



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL



Mayor's Den

By Walter Behr



Erosion Control Work Delayed, but Just a Bit

The Montgomery County erosion control work on Little Falls Branch just downstream (south) of the swimming pool bridge has

been delayed once again, but just a little bit. Following a preconstruction meeting of all involved parties this month, actual construction will begin in early January. Except for planting on creek banks when weather permits in late winter, all work must be completed by the end of February to qualify for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. (FEMA is paying because much of the erosion occurred as a result of a 100-year storm in June 2006.)

At Somerset's behest, the County got involved seven years ago to try to control erosion that was threatening the North Park Apartments.

Accessory Apartment Has New Owners

Somerset's only accessory apartment has new owners, Paul Chou and Karen Huang, and I welcome them to our Town. The property at 5523 Uppingham Street was owned and occupied for many years by Hilda Seibel, who has moved to Brighton Gardens in Friendship Heights. The new owners, with their young child, are living in the two-bedroom apartment in the lower level of the house while they refurbish the remainder of the structure.

At the Town Council meeting on November 5, several residents expressed concerns regarding the transfer of the accessory apartment due to problems

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Want Your Views on Renovating Town Facilities Known?

Then contribute to a special resident-written insert on facilities renovations to be included in the next Town Journal. Submit your written opinion – 750 words or less – to clerk@townofsomerset.com by Wednesday, January 16, 2008.

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they said they experienced arising from the prior operation of the apartment. On the basis of these statements, the Town Council voted to request the Montgomery County Board of Appeals to hold a hearing on the transfer application. Under the Board's procedures, the request to transfer was approved and then because the Town requested a hearing, the transfer was revoked and a hearing scheduled. At the Board's work session in conjunction with the transfer request, John Seibel, Hilda's son, noted that there was no record of anyone complaining to the County about the operation of the special exception.

On December 10, the Town Council met in closed session with Town Attorney Norman Knopf and voted unanimously to withdraw its request for a hearing. This Council vote came after Paul Chou and Karen Huang represented through Norman that they agreed to adhere to the conditions of the special exception and to operate it in a manner that would not adversely impact the neighbors. The Council decision does not affect the right of any individual to request a hearing.

Dog Fences and Penalties On January Agenda

New invisible fences for pet containment will have to be at least three feet from Town sidewalks and curbs, according to a proposed Town Code amendment scheduled for action by the Council at its January 7 meeting.

The purpose of the proposal is to protect pedestrians who might feel threatened if the invisible fence were closer than three feet from the sidewalk. Similarly, the three-foot space

Calendar

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Friday, December 28 | Leaf Pick-Up Ends |
| Monday, January 7 | Town Council Meeting |
| Wednesday, January 9 | J & J Christmas Tree Pick-Up |
| Wednesday, January 16 | Deadline for Special Journal Insert on Facilities Renovations |
| Thursday, January 17 | Journal deadline, Ads and Copy |
| Wednesday, January 23 | Public Meeting on Facilities Renovations |
| Monday, January 28 | Mobile MVA in Friendship Heights |
| Monday, February 4 | Town Council Meeting |

Don't forget to check the Town website throughout the month for an up-to-date calendar. Go to www.townofsomerset.com and click on "Town Calendar"

between an invisible fence and curb would permit automobile passengers to get into and out of their vehicles without intruding into the dog's space.

The same bill would increase the penalty for animal control violations from the present \$50 to \$100 for a first offense and from \$100 to \$300 for each repeat offense. This would apply not only to the location of the invisible fences, but also to permitting an unleashed dog to leave the owner's property.



Rain, Snow Curb Curb Work

Rain and snow have slowed down work on replacing damaged curbs and cracked sidewalks, but construction continues during decent weather and the \$125,000 project is two-thirds completed.

One street yet to be fixed is Dorset Avenue. Since it is our main street, I ask you to be especially careful to avoid injuring a worker or damaging your vehicle by striking rubble that has not yet been picked up. Work on Dorset will be limited to the period 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Once again, I suggest that you look at your driveway apron since many in Town are 50 to 70 years old and in need of replacement, which is the responsibility of the homeowner, not the Town. It's always a good idea to get several bids, but I suggest that one of these be from the curb contractor since he is already in Town with his men and equipment. The contractor is CRH, phone numbers 301-887-0353 or 301-343-7140 (cell).

