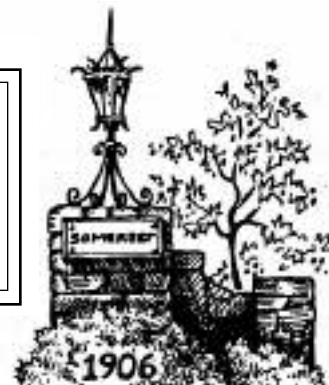




# SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL



## Mayor's Den

By Walter Behr

### Last Chance to Act on Curbs

If Somerset curbs are to be repaired or replaced this year, the

Council will have to act at the August 6 meeting. Any delay would mean that falling leaves and then winter weather would require postponing the work until next spring. Cracked sidewalk squares will be replaced at the same time that the curb work is done.

Revised estimates for replacing all curbs with curbs and gutters are now \$1 million-plus. This compares with

an actual bid of \$115,077 for repairing damaged and disintegrating curb sections and replacing cracked sidewalks. Because of the huge difference in cost, I recommend that we repair, rather than replace the curbs. I am requesting an appropriation of \$130,000 to cover the cost of an inspector and inevitable extras such as curb sections that have broken up since Town foreman Enrique Cabrera and I marked them last spring.

I was intrigued with Alan Proctor's suggestion that we consider the modern curb and gutter technique,

but believe it would be unwise to spend over \$1 million for curbs when we have three other major capital projects on the horizon -- street repaving, at a cost of about \$600,000, and swimming pool complex and Town Hall renovation.

Although new curbs and gutters throughout Town would look better than our mix of curbs in various shades of gray, curbs and gutters would cause problems at some properties. Since they would be a uniform height, higher than many sections of existing curbs, they

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would cause drainage problems by blocking water that now runs into the street from lawns or strips between the sidewalks and curbs. Also, a number of our specimen Town trees with roots and, in some cases, over the curb would be damaged.

Action on curbs is scheduled for 9:40 p.m. at the Council meeting on August 6. I sincerely hope that the Council will authorize the curb repair project so that we will be in a position to mill and repave streets next summer (all streets except Essex and parts of Dorset, Warwick and Cumberland that have been repaved recently).

### **Cutting Corners - Another Curb Issue**

There are two corners in Somerset where trucks -- and even automobiles -- sometimes go over the curb as they turn right on our narrow streets causing ruts and mud. This can happen when vehicles from Dorset Avenue on Devon Lane turn right on Cumberland Avenue and when vehicles from Dorset on Deal Place turn right onto Cumberland.

The Council is being asked to decide what to do about either or both of these corners at 9:20 p.m. on August 6. Here are the four choices that have been advanced:

1. Do nothing.
2. Move the curb back so that the rutted area becomes street pavement.
3. Build a very high curb or wall, making it difficult or impossible to drive over.
4. Leave the curbs as they are, and install a thick concrete pad in the rutted area so that tires that go over the curb will not cause ruts.

If you have an opinion, write or send an e-mail to: [clerk@townofsomerset.com](mailto:clerk@townofsomerset.com) or, better yet, come to the August 6 meeting.

## **Calendar**

Monday, August 6	Town Council Meeting
Thursday, August 16	Town Journal Deadline ads and copy
Monday, August 20	Mobile MVA in Friendship Heights
Tuesday, September 4	Town Council Meeting
Sunday, September 16	Annual New Neighbor Welcome Party

Don't forget to check the Town website throughout the month for an up-to-date calendar. Go to [www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com) and click on "Town Calendar"

## **Concerned About Dead Birds?**

Several residents have reported finding dead birds in their yards and wonder what to do with them. Should the birds be sent somewhere for testing, or should they be disposed of?

Public health authorities say they should be disposed of and recommend you:

- Wear latex gloves or use plastic bags as gloves.
- Place or wrap the bird in a plastic bag and tie the bag.
- Dispose of the bag and gloves in your outdoor trash receptacle.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.

Until recently, dead birds were tested to determine if they were infected with the West Nile virus so that public health officials could track the spread of the virus. They now know that the virus is widespread in Maryland, so there is no longer a reason to test.

### **West Nile Disease**

West Nile virus is transmitted by mosquitoes, which become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then transmit the virus to humans and animals when they bite.

