



East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc.

JANUARY 2016

Redevelopment Plans of the Old Police Station by ArtSpace will be the main topic of our next

EAST SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ASSOCIATION (ESSCA) MEETING • MEETING DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2016
MEETING LOCATION IS THE HISTORIC B&O TRAIN STATION

8100 Georgia Avenue, just south of the Fire Station

NEW MEETING TIME: Third Monday of every other 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")

VISIT ESSCA'S NEW WEBSITE: www.eastsilverspring.org EMAIL CONTACT: esscaprez@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE THE LOCATION AND DATE FOR OUR JANUARY MEETING:

WHERE: THE HISTORIC B&O TRAIN STATION AT 8100 GEORGIA AVENUE

WHEN: MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2016

Because the 3rd Monday coincides with the Martin Luther King Junior Holiday and because of an important topic, we have shifted this meeting from the regular slot to the 4th Monday of January. We hope to see you at the B&O Station at 7:00PM.

LEARN MORE ABOUT PLANS BY ARTSPACE TO CONVERT THE OLD POLICE STATION AT OUR JANUARY MEETING

ArtSpace plans to transform the old police station site on Sligo Avenue into a community for artists with housing, studios, townhouses and live/work units. Last month the Planning Board recommended approval of the requested zoning change to allow for the project (ESSCA voted to support this measure at our November meeting) and plans have been in development with input from the immediate neighbors. This meeting will be an opportunity for the rest of the community to see the design first-hand and to meet with ArtSpace leadership and project team members.

Project Background

In the winter of last year the County awarded ArtSpace of Minneapolis rights to redevelop the old police station on Sligo Avenue with a combination of housing and arts-oriented uses, including exhibition and work space for local artists. ArtSpace's history and track record includes numerous projects around the country. Founded as a private non-profit corporation in 1979, ArtSpace (<http://www.artspace.org>) has completed 37 projects in 15 states and the

District, including housing and studio facilities for artists in nearby Brookland in the District and another in Mount Rainier, MD. Also on the project team are BKV Architecture and JDC Construction, who will serve as owner's representative and project manager.

The project budget is slated at approximately \$22 million and plans call for adaptive reuse of the existing station to accommodate exhibition space and artist's studios. The project will include a new-construction building for apartments fashioned as live-work units for artists. These units will be affordable, with qualifying residents earning approximately 60% of the area's median annual income. Also included in the project will be some market-rate town houses along Grove Street. The plan includes some surface as well as below-grade parking, a plaza and other landscape open areas. It will take approximately 18 months for construction, with ground breaking in the spring of 2017.

ALSO AT OUR JANUARY MEETING:
LET'S TALK ABOUT STREETS IN NEED OF RESURFACING

Do you have suggestions for local streets in need of repair and repaving? If so, please let us know at the meeting. We are compiling a list which we will share with Tom Hucker, our district's County Council Member. This will help focus advocacy and funding efforts. Both Silver Spring and Thayer Avenues are already on the list for resurfacing in FY17 (next year).

PEDESTRIAN AND AUTOMOBILE SAFETY

The main topic of our November meeting was an open discussion with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation

representatives Khursheed Bilgrami (K.B.) and Jeff Dunkel. Issues included:

- *The 600 & 700 Blocks of Gist Avenue*
Some residents here consider these blocks the "poor stepchild" of neighborhood, because sidewalks are limited to nonexistent, the 700 block sees a lot of speeding yet has no speed bumps, there is limited street lighting and the curves near the "Y" intersection with Ray are problematic for pedestrian and vehicular visibility. These issues are especially concerning because the eastern terminus for Gist is the Middle School and conditions are exacerbated by school bus traffic. A resident circulated a petition to add speed bumps in the area during the meeting with many signing their support.

• *Traffic Calming*

K.B. and Jeff reviewed the primary tools they have at their disposal for reducing speeding, the concept known as traffic calming. Specifics include:

- Installing pedestrian refuges in divided medians at intersections (like we now have on Dale Drive)
- Striping, to further-define travel lanes when paved areas are particularly wide
- Speed bumps
- Fully striped crosswalks
- Neck-downs at intersections (as we now have along Fenton Street)

• *The "Y" Intersection of Gist and Ray*

There was a single car accident resulting in the death of the driver in October and many attendees wondered what could be done to improve conditions at this intersection. K.B. stated that another form of traffic calming was needed to reduce the perceived speed at which motorists could navigate this area and

recommended specifically installing a small traffic circle. He shared a drawing of a proposed design that would not take any additional right of way to incorporate. He said the county wants to implement it this coming spring, noting that the installation of some curbs and gutters would be required.