A different contractor was lowest bidder for first-time curbs on Devon Lane, and that job has been completed. Devon is only 18 feet wide, four feet narrower than our other streets. The only other exception is Warwick Lane, the alley near Somerset School, between Cumberland and Drummond, which is also 18 feet wide.

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Wisconsin Avenue to Be Repaved

Wisconsin Avenue from Bradley Boulevard to the District Line at Western Avenue is first on the list for repaving next spring or summer, according to Wayne Mowdy, State Highway Administration (SHA) Assistant District Engineer. At our request, efforts will be made to eliminate puddling at Wisconsin and Cumberland and at the Wisconsin Avenue entrance to the Somerset House highrise development.

Mowdy is the SHA official who responded to our complaint of stormwater gushing down Wisconsin Avenue and over the curb below Cumberland, causing serious damage to landscaping in Capello Park. He and others at SHA designed and built a new sidewalk and curb on the park side of the sidewalk, which prevents further flooding of our park.

Also, Mowdy was in charge of the team that discovered the reason that stormwater bypassed the Wisconsin Avenue inlet near Drummond and flooded Capello Park. The drain from the inlet, which runs under Wisconsin Avenue and ends on Chevy Chase Club property, had been cemented closed. SHA and Chevy Chase Club are in their third year of negotiations on how to resolve the problem without doing serious damage to the golf course.

Town Income Looks Good

In recent years, two-thirds to three-quarters of Town income has come from rebates from the State of a portion of Maryland income tax – including the County “piggyback”

tax – paid by Somerset residents. The Comptroller has just sent us totals of individual income tax returns filed for calendar year 2006 by Town residents. The Town never receives individual income or income tax information.

Net taxable income for 2006 was \$121.5 million, up 2.1 percent from the 2005 total of \$118.9 million. The \$121.5 million divided by our 413 houses means that the average taxable income per family in 2006 was \$294,000.

Longtime Residents Ann Darr and Jesse Weinstein Die

Two prominent former residents of Somerset have died recently, Ann Darr, 87, a poet and Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) during World War II, died of Alzheimer's disease in Chicago on December 2. Architect Jesse Weinstein, 88, who designed the Irene and Highland House apartments, Chevy Chase Office Building and the contemporary house at 4716 Essex where he lived, died on November 17 in Washington of heart disease.

Ann Darr, with her psychiatrist husband, George, and three daughters, lived at 4902 Falstone. Between 1942 and 1944 she flew many kinds of aircraft in simulated strafing and bombing missions, searchlight tracking and mountain mapping. She flew a plane with wind-damaged wings from California to Texas for repair. She flew B-26s towing targets near Las Vegas while gunners in B-17s fired live ammunition at the sleeve she towed. It was “aerial dishwasher,” as the WASPs called it, the mundane but necessary tasks to keep the Air Force flying.

In the mid-1950s, she began focusing on her poetry. “The poems I write and read help me handle the feelings that would otherwise shred me,” she told an interviewer. She taught at American University and the Writer's Center in Bethesda and authored nine books.

Jesse Weinstein served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Army Air Force in the Pacific during World War II. He helped design the long airstrip from which the Enola Gay took off to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

In Somerset, Jesse served two terms on the Town Council. His wife of 56 years, Eleanor, who died in 2002, was also active in Town affairs, among other things, designing the swimming pool landscaping. Survivors include Sarah, Amy and Alan Weinstein.



Permits Granted



The following permit was issued by the Mayor during the past month. (Building permits are approved by the Town Council.)

Trees:

Claire Cushman, 4717 Essex Avenue, to remove a dying juniper in her front yard.

Peter Dewees and Ritva Reinikka, 5801 Warwick Place, to remove a large, twin-trunk tulip poplar in their front yard because of an extensive decay seam.

Brian Graham and Torie Clarke, 4728 Dorset Avenue, to remove a large, dying red oak in their east side yard.

