



East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc.

SEPTEMBER 2020

Please join us for the next East Silver Spring Citizens' Association (ESSCA) meeting on Monday, September 21st, 2020, 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

SEPTEMBER ESSCA MEETING

A lot has happened over the summer and we'll use our first meeting of the season to catch up on and discuss a variety of items, including:

- Grove Street
- Nolte Park Community Garden
- Neighborhood sidewalk & curb replacement
- Street repaving
- Construction progress at ArtSpace
- Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan
- And all the Neighborhood News (that's fit to discuss)!

To participate in the meeting, please register in advance at:
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/91012020000>

GROVE STREET

Earlier this summer the county instituted a shared street concept for Grove Street, essentially closing it to vehicular thru traffic. The intent is to give residents additional area for recreation and exercise to allow for safe social distancing during the ongoing pandemic. Grove Street is not the only site for this concept; while it was the first, three more streets were added in the eastern part of the county in late August.

This has generated a great deal of discussion on the ESSCA listserve, at times elicited some confusion with the future pilot program for Grove, known as the Neighborhood Greenway. The two are completely separate projects, although they involve the same street. The shared street will be in place until the end of October when the street will be opened up and the first phase of the Neighborhood Greenway pilot is implemented (see below).

Background

We've been talking about Grove Street in ESSCA meetings and online for nearly three years. Here's a refresher on what we've discussed and learned in that time. The current street arrangement consists of two-way traffic plus parallel on-street parking on the east side. Discussion has focused primarily on the lack of sidewalks, prioritizing walking/biking/rolling, keeping the on-street parking and enforcing current restrictions on truck and bus traffic.

There are fundamental space constraints with Grove St. The street measures only 24 feet wide from curb to curb along its length. This is nearly the entire public right of way available. Space immediately beyond the right of way also contains utility poles and retaining walls, further hampering efforts to add any width to it. There are also emergency vehicle operation zones that require 20' of width periodically along the

street, and the county has a minimum 5' width requirement for sidewalks. All of this means adding a sidewalk while maintaining on street parking is not feasible at this time.

Alternative ideas to help calm vehicular traffic, make the street more hospitable to pedestrians and cyclists and mitigate large truck and bus traffic have been discussed.

Making Grove Street a Neighborhood Greenway

This brings us to the idea of a Neighborhood Greenway: a street designed to give walking and biking priority and to reduce vehicle speed and volume. The 2018 Bicycle Master Plan designated Grove St. and various other streets as Neighborhood Greenways.

A Neighborhood Greenway may include treatments such as:

- Creating a dedicated walking lane
- Making certain blocks of or the entire street one-way traffic only
- Reducing the amount of or removing on street parking altogether
- Lowering the speed limit below 25 MPH
- Adding flexible posts to create physical separation between vehicles and pedestrians
- Adding traffic diverters at intersections to shift traffic off of the street
- Speed humps, cushions and tables
- Splitters, chicanes and mini-roundabouts

● Chokers and bump-outs

After a series of public meetings with the County and multiple opportunities for public comment, the County is poised to present the community with its Phase I proposed treatments. Once installed, these non-permanent treatments will be followed by further assessment and discussion with the community to see what works best before more permanent changes are installed.

The County's [Grove St. Neighborhood Greenway Project Page](#) has more information about the Greenway concept and a primer on traffic calming and diversion treatments. The County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will be hosting a community meeting on 9/29 to present their proposal for the first round of traffic calming treatments. You are required to [register beforehand](#), after which you'll receive a confirmation email.

ESSCA BOARD ELECTIONS

Due to the pandemic, we announced at our May meeting that elections would be postponed until September. Because of the continuing pandemic we are further delaying the election until May 2021. We are hopeful this will give us the time needed to build interest in board participation. If you have an interest in serving on your all-volunteer civic association board we encourage you to attend the bi-monthly ESSCA meetings and join and follow our listserve to better-acquaint yourself with your

civic association. By this coming May we hope to either meet in person to hold the election, or if necessary, we will develop an alternative voting procedure to allow members to vote by email, text, or phone message. Current board members are as follows:

- President: Tim Haverland
- Vice-President: Vacant
- Treasurer: Steve Knight
- Recording Secretary: Stevan Lieberman
- Corresponding Secretary: Gray Kimbrough

REPORT FROM OUR MAY MEETING: DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING MASTER PLAN REWRITE & HOUSING IN EAST SILVER SPRING

County Planning is currently in the middle of rewriting the Silver Spring Central Business District Master Plan, now called the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan. The Master Plan is the visioning process for the future of Downtown Silver Spring, and includes an analysis of many factors such as transportation, environment, housing, schools, population and business growth with the goal of guiding land use for the next 20 years. The rewrite process itself can take up to 3 years and starts with public announcements, confirming the area of the plan to be studied, followed by study of existing conditions and then a series of public listening sessions for the community to provide their input on what they

like, don't like, and what they want to see changed and left alone.

The original scope for the Master Plan included making a small adjustment to the Master Plan boundary to include the St. Michael's school property on the south side of Wayne Ave. across from the Whole Foods parking lot. However, at its March 26 meeting, the County Planning Board requested that Planning staff provide options to examine "missing middle" housing within walking distance to the Silver Spring Metro Station and Purple Line library station. This expansion in scope translated into an expansion of the area to be considered, including portions of the ESSCA residential neighborhood.

"Missing middle" housing is typically thought of as smaller unit housing (duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, etc.) that diversifies the choices for households of different age, size, and income. Missing middle housing seeks to build more homes for families in structures similar in size and scale to single family homes. Although [recommendations have been made](#) to make this kind of housing more feasible, we are early in the planning process and no specific recommendations have been made yet for the Downtown Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities Plan.

There is already a variety of housing types in our neighborhood and we spent some time at the May meeting looking at the current state of

housing in the ESSCA boundaries. Much of the land area in East Silver Spring is zoned R-60, essentially single-family detached houses on lot sizes between 1/10 and 1/4 of an acre. However, only 30% of East Silver Spring residents live in single family detached homes. The remaining 70% live in a combination of:

- Townhouses (like those on Twin Holly Lane)
- Small walk-up apartment buildings (like those found on Schrider Street next to East Silver Spring Elementary)
- Mid-size apartment buildings (found along Sligo and Thayer Avenues)
- Large apartment buildings (like Silver Spring Towers behind the Fenton Street Exxon)
- Condominiums (like the 4-story building at the SW corner of Fenton and Bonifant)
- Accessory apartments (found in basements of neighborhood houses)

Additional data points on East Silver Spring residents include:

- 68% of residents are renters
- 24% of households do not own a car
- 42% do not drive to work (of these 28% use public transit and 14% walk or bike)
- The median price of a home in the area is now approximately \$650,000

The public listening sessions are slated to continue to the end of the year. If you have views specific to housing, missing middle housing or

other aspects of planning and development in our neighborhood, please take advantage of the process to share them. [You can learn more about the master plan rewrite process, dates and times for upcoming community listening sessions and even take an online survey to share your views.](#) ESSCA is also planning a neighborhood listening session with Planning staff in November.



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.



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/

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: Karen Roper



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 three 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!