Most individuals who are infected do not have any symptoms or signs of illness. Some may experience mild symptoms such as fever, headache and body aches, occasionally a rash or swollen glands. Less than one percent of those infected develop a more serious disease. At present, no specific treatment exists.

The following steps will reduce chances of being bitten and becoming infected:

- Stay indoors at dawn or in early evening.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors
- Spray clothing with repellents
- Reduce mosquito-breeding stagnant water in such places as ceramic pots, roof gutters, birdbaths, wading pools, pet food and water dishes, and up-side-down garbage lids.

## A Memorable Independence Day



Dozens of residents and nonresidents -- and sunshine -- teamed up to make this year's Fourth of July celebration a huge success, the best ever, according to some veteran attendees.

### My thanks to the following:

Gina Pack for overall coordination and Declaration of Independence reading by Somerset children: And the readers themselves: Elena Burger, Liam Farley, Brian Geffroy, Colin Losey, Julia Losey, Olivia Muro, Matthew Nolan, Alex Pack, Thomas Pack, William Pack, Isabelle Sacks, and Oliver Winters; Caroline Springer for decorations, assisted by Ruth Albert, Michelle Edson; Elizabeth Hurwit, Laura Long, Alan Proctor and Samantha Sapin; Kemy Monihan for refreshments, assisted by husband Joe, children Joey and Tommy, Reily Shea and Tyce Christian; Doug Dolan for antique cars; Bob Bookman and David Batson for games; Alan Proctor for sound system; Sarah Morse for swim team record breakers; Valerie Wiggins and daughter, Dawn the soloists from Edgewater, MD; Felipe Luisi, Patrick Eagen and Robert White, Eagle Scouts from Troop 204, Bethesda, the color guard; Ned Sherburne, B-CC Rescue Squad chief; Julio Falcon, Bethesda Fire Department lieutenant; Tom Carter, Enrique Cabrera, Angel Alba and Tomas Villanueva for numerous tasks including tent and platform erection; and Adam Bookman for pool games and contests.



If you missed this year's extravaganza, don't fret. There is bound to be a bigger and better one next year.

## Permit Requirements for Air Conditioners

What seems to be an oversight in our Town Code in regard to air conditioners, heat pumps and generators will be addressed by the Town Council at the August 6 meeting. At present, these appliances must meet certain setback rules when they are included in building permit plans. However, there is no requirement for a Town permit when one of them is installed at a time when no construction is taking place -- although a County permit is a must.

The Code amendment, if enacted, will mandate Town Council, as well as County, approval in order to install an a/c, heat pump or emergency power source when no construction is involved. Also, it will be necessary to show plans to neighbors and to pay a Town fee, now \$47.30, which is half of the current County fee.

## Permits Granted

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

### Trees:

**David and Lisa Katz**, 5409 Surrey Street, to remove a large oak crowding the house and endangering it as well as the house next door.

**David Kahn and Sherry Bindeman**, 4715 Essex Avenue, to remove a dying hemlock in their front yard.

**Patrick McMahon**, 5504 Greystone Street, to remove two double Leyland cypresses, both unstable and one crowding a large healthy dogwood.

**Sharon Bray**, 4603 Dorset Avenue, to remove two uprooted arborvitae in her side yard.

**Anjali Kumar**, 4605 Dorset Avenue, to remove two uprooted arborvitae in her front yard.

### Fences:

**Tom and Barbara Shea**, 5403 Surrey Street, to erect a four-foot high aluminum fence with two six-foot steel arches along their back and side yards.

# Pool, Town Hall Renovations Update

By Council member Tom Eldridge

Unfortunately, the Council has been unable to reach agreement with the architectural firm of O'Neil and Manion on a contract to cover the second phase of the three phase process to develop a Master Plan for the pool and Town Hall facilities. After facilitating three meetings with Town residents on the pool facility, O'Neil & Manion resigned in March, and the Council has spent the past couple of months negotiating a settlement with them, pulling together materials to pass on to another architect, and interviewing potential architects. A Council decision on the proposed settlement with O'Neil & Manion may be made at the August meeting, or sooner if the Council decides, based on advice of counsel, to address the matter in a closed session.

To provide a little background: the Council hired the architectural firm of O'Neil & Manion in July 2006 to perform a study of a wide range of

options for the pool site, from building an enclosed, year-round swimming facility, to making minor changes to the existing facility. The report included cost estimates.