Fences:

Jim Boughton and Lesley Simmons, 4723 Cumberland Avenue, to replace a six-foot high fence surrounding their back yard.



Town Hall and Pool Renovation Update and Explanation of Journal Inserts

By Council Member Tom Eldridge

Inserts in this Journal mailing are intended to stimulate discussion and debate on an important topic: the future of Somerset's Pool and Town Hall. The next public Meeting on this topic will be held on January 23, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall and all residents are urged to attend. While no date has been set for final decision on facilities issues, the Council could vote in February or March. Residents are urged to attend the January meeting and also to submit written opinions in response to the materials provided in this Journal for inclusion in a special Resident Opinion insert to the January Town Journal (which residents should receive on or about January 28). Please submit your views of no more than 750 words to clerk@townofsomerset.com by Wednesday, January 16, 2008.

Background

In September the Council voted to hire Balodemas Architects to help the Town to establish the scope of renovations, including a detailed set of requirements for the pool house and Town Hall. The goal is to determine what kind of spaces and functions the Town wants at each site, and to define criteria of a nature and detail that can be used later by an architect to prepare the construction drawings. Lou Balodemas, principal of the firm,

has worked with the Town since September facilitating and coordinating the process.

Balodemas Architects have developed an evolving set of draft facility criteria (available as an insert to this Town Journal and on the Town website) based on input from Town officials and employees, committees and individuals involved with the facilities, our pool contractor, and participants at Town Meetings held on October 29, November 13 and 26, and December 10, 2007. Participants at the November 26 meeting agreed it would be helpful for Balodemas Architects to develop cost estimates and basic drawings for the draft criteria that had been discussed.

This was done with full recognition that the community had not reached consensus on precisely what should be done at either site, and with a number of significant issues still unresolved. We emphasize that these documents are preliminary drafts not approved by the Council. They are not "designs" but merely illustrate the requirements for the spaces that have been suggested to meet the Town's needs for the next 50 years. But, for example, some residents expressed concern that the Town Hall should not be enlarged because of possible negative impacts on neighbors. Others said the Town Hall should be enlarged somewhat to accommodate current administrative functions and event use by residents. Residents have also differed in their views of how much to develop the pool. Some favored keeping the pool as a seasonal facility and some advocated locating new facilities there, including a large meeting or assembly space that would be available for year-round

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use. Despite these outstanding decisions, the Council felt that cost estimates and schematic drawings would aid the discussion planned for the December 10 meeting.

Criteria, Cost Estimates, and Drawings Enclosed

The Council is grateful to Lou and his firm for bringing to life what we have been discussing in an abstract way for a number of months in the estimates and schematic drawings he prepared for the December 10 discussion, which are enclosed with this Town Journal. The Council felt these materials should be made available to all residents for their consideration and to encourage input prior to the next meeting.

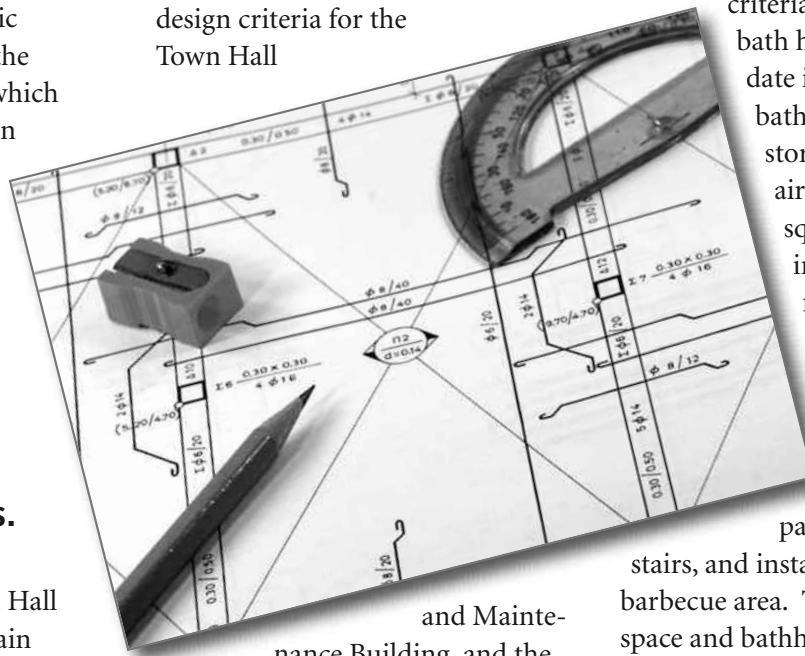
The insert covers three related issues.

