



## East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc.

JANUARY 2019

REGULAR MEETING TIME: Third Monday of every other month (Sept - May)

Doors open: 6:45 PM, Meeting starts: 7:00 PM

JANUARY MEETING PLACE - HISTORIC B&O TRAIN STATION at 8100 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring

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 NEW WEBSITE: <https://eastsilverspring.org/> EMAIL CONTACT: [esscaprez@gmail.com](mailto:esscaprez@gmail.com)

*Please note we've shifted our January meeting by one week so as not to conflict with the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. We look forward to seeing you the fourth Monday of this month: January 28th.*

### IDEAS FOR REPLACING THE NOLTE PARK BUILDING WILL BE DISCUSSED AT OUR NEXT MEETING ON JANUARY 28TH

The Nolte Park activity building has been around since the 1950's, and within the last several years has fallen into disuse. The County issued an RFP for reuse of the building, but no viable responses were submitted. As a result, the County, after consulting with the community, decided in the Fall of 2018 to demolish the building. No schedule for demolition has yet been set.

The question for nearby residents and users of the park is what to replace the building with. To this end, ESSCA and the Park Hills Civic Association will be holding a community meeting on Monday, January 28th, from 7-8:30 pm at the Historic B&O Station at 8100 Georgia Ave. At the meeting, community members will have an opportunity to present their ideas for use of the site. The County Community Garden program will also present a proposal for an accessible community garden at the site.

So we can better plan for the meeting, please submit proposals to [esscaprez@gmail.com](mailto:esscaprez@gmail.com) by Friday, January 25. Include in your proposal: title, short description, point of contact (name, phone, email), benefits to the community, number of people who may utilize the site, and cost estimate (if possible).

At the meeting, after presenting all proposals,

we'll discuss and see if there is a community consensus on priority of uses.

### REPORT FROM OUR NOVEMBER MEETING: PRESENTATIONS BY THE EL SAVADOR & GUATEMALA CONSULATES

Building on our mission to reach out to and engage further with the community, our meeting focused on hearing from and learning more about these two consulates based here in East Silver Spring. Our meeting was hosted by the Consulate of El Salvador at 926 Philadelphia Avenue with informative presentations from the staff of each consulate.

El Salvador: Consular General Ena Peña gave a brief talk about the services the Consulate provides. The Consulate is a relatively new addition to the neighborhood, having relocated here from Georgetown in early 2017. Before moving the staff discussed the idea with the Guatemalan Consulate (already based here) and decided that Silver Spring would serve them well as a new home. They assist nearly 250 children and adults a day, primarily with passports and immigration documents. They also provide interesting opportunities for community engagement, the best of which is a music and poetry program held the last Friday of the month at 7:00 PM. The public is welcome.

Guatemala: Consular General Jessica Mendoza spoke about her Country's Consulate located at 8124 Georgia Avenue (just off Silver Spring Avenue on the west side of Georgia). They serve individuals in Maryland, the District, Virginia, West Virginia, and Delaware. They similarly provide services to assist with immigration documents and citizen protections, serving

approximately 150 people a day.

Representatives of both consulates were asked if there are opportunities for the community to volunteer and offer assistance. They said they need to give some thought as to where help is needed, but they are grateful and open to exploring this further. Ideas mentioned included assistance speaking and writing English as well as legal counseling. The Guatemalan Consulate was asked about limiting clients' use of nearby parking intended for other neighboring businesses. They responded that they are in the process of adding signage in Spanish clarifying parking rules and locations. ESSCA President Tim Haverland presented both Consulates with framed maps of Silver Spring as a gesture of welcome and as a token of our appreciation for all they add to our community.

### UPDATE ON PROGRESS PLACE

A group of leaders throughout the Downtown Silver Spring community, including Shepherd's Table, Interfaith Works, ESSCA, Montgomery Preservation (B&O), 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 has been meeting monthly since last spring. The goal is to improve on safety in the neighborhood while reinforcing Progress Place's mission and the valuable role they serve in our community.