In the fall of 2006, based in part on the report on a broad array of options prepared by the architects, the Council voted to narrow options for the pool site to include renovating or replacing the existing facility roughly within its existing footprint, and making other improvements while maintaining it as a seasonal facility. The Council also decided to add a shelter space either on or near the pool deck or in the second floor of a renovated pool house and also to improve the kiddie pool.

Although no final decisions have been reached, the Council continues to explore hiring someone to facilitate the development of a Master Plan that would include detailed description of what resi-

dents want from the pool and Town Hall sites. Part of that process would involve meetings with residents to discuss residents' needs for both sites. These meetings are expected to help define requirements and foster consensus on a package of improvements at both sites that would be acceptable to a majority of residents.

The Council could vote on hiring a facilitator as early as its August meeting. The current goal is to begin the planning meetings no earlier than September when most residents are back in Town after the summer break. The master plan and its set of requirements could then be used by architects to develop detailed plans, including construction drawings, for the pool and Town Hall sites. That work would be bid out. Approval of any contracts will be voted on in an open Council meeting.

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## Failing Trees to Be Removed

By Corrie Morsey

We have received recommendations to remove two failing Town trees:

#11, red maple, in front of 4511 Cumberland Avenue. Last fall Mark Barbato of Davey Trees had suggested that the tree be removed because it was in a general state of decline. At the urging of the resident, we asked that the tree be given a reprieve and pruned at least one more time. In June Mark wrote back to the Town saying the tree was declining rapidly, it has become hazardous and we needed to reconsider its removal. Once the tree is removed and the stump is ground, it will be replaced by an American yellowwood, the monoculture for the 4500 block of Cumberland Avenue.

#419, green ash, in front of 4913 Falstone Avenue. Considerable work has been done on this tree. In December 2005 Davey pruned deadwood and suckers out of the tree and reduced the weight of the lead over the driveway; in June 2006 it was pruned once again. On July 6th of this year a large limb fell, damaging the resident's automobile. According to Mark Barbato the limb that broke off was alive not dead. However, the tree has experienced twenty percent decline since June 2006 and should now come out. If there is sufficient room, a replacement red sunset red maple, the monoculture for the lower portion of Falstone Avenue will be planted.

# Security Committee Crime Alert

By Birdie Pieczenik, and the Security Committee



At the onset of spring, crime increases each year and the mayor and the Security Committee ask

residents to take extra precautions with their property (car, house, garage, lawns) and their person. This year is no different.

Several crimes have occurred in Somerset over the past two months. A close look indicates that (i) most were crimes of opportunity (e.g. property taken from unlocked vehicles, a house entered using a house key near the door), or (ii) a crime that seemed to be an “inside” job.

Any crime is one too many. Becoming a victim, whether or not the crime could have been prevented, leaves the same long-lasting emotional and financial scars. That said, most crime in Somerset can be prevented.

We are too smart a group to deny that we are part of an urban complex (even though we live in a residential island), or allow ourselves to become victims of crime when we don't have to!

Based on the nature of crime in Somerset, in surrounding communities, and national experiences, the Security Committee has concluded that taking appropriate steps to secure the safety of your own person and property is your best defense in minimizing crime. Even a 24 hour, seven day a week police presence would not take the place

of basic, practical steps each resident must take to insure his/her own security.

**Step One:** Ask Community Service Officer Dana Mathis of the Montgomery County Police Department (301) 652-9200 to evaluate your property's security needs.

**Step Two:** Use Officer Mathis' suggestions along with those made by Security Committee in recent editions of the Town Journal (on lighting, windows, doors and garages).

Every household does not need an alarm system. You can avoid becoming a victim of crime by taking many small, but essential measures: lock your car and leave nothing of value in plain sight; at home, install appropriate door and window locks, and appropriate doors and windows; don't leave the key to your house in an obvious place (hanging on a hook in an unlocked garage IS obvious); install appropriate lights outside your house -- and keep them lit; report suspicious people/activities to the Town Office and the MCPD; look out for your neighbors' property when they are on vacation.

You may be interested in exploring additional approaches to minimizing crime in Somerset -- from the Town meeting focused on personal security and situational awareness, to national programs based on citizen involvement (e.g. neighborhood watch), to a part-time police pres-

ence, to reminder posters and flyers at various Town locations. The Security Committee will do what is can to advance these efforts.