• *Annual Sidewalk Program*

Neighbors asked about the process for requesting and building additional sidewalks in the neighborhood, including along Gist and Grove streets. Jeff and K.B. described the County process, which can begin when residents formally request sidewalk construction. This can take between one and six years. Although it does not require universal assent from every neighbors, the County requires a strong majority of community support.

• *The Purple Line at Wayne Ave. & Dale Dr.*

Neighbors asked about and expressed concern regarding the plans to widen Wayne Ave. to seven lanes at the intersection with Dale Dr. (near the elementary and middle schools). The new plans include 6 lanes for cars and the Purple Line, with additional crossing area to accommodate the station platform. The Department of Transportation said that expansion to five lanes for automobiles would be necessary to handle traffic flow. Because this nearly doubles the crossing distance for pedestrians, neighbors asked if there could be fewer lanes of car traffic to compensate for the increased width for the rail lines.

• *Congestion at Sligo/Fenton Intersection*

Attendees noted issues with buses not being able to negotiate the turn from southbound Fenton onto eastbound Sligo. It was noted this is probably because of the location of the stop line (the painted white line telling cars where to stop when the light is red) and K.B. said it is an easy fix for him to have D.O.T. to assess and move the line back to allow more room for the buses to make turns.

• *Grove Street*

This narrow two way street running parallel to and east of Fenton Street has its own issues, including lack of sidewalks, curbs and gutters and truck and bus traffic that is supposed to be restricted from using this street at all. It was noted that the recent increase in truck traffic is likely due to the opening of some additional restaurants on Fenton Street. These vehicles have a particularly difficult time negotiating turns at the street's tight intersections and have been known to cause property damage to fences, etc. K.B. stated D.O.T. will look at adding more signs noting the restrictions to bus

and truck traffic.

FIRE STATION OVERHEAD DOOR REPLACEMENT

We were informed recently of plans to replace all of the overhead doors to the emergency vehicle bays of the Fire Station on Georgia Avenue. This is apparently necessary because the current glass doors are too heavy and have been failing. In fact, one bay was recently boarded up because the door was not working at all. The original plan was to replace them with simple solid doors that would be lighter and work more easily. Several folks in the community voiced concerns about limiting views into the Station bays, making it appear more imposing and visually uninteresting, especially to pedestrian traffic that frequently passes in front of the Station. We had a brief discussion on the matter with General Services representatives June Evans and Deane Zuispan at our November meeting and several attendees voiced their concerns. The County has agreed to look at some alternatives, including partial glass doors, doing nicer doors on the front/street side versus the back and the possibility of incorporating murals. We will keep you posted as this develops further.

BEST OF FENTON VOTING IS NOW CLOSED

This fourth annual community-spirited contest allows residents and customers to vote for their favorite local small business establishments. You have probably seen posters hanging in many of the area's shops, which includes over 40 restaurants, 35 auto repair establishments and 25 salons. Online voting ran from Shop Local Day through the end of the year and we will have results tabulated in our next newsletter.

THE SECOND ANNUAL LEO'S RUN

Leo's Run, a 5k run/walk in downtown Silver Spring, honors the stillborn son of Caroline Joyce and Mike Mowery, and will take place the morning of Sunday February 7, 2016. The run will begin and end at East Silver Spring Elementary School (631 Silver Spring Ave). Proceeds from the 5k will go to Leo's Garden, a non-profit whose aspirations include starting a scholarship for children whose parents have experienced pre-natal loss (i.e. the recipient will have lost a sibling), and supporting and sponsoring creative and artistic activities or therapies such as yoga, art, and outdoor education as a means of promoting the well-being of families who have suffered still birth or other tragic loss. More information on participating or volunteering is available at

www.leosrun.org. Last year's race saw over 200 participants and those interested can register to get an official time.

VALENTINE'S DAY SAVE-THE-DATE

Silver Spring Village is a local non-profit organization dedicated to providing services, networking and support to our neighbors who want to age in place. They will be holding a special informational luncheon on Valentine's Day to learn more about the group and all that they do.

PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP WITH ESSCA!

We Are Your Civic Association. Membership dues allow us to print and deliver this newsletter, beautify our neighborhood and our parks, work on other issues beneficial to the community, including working with local developers for better projects, parking permits and monitoring neighborhood crime and safety issues.



NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS CAN NOW PAY THEIR DUES ONLINE THROUGH PAYPAL!

Visit the ESSCA Website:
<http://eastsilverspring.org/Membership.html>



WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP WE COULD IMPROVE ON THESE EFFORTS & DO A LOT MORE.

Annual ESSCA dues are \$10/ family. Dues cover each meeting season, from September to May. Please pay at our next meeting, or send a check (payable to ESSCA) to Steve Knight, ESSCA Treasurer, 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-deductible. Thank you!