(i) Draft Facility Design Criteria for both the Town Hall and pool sites, which contain criteria developed over the course of several years and with new input from the four recent public Town Meetings. The document presents broad requirements about which there is a general consensus (such as a desire to build facilities with a 50-year life cycle, to do so in a manner representative of the Town's environmental stewardship of the water resources, flood plains, trees, and other natural resources, to make the facilities fully accessible, to plan for possible future expansion, and to avoid possible adverse impacts on adjacent residents) and consensus requirements specific to each site,

as well as optional requirements proposed for each site.

(ii) Preliminary draft space requirements, with square footage and cost estimates associated with developing those spaces identified as consensus requirements for the Town Hall and Pool sites.

(iii) Site plans of the Town Hall, Town Maintenance Building, and Pool sites. These depict the existing locations and layout of the facilities, the location and layout of a facility that would meet the draft consensus design criteria for the Town Hall



and Maintenance Building, and the locations of buildings at the pool site that would meet the draft design criteria there as well. (Balodemas Architects were not able to develop a more detailed floor plan for the pool site because of the limited time between meetings.)

The draft site and floor plans illustrate that the draft criteria could, in the case of the Town Hall, enlarge the meeting room the equivalent of ten feet on one side (adding 250 square feet for a total of 875 square feet), add a lounge space for spillover from that room, and increase the administrative space

for the Town government and administrative functions. We emphasize that no final decision has been made on the draft criteria or the ultimate size of these Town Hall improvements. And while some residents have expressed approval of the criteria reflected in these plans, some remain concerned about the potential negative impact on neighbors from enlarging the meeting room and the need for larger spaces there.

In the case of the pool, the criteria would enlarge the bath house to accommodate increased space for bathrooms, office and storage, create an open air shelter of 1400 square feet for safety in a thunderstorm, move the baby pool and locate it on the same level as the current pool deck, double the width of the upper patio area and add

stairs, and install a kitchenette and barbecue area. The large shelter space and bathhouse could be turned into a year-round facility at a later date. Please be aware these criteria are preliminary ideas for discussion. Some residents have said they favor exploring the possibility of locating more facilities at the pool that could be used on a year-round basis.

Funding the Projects

The costs associated with developing the sites to meet the draft design criteria reflected in these drawings are significant. Balodemas architects estimate the costs of developing the

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sites in accordance with these draft criteria at approximately \$3 million for the pool and \$2 million for the Town Hall.

There undoubtedly will be surprise and concern among some residents related to these cost estimates. Please understand that they are initial estimates that we asked for to help us assign priority to particular spaces and options at these facilities.

No final decisions have been made on the criteria for these sites, so these may or may not reflect the ultimate cost to improve the sites. Estimates are included here in part to learn from residents whether they find them appropriate for the amenities they would receive in return. Residents should not conclude from these estimates that Somerset would need to raise taxes or otherwise raise revenue. In fact, once we more concretely establish the design criteria, we plan to develop a detailed financing plan to ensure we can pay for improvements to these facilities in a long-term and sustainable manner, as well as our other commitments such as road paving, without raising taxes.

Should additional funding be sought to continue the Planning Process?

At the regular January Council meeting, the Council will take up the question of how much additional facilitation work the Town wants Balodemas Architects to perform under the contract prior to preparing final design criteria. Lou and his firm have done excellent work thus far and at the December 10 meeting, some residents suggested that the architects should prepare drawings reflecting less square footage in meeting space at the Town Hall and alternatives that included year-round use at the pool site.