However, before significant Town time or money is spent on additional approaches to minimizing crime, residents **MUST** have done their part to protect their person and property. Step 1 and Step 2 should be undertaken by every Somerset household. After that, a period of time should pass in order to evaluate the amount and type of crime that may still be occurring. Only then will we be able to determine the appropriate next step.

As Mayor Behr noted in last month's Town Journal, it's frustrating to know that most crime in Somerset can easily be prevented with the most minor of changes in personal behavior and home security. So let's start preventing!

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## Crime Report

No crimes were reported to the Mayor or Town Clerk in July up to the time of publication.

**Editor's Note:** At the last Council Meeting it was suggested that the Journal carry a regular column reporting on any crime that may have occurred in Town, and if there were none, that too be reported. If you are aware of a crime in Town, please notify the Mayor or Town Clerk as well as the police.

# Town Hall Tidbits

by Tom Carter



## Found

Two pairs of sunglasses and a Town of Somerset cap were left after the July 4 picnic at the Town

Hall. Call Tom at (301) 657-3211 if you think they belong to you.

## Town Trees and Grounds

Don't forget to help us by watering

the Town trees in your yards when no rain has fallen in several days.

## Sidewalk Cleaning

Residents are reminded that they are responsible for keeping their sidewalks clear of debris, hedges and other plantings.

Section 4-103 of the Town Code says that owners and occupants of houses shall:

“(a) maintain the land

between their property and the street curb in good and orderly condition; and,

“(b) clean the Town sidewalk in front, and on the side, of their property and keep the sidewalk free from overhanging shrubbery.”

## MVA Mobile Office

The MVA's mobile office will be in Friendship Heights on Monday, August 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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## Interest High in Plans for Westbard Area

by Council Member Marnie Shaul

More than 60 people from Somerset and nearby neighborhoods came to Somerset's Town Hall on July 18th to hear how community priorities have been translated into concepts for the development of the Westbard area. Based on the results of the survey many area residents completed last year, Catholic University Professor Iris Miller and other architectural staff have developed preliminary plans for River Road, land around the Capitol Crescent Trail, and the shopping center where Giant is located. The final plan will be an important tool for residents in dealing with the County Council, which will be updating the Westbard Sector Plan in 2009. The update will determine zoning (land use) and maximum building heights.

The preliminary plan envisions River Road as a boulevard with trees on both sides, several short median islands, and at least one sidewalk broad enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bikers. The intersections at either end (Little Falls and Ridgefield-Brookside) would be visually attractive gateways.

The shopping center site is proposed to have several apartment buildings with underground parking and retail space on the first floor. The number of units and building height is still being thought through, but the apartments are likely to be 6 or fewer stories. Town homes are also proposed for the site. Some surface parking and a parking structure would serve the Giant.

Catholic University staff will continue to work on the plan over the summer and are interested in hearing residents' feedback, which can be provided through the chair of the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights or Somerset Council members. A website for reviewing material will soon be operational and the address will be announced in the Town Journal.



## Have you Noticed?

Some Somerset residents are displaying their pride in our Town by sporting attractive Town of Somerset Centennial license plates on their vehicles. If you are interested in obtaining a TOS license plate, contact Jeffrey Slavin for an application form and details at (301) 654-6767 or <mailto:jslavin@townofsomerset.com>

# News from the Swim Team

by Sarah Morse, Team Rep

What an exciting season for the Dolphins in the I division! Although we finished with a 1 win, 4 loss-season we were well matched with the competition. Every meet was a cliff hanger, frequently coming down to the last race to determine the winner. We beat Carderock Spring by just five points. Our largest loss was against Inverness Forest where the final score was SO 383 to IF 403. The Connecticut Belair meet was lost by just three points, and the Little Falls meet by only 14 points. The Relay Carnival was another close competition: Somerset finished in third place, just two points out of fourth.

The division standing, however, tells only part of the story. On Wednesday night, when all swimmers can compete (there is no limit to the number of heats we can run) we really showed that our strength is in numbers -- and in teenagers. With 24 teenagers on the team, we frequently swept all the 15-18 events as we filled all the lanes. We finished with a 3-0 record.

Swimmers also swam some of their fastest times -- with drops of over 11 seconds in some cases. Over 30 personal bests were



recorded and six new team records were set. Gavin Springer set records for Boys 9-10 50 M Free and 25 M back, breast and fly! The Boys Open 200 M Medley Relay has a new record set by team members Toby Kathan, Miles Batson, Nick Kessler and Isaac Sorenson.

