



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL



Volume 51, No. 7

January 19, 2007

In This Issue

Mayor's Den	1-3
Verizon Begins Installation of FIOS While Council Considers Proposed Code Changes.....	3
Town Street Tree Removal Should be Discouraged	3-4
Historic District Signs to be Installed	4
Town Hall Tidbits	4-5
Permits Granted	5
Legislation	5
Council Activity.....	5-6
Residents' Letters.....	6
2006: The Year in Review	6-7
On My Mind	7
Obituary – Ted Cron Dies at 76.....	8
Year-round Swimming and Exercise Opportunities	8
Job Opportunities with Census Bureau	8
County News	
Published Works by Local Authors Sought by Gaithersburg Library.....	9
Citizens Advisory Board Vacancies	9
Calendar.....	9
Somerset Life	
All About People	9-10
Classifieds	10
I-Neighbors Web site.....	11
Town Council Meeting Agenda.....	12



Mayor's Den

by Walter J. Behr

Trailer Unnecessary After All

The contractor has started to restore the stone foundation of the Town Hall, and I am pleased to report that the office will remain open – no need to retreat to a trailer, after all. Town Council meetings will continue to be held in the Town Hall meeting room, although the outside ramp to the space will be dismantled.

Work on the \$126,000 project is scheduled to be completed by early May. Thomas E. Page, operating as Select Contractors, assures us that there will be access to the building through the front door at all times.

Charettes with our architects to refine plans for the bathhouse and Town Hall will be held in Somerset School. Please see the following article.

All-Important Charettes: What, Where, When?

The next critical step in the process of deciding how to improve the swimming pool and Town Hall will be three charettes to be held in the all-purpose room of Somerset School on Monday, February 12; Monday, March 12; and Monday March 26. Sessions will begin at 7:30 p.m. and end at 9:30.

What are charettes anyway? They are public meetings with architects to help the community:

- Understand the design and construction process;
- Perceive clearly the project constraints established by external sources such as existing conditions, jurisdictional processes, codes, laws and other limiting factors;
- Establish community values and exceptions;
- Develop functional and programmatic requirements;
- Set budgets and schedules;
- Generate public support.

Charettes are not “design by committee.” When managed effectively, they lead to better and more responsive planning and design and to significantly greater community buy-in. Budgets are also better understood through this process and help everyone focus their efforts on the highest priority options.

Options to be Considered in the Charettes

POOL SITE (seasonal use only)

- Renovate or rebuild the existing pool house facility within its existing footprint resulting in improved circulation to accommodate strollers in the changing rooms; increased staff space; and additional or improved storage, trash and vending space.

- Build a rain shelter to protect 200 swimmers, either attached to the pool house or somewhere else on or near the pool deck.
- Provide new amenities for the baby pool, including heating the pool and adding a shade trellis, a water feature and, if possible, a ramp to the main pool deck.
- Remove or replace the wooden deck on the west side of the pool, widen and improve the upper walkway to the picnic area and make other improvements to the pool site as necessary.
- Possibly provide an exercise room in the pool house facility.

TOWN HALL SITE (year-round use)

- Renovate and make more useable the existing house portion of Town Hall.
- Possibly replace the meeting room, kitchen and unisex bathroom with a new, at-grade and fully accessible community room, kitchen and men's and women's bathrooms.
- Possibly add an exercise room, reading room or other amenities.
- Possibly add an indoor lap pool facility.

Life in Somerset Depends Upon Committees

The Town Council makes lots of decisions - some easy and some very difficult - but Somerset could not function without its 11 committees, two of which will have vacancies as of March 5. Special Events has seven members, with four terms expiring. Batting Cage consists of five members, two of whose terms are about to end.

If you would like to be considered for either group, please submit a brief statement of your interest and background to the Town Hall by Tuesday, February 13. The Town Council will act on my appointments on March 5.

Three of the four members of the Special Events Committee whose terms are about to end have indicated they will apply for another two-year term, Alan Dock, Bonnie Lewin and Sarah Morse. Richard Furcolo and Chris Lane are the Batting Cage members whose terms are expiring. Both have said they will not reapply.

Questions about the responsibilities should be addressed to the committee chairs, Phyllis Wiesenfelder of Special Events and Richard Furcolo, Batting. Cage. If you prefer, feel free to call me.

