



SECTION THREE
VILLAGE OF
CHEVY CHASE

NEWS & VIEWS

JANUARY 2015

CALENDAR

ANY MONDAY ALL JANUARY
Curbside Christmas Tree pick-up

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

Council Meeting

CCUMC Room 107, 7:45 p.m.

Council will go into Executive Session to discuss the Village Manager's salary and performance.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Groundhog Day

**WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 11**

Council meeting

CCUMC Room 107,

7:45 p.m.

**SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 14**

Happy Valentine's Day



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COUNTY ACTIONS UPDATE

The 20-year Downtown Bethesda Master Plan is moving forward; a conceptual plan was presented to the County Planning Board in December. They hope to have a final plan ready to be assessed by the Planning Board in the spring. The plan will then go to the County Council for review and hearings.

While the downtown Bethesda area does not impinge directly on our community in the same way the Chevy Chase Lake plan did, there is concern again regarding both traffic density and also the adequacy of public facilities such as our schools to address the needs of the new residents who will be moving into the many high-rise condominiums that are planned. Our neighbors to the west, the Town of Chevy Chase, are particularly and understandably concerned about the "edges" of the new plan that about their single family homes. At the moment, there are plans for significantly higher buildings and much greater density in the area near the Farm Women's Market and its parking lot and the other parking lot behind the shops to the south. The plan envisions retaining the Farmer's Market as a "civic gathering hub." It's clear, however, that there will be little street parking and that most of us who shop and/or work in Bethesda will need to either plan to walk, bike or pay for underground parking.

An effort has been made to make the area more pedestrian and bike friendly, but the amount of open space mandated by the initial plan is minimal...very little new space in the heart of downtown. There are incentives for developers to provide more open space and tree canopy, and a "linear park" is proposed near an area that really cannot be easily developed due to the topography. Whether that will work is yet to be determined. The conceptual plan proposes making the Bethesda Metro a town center but plans to animate the space to bring people to it as a center aren't defined. For example, when there was an ice rink in the winter, the space drew many to that area, but now that it no longer exists, they haven't been able to even fill the space that once held a food court for area offices. The other "civic gathering centers" delineated in the plan include the space near Barnes and Noble (Bethesda Row), which even today is much more animated than the Bethesda Metro space, the Woodmont Triangle Veterans Park and the Farm Women's Market. It's not clear however, how much would be trees and grass and how much would be "hardscape" like the Woodmont Triangle Veterans Park which is a tiny space with a handful of planters for trees and shrubs.

The overall plan for the Downtown Bethesda Area is to build mixed use buildings, with retail on the ground floor and a combination of office and residential space above...what that balance will ultimately be cannot be determined in precise detail. The projection, over the next few years is another

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

**In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and our desire to have our meetings open to everyone in our community, Council meetings are held at the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church which has handicapped elevator access via the parking lot entrance. We are grateful to the Church for their generosity in allowing us to use their facility each month.*



COUNCIL ACTIONS

The Council met on Wednesday, December 10th at CCUMC, room 107. All Council members were present except **Melissa Brown** who was out of the country. The meeting began at 7:50 p.m.

PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Police were notified of a suspicious person sitting in his car with a camera and Illinois plates on Bradley Lane in early December. Similarly, a large unmarked moving van on another segment of Bradley Lane also required that police be called.

State Highway Administration personnel are studying the intersection of Taylor Street and Brookville Road to determine if there is any other way to make that area safer for pedestrians and make drivers more stop sign compliant.

BUILDINGS AND ROADS

The Council approved the concept of a one-year, temporary variance to allow the **Weller** family to build a temporary ice rink in their back yard eight foot into the rear setback. The Council agreed to direct legal counsel to draft the wording of the document which will:

1. Limit the variance from the time of issue in December to March 30th.
2. Make it clear that the drainage issues created by the rink must be contained on the Weller property.
3. The chillers needed to keep the ice cold will not be located within the setback.
4. The variance is issued for the December 2014 through March 2015 time period only.

The Council discussed legal options for abandoning a portion of the oversized right-of-way at Fulton and Taylor Streets so that the portion of the right-of-way located inside the fence owned by the **Scheck** family would become their property. As it stands now, the Village has liability for that portion of the property, has no need for a wide extra lane to turn from the no-outlet portion of Fulton Street onto Taylor Street and finds it in the public interest to eliminate our liability and minimally increase the tax revenues (approximately \$3.18 per year) that would accrue to the Village by abandoning this portion of the right-of-way. The Council's buildings and roads person will now discuss various options with the Schecks.

