



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL

*"Where People and Trees Have
Deep Roots and Grow Strong"*



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County Council to Vote on Final Westbard Plan in May

Council Vice President Marnie Shaul, Uppingham Street

The Montgomery County Council plans to vote on the Westbard Plan in early May. The Council received a draft plan from the Montgomery County Planning Board in December and since then the Council's Planning Housing and Economic Development

Committee (PHED) held three work sessions on topics such as schools, transportation, the environment and zoning. Our District One Councilmember, Roger Berliner, sat in on these sessions and offered his own plan, which reduced the number of housing units, heights and densities, especially near residential communities. On March 22, the entire County Council took a straw vote on recommendations of the PHED committee; it accepted most of them and made some changes that responded to citizens' concerns. The County Council directed the Planning Board and the Planning staff to revise language to include all the agreed upon language in the draft it will vote on.

The County Council would ordinarily hold its final vote fairly soon after the straw vote. However, a group of concerned citizens called Save Westbard said the plan doesn't reflect their interests and has been protesting. The final draft plan was issued April 15, and comments are due April 26th. The County Council wants to give ample time for everyone to read the final language because much has changed since the original Planning Board draft. The final draft specifies numbers for residential units and building heights and types and has much more detail about potential school enrollments.

Somerset has participated in meetings about the Westbard plan directly and through the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH) for several years. Through the efforts of CCCFH and its members, the County Council substantially changed the Westbard Plan to reduce density and to protect neighborhoods. Although CCCFH members might like even less density, during CCCFH meetings most agreed that the final plan is a reasonable compromise that allows for modernization of the shopping center, increased affordable housing, improved connections for pedestrians and bikers, increased green space, and some daylighting of the Willett Branch. Somerset officials are especially pleased that the County Council has put in some protections that the 10-acre Washington Episcopal School site will be developed as residential rather than as a shopping mall, should the school ever decide to move. We also were pleased that the Council agreed to remove from the County's Master Transportation Plan a third outbound lane on River Road starting below Greystone to Little Falls Avenue. That intersection is one of three main entrances to Somerset and a third lane would have made this intersection much more difficult for residents to use.

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Calendar

Monday, May 2

Bulk Refuse Pickup

Monday, May 16

Brown Bag Lunch

Monday, May 16

MVA Mobile Office

Saturday, May 21

Pool Opening

Saturday, June 18

Somerset's Summer Kickoff

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.



On My Mind

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place

The Power of Participation

It was my fortunate privilege to take Montgomery County's annual civil rights bus tour for the second time earlier this month. It provided me the opportunity to once again relive important American history.

Stops were added this year to Jackson, Nashville and, significantly, Little Rock where we visited the Central High School national historic site. Such a powerful experience! And do you know the school is still in operation, is incredibly diverse, and is truly one of the best public high schools in the nation? This is a great tribute to the courage of the Little Rock Nine.

One of the true legacies of the civil rights movement was the realization that folks organizing and standing up to stated policy could actually create change.

I truly believe that the success of the civic activists here in Montgomery County has roots in what happened Down South in the 60's. Our recent accomplishment in getting the County Council to scale back—for the first time in memory—a large scale development occurred because we knew what history taught us.

I want to encourage all of you to take the County's tour at some point in the future. It could be life changing as it was for me.

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Save the Date

Brown Bag Lunch on Monday, May 16th



By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

Come celebrate the beginning of the summer season at our second quarterly Brown Bag lunch of the year on Monday, May 16, from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. We can discuss the status of proposed changes in land use in the vicinity of the Town that could have a dramatic impact on us. As always, members of the Council and I will host anyone from Town interested and available to talk about any issues or relate a story of two.

Remember to bring a sandwich or dish to share—and a friend.

Beverages, plates and utensils are provided. Email me at mayor@townofsomerset.com if you have any questions.

Barbara Marenus, Editor – bmarenus@gmail.com

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Deadline for copy and ads is the 15th of the month at 4:30 p.m.

