



## East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc.

SEPTEMBER 2019

Please join us for the next

**EAST SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ASSOCIATION (ESSCA) MEETING**

**MEETING DATE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, 2019**

MEETING LOCATION IS THE HISTORIC B&O TRAIN STATION

8100 Georgia Avenue, just south of the Fire Station

REGULAR MEETING TIME: Third Monday of month (Sept - May) Doors open 6:45PM, Meeting starts 7:00PM

**JOIN ESSCA'S LIST-SERVE:** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/eastsilverspringcivic>

(Include your name and street name when you send your "join request")

**JOIN ESSCA'S Facebook Group: East Silver Spring Citizens' Association**

**VISIT ESSCA'S WEBSITE:** [www.eastsilverspring.org](http://www.eastsilverspring.org)

Email Contact: [esscaprez@gmail.com](mailto:esscaprez@gmail.com)

### **COME HEAR ABOUT PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING 2020 U.S. CENSUS AT OUR NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>**

Shawn Ellis, the County's 2020 Census Manager, will talk about the 2020 Census and how you can help make sure everyone in our area is counted!

Every 10 years, the federal government conducts a population count of everyone in the United States. Why should this matter to all of us living in Montgomery County? The federal government allocates more than \$675 Billion in funding every year based on census data, and it's estimated that each Marylander not counted in the 2020 Census will cost the state approximately \$18,250 over 10 years.

Montgomery County has taken a regional approach to the development of their Census outreach strategy. With the establishment of five Regional Census Complete Count Subcommittees, the County's goal is to allow each Region to develop and implement awareness and education outreach strategies specially tailored to the Hardest-To-Count Census tracts in their specific communities, both geographically and by demographics (age group, country of origin, language, etc.).

Help ensure that everyone in Montgomery County is accurately represented and that our communities get their fair share of federal funding for schools, health care, libraries and social services!

You can take action by signing up to serve on

a Regional Subcommittee or becoming a 2020 Census Ambassador.

To learn more, join us at our September 16th meeting or visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/census/](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/census/).

### **ESSCA BOARD ELECTIONS**

A motion was passed with the unanimous support of those attending our May 2019 meeting to re-elect to the ESSCA Board: Tim Haverland, President; Steve Knight, Treasurer and Tracy Vandenbroek to her new role as Vice President. The motion passed also included newly elected board members Gray Kimbrough, Corresponding Secretary; Stevan Lieberman, Recording Secretary. Mark Paster will continue to serve ESSCA as Chair of the Hospitality and Membership Committee.

### **PROGRESS PLACE UPDATE**

A coalition has been meeting monthly since Spring 2018 to discuss security issues in and around Progress Place. We are leaders throughout the Downtown Silver Spring community, including Shepard's Table, Interfaith Works, ESSCA, Montgomery Preservation (the B&O Station next door), South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association, Silver Spring Urban District (Red Shirts) and Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce with advice from Montgomery County Police, Liquor Commission and Civil Servants.

We requested \$180,000 for 24/7 crisis intervention-trained security and \$43,000 for security cameras to provide visibility to current

blind-spots, including behind the building, which is intended for a future smoking area. These measures have not been in place and those that serve the homeless and the homeless themselves have been put in harm's way. Staff and patrons have been assaulted and there is a public drug market in the parking lot. The sources of much of this danger are those who are neither workers at nor patrons of Progress Place at all.

After a couple of letters to Montgomery County (MoCo) elected officials, a year of regular meetings, numerous appearances at MoCo listening/ budget meetings and countless tours of Progress Place, we have made some progress!

The FY20 MoCo Operating Budget for Health and Human Services (HHS) and Police Department now includes over \$350,000 to improve conditions at Progress Place. Work is in progress to hire 24/7 security guards and to install cameras and create a off-street smoking area behind the building.

Other items the group has accomplished include:

- CSX has installed brighter lights in the adjacent Georgia Ave underpass
- The Red Shirts are cleaning the underpass 6 times a day
- Public bathroom enhancements and maps are being distributed
- The wine & beer store next to Progress Place has stopped paying patrons to do odd jobs with alcohol per our request

And items the group continues to work on include:

- Mental health/addiction services (evaluating needs and effectiveness and finding staff office space)
- Safe environments/activities (developing enhanced programming/resources and finding partners to organize activities)
- Housing needs (scoping for very low/no income individuals)

### **PROPOSED DAYCARE CENTER ON SLIGO AVENUE**

**Background:** We first heard details of the plans to change the former veterinary hospital behind the 7 Eleven and facing Sligo Avenue into a child daycare center at our March 2019 meeting. Initial studies indicate the 13,000 square foot 2-story building can be effectively converted to accommodate up to 191 children at any one time. The proposed operator, Kiddie Academy, is a nation-wide franchise with an education-focused program serving children ranging from infants up to kindergarten as well as after school childcare. The center would be operational from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM Monday through Friday. More information on Kiddie Academy is available on their website: <https://kiddieacademy.com/>. Because a daycare center is a change from the original building use, the developer and operator will be required to work with the Planning Department staff and to seek approval from the County Planning Board.