The Village Manager reported that she has identified a series of possible tripping hazards in sidewalks throughout the community. They have been marked and our contractor has been contacted

to do the work as soon as possible.

The "temporary" speed bump at Shepherd Street between Connecticut Avenue and Delaware Street is now fully repaired. Special stakes will be placed in the greenway this winter to identify the area of the bump on the greenway so that snow plows know its location. Last year, during heavy snows, the plows unwittingly pulled up about half of the rubber speed bump.

The last remaining street signs and stop signs are ready to be installed. The sub-contractor applying the powder coating to the poles had just completed his work. The combination stop/street signs will be installed at Shepherd Street and Connecticut Avenue, Taylor Street and Connecticut Avenue, Georgia Street and Bradley Lane and street signs will be installed at Fulton and Spring Streets as well. The only remaining signage needing improvement are the stop signs and the Village Manager hopes to find another vendor to handle them in the new year.

The Village Manager is working on a comparative chart of the cost of operating and maintaining Induction versus LED lighting for our new lighting scheme in Section 3. We hope to discuss this further with Pepco early in 2015.

The Council approved using Snow Central as our snow removal contractor for this winter.

The Council agreed to buy American Elm trees to be planted on residents' property at their request (see story this issue).

FINANCIAL REPORT

Income tax revenues statewide, particularly in Montgomery County, are down. The Village Manager reports that at this juncture, that doesn't seem to be true for Section 3, but we are likely to come closer to our budgeted amount of \$350,000 in revenues whereas in prior years we exceeded the budgeted amount. At this point, we seem on track to meet the budgeted goal. It is again uncertain as to the outcome of the discussions regarding tax duplication which are taking place between County officials and members of the local county chapter of the Maryland Municipal League.

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL

The Warm Clothing drive was a huge success with two carloads filled with clothing and warm blankets and quilts going to Martha's Table. A huge thanks to all who participated.

The book donations drive is moving slowly, we are hoping that families will remember to donate children's books during the holiday season. The deadline is December 30th for donations, so that if people get duplicate books, they can pass one on to this drive.

OTHER

The Council voted to update the website and shift to a different platform with the same web host. The Section 3 ordinances are now up on the web.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Welcome to **Ray and Karen Pate** and their son **Trip** who have moved into 3701 Taylor Street. Trip (13) goes to Bullis. The family previously lived in the Town of Chevy Chase so they are familiar with the neighborhood. They moved in just in time to watch the finishing touches on the **Afnan** home being built on the corner of Taylor and Florida Streets. Construction has been moving rapidly and the house is now completely under roof and enclosed so that they can begin the interior work. They hope to move in by late February or early March.

Many thanks to **Tom and Carolyn Wilson** for their thoughtful and beautiful Christmas decorations for our Gazebo Park... Every year they outdo themselves. The natural swags, the lighting, the decorative bows, really enhance the look of the very heart of our community. We cannot thank them enough.

Section 3 has become the hub of power for Chevy Chase at Home. Congratulations on all the new office holders: **Nathan Billig** of Florida Street is the new President, **Susan Hamburger** of Taylor Street is the new Vice President, and **Jan Augustine** of Spring Street (our own webmaster for Section 3) is the Treasurer! Many Section 3 residents are involved in this wonderful Chevy Chase nonprofit and take advantage of their many programs and benefits. If you haven't already signed up as a member or a volunteer, consider doing so. They can be reached at (301) 657-3115, or through their website at www.chevyCHASE@home.org.

TOWN ORDINANCES AVAILABLE ONLINE

Section 3 ordinances are now available on our website (www.chevyCHASEsection3.org) under the Governance tab. If you have any questions before you contemplate a building project, look under BUILDING INFORMATION for a précis of our rules and then Chapter 6 of the ordinances for more detailed information. Building permit application forms can also be pulled from the site.

PARTICIPATE IN THE RENAISSANCE OF THE GREAT AMERICAN ELM!

Almost every major town in America has an Elm Street in honor of the mighty elm tree which graced so many of our neighborhoods before the advent of Dutch Elm disease. The American Elm was ubiquitous. The disease took away many of these great shade trees and it has been years since we have even been have access to elm seedlings, the destruction was so complete. New cultivars that are resistant to both drought and Dutch elm disease have been introduced into the market recently and the Council has decided that we should expand our tree canopy by gracing it with the new American Elm.