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Here's What You Need to Know

By Alexis Carmer, Pool Committee Chair, Essex Avenue

1. **Opening date is Saturday, May 21st.** Remember, pool hours are modified while school is still in session. Full schedule for dates and hours of operation can be found at <http://townofsomerset.com/2217/Pool>.
2. **The new pool manager is Ms. Corrie Duffer.** She is currently a junior at Salisbury University and has been a pool manager for the last four summers. Returning from last season as **assistant manager will be Ms. Camille Schlemme.** Please introduce yourself and welcome them and the lifeguards.
3. **The Somerset Dolphins, our swim team, will sport an all-Somerset coaching staff this year! The registration party for the team will happen on Friday, May 20th, at 6:00 p.m. at the pool.** Please see <http://somersetswimteam.org> for more information.
4. **Key tags will again be required for entry into the pool.** All residents age 8 and above must use their tag to enter the pool. Replacement tags will be offered free of charge at the Town Hall during the entire month of May. Please remember to add funds to your Town account for guest fees.
5. **Morning swim returns—bigger and better.** The morning swim session will run every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 7:15 a.m. to 8:15 a.m., from June 1 to September 2. The session includes space for both a masters style workout and lap swimmers. The charge for morning swim will be \$100 for the entire session (39 swims), or \$5/swim drop in fee. Please email **Matt Zaft** (Dorset) matthew.Zaft@morganstanley.com for more information.
6. **Water aerobics will begin June 20th, and meet every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** This class is open to all residents with a drop-in charge of \$5/session.
7. **The Pool Season Opening Party will be on Saturday, June 18th from 12 noon-2:00 p.m.** Please come out for lunch and a swim.
8. **Please review the pool, guest and party rules.** Refer to <http://townofsomerset.com/DocumentCenter/View/590>.
 - Foursquare will be allowed in the far left corner, past the diving boards, and the court will be chalked on. Future plan is to install a concrete court on the back grassy area.
 - Children that are not potty trained must wear diapers+ rubber pants+ swimsuit.
 - No food or drink on the deck (water is ok).
 - No cars over the bridge except handicapped access and large deliveries (not food delivery or child drop off).
 - NO GLASS NO GLASS NO GLASS.
9. Although we have a beautiful new pool house, the pool itself is showing its age (circa 1970). Over the years, the pool surface, tiles and stones have been patched when needed, but the time has come when repeated “band aids” no longer make financial sense. The Pool Committee and Town Council have worked with John Chadwick, a pool construction consultant, to determine the renovation needs. The concrete structure of the pool is intact, but the plaster coat, tiling and coping stones all need replacement. This work has been budgeted for, and will be bid on this summer with the work completed in the fall after pool season ends.

See you at the pool!

County Council to Vote on Final Westbard Plan in May from page 1

One recommendation of the draft plan is to leave zoning on River Road as is, partly because many of the property owners have little interest in redevelopment at this time. During the public meetings, Somerset supported a vision of River Road as a boulevard with wide sidewalks and trees that was friendly to pedestrians and bikers, especially our students who bike to Westland. CCCFH was instrumental in shaping the McDonalds site, which has wide sidewalks and trees. Our hope is that a River Road vision continues even if the rezoning that would incentivize development is not included. Councilmember Berliner has proposed a study to show how improvements can be made in the absence of new development on River Road. Although change can be unsettling, the Westbard plan is a 30 year plan so change will take place over many decades. Once the Westbard Plan is approved, some developers will submit applications to redevelop their properties. Nearby communities, like Somerset, will need to review site plans to ensure that the developers commit to the amenities in the Westbard Plan so the benefits envisioned for residents become realities.

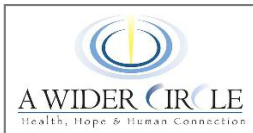


FY17 Budget

At the May 2 Town Council meeting, the Council will consider the adoption of the Mayor's FY 17 proposed budget. An article discussing this budget and the 5-year plan are included in this edition of the Journal. There is also a 2-sided insert which displays the 1-year plan and the

5-year plan. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Bulk Refuse Pickup on May 2



The next neighborhood bulk refuse collection will be on **Monday, May 2, 2016**. All items should be at the curb by 7:00 a.m.

We will be partnering with **A Wider Circle** for this event. A Wider Circle will pick up gently used home furnishings and household items. They will be collecting in Somerset on **Saturday, April 30, 2016**. To schedule a pickup, you must contact them before Monday, April 25th. You can reach them either by phone at **301-608-3504** or via email at furnish@awidercircle.org.

We strongly encourage you to donate your items!

Tennis Court Project



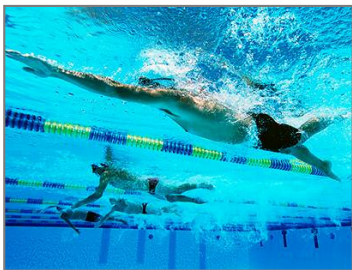
At its March 7 meeting, the Town Council approved a final contract with Bishop's Tennis to install Nova Probounce on the courts. The project is scheduled to start around May 16th.

Once an exact start date is known, the Town will publicize it. The project is scheduled to take approximately 45 days, weather permitting.