Frosh Leads Effort to Help Consumers

Somerset's State Senator Brian Frosh is sponsor of a bill that, if enacted, will give municipalities throughout Maryland authority to negotiate with electric utility companies for lower rates that would apply to all residents unless the residents decide to opt out. Brian chairs the important Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

The municipal opt-out electrical aggregation bill is one of two top priority bills for this year's General Assembly which the Maryland Municipal League is spearheading. The other bill - described in last month's Town Journal - would allow local governments to purchase their streetlights from utility companies and maintain the lights. This could save taxpayer dollars by installing more efficient equipment and could also enhance reliability.

Current law forbids local governments from serving as aggregators of electric power for their residents unless the Public Service Commission determines that there is no competition in the residential market. If Brian's effort is successful, Somerset alone or teamed with other towns will be empowered to negotiate for lower than standard electric power rates that would cover all residents, but give the residents the authority to "opt out" of the arrangement.

Accident or Vandalism?

It is disappointing to report that a new car parked on Cumberland Avenue overnight recently was scratched from end to end. There is no way to know if the damage was done maliciously or accidentally, but obviously cars are safer if parked off the street. And, wherever they are parked, please be sure to lock them.

B-CC Among Top Public High Schools

Our neighborhood high school, Bethesda-Chevy Chase, ranks 34th among public high schools in the country, according to the May 8, 2006, issue of Newsweek magazine. The ranking is based on the number of Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) tests taken by students at a school, divided by the number of graduating seniors. According to the magazine, the list "recognizes schools that do the best job of preparing average students for college."

Did you know? -

- The class of 2006 had a graduation rate of 98.9 percent;
- 75 percent of the class went to four-year colleges, 20 percent to two-year colleges;

- Among County public schools, B-CC has the highest percentage of students enrolled in at least one honors course (92 percent);
- B-CC remains one of the most ethnically and economically diverse schools in the County, 61.6% white, 15.8% black; 15.4% Hispanic, 7.0% Asian and 0.2% American Indian;
- Enrollment has increased from 1061 ten years ago to 1690 today;
- The school chess team is the reigning State champion.

Verizon Begins Installation of FIOS While Council Considers Proposed Code Changes

by Alan Proctor, (Cumberland)

The Mayor learned on Thursday, January 18, that Verizon began installing new FIOS fiber optic telecommunications system in Town rights-of-way. This is in apparent violation of Town ordinance Section 7-101, which states: "No utility line shall be constructed or installed in or through Town-owned land without first submitting an application for, and receiving approval of, a permit from the Town Council." Verizon has not applied for or received approval for this work.

Verizon is aware of the Town Code requirements, which have been in place for many years and the changes to which have been discussed with Verizon representatives several times over the past few months. The Council has been considering the topic, and discussion and possible introduction of proposed changes are on the agenda for the February Council meeting. As much as any of us may welcome the arrival of Verizon's new capabilities and services, and the competition they may engender, there is no excuse for violating the Town's perfectly reasonable permit requirements.

The Mayor, Council members Slavin and Simmons, and I met in late November with representatives from Verizon, Comcast, Pepco and WSSC to review proposed changes to section 7-101 of the Town Code and to obtain their feedback. The companies raised several issues and made some reasonable suggestions for improvements in the proposed legislation, which, with one exception, I have reflected in revisions to the proposed Code change.

One notable area of disagreement was raised by Verizon. That was the provision that in the event that a utility seeks to install additional wires in Somerset, the Town would require either: (i) the utility install the new wires underground (as required for more than 40 years by Maryland law of all utilities in new subdivisions, and

as the Village of Chevy Chase is now contemplating in its neighborhood); or (ii) while Somerset overhead utility wires utilities remain, utilities installing yet move overhead wires agree that in the event the Town eventually converts to underground wired utilities, the utility will bear the cost of undergrounding the newly installed wires.

Based on our discussion with Verizon, I plan to modify further the Code language and recommend to the Council that the Town provide for possible cost sharing for conversion of new wires from overhead to underground location. This would be specifically to protect a utility from the unlikely possibility of installing overhead wires today, and being required shortly thereafter to make additional investment to move them underground. The Town would share costs on a proportional basis if a conversion to underground installation were made within a short period of time, say 5 years, after initial installation.