The January 23 public meeting was initially planned to be the final of five meetings facilitated by Balodemas architects; and, drawings were not originally intended to be part of that phase of the process. Therefore, the Council will decide at its regular January meeting whether to spend more money for Lou to prepare more drawings of the sites for the January 23 public meeting. The additional expense could be up to \$14,000. Residents' views on whether this is needed will be welcome, please write council@townofsomerset.com and let us know.

A Seasonal or Year-round Pool Facility?

By Council Members Tom Eldridge, Rick Kessler and Lesley Simmons

In October 2006, the Town Council voted not to pursue the option of year-round facilities at the pool. We are three of the four Council Members who voted at that time to keep the pool as a seasonal use facility. Why? We think

the pool works well as a seasonal community amenity for 5 months of the year when people enjoy spending time out of doors.

We also remain extremely concerned about: (i) the impact of a year-round facility on the fragile environment at the pool, (ii) whether there is genuine demand among Town residents for such a facility, (iii) the cost to build and maintain a year-round facility at the pool site, and (iv) the time and expense that likely would be involved in the planning process, among other factors.

The pool is located in a stream valley buffer. In our opinion an effort to change materially the nature and scope of activity from its originally-approved purpose could involve lengthy litigation with the County and neighbors, while delaying desperately needed repairs to the facility. Both the Town Hall and pool are in urgent need of repair and improvement.

Meanwhile, we have options before us that are less costly, and that would substantially enhance amenities at both the pool and Town Hall locations. These options do not involve the same risks and attendant costs. They also would build in the option of allowing the Town to pursue increased amenities at the pool in the future – if there was sufficient demand and funding.

We do not believe it is in the Town's interest to pursue time-consuming, risky, and costly options unless they are broadly supported by residents. We would like residents' input. Please be part of the process and let the Council know your views by writing council@townofsomerset.com





On My Mind

By Council member Jeffrey Slavin

Various plans and ideas for the restoration and/or upgrading of the facilities at Town Hall and Pool House sites have been floating around here for many years now, to great debate. This public discussion has taken place longer than the slots issue has dominated the agenda of the Maryland General Assembly in recent years. Some felt this created a major impasse to the Assembly's work. Consequently, last month the Assembly "punted" and has passed over the future of slots to the voters in the form of a referendum.

Some residents have suggested the same course for us in order to finalize some of the basic design and use for our two public facilities. I have kept an open mind about this possibility.

However, now that our architect/planner has produced baseline concepts for both buildings, I would suggest we try a different process first.

We have drawings, which compile the major concepts that the various factions of the Town are advocating. Residents are now taking positions everywhere on the spectrum. There are major and minor decisions for the Council to make, all subject to approval by the County's land use authorities.

So, I think we need to continue to educate ourselves, especially about the possibility of a "year round" room at the pool, how to incorporate strong use restrictions to protect neighbors from added traffic, parking and noise at both sites, how we might add two lap lanes and whether we really need to expand the footprint at the Town Hall. Then we must bring all the stakeholders to the proverbial table and try to come up with a compromise plan that would be best for the vast majority of residents.

But no one will be able to get everything they want.

Residents' Letters



Renovating Town Facilities

From Harry Rand (Greystone)

There is a strong possibility that our national economy may shortly experience recession-like conditions, beginning with a more severe housing market and moving outward into the rest of the financial terrain. Some think this process has begun and its fullest effect is only being retarded by monetary policy. Even if housing prices decline steeply,

the near-term effect on Somerset's governance will be slight. The Town derives its funds from income tax, which, thanks to the socio-economics of the vicinity, somewhat insulates us from dramatic fluctuations and economic whiplash. Other local services such as education are funded from real estate assessments and may suffer. We may not feel so comfortable with up-graded Town luxuries when schools and other essential services are suffering. I suggest that whatever up-grades are recommended for the pool and Town Hall, we wait to implement the plans and that utmost caution be exercised in entertaining ourselves in a treacherous economic time.

Crime and Police Report



By Council member, Lesley Simmons

Crime Report

No crimes were reported in Somerset for the month of November. However, a home in the 4700 block of Drummond Avenue was broken into between November 17 and 29. No one was living in the home at the time.