In prior years, we have offered residents a series of free shade trees to be planted within four or fove feet of the public sidewalk in an effort to improve our tree canopy because our greenways are too narrow to support large shade trees. The last time we offered these trees, we had only seven takers as many of our front yards are already packed with trees and other vegetation. Those who did take advantage of the program which offered four different trees loved the two maple trees we offered so much that most planted maples, which are beautiful shade trees and gorgeous in the fall. The result is that we now have too many of the same type of tree, not enough bio-diversity. To resolve that problem and to encourage the growth of our tree canopy, the Council has decided this year to offer only the Princeton Elm tree to be planted anywhere on your property, as long as it gets about 50-60 percent sunlight. The trees won't be planted until this spring and will be guaranteed for a year, as long as you water them twice a week in the tube feeder we will supply at planting.

The Princeton Elm is vase-shaped and will grow to 60 feet at maturity. Because of its shape, it can be planted near bushes and undergrowth. The hole for the root ball that the nursery will dig will be about 36 inches in diameter. The trees we plant will be about 10-12 feet tall and will have about a two-inch diameter trunk. Once settled in, the trees will grow fast—one-and-a-half to two feet a year. So if you plant one, plan to photograph your children by the tree so you can document their growth and the growth of the tree!

In considering this tree, please be aware that ultimately, this is a shade tree, so you will be creating shade in one portion of your yard. We are excited to participate in the renaissance of American elm and hope that you will share our enthusiasm for this effort. If you are interested in having a tree planted in the spring, just email the Village Manager to be added to the list. Come spring you will receive a stake to indicate the center of the root ball. Contact the Village Manager with any questions.

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

We are fortunate that our local library through the Friends of the Library has such an active set of programs for toddlers through adults. On Friday, January 2 at 3:30 p.m., children in elementary school accompanied by an adult can participate in the Build and Learn with Legos program. The two-hour program will be repeated each Friday in January at same. No registration required.

Other programs at the library include a Great Books Group, a Non-Fiction Book Group, a Foreign Film Series, a Fiction Memoir and Biography Book Group, and a discussion group on articles of contemporary interest.

COUNTY COUNCIL LOOKS TO BAN INSECTICIDES FOR OUR LAWN

The County Council is now looking to expand their reach beyond the EPA regulations and Maryland State regulations regarding the use of pesticides. In proposed legislation (bill 52-14) the Council has proposed that we as homeowners can no longer use a wide range of pesticides to get rid of pesky weeds, grubs and lawn diseases. The Maryland state regulations requiring our landscape contractors to pass tests before being allowed to use or apply certain regulated pesticides apparently are not enough. They carved out an exception for golf courses with no explanation of the logic for the exception. If your child plays baseball, soccer,

VARIANCE REQUEST

The **Norton** family of 7101 Georgia Street has requested a variance for the roof of a bay window which will extend six feet into the 20-foot rear setback.

football or any other sport on parkland anywhere in the County, regardless of the owners, that nice turf you see now might no longer be quite so nice... but if you play golf, no worries.

It's difficult to imagine that the many lawn services we hire to maintain our lawns and gardens would be happy with this. It's also equally hard to imagine the big-box stores or our own local hardware stores would be happy with this. Three of the County Council members, including the current President George Leventhal, are from Takoma Park where there are small lawns, many apartments, and a ban on all pesticides.

Only two jurisdictions in the entire country have passed a far reaching plan: Takoma Park, Maryland and Ogunquit, Maine. The ban exceeds EPA guidelines and draws on legislation passed in Ontario, Canada and by the European Union. The public hearing on the bill is set for January 15th.

Take a look at this bill under the County Council's website and let us know what you think.

CHEVY CHASE AT HOME MATCHING DONATION YIELDS \$\$\$\$

Thanks to the generosity of many Section 3 residents and an anonymous "matching" donor, Chevy Chase At Home collected a total donation of \$6,450.00 during its recent local fundraiser. The organization sponsors regular brunch get-togethers at Olympia Café, Meet and Greet events on third Tuesdays at the Chevy Chase Village Hall and numerous thoughtful talks and activities. For more information, contact them at (301) 657-3115 or through their website at www.chevychaseathome.org.

CHILD CPR AND FIRST AID TRAINING

The Council is considering hiring a teacher to certify residents and their babysitters or nannies in Child CPR and First Aid. The classes would require a commitment of two long (3-4 hours) evening sessions, or about seven to eight hours total for the two-session course. If you are interested, please contact the Village Manager to see if we have enough individuals to bring an instructor. The cost to each applicant will depend on how many register for the class—the more students, the cheaper the class.