Directory Update

We are currently working on the 2016 Town Directory, and we know there may be incorrect email addresses in the current one. Please email any changes to town@townofsomerset.com. If you are new to Somerset, or you wish to amend your household's entry, please send us an email containing any updated information for your listing. You can use the format in the current directory as a guideline. The deadline for revisions will be May 16, 2016.

Update on the Dolphins: Swim Season is Getting Close!



By Nancy Jardini, Swim Team Committee Chair, Essex Avenue

Now that summer is approaching, it is time to remind everyone about the Dolphins, Somerset's swim team. The Somerset Dolphins compete in the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL) and is open to any Town resident 6-18 years of age who can pass the deep water test and is assessed by the coaches, in their sole discretion, as being water safe for the team. The team practices every afternoon after Memorial Day, and each morning and afternoon after school is out. There are two meets a week from mid-June through July. All swimmers compete in Wednesday night meets. Competitive Divisional

Swim Meets occur every Saturday morning where the top 3 swimmers in each event (top 6 in freestyle) compete. There are social events throughout the season, including pizza parties, a pasta potluck, a dessert contest and breakfast with the coaches. At the end of the season, we celebrate with a banquet including trophies, skits, and a slide show. Our swimmers range from "just for fun" to highly competitive – everyone is welcome and everyone has a chance to participate, have fun and be recognized.

The Minis

Minis is the developmental team for little swimmers who cannot pass the deep water test. Mini swimmers are between 4 and 7 years old and must be able to put their face under water. They practice three days a week after school is out. There is one Mini meet and Minis are encouraged to attend all social events.

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The Coaches

We are very pleased and proud to announce that we will have an ALL SOMERSET Coaching Team this year:

Bess Pickar – Head Coach

Nate Albert – Assistant Coach

Gavin Springer – Assistant Coach (will join the team on July 4 after Olympic Trials)

Jessica Khanna – Junior Coach

Abigail Muro – Junior Coach

Manali Neeck – Junior Coach

Potomac Pizza Night

If you dine in or order out at Potomac Pizza on **Wednesday, May 11** and mention Somerset, 20% will go to the swim team!

Registration Party

The pool opens one day early for the swim team at our registration party on **Friday, May 20 at 6:00 p.m.** You can not only swim and get the kids dinner (we'll be selling pizza), but you will be able to register, pick up your spirit wear, and buy the team swim suit and other gear from Sport Fair, our apparel vendor who will be on site. We will also be selling Somerset Parent t-shirts!

Reflections on Earth Day



By Dudley Fowlkes, Council Member, Falstone Avenue

(Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 2016. Somerset's first Bikefest was held on April 24, 2016.)

On Earth Day in 1991, two twenty-three year olds arrived home from California on their bicycles. One of those local guys was me, and to this day the experience inspires and informs my life perspective. We didn't mean to arrive on Earth Day. We didn't think about it as an environmental crusade or anything. We just liked the idea. We were bicycle enthusiasts, which come in all shapes and styles.

But the Washington Times reporter who interviewed us on arrival picked up on something I said about riding through "flyover" country. I told him of the many things we saw and experienced along the way, the most consistent thing was the flotsam and jetsam along the highway. These things

told the story of America better than anything else. We rode 3,334 miles over the course of 55 days, depending on the kindness of strangers the entire way, which is the second thing that most impressed me about America, and indeed, humanity. But I hardly exaggerated when I told him that every mile we rode we saw dirty, discarded disposable diapers on the edge of the road. We saw all kinds of trash, and found treasure, too.

It was Earth Day, and so the reporter decided to tie it all together. The next day, the article's headline read: *Local Men Ride Bikes on Trek for Earth*, and there was a picture of us in DuPont circle with garlands around our necks that my mother had presented.

I've associated Earth Day with that experience ever since. This year, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of our trip, I decided to try to organize a gathering of the people I live amongst to talk about bikes, learn about them, have fun riding them, and tell stories. Every bike ride is a story, and stories are for sharing. Here's one, lifted from a daily journal I kept as we made our way across the country.

Between There and Here

We're out of the saddle eating in a diner/Mobil station seventy miles from Raleigh, a place called Voss and it's Sunday. The proprietor here took notice of our achievement and served us each a short stack for free. He said he trained for the SEALS in Coronado, then lost a man to a shark in Grenada.

The rain last night surprised us, and the campsite, under the backeaves of the Marston Baptist Church, pooled. The soothing patter became a drip which led to splashes that worried us, and then the standing water galled us out. The front stoop offered shelter, so we shifted with our gear, there. Irregular headlights revealed us disconcertingly as strange silhouettes against the countryside, but dry, we waited it out on the step.