The Boys 14 and Under graduated free style also has a new record set by team members Gavin Springer, Colin Losey, Mark Berry, and Brian Geffroy.

However, the real measure of the Dolphin's success is in spirit and having fun. The swim team fills an important function in building community and getting kids of all ages out to have fun. And have fun they did! Over 200 team members and their families gathered at the Mondale/Patton house for the annual spaghetti dinner and Capture the Flag game. Teams were quickly formed and it was wonderful to see the little guys playing with the teenagers.

More than 40 turned out for All-Day-with-the-Swim-team, the annual swim team workshop followed by breakfast and laser tag. T-shirt making was

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a popular activity -- 82 shirts were screened with catchy art designed by Toby Kathan. Lock-in, where 57 kids spent the night at the pool, was commemorated by a T-shirt designed by Pat McMahon.



The Mini Meet was another highlight. The developmental team, with 30 swimmers and a whole lot of teenage coaches, showed off what they have accomplished in this annual event. Swimmers competed in half-length kick board, half-length free and full length free. For some it's the first time they have made it across the deep end, so it's a very thrilling meet for parents, swimmers and coaches alike!

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## Traffic Calming Efforts: A Historical Perspective

By Catherine Pickar, Chair, former Traffic Committee

Fifteen years ago I was lying in the street on lower Dorset Avenue; I was trying to save "my" speed bump. Built too high, the bump was a nuisance and the Town was going to remove it. Fearing it would never be replaced I lay down on "my" bump and invited the demolition crew to have coffee in my home while I protested. That's how I became chair of Somerset's Traffic Committee.

Our committee, from an array of Somerset streets and with diverse opinions, met with specialists, planners and experts; we canvassed citizens, read reports and learned of other communities' efforts to slow traffic.

We knew that speeding vehicles in Somerset posed a significant safety hazard and were told that the few bumps installed 10 years earlier by the hard work of citizen "pioneers" had reduced speed.

We learned that this issue, although necessary to tackle, is divisive and ignites freewill vs community controversy. And that:

- the most effective traffic calming and deterring methods are speed bumps (reports by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Institute of Transportation Engineers).
- any restrictions into or diversions on Dorset impact other Somerset streets, which are less able to handle traffic than Dorset.
- permanently closing the alley between Cumberland and Drummond (as opposed to during school hours only) would encourage traffic traveling south on Wisconsin that turns right on Drummond and left into the alley, to turn right on little Cumberland or upper Dorset instead,

while alienating neighbors on Drummond.

- circles are effective and, in order to allow the pass-thru of emergency vehicles, require expanding the Town's right of ways.
- maintaining brightly painted crosswalk patterns increases the percentage of stopping or slowing at stop signs and likewise for the bumps.
- parked cars create congestion and slow traffic, although increase the risk of child pedestrian accidents.
- a sidewalk on lower Cumberland would enhance safety
- emergency response vehicles do slow down over bumps, but are already slowed by the size and configuration of our streets. Formulas exist for calculating delays.

### **The results:**

Additional speed bumps were added to Town streets, but on advice of a traffic consultant to the Town Council, some streets were denied bumps. Specifically, residents of Greystone between Uppingham and River Road, who had passionately lobbied for a speed bump to alleviate dangerous traffic conditions on their block, were denied.

Cross walks (or at a minimum thick lines) were painted across the road at stop signs.

A stop sign was added on Cumberland and on Warwick at the intersection.

Traffic slowed (but never quite as much as when "my" bump was a nuisance).



# News from the Parks and Natural Resources Committee

By Corrie Morsey, Chair, PNRC



Two meetings were held earlier this month on the Mayor's request for input on proposed repairs to erosion control measures in Little Falls Branch, our creek. The repairs are to be undertaken by the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), utilizing FEMA funds. The Committee feels the least invasive access to the site to be the most desirable. However, Committee members raised several questions concerning the repairs since the Town has not received specific plans. Since the turnaround time is rather short -- work needs to commence after the pool is closed, vegetation needs to be installed this fall and the project needs to be completed prior to January 31, 2008, in order to obtain FEMA funds -- we feel a detailed proposal needs to be presented to the Town council by its September 4 meeting.