As mentioned in the November newsletter, on October 11, 2018, the group plus a dozen affected businesses sent a letter to our Montgomery County representatives to request supplemental budget for 24/7

security inside and outside of Progress Place. Currently there is only security detail at dinner time; as a result, employees and participants are unsafe at times. You can find the letter on the ESSCA website. Regrettably, we heard very little response from Montgomery County elected representatives.

Several members of this group attended Marc Elrich's Listening Session at Takoma Park Middle School on December 1, 2018. They had the opportunity to ask for supplementary budget for 24/7 security from Interfaith Work's perspective and from a neighbor of Progress Place. It was quite impactful as several of our elected officials were in attendance and have reached out to our group.

Funding in the budget for 24/7 security personnel would make Progress Place staff and clients as well as our community be safer. The group is also investigating other measures, including moving the Progress Place client smoking area between the building and the CSX train tracks. ESSCA recognizes that increased security is a Band-Aid solution and can even exacerbate problems; homelessness and housing insecurity are expressions of poverty, mental illness, and other fundamental conditions. ESSCA will work with the Progress Place partners and our elected officials to try to address our homeless members' needs at these very basic levels. This group will continue to keep the community updated on our ongoing efforts.

### GROVE STREET

There has been much discussion recently once again about traffic and pedestrian safety on Grove Street. ESSCA devoted two meetings last year to discuss and vet different ideas and solutions to better balance the needs of pedestrians, bikes and cars on this tight north-south street connecting Sligo Avenue and Bonifant Street. The County Department of Transportation has agreed to explore and implement temporary experimental solutions primarily aimed at calming vehicular traffic. We are currently in discussions with Staff to further vet and implement some of these measures.

Here is a recap of some of what has been discussed so far at previous ESSCA meetings and more recently on the list serve :

- The current street arrangement is comprised of two-way traffic plus parallel on-street parking on the east side.
- There is a desire by many to retain the on-street parking.
- There is concern with the current lack of sidewalks.
- The posted restrictions intended to restrict truck and bus through traffic are not enforced.
- Conditions on Grove Street are likely to deteriorate further with the construction activity from new development and PEPCO utility upgrades on nearby Fenton Street.

Ideas for changes and improvements discussed at the past meetings and more recently on the list serve include:

- Adding speed bumps to slow vehicular traffic
- Creating dedicated bike lanes
- Making portions or all of the street one-way traffic
- 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
- Restricting vehicular access to Grove Street and Twin Holly Lane residents only
- Not allowing through traffic during morning and evening rush hours

Although a long list of ideas has been suggested, ESSCA will be focusing primarily on traffic calming measures at this time. There are fundamental space constraints with Grove Street making it difficult to add much of anything in the space available. The street measures only 24 to 24 ½ wide from curb to curb along its length, and the public right-of-way inside of the telephone poles is as little as one foot. Our understanding is that the County requires a minimum of 17' of travel lane width for emergency vehicle access. With parking on one side this represents all of the travel lane width currently available. We are confirming this 17' requirement with the County, as it represents a significant limitation for design alternatives on Grove St.

ESSCA will be continuing to work with County Staff on implementing some

temporary experimental traffic calming measures as a first step to towards improving the situation. We are pleased that we have the County's attention and we will keep you updated as we learn more and as plans proceed.

Pedestrian and bike safety are neighborhood-wide issues. ESSCA will continue to monitor problems and work toward solutions that treat our streets as a connected.

### DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: 811 SLIGO AVENUE

We have heard that a buyer is interested in turning the former Ambassador Animal Hospital building next to the old police station on Sligo Avenue into a child daycare center. We understand they have been in conversations with County Planning Staff to review their plans and that the primary issue to be addressed first is accommodating vehicle arrival, queuing and drop off. County Planning Staff has asked that the prospective buyer conduct a traffic impact study, which is currently underway. As soon as we know more we will share it on the Listserve and in the newsletter.

### 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!

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#### 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!*