The last town we threaded through was Southern Pines. It was out of season and the stores shuttered. Somewhere in the dark there were more hungry dogs, and we pedaled with greater purpose as they pursued. Then they gave up and it was quiet again save for the song of our tires.



Mayor's Note on the FY17 Budget

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place

The Council, staff, Ad Hoc Budget Committee and I take our budget process seriously and work very hard on our finances. We always try to economize and keep costs down. However, this year many factors have led the Council and me to propose an increase in the property tax, which is the only major revenue source that we control. These factors include the uncertainty of revenues as a result of the Supreme Court's Wynne decision and major administrative problems in the Comptroller's office, the desire to fund high quality of life services like sidewalk snow removal, and the need for adequate reserves. Fortunately, our rates are still comparable to the other municipalities in the area. Furthermore, for years our rates had been artificially low because the previous administration did not do the sophisticated budgeting and planning that we do today. We always need to be prepared to protect our vital assets like the swimming pool, Town Hall, parkland, trees and streets.

Somerset's FY17 Budget and Five-Year Plan

By Rich Charnovich, Town Manager

The proposed FY17 1-year budget and 5-year plan are inserts in this month's Journal. Below is a general summary containing the highlights of each budget.

The FY17 budget proposal is scheduled to be acted upon at the May 2, 2016 Council meeting.

The 5-year plan is not a document that is approved; it is a general guideline which Somerset elected officials and the administration can utilize over the course of the next 5 years. It will change year to year as circumstances change.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

FY17 Budget Plan Summary

Revenue Highlights

The two major sources of revenue for Somerset are income and real estate taxes. A recent Supreme Court decision, the Wynne Case, will adversely affect Somerset's budget. The full effect is still not known, so some uncertainty exists in the FY17 budget and moving forward because of this decision by the Court. In order for Somerset to combat this permanent loss in revenue and provide additional services such as sidewalk snow/ice treatment, a two-cent increase in the real property tax is proposed for FY17. It is currently at \$0.08 and is proposed to be raised to \$0.10 per \$100 in assessed value.

Operating Expenditure Highlights

Expenditures for FY17 are projected to increase. An additional part-time staff person is being considered in the Town Hall due to an increased workload over the past few years. Our long standing plan reviewer and code officer, Larry Plummer, retired at the end of 2015. A new arrangement is in place, but the Town is still working through what projected overall costs will be with the new arrangement in place. Fees for the Town Arborist are scheduled to be up in FY17 due to the proposed WSSC project in Town parkland. Extra time will be required to monitor the trees scheduled to be removed and the trees that will be re-planted when the project is completed. Part-time police protection spending is set at the same level as FY16. Two consultants are scheduled to be hired in FY17 to look at specific projects: one will look at the upstairs of the Town Hall and make recommendations on what capital projects could be completed. Currently, it is only used as storage and is unfurnished. The second will be to look at all of the street lights in the Town to determine what it would take to convert them to more energy efficient models which will ultimately save the Town money in the long run. Snow removal is a very difficult expenditure to predict year to year. This past winter, the Town changed its law, which now requires the Town contractor to treat public sidewalks when it snows no matter the level of snowfall. Previously, the contractor only treated the sidewalks if over 2 inches of snow fell on the walks. We feel this new policy will make the sidewalks consistently safer. Refuse, recycling and compost collections continue to be a significant component of the budget. The Town continues to hire a pool management company yearly to oversee management of the Town Pool.

Capital Project Highlights

Due to the revenue uncertainty mentioned, capital projects in FY17 are proposed to be light. The largest project will be at the Town Pool at the end of this season on the pool deck area itself. The pool bridge is also scheduled to be worked on in FY17. Crack sealing and some curb work on Town roads have been budgeted, but no major public works projects are scheduled for FY17.

5-Year Fiscal Plan Summary

Revenues

Over the course of the 5-year plan, a 3.9 percent rate of growth for property tax collections has been incorporated (excluding the impact of the above-mentioned property tax increase). State income tax revenue receipts are a very difficult component to predict in the Town budget. Each year, the Town requests Montgomery County to share its own income tax forecasts. The income tax forecasts in Somerset's 5-year budget show the same growth profile as those provided by Montgomery County.

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General and Capital Expenditures

The 5-year plan is a guideline for Somerset and not a binding document. From a general expenditure standpoint, the items that are the greatest portion of the plan are as follows: personnel and consultant costs, Town tree maintenance, management of the Town Pool including operational and capital improvement costs, refuse/recycling/composting, and debt service on the bond issued to complete the pool house renovation project.