Did you know that 1,000 square feet of roof yields 600 gallons of water with 1 inch of rainfall? PNRC members feel it is time for the Town to take a pro-active position in decreasing impervious surfaces in Town. While a house and out buildings (garages, sheds, studios, etc.) can only occupy 35% of a lot under present code, there is no limitation to the amount of land driveways, walkways, patios, etc. can cover. Rather than allowing impervious paved surfaces, we feel owners/developers should be made to use more porous materials. Furthermore, downspouts should not be allowed to empty into streets, parkland and neighboring properties, without first flowing through rain gardens and other such environmental-friendly devices.

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## News From the History Committee -- Somerset's Historic Documents Organized and Accessible

By Council member Lesley Simmons, Chair History Committee



Many of Somerset's early historical documents and photographs were collected by our Town's first historian, Dorothy O'Brien. When she moved from Town in the late 1970s, Somerset had no Town Hall so Dorothy donated the material to the County

Historical Society in Rockville for safe keeping. A Finding Aid or guide to the collection is now available and can be found on the Town website's history page at

[http://www.townofsomerset.com/historic/town\\_of\\_somerset\\_fa.pdf](http://www.townofsomerset.com/historic/town_of_somerset_fa.pdf)

Meanwhile, Municipal Maryland, the official publication of the Maryland Municipal League, carried a cover story of Somerset's Centennial celebrations in its September/October 2006 issue. The League has kindly donated us its extra copies of the publication, which includes several colorful photographs. If you would like a copy you may pick one up from Tom at the Town Hall.

# Somerset Learns and Is Recognized at Maryland Municipal League Convention

By Council Member Marnie Shaul

Five Somerset officials (Walter, Jeffrey, Lesley, Tom Carter and I) joined over 1,000 other municipal officials at the annual meeting of the Maryland Municipal League (MML) in Ocean City in late June.

Somerset was prominent in many ways. Our town was honored by being one of the first 14 municipalities named a "Banner City/Town" for our commitment to MML programs. Our mayor gave the blessing at the inaugural dinner. Jeffrey was re-elected to the MML Board of Directors (the only At Large member of the Board of Directors from Montgomery County). And during the opening session, Tom carried our flag in the Parade of Flags.

Members of our delegation met with vendors whose products/services might be of interest to our Town, such as raised crosswalks and engineering services related to calming traffic. This was helpful preparation for our recent traffic calming meeting.

And our delegation attended a variety of workshops ranging from urban tree programs to making meetings more effective. In the future, we may want to experiment with some of the suggested techniques to improve meetings. These include ideas such as using a podium for resident statements or separating the meeting into a resident comment time and a business time.

We also had the opportunity to talk with other local officials and to learn how they have tackled issues and what has contributed to their success.



## On My Mind

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

At the last Council meeting, I was honored to be approved for recommendation to the County Executive to fill the Somerset seat on the Advisory Committee of the

Friendship Heights Transportation Management District (TMD). Now I await County Council confirmation. But in the meantime, I have been starting work on this new assignment and attending meetings, too.

There are four TMDs in the County, including Silver Spring, Bethesda and North Bethesda and they are "housed" within and staffed by the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation. The goals of these authorities include cutting traffic congestion, increasing transportation capacity, reducing air and noise pollution and promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety. One of the ways they do this is by implementing a County law that requires every employer with 25 or more employees to submit a traffic mitigation plan, encouraging these commuters to find better ways to work other than

driving single-occupant vehicles.

Given that there are 500 employers with an estimated 9,000 employees in the Montgomery County side of Friendship Heights alone, and more on the DC side, the advantages to Town residents of having these plans in place are obvious, in addition to stimulating the economy, lessening energy consumption and protecting our health.

Our area is rich in transit options and the 14 representatives of the Advisory Committee, including folks from the business, residential and development committees, have committed to getting people to take advantage of these options. They will also advise staff, the Department and the County Exec on other related policies and programs.

