

YOUR IDEA HERE! SEE DETAILS OF OUR BANNER CONTEST BELOW

East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc.

MARCH 2021

Please join us for the next East Silver Spring Citizens' Association (ESSCA) meeting on Monday, March 15, 2021, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM.

The meeting will be held online. Please register in advance - details provided below.

JOIN ESSCA'S LIST-SERVE: <https://groups.io/g/eastsilverspringcivic>

JOIN ESSCA'S Facebook Group: [East Silver Spring Citizens' Association](#)

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

MARCH ESSCA MEETING: FOOD TRUCKS, COMMITTEES AND VACCINES, OH MY!

Food Trucks! Special guest speaker, Enza Barbato, will talk about the “Grove Eats” food truck calendar. Come hear about the great food vendors Enza has single-handedly arranged and get excited for these upcoming mouth-watering neighborhood events.

Revisiting ESSCA Committees. The ESSCA Constitution defines several committees, but only one, the Planning, Zoning, and Public Works Committee, is active. We'll talk about which committees to keep, which to shelve, and how we can create new committees to engage more people in ESSCA's community mission.

The COVID Vaccine Game: Mary Anderson, Public Information Officer for Montgomery County Health and Human Services, will explain the County's vaccine process and how we can navigate the complex and many times competitive array of vaccine registration systems.

Please join us Monday March 15 at 7:00 PM. *To participate in the meeting, [Registration for the Zoom meeting is required in advance.](#)*

REPORT FROM OUR NOVEMBER 2020 MEETING

To give the community more opportunities to participate in meaningful service activities to commemorate Martin Luther King Day, we did not hold our regular bi-monthly Monday meeting in January. As such this report is from our November 2020 meeting, devoted primarily to a presentation by County Planning staff on the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Sector Plan rewrite, currently underway. Atara Margolies, Planner Coordinator with DownCounty Planning, is serving as Project Manager for the rewrite and was the primary presenter at our November 16th meeting.

Sector plans are revisited approximately every twenty years. Last rewritten in 2000, the area covered by the Silver Spring Central Business District (CBD) sector plan has seen much growth and change: construction of the Civic Center and Veteran's Plaza, creation of an arts and entertainment district, continued growth in our diverse small business community, planning for the Purple Line, and new retail, restaurant, office and multi-family residential development. The concept of a CBD (restricted primarily to office and other commercial uses) is now generally considered an antiquated concept not fully in sync with current planning thinking which promotes fine-grained patterns of mixed use development and encourages growth near

established and planned public transportation centers like Metro and the Purple Line. The idea of accommodating pockets of [missing middle housing](#) has also entered into the planning conversation recently. For these reasons the Planning Board decided to expand the study area to be considered, incorporating small portions of Woodside to the North, Silver Spring-Evanswood to the northeast and East Silver Spring to the east and southeast that are adjacent to the downtown Silver Spring and Fenton Village, hence the addition of Adjacent Communities to the planning project's name. It is important to note that this expansion is only for the purposes of study and that any plan changes are far from defined at this point.

As of November the planning team was nearing completion on the first phase of the Sector Plan rewrite project which focused on studying and documenting existing conditions and included community engagement with online meetings, surveys and newsletters. This first phase included listening sessions with the community to hear directly from individuals on what they like about the area, what needs to be improved and what should be changed for the future outcomes to be successful. Ms. Margolies noted that broad engagement efforts can be difficult, especially with traditionally hard-to-reach parts of the community, including renters, immigrant communities and small business owners.

Planning staff have been working to increase the types of engagement used, including fliers, mailings and working through local community representatives to broaden participation. They are also engaging consultants to do some use-specific studies on missing middle housing and office and retail markets. As of the November meeting two additional community listening sessions hosted on Zoom were planned for early- and mid-December.

Staff expect to start the Phase II Visioning portion of the project in early 2021. This is the phase when the community gets to share what they'd like to see maintained and changed in the new plan through a series of community workshops. Sessions will be organized by different themes, including history, diversity, demographics, character of the built environment, inventory of parks and open space, transportation, environmental resilience, housing, economic development, community resources and schools, and historic preservation. Go to [Sector Plan Rewrite](#) to learn more about the process, next steps and schedule. ESSCA will continue to provide updates in the newsletter and on the list serve.