The core part of the 5-year plan is capital spending. **Here is a list of the highlights in the 5-year plan:**

- In FY18, funds are budgeted for the Town Hall. The idea is to consider implementing the recommendations of a consultant who the Town will hire in FY17.
- Funding is included in FY18 thru FY21 to possibly implement the recommendations of the street lighting consulting whom the Town is proposing to hire in FY17.
- The public works department uses 2 trucks. Replacement of each of these trucks is included in the plan: one in FY19 and one in FY21.
- Since no public works capital projects are planned for FY17, funds are included in FY18 and FY20 to complete one each of these 2 years in the immediate future. The specific projects have not been determined yet, but will likely be a combination of street, curb and sidewalk work.
- Town-owned trees are one of the unique aspects and assets of Somerset. Funds are included in all 5 years to plant trees in the spring and fall of each calendar year.
- A capital project is scheduled at the Town Pool in FY17, but after that, no large-scale projects are currently planned.
- The tennis court overlay project is scheduled to be completed before FY16 is over; therefore, once the new court surface is installed, no large-scale work is scheduled on the courts over the remainder of the plan.
- There are no plans in the 5-year plan to resurface the basketball courts.

Lastly, the 5-year budget includes an estimate of how our reserves will be affected by the various revenue and expenditure trends discussed above. The Town strives to maintain an adequate level of reserves to deal with any contingencies and, as such, also strives to build a Rainy Day Fund that will eventually be equivalent to 12 months of operating expenditures. In the current five-year plan, we expect to reach nine months by the outer year of the plan.

Tennis Courts Torn Up—Here's Where to Play

By Frank S. Joseph, Chair, Tennis Committee, Warwick Place

Somerset tennis court renovation still is on target for mid May. The work may last up to 45 days. During that period, we have reciprocal tennis privileges at the Somerset House condominiums. Here is how that will work.

1. **Call ahead.** You must reserve your court 72 hours in advance. Somerset House allows one-hour signups for singles and 1½-hour signups for doubles. The number is **301-654-6780**.
2. **Show your Somerset tennis card at the gatehouse for admission.** The gatehouse will have a current list of cardholders to check against.
3. **Sign a waiver.** Somerset House is a gated community. They have liability issues. The waiver form will be available at Somerset House the first time you play.
4. **Parking is extremely limited.** There are nine visitor spaces. Best to walk, bike or carpool.
5. **Follow their rules.** For a copy, contact Frank Joseph at keycom@verizon.net.
6. **Non-Somerset-resident guests are OK but they must be accompanied by you, the Somerset tennis-card holder.**
7. **Instructors are not OK** – at least not non-approved instructors. However, you may be able to arrange something with one of their approved instructors.
8. **There are blackout times.** We are NOT allowed to use their courts during the following periods:

Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Sunday: 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Monday: 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday: 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Friday: 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Where to Play Somerset
Tennis During Renovations

Council Meeting Actions

The Town Council met in regular session on Monday, April 4, 2016. The Town Council took the following actions:

1. Approval of a contract with NB Health and Fitness, LLC for water aerobics classes at the Town Pool for 2016.
2. Approval of a contract with Camp Summerset for use of the Town Pool for the 2016 season.
3. Approval of a contract with Vigilant Security for security monitoring at the Town Pool for the 2016 season.
4. Approval of a contract with AquaFree Facilities Services, Inc. for cleaning services for the Town Pool 2016 season.
5. Approval of a contract with Innovative Pest Management, Inc. for pest management services at the Town Pool for the 2016 season.
6. Adoption of a Proclamation declaring June 2, 2016 National Gun Violence Awareness Day.
7. Approval of a demolition permit for an accessory building and dumpster permit at 4910 Dorset Avenue.
8. Approval of a building permit for a small addition at 5702 Warwick Place.
9. Recommendation of the Town Council acting as the Local Advisory Panel to the Historic Preservation Commission on an application submitted for 4718 Cumberland Avenue to renovate the existing accessory building at the rear of the house and construction of a garage in the side yard.
10. Approval of permits at 4823 Cumberland Avenue to complete the following: demolition of existing structure, building permit to construct new home, driveway apron permit, dumpster permit, tree removal permit, and reforestation plan.
11. Approval of permits at 5405 Surrey Street to complete the following: demolition of existing structure, building permit to construct new home, driveway apron permit, wall permit to construct 4 walls, tree removal permit, and reforestation plan.
12. Approval of the Town trees to be planted at the following locations in the spring of 2016:

