

HCA General Membership Meeting

Thursday, February 1st, 2018 at 7:30 pm

In the all purpose room at The Center for the Handicapped
10501 New Hampshire Ave, Silver Spring, MD

Doors open at 7:00pm

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm

Board President Margie Goergen-Rood read a statement of support for all neighbors on behalf of the community association:

*To all our neighbors and friends of the Hillandale Community,
As the Hillandale Citizens Association we want to make a clear statement in the present negative climate of hate-filled language and total lack of civility, that we in the Hillandale Community welcome all neighbors without regard to race, religion, ethnicity or cultural differences. Hillandale is a wonderful weaving of many ethnicities, races, religions and cultures and as a diverse community we are stronger and far better for these attributes. You are after all our neighbors and our friends. You are a strong presence in the Hillandale community to which we all belong and because of that, we join with you in treating each member of the community with a sense of fairness and equality.
Welcome to all who live and work in our community*

Margie then introduced the evening's speakers:

- Linda Komes, Landscape Architect/Project Manager with M-NCPPC
- Michael Ma, Chief of the Park Development Division with M-NCPPC
- Brian Anleu, Deputy Chief of Staff for Councilmember Tom Hucker

Hillandale Local Park Renovation

Linda Komes provided background on the Hillandale Local park, and the envisioned renovation as previously approved by Montgomery County. The park is located adjacent to the CHI Center on the northbound side of New Hampshire Avenue, was created in the 1950's, and slated for a complete renovation starting in 2019, and finishing up in 2021. The community has been heavily involved in the design process during prior years that identified and fixed major infrastructure issues with the park. Ms. Komes also walked through the changes to the plan that have been recommended to both improve the plan (e.g. direct access to the parking lot from the CHI parking lot), and reduce the overall cost by one million dollars in hopes of keeping the renovation in the new county budget and on schedule for next year (e.g. removing nice-to-have components and swapping out materials for less expensive options) .

Michael Ma then spoke to the ongoing budget challenges, particularly with the funding for local parks. Historically the Parks Department has split their budget between these large renovation projects that span many years (called "standalone" in Park Parlance), and small maintenance and upkeep projects (referred to as "level of effort"). They have additionally introduced a "Park Refresher" program which would be medium-sized, less than two year efforts to renovate one component of the park. The Hillandale Local Park renovation has been designed as a large (or standalone) effort. The Planning

Committee and the Parks Department are both moving to do more of the small and medium sized projects in order to see some work in the 200+ parks across the county, and have recommended cutting out all of the standalone projects -- including Hillandale. All of the standalone parks would then be reconsidered under the Park Refresher program.

Brian Anleu, in response to question from the citizens in attendance, then explained that the recommendations to cut the Hillandale Local Park Renovation are not yet set in stone, and that there may still be a way to emphasize to the council that the larger-scale issues in the Hillandale Local Park deserved to be considered individually rather than simply lumped together with the other standalone projects. He recommended that those that wish to do so should contact the councilmembers, and even register to testify at the upcoming Public Hearings about the Capital Budget on February 7th & 8th. He emphasized that in addition to our direct District 20 representative, Tom Hucker, we are also represented by the four at-large members of the county -- Councilmembers Erlich, Floreen, Leventhal, and Riemer. Additionally, Mr. Anleu pointed out the Councilmembers Reimer, Leventhal and Floreen compose the Planning, Housing & Economic Development (PHED) committee, which is the group responsible for considering the details behind the Park plans and recommending a course of action to the council.

Traffic Calming and Concerns

After the discussion of the park, Lillie Brown, part of the HCA's Hillandale Forest Traffic Committee presented the concerns expressed by community members at a committee meeting in January. Community members in attendance emphasized the safety and quality of life concerns in Hillandale Forest regarding the increased volumes and speeds associated with the cut-through traffic (in particular on Wooded Way and Elton Road). Ms Brown and residents of the affected areas expressed their frustration with the lack of any appreciable progress relieving their safety concerns, and opposition to a "slip ramp" that has been discussed by developers, that would connect Elton Road directly to the westbound portion of the Beltway as this would incentivize even more cut through traffic and exacerbate the existing problems.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

Board Members for 2017-19:

Margie Goergen-Rood (President), Kimberly Pfirrmann-Powell (VP), Andrew Harris (VP-Programs), Ken Harringer (Treasurer), Heather Thomas (Secretary), Luann Spiller (Past-President), Jeff McNeil (At-Large OH), Virgil Tudor (At-Large WH), Tom Helfand (At-Large WH), Ava Penny (At-Large HF), Lillie Brown (At-Large HF/Traffic), Ross Sutton* (Bulletin/Garden), Mary Myers-Nelson, Clay Teunis (Safety), Russ Harris (Web), Eileen Finnegan (Zoning), Bill Thomas (Developer Liason/Traffic), Shana Davis-Cook (Bylaws/Traffic)

Minutes prepared by Heather Thomas