COUNTY ACTIONS UPDATE,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

5,300 households. The number of housing units already in the area, plus those in the pipeline now totals 10,400. Oddly, the planning staff uses dwelling unit figures for current residents but only “households” to be added in the future growth and no where is “household” defined. It could be an additional 15,000 additional residents over the twenty year period of this plan in the same area extending from Battery Lane and Wisconsin Ave all the way down to Wisconsin Avenue with Bradley Boulevard as the southern boundary.

The challenge, according to a presentation by the planning staff to the planning board is that the adjacent neighborhoods are heavy on “baby boomers” and the new, vital downtown Bethesda is made up largely (60 percent) today of people between the ages of 22 and 49, both renters and condo-owners. The tilt is understandably to satisfy the needs of the future generation without alienating the “baby boomers” who live on the edges. Unfortunately, the plan has yet to address a serious potential requirement for the Millennials and Gen Xers: more schools for their children.

The conceptual plan proposes to step back some tall buildings so that the higher portions of the building are set back farther from street level to avoid a “canyon” look to the new Bethesda. At the same time, however, they propose “signature” tall buildings as high as 290 feet and others at 250 feet and even a large number in the 70 to 120 foot range. How those two priorities mesh is hard to envision, particularly in view of the non-mandatory guidelines.

The smart growth movement promotes intensive live/work development at transportation nodes to promote more public ridership, carpools, bike and pedestrian connectivity, and the concepts of the plan all promote those very things. This can be seen in Silver Spring, Friendship Heights and most recently in White Flint or the new “Pike” neighborhood as its being re-branded.

The big questions continue to revolve around the scale of future development, the pressure it puts on neighboring communities with parking being at a premium, the potential impact on our school system and, of course, the traffic, which is already at nightmarish proportions. Open space does not necessarily mean lawns. Open space may be a “hardscaped” area with canopy trees in planters. Grassy parks and wide open spaces are not envisioned, rather, the highest and best uses seem to be build Bethesda taller and create “connectors” to the two existing large parks—Norwood Park and Battery Park.

The results of the traffic study have not yet been released, but it’s well known that Bus Rapid Transit lines are envisioned up Wisconsin Avenue and of course the Purple Line (currently in



HOLIDAY DONATIONS OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS GREAT SUCCESS

Generous Section 3 children donated 327 books to A Wider Circle for less fortunate children this holiday season! Special thanks to the **Hutson** family, the **Connor, Saifee, Stone, Mostofi, Purvis** and **Leggett** children for their generous donations.

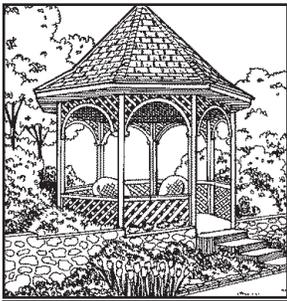
If you missed the deadline but would still like to donate gently used children's books, just drop them off with your name on the Section 3 Village Manager's porch and she will see that they get to A Wider Circle for you.

limbo due to the new Governor’s purported opposition to it along with serious budgetary concerns). There are thoughtful plans to extend some streets to help create viable grids in several neighborhoods, for example, to link the Battery Lane area and the Woodmont Triangle, to further develop the Pearl District (where the McDonalds used to be on East-West Highway near BCC High School), and South Bethesda, where Strathmore Lane might be extended. The plan has many moving parts and has been carefully thought through with input from a wide range of sources: property owners, neighbors, advocates for pedestrians, bikers, parks and open space, retail and business opportunities.

It’s going to be essential that Section 3 residents follow the development of this Bethesda Downtown Master Plan closely so that we can be certain that concerns to our neighbors are communicated to the planners. At the moment, the biggest concerns are height and densities, traffic and schools. The plan is thoughtful in concept and we urge you to review it yourself. There is a power point slide show of the entire concept which you can review at www.montgomeryplanning.org or just Google Bethesda Downtown Plan to get to the extensive information available online.



**SECTION 3 VILLAGE OF CHEVY
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**SECTION THREE
VILLAGE OF
CHEVY CHASE**

NEWS & VIEWS

JANUARY 2015



SNOW COMING?

PLEASE GET YOUR CARS OFF OUR STREETS AT THE SLIGHTEST POSSIBILITY OF SNOW OR ICE. OUR STREETS ARE NARROW, AND WE WANT TO GIVE YOU THE BEST CONDITION ROADWAYS POSSIBLE. IN ORDER TO DO THAT, STREETS MUST BE CLEAR!