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Town Hall Tidbits | By Tom Carter



HOLIDAY GREETINGS from the staff at Town Hall – Tom Carter, Corrie Morsey, Sharon Mitchell,

Enrique Cabrera, Angel Alba and Tomas Villanueva.

Christmas Tree Disposal

Christmas trees will be picked up by J&J on Wednesday, January 9. This is the only day for pickup this year. J&J will make only one pass through Town that day, so be sure to have your tree at the curb no later than 7:00 a.m. Trees must be free of tinsel, lights and ornaments, removed from any bases or stands, and not in plastic bags.



Sidewalk Clearing

Residents are reminded that our contractor will only clear Town sidewalks after a 2-inch accumulation of snow occurs. Residents are responsible for clearing accumulations of less than two inches and sanding for ice.

Leaf Season Ends

If the weather cooperates, we expect to end leaf collection season on December 28. We will, however, pick up any leaves that are raked to the curb by this date, even if we don't get to them until after January 1. In the spring, we will reseed any areas of grass that may have died from the piles of leaves before they were picked up.

The way to get rid of any remaining leaves is to put them in your mulch pile or at the curb on Tuesdays in paper bags or reusable containers.

Found

A black stocking cap was left in the Town Hall after the meeting with our architect on December 10. If you think it is yours, please call Tom at 301-657-3211.

Broadcast E-mails Bounce Back to Town Office

When sending Town broadcast e-mails we receive several returns, sometimes from full accounts, but more often from bad addresses. In checking these, we have discovered residents who have changed their e-mail addresses and not informed us. Our policy is to delete these bad addresses.

Please remember to notify the Town Hall if you change e-mail addresses so you will continue to receive these informational and emergency e-mails.

Last Chance for 2008 Calendars

2008 League of Women Voters calendars are available at the Town Hall for \$7, or call Nancy Soreng at 301-986-1916.

MVA Mobile Office

The MVA's mobile office will be in Friendship Heights on Monday, January 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Crime and Police Report from page 7

Entry was gained through a rear window by removing a window air conditioning unit after punching a hole in a rear screen patio door. Personal property was taken. There were no witnesses. No neighbors saw or heard anything.

Police Report

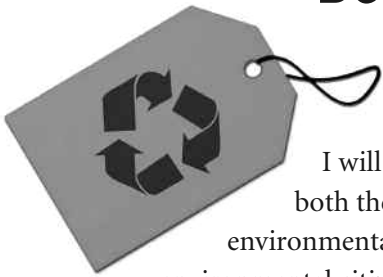
During November our part time police officer, Sherif Almiggabber, issued ten failure to stop at STOP sign citations in Somerset, five of them to Somerset residents. In addition, nine, failure to stop at STOP sign warnings were given. He issued seventeen parking citations, fifteen for parking in NO PARKING AT ANY TIME zones and 2 for vehicles parked in fire lanes. Two warnings were given for vehicles parked in areas marked NO PARKING AT ANY TIME and two for vehicles parked in a fire lane. In addition, 2 registration citations and 2 registration warnings were given.

One morning the traffic light at Wisconsin and Dorset Avenue malfunctioned and traffic was backed up to Deal Place. Officer Almiggabber was on duty in Somerset and was able to report the problem and meanwhile direct traffic.

In light of the positive feedback that Council Members have had about the work that Police Officer Sherif Almiggabber has performed in recent months, the Council voted to extend his contract for another month at the December meeting and to consider, at the January meeting, to extend his contract until the end of the fiscal year. Residents who have views on the issue are invited to write the Mayor and town council at mayortowncouncil@townofsomerset.com