4816 Cumberland, 2 serviceberry	5706 Warwick, 1 celestial dogwood
5509 Uppingham, 1 redbud	5801 Warwick, 1 white oak
5514 Uppingham, 1 redbud	5812 Warwick, 1 celestial dogwood
5702 Warwick, 1 redbud	4723 Cumberland, 1 red oak
13. Approval of Permit as requested by PEPCO to complete reliability work on feeder #14949 on Dorset Avenue, Surrey Street and Greystone Streets. The work includes: replacement of 6 poles, 5 overhead transformers and associated equipment.
14. Approval of a proposal submitted by Lindsey and Associates for professional auditing services to complete the FY16 audit.
15. Mayor Slavin presented his monthly report. Town Manager Charnovich presented the March Financial Report. The FY17 budget was introduced and a summary was presented along with the 5 year fiscal plan. Council Member Condos, Council Member Peale and Town Manager Charnovich provided an update on the Town Code and Charter project with General Code.



By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

Many thanks to all who came out and voted on Election Day in Somerset—and also viewed the lovely artwork on display. Congratulations to Council Member **Barbara Condos** (Falstone) on her re-election and Council Member **Dudley Fowlkes** (Falstone) on his initial run for office. I look forward to working with these two outstanding individuals over the next two years. I also want to publicly express my gratitude to the voters for showing their confidence in me by returning

me to the Mayor's office for a fifth time. I continue to be enthusiastic in my elected role and am grateful for the opportunity to serve the Town.

I also would like to commend the entire Town Council for their recent hard work in approving two capital improvement projects that are about to begin. A construction project to completely rebuild our three tennis courts will commence soon. I know that all the tennis players will be excited to play on a world-class surface. And I also appreciate how closely the Council worked with WSSC on a project in our parkland to remedy a problem that has created a serious environmental hazard. The plan that the Council approved, which will be operated and funded by WSSC, will save and protect as many trees as possible and will respect the rights of owners of the adjoining properties. Work on this project will begin soon.



A good Somerset "citizen"

To repeat what I say every year, now that we are finally in the spring season and flowers are blooming, I hope we will all make a special effort to use the trashcans when disposing of waste, especially cigarettes butts, small pieces of paper, chewing gum, and most importantly dog poop. The value of our streetscape can never be overestimated so anything that we can do to enhance it is vital. This would include making little stops on your walks to bend down to pick up unsightly items. The Council, staff and I will be greatly appreciative. It is also important to put away toys and garden supplies when we are not using them, and put away basketball hoops when game time is over.

Kudos are in order to so many of you who closely followed the County Council process to consider a major revision in the master plan for the Westbard area, which practically adjoins Somerset. As a result of your emails, calls, public appearances, and the incredible leadership of elected officials and our own Council

Vice President **Marnie Shaul** (Uppingham) the County Council is about to approve a final plan that for the first time in recent memory, or maybe ever, actually reduces the high building density as compared to the original proposal. I hope we can now all breathe a sigh of relief.

General Permits



Tree Removal Permits

4905 Dorset Avenue, 1 Cedar

5806 Warwick Place, 1 Cryptomeria and 1 White Pine



All About People

By Alan Dock, Falstone Avenue

Electronic gremlins seemed to have gotten into my column last month. Apologies for the strange sentence construction in my opening paragraph. Some words misplaced – but I’m sure you worked it out!

Speaking of “working it out,” did you identify the intersection in my puzzle photo last month? Details were difficult to discern, but for those of you with sharp eyes, you might have recognized the intersection of Falstone Avenue and Surrey Street, Falstone running roughly horizontal in the picture.

Two new families are joining our community this month: **Maximilian** and **Wendy Teleki** are moving into **Warwick Place with their three children, Tibor** (age 11), and **twins Ava and Naoma** (age 9); while **Kris Garin** and **Semra Mesulam** with their children **Serena** (nearly 5 years) and **Julian** (nearly 2 years) will be up the hill on Surrey Street. Welcome to both families. I hope you will soon make friends and join in our community activities.

You may remember in the April column, I highlighted the prowess of several of our youngsters in the sport of wrestling. In an update to that story, the Washington Post reported in February that Freshman **Eli Guttentag** (Warwick) collected a first-period pin, and Bethesda-Chevy Chase conquered Whitman, 47-18, to wrap up the Montgomery County South Division with a 13-1 county record. We look forward to more news from our talented wrestlers!