DAN REED APPOINTED CHAIR OF ESSCA PLANNING, ZONING, AND PUBLIC WORKS (PZPW) COMMITTEE

In February the ESSCA Board appointed Dan Reed as the Chair of ESSCA's Planning, Zoning, and Public Works Committee. Dan will lead a team of 3-5 Committee members with the primary tasks of listening to current and future neighborhood needs, keeping up-to-date on development and public works projects, researching planning and zoning issues, helping neighbors engage in the County's planning process, and keeping the neighborhood informed through meetings and online and print publications.

Dan says: "I grew up in downtown Silver Spring, and I'm so excited to give back to this neighborhood. This committee is a great opportunity to talk about ongoing changes in our community and how we can make this place the best it can possibly be."

KAREN ROPER STEPS DOWN AS CHAIR OF ESSCA PZPW COMMITTEE

On January 12th Karen Roper resigned after 12 years of service as Chair of this ESSCA committee. She cited the need and desire to focus her time and advocacy efforts leading Fenton Village, Inc. (FVI), the organization that advocates for the small, racially and ethnically diverse independent businesses that make up the commercial center of our neighborhood. Karen co-founded FVI over 5 years ago and now serves as its Director of Development.

Karen has led this ESSCA committee since its inception, leading ad-hoc groups of residents and businesses on a case-by-case basis to effectively negotiate neighborhood interests in the design of new development in East Silver Spring. Projects include Studio Plaza, Central, the Bonifant Senior Apartments and 850 Sligo Avenue. Work also included ongoing advocacy and coordination on behalf of Fenton Village businesses impacted by the Purple Line as well as playing a key role in creating an affordable place in the community for artists. Moving ESSCA beyond taking divisive pro- and anti-development stances, Karen led the creation of a micro-to-macro community outreach system to ensure neighbors had input on new development compatibility, creating positive outcomes for developers and the neighborhood. In so doing ESSCA built credibility and gained respect with the Planning Department, developers and County officials: Chief of DownCounty Planning Elza Hize-McCoy invited Karen and the developer of the Central to present the micro-to-macro process at the 2016 symposium *Makeover Montgomery 3: Balancing Change in America's Suburbs*. Elza has said ESSCA is "the most sophisticated community in the entire County and a joy to work with."

Karen expressed gratitude in meeting and working with so many neighbors over the years. She will continue to be a member of ESSCA, serve as the liaison between ESSCA and Artspace, and serve as a liaison between FVI and new development in Fenton Village.

MORE HOUSING FOR MORE PEOPLE

The median home price in Montgomery County shot up 14% in 2020, and county leaders want to encourage less costly housing choices, especially in neighborhoods near transit. In December, County Councilmember Will Jawando introduced [More Housing for More People](#), two bills that would introduce rent control for apartments within one mile of Metro, the Purple Line, and Bus Rapid Transit, and another that would allow "missing middle" house types on lots near Red Line stations zoned for single-family homes. You've seen "missing middle" homes in East Silver Spring, like duplexes, townhomes, and small (4-6 unit) apartment buildings. Under the bill, you could build those things as long as they weren't any taller or bigger than what's allowed today.

East Silver Spring residents testified both for and against the housing bill at a hearing last month. The Planning Board says they support the idea, [but made recommendations](#) for how the bill could be more effective. The County Council hasn't scheduled any meetings to discuss the bill yet.

GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER FOR ESSCAFEST MAY 1!

What entertainment skills have you developed over the pandemic? Got new jokes? Write poetry? Learn an instrument? Even if you haven't felt inspired, there's still time to polish up your act for ESSCAFest! This hyper-local afternoon of entertainment will be back (virtually) on May 1 and we hope to get a variety of acts from across the neighborhood. Stay tuned for sign-ups in April!