Helping Somerset Become More Green

By Council Member Marnie Shaul



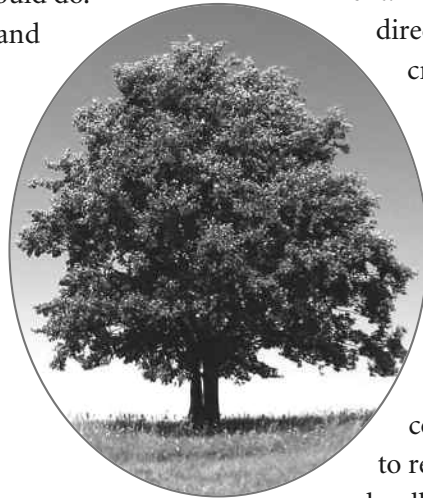
At the Town Council's January meeting, I will introduce a resolution to help Somerset – both the Town and all its residents – enhance its environmental stewardship. We already try to be good environmental citizens: our Town has made taking care of trees a priority for many years, and we've tried to restore our creek (with partial success). But we haven't looked at our environmental footprint systematically, and there is much more we could do. For example, we could do more to protect the stream and manage stormwater runoff to reduce pollution and erosion.

Last month I wrote about a new effort to create a watershed group for our area that Sarah Morse has volunteered to lead. The group's work can make an important contribution, but it will need citizen support. Other municipalities, including some close neighbors, are taking steps to reduce their contribution to global warming, and we could certainly join them. There are many potential opportunities to be better stewards if we take a good look at ourselves.

I want Somerset to have a committee to advise the council about actions the Town and individual residents could undertake to be good environmental stewards. There is already a core of people who would like to be part of this effort and serve on the committee including environmentalists and some current members of our Parks and Natural Resources Committee. Others might volunteer, too. As I see it, the committee would be asked first to review the proposed requirements lists for our two facilities and make recommendations for improvements at the next public meeting on the



Town Hall and pool site. (At our public meetings, residents have said Somerset should be a leader in protecting the environment, so we want to



be sure that whatever we build supports this.)

Early in the New Year, it would be helpful for the council and the committee to sponsor a forum to discuss environmental issues. This forum could lead to a proposed environmental policy statement for Somerset – which the council could consider adopting – and a draft statement of work for an overall assessment of Somerset's environ-

ment. Because of the Town's direct impact on the creek, I believe that the assessment should especially focus on major contributors to stormwater runoff. An assessment could help us make cost-effective decisions about street and gutter construction, identify ways to reduce the amount of silt and pollutants that drain directly to the creek, identify where rain gardens on Town property might best reduce runoff, and suggest how to reduce impervious surface. It could also identify individual actions that will have the greatest impact on arresting water pollution and steps that residents could take to reduce their impact.

Stormwater is not our only issue, of course. Over time, I would look to this committee to educate all of us about how we affect the environment and steps we can undertake to make a difference.



Classified Ads



Services

PIANO & FLUTE LESSONS (with **THEORY**). Cecelia Porter, Ph.D., musicologist. Washington Post music critic. 301-654-2165.

ACADEMIC TUTOR. 20 years experience teaching all ages, subjects. Math through Algebra II. Reading comprehension and writing. Test preparation, organizational/study skills. M.A. in Biology and Special Ed. Call Sheryl Gilbert, 301-656-1753.

OUR CLEANING WOMAN is looking for work and we highly recommend her. Call Bob Siegel at 301-961-9076.

Wanted

DRIVER. Somerset family seeks a friendly, responsible person with excellent driving record to drive our son, in our car, back and forth to swimming practice twice a week at Holton Arms School. Must be available Tuesday/Thursday, 5:30-7:30 p.m.; \$60 per week. Please call 301-907-0069.

Miscellaneous

SOMERSET HOME FOR RENT. 4 bedroom, 3 full bath, sunroom, carport. Available now: \$3,800/month. Call Georganne, 304-763-4287 (H) or 304-673-0332.

ART. Florence Gang's unique abstract paintings are now attractively priced. Works on canvas and paper, framed and unframed. Various sizes. A rare opportunity to buy for yourself or for that last minute gift. Call for appointment at 301-656-3430.

Ads are printed as a courtesy to Town residents. The Town makes no representations as to quality, safety or otherwise regarding the goods and services advertised. Readers should make their own inquiries. To place an ad, submit typed or neatly printed copy to the Clerk-Treasurer. Ads must include a Somerset phone number.

Price: \$5 per advertisement per issue. Check or exact change. 50-word limit per advertisement.



When You Need a Helping Hand

If you become sick or have an accident, or for some reason need a little help, call on Somerset's Helping Hand volunteers who can run an errand, give you a ride to a doctor's appointment or otherwise help out in an emergency.