Turning now to college news . . . **Barbara Levine** (Uppingham) told me her son Caleb is graduating this month from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. He is planning to return to this area, and is hoping to get a job as a paralegal. Her daughter, **Shoshana**, will complete her sophomore year at Barnard College a liberal arts college for women in New York, and will be working again this summer at Camp Summerset. (New residents, do you know about ‘Camp Summerset’? Check it out!)

David and **Stephanie Lynn** (Surrey) will be attending graduation ceremonies at the University of Pennsylvania this month when their daughter **Alison** will be awarded a Masters degree in Social Work. Alison will be working at the Penn Memory Center this summer. **Jeremy Lynn**, their son, graduated from the Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland in 2014, and is carving out a career for himself working for a supply chain software company in Atlanta, Georgia.

Lastly in college news, **Sarah Morse** and **David Kathan** of Dorset Avenue have two graduations this month! **Toby Kathan** is graduating from the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, and his brilliant wife **Kate Howard Kathan** will be receiving her medical degree from the University of Iowa. The couple will be moving to Minneapolis, where Kate will start her residency in Family Medicine. Sarah writes “we are looking forward to visiting, especially when it gets too hot in DC!”



“Strain of the Earth’s Sweet Being,” a painting by Carol Barsha

The Maryland State Arts Council has recently honored one of our resident artists, **Carol Barsha** (Essex). From a field of 585 Individual Artist Award applicants, 96 artists, including Carol, were chosen as MSAC 2016 Individual Artist Award grantees. These awards are designed to encourage and sustain Maryland artists’ pursuit of artistic excellence. Congratulations Carol!

Here is some news from the world of finance, of interest to all of us saving for retirement. In a historic pro-consumer move, the U.S. Department of Labor approved a landmark federal rule requiring those who advise retirement investors to disclose hidden fees and act in the best interests of their clients. This measure is expected to save hard-working Americans billions of dollars while driving much needed reforms of the stock brokerage, mutual fund and insurance industries.

Why is this of particular interest in our community column? **Scott Puritz** (Essex) is Managing Director of **Rebalance IRA**, a member of the *Save Our Retirement coalition*, and he testified before the U.S. Senate in favor of these historic pro-consumer protections. “*This is an extraordinary victory for the American consumer,*” said Puritz. “*The U.S. Department of Labor has*

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Classified Ads



Miscellaneous

BOZEMAN, MONTANA: Ski Big Sky & the Bridgers! Enjoy our furnished four-bedroom+ home on 20 acres with spectacular 360 degree vistas. Only ten minutes from downtown Bozeman, 30 from skiing at Bridger Bowl, and 60 from Big Sky Ski/Resort. Hiking/biking trails everywhere! And then there's the fishing! Weekly/monthly rentals. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** for more details at srpvacationhomes@gmail.com or **301-652-1207**.

PARIS, FRANCE: Paris is affordable again. Enjoy our furnished, one-bedroom, well-located apartment in the heart of historic Paris. Walk to the Louvre, the Pompidou Center, the Seine and two Metro stops. Available to rent on a weekly or monthly basis. For additional information, contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at srpvacationhomes@gmail.com or **301-652-1207**.

LIFESTYLE AND WELLNESS COACHING: Would you like to get unstuck and upgrade your lifestyle and wellness habits? Small changes can make a lasting difference. If you are curious to see if coaching is right for you contact Certified Wellness Coach **Diane Horn RDH CHHC** at **301-654-0310** or diane.b.horn@gmail.com.

HAVING TROUBLE WITH TECHNOLOGY? Let me untangle it for you. Hire your own personal technology concierge, who helps you figure out what to buy, how it works, and keep it working. I am available for any question or issue. Call **Jonathan Horn** at **202-557-1151** or email Jon.m.horn@gmail.com.

DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR INCLINATION TO TACKLE ALL YOUR TO DO'S? Please let me help you troubleshoot, research and resolve those problems hanging over your head. Think of me as an extra set of hands to complete whatever projects need attention. Contact **Rob Albert** at **202-436-1115** or email Rob@DependableDad.com.

YOGA IN THE 'HOOD: Come as you are to CalmHeart Yoga! All bodies are welcome to bend, stretch and strengthen in small, personalized classes. Currently S/M/Th mornings. Kids' classes, meditation, restorative, partner yoga, yoga for anxiety or insomnia available by request. Contact **Lauren Rubenstein** at **301-928-9606** or DrLaurenRubenstein@gmail.com.

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. **Fifty word** limit per advertisement.



Somerset's Helping Hand Is Just a Phone Call Away

If you need a ride, someone to pick up some groceries or a prescription, or even if you just want to get to a friend's house, give us a ring. We have a list of 30 Somerset volunteers who can help. Call **Zola Schneider** at **301-654-7481** or Council Member **Barbara Zeughauser** at **301-951-8560** and we will set it up.