These proposed changes will be discussed and possibly introduced at the February Council meeting.

It remains to be seen what Verizon is presently doing and why. But based on what I know now, I will recommend that the Council introduce and adopt changes to the Code as discussed here and in the October Journal, and that essentially similar requirements be attached to any permit that may be issued to Verizon should it seek to proceed before the proposed code change becomes effective. Verizon is on notice of the proposed changes and the Town clearly has the authority to impose such requirements under existing Town Code Section 7-101, which concludes that should the Town Council decide to issue a permit, "The Town may impose any additional requirements it deems necessary to maintain the integrity of the land affected and the health, safety and welfare of its residents."

Editors Note: The Mayor adds that: Later on Thursday and again on Friday, Verizon apologized for installing fiber optic cable in Somerset without authorization. They promised "It won't happen again." They will submit an application in letter form for the Council to consider at its February meeting.

Town Street Tree Removal Should be Discouraged

by Council member Lesley Simmons

A permit to remove a Town street tree was granted at the last meeting of the Town Council, the second in



the last few months. The action was required because an architect had designed a new house using a different location for the curb cut than the existing one. To have denied the tree removal permit would have required that the

home owners go back to their architects to redesign the building at expensive monetary and time costs. This Council member was not happy to have to approve the permit. I, like most Town residents, place an extremely high value on our trees, their environmental and aesthetic benefits as well as the grace their even spacing brings to our streetscape. Once a Town tree is removed for a new curb cut, it disrupts the even spacing of the street trees, and most often, there is not enough room to place another tree nearby, thus leaving an unsightly gap in the tree cover.

The situation will likely arise again as existing homes are demolished and new buildings take their place. I think the time has come to recognize that without significant penalties being written into our Code there is little incentive for architects to take the location of a Town tree into account when designing a house, and specifically the location of the garage and curb cut. To rectify this, I purpose introducing an amendment to the section of our Code on Protection of Trees.

Section 8-101 would include language that as a general rule, the Town of Somerset does not allow street trees, which it has planted and maintained, to be removed. These trees are the property of the Town and its residents.

In exceptional cases a property owner may request a hearing for consideration of removal of a Town tree.

The Code should include language to the effect that only in exceptional cases, where the existence of a Town tree creates a hardship to a resident should the resident request a hearing of the Town Council to consider granting a permit to remove it. If the Council agrees that the hardship is such that the tree should be removed, a special permit may be issued. There will be a significant fee for any Town street tree removed, regardless of type, size, age or location. The Town will perform the removal and will replace the tree with another in a nearby location if possible (often this will not be possible because of the spacing between existing trees). In the case of an older specimen tree, in the unlikely event of permitting its removal, at the discretion and advice of the Council the fee may be significantly increased.

Town to Mark Historic District

By Lesley Simmons, Chair History Committee



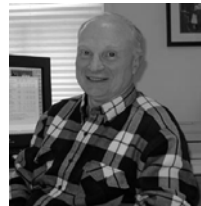
Not all residents may know that the Town of Somerset, which was developed as a trolley suburb of Washington D.C. in the late 19th century, had some 54 homes designated as a historic district in 1990. Thanks to generous support from Preservation Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust the Town will mark the borders of its historic district with small but colorful signs installed above the street name signs.

You are invited to attend a brief ceremony at which the first of the six signs will be installed beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Friday February 2, 2007. The ceremony will be followed by coffee and cookies in the Town Hall.

We will convene at the Town Hall, 4510 Cumberland Avenue at 10:00 a.m. – the ceremony will take place at the corner of Dorset and Surrey across from Founders' Park.

Town Hall Tidbits

by Tom Carter



Tax Time Again; Remember: 'TOWN OF SOMERSET'

Somerset's largest source of revenue is a portion of the State income tax paid by Town residents. Unfortunately, Somerset will not get its share of income taxes unless its name appears on the Maryland income tax form in the box marked, "City, Town or Taxing Area." A sample of the form appears below. Please don't forget to complete this section when filing your taxes.



Found

A red Little Tykes chair was found at 5503 Uppingham Street. Please call Ilene Heller at (301) 656-8136 if it's yours.