Call Zola Schneider at: 301 654-7481 or 301 654-5889.

Legislation

At the December 3 meeting, the Council:

Introduced legislation to require invisible fences for pet containment to be installed at least three feet from Town sidewalks and curbs and increase penalties for violation of animal control requirements from \$50 to \$100 for a first offense and from \$100 to \$300 for each repeat offense.



Council Activity

At the December 3 meeting, the Town Council:

1. Confirmed the Mayor's appointment of John Sullivan and reappointment of Bonnie Thomson for three-year terms on Board of Supervisors of Elections, terms to expire December 31, 2010.
2. Set dates for election of Mayor and two Council members for two-year terms – Monday, March 3, for nominations and Tuesday, April 1, for elections, with polling hours from 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. on election day.
3. Discussed the possibility of closing Cumberland Avenue on Halloween. Will continue discussion at a later meeting after an article is placed in the Town Journal.
4. Set the annual household tennis fee for 2008 at \$5.
5. Discussed the Swimming Pool Committee's proposed budget for the 2008 season.
6. Extended the contract of the off-duty policeman through December. Further extension will be considered for action at the Council's January meeting.
7. Discussed establishing a group to look at environmental issues in Town. Action on this issue will be considered at the January Council meeting.

Preliminary Agenda

Regular Meeting of Town Council

Monday, January 7, 2008 – 7:30 p.m.

1. Report of closed session of Town Council on Monday, December 10, in the Town Hall pursuant to Section 10-508(7) of State government Article of the Maryland Code Annotated to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice regarding special exceptions – 7:30 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes of December 3 regular meeting and December 10 closed session – 7:35 p.m.
3. Discussion of financial report – 7:40.
4. Action authorizing payment of \$100 annual dues to Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights for 2008 – 7:45 p.m.
5. Confirmation of Mayor's appointment of Ilene Heller and reappointment of Joan Weiss to three-year terms on the History Committee – 7:50 p.m.
6. Fact finding hearing and action on application by Steven Guttentag and Stacy Winick, 5608 Warwick Place, to add a screened porch to the back of their house – 7:55 p.m.
7. Mayor's report – 8:05 p.m.
8. Developments/plans in the vicinity of Somerset – 8:15 p.m.
9. Suggestions and questions from residents – 8:25 p.m.
10. Action on Swimming Pool Committee's recommendation of management company for 2008 season – 8:35 p.m.
11. Discussion of 2007 swimming pool financial report – 8:55 p.m.
12. **Action on hiring off-duty police from February 1 to June 30, 2008 – 9:00 p.m.
13. **Resolution to form working group to provide advice to the Council on developing environmental policies for the Town – 9:05 p.m.
14. **Action on Town code amendment to require invisible fences for pet containment to be installed at least three feet from town sidewalks and curbs and increase penalties for violation of animal control requirements from \$50 to \$100 for a first offense and from \$100 to \$300 for each repeat offense – 9:15 p.m.
15. Action on application by Sandy Spring Builders to revise plan for garage/studio at 4520 Dorset Avenue – 9:20 p.m.
16. Action to extend building permit issued to Tom Dimond and Joan Ebzery for new house and garage at 4914 Dorset Avenue for six months – 9:30 p.m.
17. Action on contract to paint Town Hall in spring – 9:35 p.m.
18. **Action authorizing up to \$14,000 to Balodemas Architects for work not covered in original contract for facilities renovation planning. 9:45 p.m.
18. New business – 10:00 p.m.
19. Adjournment – 10:05 p.m.

This is a preliminary agenda prepared to meet the Journal press deadline, which typically is two weeks prior to the next Town Council meeting. During this period there will likely be changes to the timing of items, and some items may be added or deleted. Please consult the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch or the Town web site for the most up-to-date agenda.

Residents who wish to be present for a particular agenda item are advised to arrive 15 minutes ahead of the item's scheduled discussion time as discussion sometimes run ahead of schedule.

Items marked ** have related articles inside this issue of the Town Journal.

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The **Town Journal** is the official publication of
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