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estimated that consumers lose over \$17 billion through excessive fees every year, draining investment accounts of money needed for retirement. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez and his team should be commended for persevering in the face of serious opposition by the brokers." More power to you Scott!

Here is a little story about **Harpo** (Uppingham) to end this month's column. Harpo is a large white woolly dog belonging to **Barbara Levine**, mentioned earlier in this column. You may have seen Harpo taking his exercise with Barbara on the streets of Somerset. What you may not know is that Harpo is a specially trained dog, was registered as a 'care giver' and was allowed to enter hospitals where he would comfort seriously ill children. I mentioned to Barbara that I had not seen Harpo around the neighborhood recently, and she wrote me "*Harpo is fine. He just turned 13 and doesn't see too well, but other than that and a little arthritis is hanging in there. He still goes to visit children at the DC public library and listens to the stories they read to him. (Although sometimes he falls asleep).*" Some neighbors saw him recently when the dog sitter took him for too long a walk. She had to bring him home in a Rodman's shopping cart. Go Harpo!

Preliminary Agenda

Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting

Somerset Town Hall, Monday, May 2, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will meet in regular session on Monday, May 2, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall. Agenda updates are posted on the Town website: www.townofsomerset.com.

Council Work Session – 7:00 p.m.

Council Meeting Convenes – 7:30 p.m.

Swearing-In of 2 Council Members and Mayor

Election of Council Vice President

Comments: Public Comment Period – 7:30 p.m.*

CONSENT

1. **Motion:** To consider approval of the Council liaison assignments for 2016-2017.
2. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of a HVAC replacement unit application submitted by Donald Kosin and Joyce Somsak, 4709 Trent Court.
3. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of a HVAC replacement unit application submitted by Jamie and Debbie Heller, 4803 Falstone Avenue.
4. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of a HVAC replacement unit application submitted by Susan Schneider, 5508 Greystone Street.

NON-CONSENT

1. **Discussion:** Town Manager's April Financial Report – 7:40 p.m.
2. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider adoption of the FY17 Budget and set the real and personal property tax rates – 7:45 p.m.
3. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider a site plan amendment application submitted by Tom Eldridge and Jennifer Marron, 5607 Warwick Place, to construct a new fence and retaining wall – 7:55 p.m.
4. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of a permit request submitted by the WSSC to complete a pipe rehabilitation project in Town parkland adjacent to Wisconsin Avenue – 8:00 p.m.
5. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of the following Town tree planting for the spring of 2016 as recommended by the Parks and Natural Resources Committee and the Town Arborist – 8:25 p.m.
1 yoshino cherry at 5522 Trent Street
6. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of the removal of the following Town trees as recommended by the Town Arborist – 8:30 p.m.
4718 Essex – 1 Pin Oak, tree #300 | Park across from 4507 Dorset Avenue – 1 Norway Maple
5522 Trent Street – 1 Flowering Cherry, tree #672 | Pool area along the back fence line – 1 Ash
7. **Discussion:** Update on the design and storm water management by Nobis Engineering, Inc. on the Somerset Elementary School turf renovation project – 8:35 p.m.
8. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of an application request submitted by the Somerset Elementary School to remove certain trees in relation to turf field renovation project – 8:45 p.m.
9. **Public Hearing / Motion:** Environmental Committee Storm Water Management Plan proposal – 8:55 p.m.
10. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider bids received for exterior work on the Town Hall building – 9:05 p.m.
11. **Discussion:** General Code Update – 9:15 p.m.
12. **Discussion:** Mayor's Report – 9:20 p.m.
13. **Adjourn:** – 9:25 p.m.

Key

Public Hearing Item: Agenda item where public comment is permitted.

Discussion Item: Agenda item limited to discussion among the Council, Mayor and Town Staff.

Motion Item: Agenda item requesting action, limited to Council discussion.

Comments: Opinions and Questions from Town residents.

* Residents who wish to be present for a particular Agenda item are advised to arrive 20 minutes ahead of the item's scheduled discussion time since discussions sometimes run ahead of schedule.

This is a preliminary Agenda prepared to meet the Journal press deadline, which typically is two to three 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 contact Rich Charnovich at Town Hall if you are interested in what has been added, or consult the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch or the Town website/email blasts for the most up-to-date Agenda.



Council Members: Barbara Zeughauser, Franny Peale, Dudley Fowlkes, Marnie Shaul, Barbara Condos