A set of five keys was found on the basketball court next to Town Hall on Tuesday, January 16. Call Tom at (301) 657-3211 if you think they may belong to you.

2007 Tennis ID Cards

Tennis ID cards for 2007 are available from Tom at the Town Hall office. Fees are still only \$5 per family for the annual card. Please make your checks out to "Town of Somerset."

Batting Cage Annual Fees



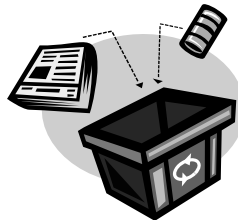
Batting cage users are reminded that their annual fees of \$5 for 2007 are due for continued use of the equipment. Checks should be made out to "Town of Somerset."

MVA Mobile Office

The MVA's mobile office will be in Friendship Heights on Monday, January 29 and Monday, February 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Recyclables

Many of you have noticed our recyclables being picked up by a regular trash compactor truck lately. I, too, had noticed it and questioned our trash company, J&J. Owner John Cavell says that he is using a Waste Management recycling facility, Recycle America, in Howard County that accepts the recyclables in this manner on an irregular basis, depending on the status of his recycling truck. Please continue to separate your recyclables as you normally do or we will have pickup problems on the days he uses his regular recycling truck.



Permits Granted

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



Fence: Sam Leiken, 5518 Greystone Street, to replace his back fence.

Legislation

At the January 2 meeting, the Council:

1. Did not receive Alan Proctor's proposed amendment to Town Code Chapter 7, Utility Line Construction. Item was postponed until the February meeting.
2. Introduced a Town Code amendment to Chapter 2 to expand the purpose, policies and procedures of the Town Journal.

Council Activity

At the January 2 meeting, the Town Council:

1. Authorized payment of \$100 annual dues to the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights for 2007.



2. Recommended approval to the Historic Preservation Commission on the application by Gary and Michelle Edson, 4721 Cumberland Avenue, to turn their garage into a workroom.
3. Approved demolition, building and curb permits for the plans of John Wittstadt, 5514 Uppingham Street, dated March 9, 2006, subject to receipt of a County permit and Town fees for curb and building permits and curb deposits. The motion included approval of the removal of a Town tree, subject to the owner providing \$700 for the Town to replace the Town tree with one or more trees and should the tree at the left rear of the proposed house die, it would be replaced with a 2" tree somewhere on the property. (Vote: Eldridge, Frankel, Kessler and Simmons for; Slavin opposed. Motion passed 4-1.)
4. Approved an application by Laura Will and Joe Lipscomb, 4722 Dorset Avenue, to remove five trees.
5. Approved an agreement with architects O'Neil and Manion for Phase II for \$40, 170 that will include:
 - (i) Hold three public charettes to refine the options specified by the Town Council on October 30 for the swimming pool and Town Hall sites;
 - (ii) Determine the spatial requirements, spatial relationships, equipment needs and location for each option;

- (iii) Check to ensure that the results meet County zoning and environmental requirements; and
 - (iv) Develop a master plan and schedule for building the various elements of the plan.
6. Received the 2006 swimming pool financial report.
 7. Approved a pool management contract with High Sierra Pools, Inc. for \$71,937 for 2007, with an option to renew for \$74,095 for 2008.

Letters to the Editor

From Bill Brenner (Surrey)

The unsigned insert by the Ad Hoc Committee for Year-Round Community Facilities in the December Town Journal criticized the Town for not consulting with its current architects O'Neil & Manion, before moving ahead with the Town Hall foundation repairs. For the record, this was discussed several times with the architects, who agreed the town should proceed with the repairs, preparations for which have been underway for over a year. The penultimate sentence on page 35 of the architects' final report, which is posted on the town website, states "The Town Hall's deteriorated foundation has not been braced. It is never recommended to leave a deteriorated or substandard condition untreated, particularly when a regularly used." The Town's other architects, Greg Wiedermann and Bruce Lawson, and the three structural engineers and one home inspector who have examined the Town Hall, have each emphasized that the foundation should be fixed as soon as possible.