I know that a lot of people in Town have expertise in this area, and ALL have opinions. During my term on this Committee I pledge to keep you informed as to the work of the TMD and to pass along your thoughts in the appropriate manner. For more information, check the website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov>

# Residents' Letters

## Mentors Needed for B-CC Students

Marie Cohen

A significant minority of Bethesda Chevy Chase High School ninth-graders are considered at risk of school failure or dropping out because of low grades and/or test scores or poor attendance in middle school. B-CC needs responsible adults willing to work one-on-one with these ninth-graders in order to improve their academic performance. Mentors meet with their students every week for an hour after school or during lunch. They provide needed advice, friendship, advocacy, and access to people, opportunities and information. Training, as well as occasional mentor workshops will be provided. We are also seeking local employers who would like to encourage their employees to serve as mentors for B-CC students. If you are interested in being a mentor, or are willing contact your workplace about starting a program, please contact Deborah Newman, program coordinator, at (301) 529-0702 or mail to: Deborah\_Newman@mcpsmd.org

## Save the Date

by Bonnie Lewin

16

Somerset's annual welcoming party for new residents will take place on Sunday, September 16 from 4-6 p.m. at the pool. Mark the date on your calendars and be ready to relax under the tent with a drink and lite fare while the children enjoy entertainment. For further information, please contact any members of the Welcoming Committee: Bonnie Lewin (301) 907-4772, Lyndsey Gerber (301) 654-2984, Laura Long (301) 907-4843 and Ann Brown (301) 986-8811.

## County News

The Montgomery Charter Review Commission is seeking resident input on charter issues. Comments and suggestions must be submitted by October 31 to: Charter Review Commission, Montgomery County Council, 100 Maryland Avenue, 5th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850 or by e-mail to:CharterReview.Commission@montgomerycountymd.gov A copy of the Charter may be obtained by contacting the Council Office at (240) 777-7900. For more information check the news release on the Town Hall bulletin board.

# Legislation

At the July 2 meeting, the Town Council:

1. Amended the Building Code by stipulating requirements for temporarily blocking or restricting traffic.
2. Introduced a Town Code amendment to require notification of adjoining neighbors outside of Somerset of applications for tree removals.
3. Introduced a Town Code amendment to require notification of adjoining neighbors outside of Somerset of applications for fence or wall permits.
8. Endorsed Marnie Shaul's candidacy as the Town representative for the Purple Line Advisory Committee.
9. Discussed options to retain an architect(s) to plan, design and supervise construction of the bathhouse and Town Hall improvements.
10. Briefly discussed replacing curbs throughout Somerset with modern curb-and-gutter construction, but decided more information was needed prior to taking any action. More thoroughly discussed possible traffic calming devices.

# Council Activity

At the July 2 meeting, the Town Council:

1. Approved the following fund transfers for FY-07:

Amount	From	To
\$30,000	CPF Town Hall	GF Legal
\$6,000	CPF Town Hall	GF Misc./Engr.

(Vote: Eldridge, Shaul, Simmons and Slavin for; Kessler opposed. Motion passed 4-1.)

2. Authorized payment of (1) annual dues of \$2,472.84 to Maryland Municipal League for FY-06 and (2) annual premium of \$5,000.00 to Montgomery County Self-Insurance Program.
3. Confirmed the Mayor's nomination of Jeffrey Slavin for two-year term on the County's Friendship Heights Transportation Management District Advisory Committee.
4. Heard a presentation by Officer Mathis, Montgomery County police, and discussed crime in Somerset and vicinity with the officer and the Security Committee.
5. Postponed action on an application by Steve and Birdie Pieczenik, 4731 Essex Avenue, to construct a two-story addition to the north side of their house until the August meeting because they were not ready.
6. Approved permits for Frank Loversky and Cathi Davis, 5415 Surrey Street, to construct a two-story addition in the back and one-story addition in the front with a one-car attached carport and to remove three trees, subject to receipt of a County building permit and the Town fees and deposit.
7. Approved permits for David Kathan and Sarah Morse, 4920 Dorset Avenue, to add a screened porch to the rear of their house and to remove one tree, subject to receipt of a County building permit and the Town fees and deposit.
11. Discussed an application by Sandy Spring Builders, 4520 Dorset Avenue, to demolish the remaining structure and construct a two-story house with two-car attached garage and provided information needed to act on the request for the August meeting.
12. Approved a building permit for Otis and Haydee Barnes, 5402 Greystone Street, for a 7'x20' extension to the rear of a second floor bedroom over an existing storage room, subject to the building inspector's review and discretion of the Mayor and receipt of Town fees and deposit. (Vote: Eldridge, Shaul and Simmons for; Kessler and Slavin opposed. Motion passed 3-2.)
13. Approved a request by the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights for \$4,000 to develop a plan for the Westbard area.
14. Heard the Mayor's report of an emergency expenditure of \$275 to Professional Consulting Corporation for their final report on soil sampling for Town Hall foundation.
15. Approved the removal of two Town trees: 1) #554, pin oak, 5510 Surrey Street, with considerable dieback and 2) unnumbered sycamore behind 4514 Dorset Avenue in Vinton Park in serious decline. (Vote: Eldridge, Shaul and Simmons for; Slavin opposed; Kessler abstained. Motion passed 3-1.)
16. Authorized the Mayor to write a letter to the County Council President in support of the items mentioned in County Council member Marc Elrich's letter regarding the proposed County Growth Policy for review by our Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights representatives. (Vote: Kessler, Shaul, Simmons and Slavin for; Eldridge opposed. Motion passed 4-1.)
17. Changed the Town Hall rental rules to restrict music to inside the meeting room.