**Clarification:** While the property address is 811 Sligo Avenue, the official project name is 911 Sligo Avenue. This is only important insofar as tracking project updates through the County Planning Department's website.

**Update:** The application for the daycare had its Design Review Committee (DRC) meeting in July. DRC meetings provide the required input of other County agencies, e.g. Fire, Department of Transportation (DOT), Environmental, etc. As a result of this input, the developer must resubmit the application with the changes requested by these committees. One of the major changes for this project is the DOT Engineer's recommendation to reverse the developer's proposed flow of traffic into and out of the facility, such that vehicles will enter from the alley on Fenton and exit onto Sligo Ave.

The Planning Staff recommended that DOT exempt the development from the prohibition

of using the alley for ingress. DOT Engineers also recommend that the exemption be granted, so the development can use the alley as its sole entrance. The Director of DOT and the Planning Board will make the final decision on granting the exemption.

The tentative hearing date for this project is October 17, 2019. As per the ESSCA membership vote at our May meeting, the ESSCA Board will send an email to the Director of DOT and the Planning Board supporting the alley exemption as soon as the new application is accepted by the Planning Staff.

### **DEVELOPMENT & UTILITY CONSTRUCTION UPDATES IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

**850 Sligo Avenue:** An Amendment to the pending project to adaptively reuse the existing vacant 8-story office building at the corner of Sligo and Fenton was recently filed by the developer. The project will transform the existing structure into apartments and construct a new mid-rise apartment building and parking structure on the existing surface parking lot.

The amendment the developer has filed specifically relates to who can live in the future building. There is currently a moratorium in place for certain school clusters in the county to prevent new residential construction to avoid school overcrowding. East Silver Spring is in one of those clusters. In June the County Council passed an amendment to the moratorium to allow projects to move forward that would: add no more than 10 students to the relevant school cluster and that would either 1) replace or remediate an uninhabited, blighted or condemned property within or adjacent to a state-designated Opportunity Zone; or 2) provide more than 50% affordable housing units for families earning 60% or less of the area median income. The developers of 850 Sligo have proposed such a project and the amendment they have filed would remove the current senior age-restricted classification for the project to allow families with school-age children to live there.

**PEPCO Utility Work on Fenton Street Continues:** We have previously reported on the plans to construct a major high voltage electrical line under Fenton Street. Instead of working one block at a time from north to south as we understood and stated previously, PEPCO is working on several blocks simultaneously.

The project will take roughly one additional year to complete, with work on the eastern side of the street nearly finished and work on the western side to begin soon.

**Artspace:** The developer started construction this summer on the site of the former police station on Sligo Avenue that will turn the property into housing, work and gallery space for artists as well as townhouses constructed along Grove Street. One recent change from the original plans we learned about was the elimination of one story from the existing structure (this is apparently related to project budget and restrictions from one of the project's various funding sources). We have been told the project will take approximately 18 months to complete.

### **FROM REEMBERTO RODRIGUEZ, SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA DIRECTOR FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY:**

If you are interested in what is going on in our broader Silver Spring Regional Area (including Takoma Park) you are invited to subscribe to the Regional Area's eNewsletter from the link at [www.MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SilverSpring](http://www.MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SilverSpring)

### **PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP WITH ESSCA!**

#### **How much is community worth to you?**

ESSCA has calculated community can be improved with just \$10 per household per year. Seriously that's it! Your \$10 enables ESSCA to print and distribute The Advocate newsletter, maintain a website, and host 5 public meetings a year. And don't forget ESSCA Fest, our annual block party with free music and refreshments!

#### **Three Ways to Give:**

1. Give at the ESSCA Meeting
2. Go to the website at: <https://eastsilverspring.org/> and pay via PayPal
3. Write a check payable to ESSCA and send it to:  
Steve Knight  
808 Violet Place  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

*Please note that ESSCA is a 501(c)(4) non-profit corporation and that member dues are not tax-deductable. Thank you!*