2006: The Year in Review

by Council member Lesley Simmons



2006 marked the Town's Centennial year, which was celebrated with special commemorative stamps, banners on our street poles, and a huge street party on April 30. The perfect spring day attracted some 600 current and former residents and almost all of our local politicians, who enjoyed an ice cream social, entertainment, house and trolley tours and a special exhibit at the Town Hall. Residents of all ages got involved including the younger set led by 11-year old Jesse Guttman, who wrote a history column for the Town Journal in the months leading up to the Centennial. Jesse also put together a team of kids to fill a time capsule, which was on display at the July 4th celebrations and which is to be opened in 2056. In June, Montgomery Preserva-

tion Inc. bestowed an award on the Town for its Centennial celebrations.



The big issue of the year for many residents, and for the Town Council, was discussion on renovation of the swimming pool bathhouse and Town Hall, both of which are in a severe state of decline. Special meetings were held throughout the year – in February, April, June, September and October. Architects O'Neil and Manion were hired by the Town to help move forward with planning. Surrey Street resident Bill Brenner was designated as contract officer. A Special Issue of the Town Journal in October gave residents a chance to air their views. Twelve residents, the Mayor and most Council members chose to do so, and a group of 24 others submitted a response to the Architects' Report.

Late in the year, the Council voted to move forward into Phase II of a three-step process for making decisions on the pool and Town Hall renovations. They agreed to renovate the pool house on its current foot print, for use as a seasonal facility, and at the same time improve the children's wading pool, add a shelter from storms and a secondary space that might be used as an exercise facility on a seasonal basis. They also voted to renovate the Town Hall office, storage and kitchen space and explore options for adding a larger meeting hall in place of the existing one, a smaller meeting room and/or exercise room and possible indoor lap lanes at the Town Hall site.

Meanwhile, as part of the preparatory work, a boundary and topographical survey for the swimming pool complex was undertaken, and a Natural Resources Inventory was completed.

A contract was signed to rebuild the failed stone foundation of the Town Hall. Work was to begin in January.

Residents' participation at the special meetings to discuss renovations of the pool house and Town Hall was considerably higher than at most regular Council meetings. A high of 54 attended the October Special session. Regular meetings of the Council attracted an average of 15 persons who attended part or all of the meetings.

The Council took several initiatives to help increase safety and adherence to traffic regulations in Town including purchasing and installing a speed indicator sign, lowering the speed limit on Town streets to 20 miles per hour and installing trial rumble strips at the intersection of Dorset and Warwick. The Falstone-Warwick intersection was made safe with new sidewalk and ramps.

Also to improve safety, a hand rail was installed along the shortcut path to and from Friendship Heights.

Water and sewer line replacements were completed on Essex, Dorset (from Little Falls to Warwick) and Warwick (from Cumberland to Falstone) in the spring, and by year end damaged curbs, handicap ramps and driveway aprons were repaired, roads repaved and speed humps reinstalled.

The property tax rate was reduced for the third year in a row, down a half-cent to 4 cents per \$100 assessed value of house and lot. At year end the Town's combined fund balance stood at almost \$2,500,000.

Mayor Walter Behr and Council members Jeffrey Slavin and Lesley Simmons were re-elected in April and Rick Kessler was elected to serve a second term as Council Vice President. Our Town Clerk, Tom Carter, was chosen "Clerk of the Year" by the Maryland Municipal Clerks' Association.

The pool opened on May 20 and the season included water aerobics as well as an early bird swim 3 days a week. The Dolphins swim team advanced to the G division. Pool parties, movie nights, other social activities and the ever-popular dog swim on pool closing day were highlights of the season.



Somerset was named "Tree City" for the 24th consecutive year, and more than 70 trees and shrubs were planted primarily in Vinton Park. The Mayor approved permits for some 29 trees to be taken down, most of them dead or dying. The Council authorized another 14 (usually in combination with building permits and in conjunction with a requirement that they be replaced). Eleven Town trees, located on the street or in Town parks were removed because of disease or death. They too will be replaced. Somerset Elementary School landscaping was finally completed. The new school building and grounds are a very attractive addition to the Town.

Permits to demolish six homes were approved throughout the year.

A property owner filed a lawsuit against the Town which, by year end, had cost the Town more than \$26,000. But Somerset continues to be the neighborly community it has long been, with many residents involved in community service and volunteer activities. Especially notable this year were Somerset residents Pat Berry, who took the initiative to give Town seniors free help in the complex decision involved in the new Medicare Part D drug coverage program, and Mark Berry (no relation), who was presented with a certificate of commendation for saving a drowning fellow student's life.