# PRELIMINARY AGENDA

## Regular Meeting of Town Council

Monday, August 6, 2007 - 7:30 P.M.

1. Approval of minutes of the June 28 special meeting and the July 2 regular meeting -- 7:30.

2. Action on the following transfers for FY-07: -- 7:35.

Amount	From	To
\$3,000 CPF	Town Hall	GF Pool
\$1,000 CPF	Town Hall	GF Misc./Engr.

3. Confirmation of Mayor's reappointment of Richard Furcolo and appointment of Caroline Springer to Swimming Pool Committee for three-year terms and appointment of Michelle Edson as chair for one-year term -- 7:40.

4. Authorization to close River Road and Wisconsin Avenue entrances on Sunday, September 30, from 7:45 to 9:30 a.m., for the 8-kilometer road race sponsored by the Somerset Elementary School PTA -- 7:45.

5. Report by Nat Finkelstein on finances and operation of Channel 16, the Montgomery Municipal Cable channel -- 7:50.

6. Action on renewal of Town membership in Montgomery Municipal Cable by contributing entire payment from County, which is based on number of Somerset cable subscribers -- 8:00.

7. Recommendation to Historic Preservation Commission and fact finding hearing and action on application by Steve and Birdie Pieczenik, 4731 Essex Avenue, to construct a two-story addition to the north (Surrey Street) side of their house -- 8:05.

8. Fact finding hearing and action on application by Sandy Spring Homes, 4520 Dorset Avenue, to demolish the remaining structure and construct a two-story house with two-car attached garage -- 8:15.

9. \*\* Action on recommendation by Davey Tree to remove Town tree #11 at 4511 Cumberland Avenue, a red maple rapidly declining -- 8:25.

10. Mayor's report -- 8:30.

11. Developments/plans in the vicinity of Somerset -- 8:40.

12. Suggestions and questions from residents -- 8:50.

13. Discussion of adding circles, semicircles and humps to Town streets and other traffic calming devices -- 9:00.

14. \*\* Action on whether or not to modify curbs at corners of Deal Place/Cumberland Avenue and Devon Lane/Cumberland Avenue and, if modified, whether to round off curb, build wall or pave rut area -- 9:20.

15. \*\* Action on repairing damaged curbs and sidewalks at cost of \$130,000 or replacing curbs and damaged sidewalks at cost of approximately \$1 million-plus -- 9:40.

16. \*\* Action on settlement with architects O'Neil and Manion -- 10:00.

17. \*\* Action to retain architect(s) to plan, design and supervise construction of bathhouse and Town Hall improvements -- 10:10.

18. Action on ordinance to provide that violations of the Parking Ordinance may be enforced by any law enforcement officer of the State, County, the Mayor, Clerk-Treasurer or other person authorized by the Town Council, and that the Mayor may contract with Montgomery County for enforcement -- 10:30.

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19. Action on Town Code amendment to require notification of adjoining neighbors outside of Somerset of applications for tree removal -- 10:35.

20. Action on Town Code amendment to require notification of adjoining neighbors outside of Somerset of applications for fence and wall permits -- 10:40.

21. \*\* Introduction of Town Code amendment to require Town permit to install air conditioners, heat pumps or generators when not accompanying construction -- 10:45.

22. Report of emergency expenditure of \$3,133.99 to Mercantila for a robotic pool vacuum -- 10:50.

23. New business -- 10:55.

24. Adjournment -- 11:00.

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.

The **Town Journal** is the official publication of  
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This issue edited by Lesley Simmons