FENTON ST UPDATE

Plans are moving forward for bike lanes on Fenton Street between Cameron Street and Philadelphia Avenue. Over the past few years, county planners have been looking at seven different ways to build bike lanes while retaining some street parking, as there isn't room to have both in some areas. Last month, County Council's Transportation and Environment committee recommended "Alternative E," which will require

removing 48 parking spaces, but also has the smallest impact on travel time through the area. It also won't require widening Fenton Street, unlike other options. Next up, the County will pick an option later this year, which allows detailed design work to begin. The county will have to set aside money for construction after that. [For more info, visit MCDOT's website.](#)

In the meantime, resurfacing work will be done to patch up the trenches dug by Pepco last year for ongoing repairs. That will happen once Pepco finishes in a few months, though a firm date has not been set.

GROVE ST UPDATE

Changes are coming to Grove Street this spring. Montgomery County's Department of Transportation will begin a trial of different street designs that will calm traffic on Grove Street between Bonifant and Sligo and make it safer to walk and bike. The ongoing "Shared Streets" pilot, which began last summer and restricted through traffic on Grove, is a related effort. While we don't have an exact date yet, within the next few months we'll see a "Walking Lane" installed on one side of Grove, with a special barrier designed to keep cars out while allowing access to driveways. It'll be in place for about three months. [For more info, visit MCDOT's website.](#)

ESSCA BOARD NOMINATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

Shape the destiny of your community! We are looking for leaders from East Silver Spring to play the critical roles of ESSCA board members. The five roles, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary and Recording Secretary are integral to ensuring all neighbors have a voice in our neighborhood, and the neighborhood has a voice in Montgomery County.

If you are an inspired individual with vision and a thirst for civic life, **please contact the Nomination Coordinator, Pete Tan, through call/text at 813-240-3887 or email at petetan@silverspringinc.com.** Send in your nomination by the April 15 deadline.

Early candidates will be announced at the March 15 meeting. The final nomination list will be included in the ESSCA newsletter one week prior to our May 17 meeting and election. We can't wait for your voice!

NEWSLETTER BANNER CONTEST

We think it is time for ESSCA to have a new banner for the newsletter. We'd love to tap into the creative energy of our neighbors, so we are organizing a contest! Our goal is to have a new banner design by May. We will talk more about schedule, how to enter and prizes at our March meeting and we'll follow up with details on the list-serve.

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/Silver Spring/](http://www.MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/SilverSpring/)

How much is community worth to you?

Your 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!

If everyone chips in, we can do even more together! We have an amazing community and if you invest in it; together we can become even more effective!!!

Give to ESSCA in any of these 3 ways:

1. Give at the ESSCA Meeting
2. Go to the website at <https://eastsilverspring.org> and pay via PayPal
3. Send a check payable to ESSCA to Steve Knight at 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!

ESSCA Officers:

President: Tim Haverland

Vice President: Vacant

Treasurer: Steve Knight

Recording Secretary: Stevan Lieberman

Corresponding Secretary:
Gray Kimbrough

Chair for Planning, Zoning & Public Works Committee: Dan Reed

COVID-19 RESOURCES

Food Assistance - Seniors, call the County's Aging and Disability Services at 240-777-3000 or call 311.

Adventist Community Services - Located at 501 Sligo Ave, our local food pantry is available to provide food assistance to all. They also welcome donations at all times of shelf-stable foods (no glass) with their outside collection bin near the entrance. Ken Flemmer, Director of the food bank, is grateful to the community for cash donations as well. They can be reached at 301-585-6556.

Grocery Shopping, Delivery - Seniors, call Senior Connections MC at 301-962-0820. Non-seniors please call the Silver Spring Rotary at 240-781-6586.

Check-ins - Seniors, call Senior Connections MC at 301-962-0820

Mental Health Services - Need someone to talk to? Call 240-777-4000

Rental Assistance - Call 311 or visit the [County Dept. of Health and Human Services COVID-19 Rent Relief Program Phase 2](#)

Still need help? Call 311 to talk with the Montgomery County Service Center, or call ESSCA President Tim Haverland at 240-429-2506.