Town services to residents continued as always with special trash pick-ups, numerous activities – from brown bag lunches to our ever-popular July 4th celebration and welcome party for new residents – and even flu shots at the Town Hall, which some 150 residents took advantage of this year.

On My Mind

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin



In talking in this New Year with a number of down county civic activists, there seems to be a general feeling that our new District One County Council member Roger Berliner is getting off to an excellent start. This is good news because a lot of our leaders supported the incumbent and had been concerned about Roger's knowledge of our local issues and willingness to support our initiatives.

Having attended a number of meetings lately, I have been impressed with Roger's personal participation and advocacy and/or willingness to send staff. This is one of the reasons I supported him in the first place because I felt that the last person who held this important position had neglected his responsibilities of late.

And while I am not certain whether Roger will ultimately be with us on all of our issues, I do feel that he is going to listen well and make every effort to learn about our problems and proposed solutions. I look forward to having him help us make our way through the County bureaucracy.

The County Council will be facing major decisions this year in growth, transportation, crime and education. Our Town will be dealing with our structures, traffic, policing, signage and much more. We will need to have Roger's assistance on many of these matters. I am convinced that he will lend his ear to our elected leaders.

But what's really on my mind today is to urge all of you to get to know Roger and to make your views known to him. When the Town Council asks him to help Somerset, it will be necessary for him to hear from our residents in addition to us. Never underestimate the power of your letters, calls and e-mails.

So, make it a point to contact Roger sometime in 2007 at:

Councilmember.Berliner@MontgomeryCountyMd.gov or (240) 777-7828. He has hired Reggie Oldak, a well known tax attorney, member of the Commission for Women and House of Delegates candidate as his chief of staff. You can contact Reggie at Reggie.Oldak@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov or (240) 777-7962.

Obituary

Ted Cron Dies at 76

Theodore O. "Ted" Cron, 76, who created three magazines during a 25-year career as a public affairs executive at six federal agencies, died December 20th at his home on Trent Street. He had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Mr. Cron, a Somerset resident for 34 years, came to Washington from New York City in 1964 to join the public affairs staff of the office of education in what was then the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. When James L. Goddard became Food and Drug Administration commissioner in 1966, Mr. Cron served as assistant commissioner for education and information and as Goddard's principal speechwriter. He also established a consumer education program that was extended nationwide by consumer specialists in each of FDA's 18 district offices.

After leaving the FDA in 1968, Mr. Cron joined a public relations firm in Washington, testified before congressional committees on health and consumer legislation and sued HEW to contest an announced Medicare premium increase. He contended that the department failed to provide an actuarial basis for the proposed increased and did not invite public comment on the issue.

Three years later, he returned to the federal government, served for a time as director of information of the Federal Trade Commission during the Carter administration, and, in 1981, became speechwriter for Surgeon General C. Everett Koop.

A prolific freelance writer and editor, he completed a novel, *Assignment: Istanbul* (2005) and was working on a second when he was stricken with ALS. In 1966 he coauthored a picture-and-text history, *Portrait of Carnegie Hall*.

A native of Newton, Mass., Mr. Cron received a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in teaching in 1953 from Harvard University. He and his wife, Lee H. Cron, who died in 1998, were among the founding members of Southwest Hebrew Congregation, which later became Temple Micah.

Survivors include his wife, Suzanne Harris; two children from his first marriage, Elizabeth D. Koozmin or Reston and Adam D. Cron of Allentown, Pa.; a sister; and three grandchildren.

Year-round Swimming and Exercise Opportunities

by Council member Lesley Simmons

Only a couple of people responded to my piece in last month's Journal offering to pursue possible group arrangements for year-round swimming and exercise at two nearby facilities. Since the notice came out during the holiday season I am extending the offer to try facilitate group arrangements should enough residents be interested.

This is the background: In response to enquiries, two nearby facilities: the YMCA on Old Georgetown Road and Bethesda Health and Sport are willing to consider some kind of group rate for Somerset residents. Both facilities offer year-round swimming and an impressive array of sports and exercise opportunities, which you can check out at their respective websites: for the YMCA visit

<http://www.ymcasilverspring.org/YMCA-Bethesda-Chevy-Chase.aspx> and for Bethesda Health and Sport visit www.sportandhealth.com then click on "locations" then click on "Bethesda")

The Y offers to drop the initiation fee if Somerset has 5 or more new memberships (individual or family).

"Bethesda Sports and Health offers to give us a presentation on their facility and activities and, based on the amount of resident interest, will work out a group deal for us.

Please drop me a line if you would like to pursue either option at lsimmons@townofsomerset.com.

Job Opportunities with Census Bureau

The U.S. Census Bureau is recruiting Field Representatives to conduct the American Housing Survey between May and September 2007. Workers will be hired in March and trained in April.

Field representatives must be US citizens, at least 18 years old (or if under 18 have a high school diploma or equivalent), pass a 30-minute test, have a land line telephone, a valid driver's license, and use of a car. The salary rate is \$11.59 per hour. If you are interested in applying for a position call the recruiting section at 1-888-722-8995 before January 22, 2007 for the schedule of testing's and interviews in our area.



County News

Published Works by Local Authors Sought by Gaithersburg Library

The Gaithersburg Library is providing local authors the opportunity to have their works displayed and circulated. For information visit:

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/News/press/PR_details.asp?PrID=3006

Citizens Advisory Board Vacancies

County Executive Isiah Leggett is seeking applicants to fill six vacancies on the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board. Two of the vacancies must be filled by area business representatives and four vacancies must be filled by area residents. The application deadline is February 9. More information is available in an e-mail, which is posted on the Town Hall bulletin board.

You're Invited to Join the Neighborhood

by Gayley Knight & Gail Werner, Town Web Administrators

Join i-Neighbors and be part of the conversation when you can't be at Town meetings.

As Web administrators for Somerset, we invite you to participate in testing this new online (and free) community developed by UPenn. This is about promoting neighborhood interaction, making it simple and easy to meet and communicate with other Somerset residents, voice your opinion or share a concern or resources (babysitters, contractors, restaurants, and almost anything else).

At <http://i-neighbor.or/20815>, create a login, add your profile, and jump in. Invite others to join. Create polls, events and even add documents. This is not an official Town site and is not sanctioned by the Town of Somerset or its elected officials or staff. You can access the registration page from the Town Web site.

The Town Journal is the official publication of the Town of Somerset, Montgomery County, MD.

Post Office address: 4510 Cumberland Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

This issue edited by Lesley Simmons

MAYOR

Walter J. Behr, 4809 Grantham Ave., 301-654-1258/654-0224

Town Hall Phone Number: 301-657-2229

E-Mail: mayor@townofsomerset.com

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Richard Kessler, Council V.P., 4914 Cumberland Avenue
301-654-2699

Tom Eldridge, 5605 Warwick Place, 301-656-3354

Judy Frankel, 5528 Uppingham Street, 301-657-8875

Lesley Simmons, 4723 Cumberland Avenue, 240-497-1876

Jeffrey Slavin, 5706 Warwick Place, 301-654-6767

E-Mail for Council: council@townofsomerset.com

CLERK-TREASURER

Tom Carter

TOWN HALL

Open 9 to 4:30

301-657-3211/Fax 301-657-2773

Web site: www.townofsomerset.com

E-Mail: clerk@townofsomerset.com

TTY users call Maryland Relay

Deadlines February 13, Ads and Copy

Preliminary Agenda

Regular Meeting of Town Council

Monday, February 5, 2007 – 7:30 P.M.

1. Approval of minutes of January 2 regular meeting – 7:30.
2. Discussion of financial report – 7:35.
3. Mayor's report – 7:40.
4. Developments/plans in the vicinity of Somerset – 7:50.
5. Suggestions and questions from residents – 8:00.
6. Acton on new refuse and recycling contract – 8:10.
7. **Introduction of proposed amendments to Town Code Chapter 7, Utility Line Construction – 8:25.
8. Discussion of application by Verizon-Maryland, Inc. to install fiber optic cable throughout Somerset – 8:45.
9. Action on amendment to Town Code Chapter 2 to expand purpose, policies and procedures of Town Journal – 9:05.
10. **Discussion of possible Town Code amendment to discourage construction plans that include removal of Town trees – 9:20.
11. New business – 9:35.
12. Adjournment – 9:40.

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.

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