



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

# SomerseT TOWN JOURNAL



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February 2022

## "SomerseT, Slavery, and Segregation" Forum Educates and Raises Awareness

By **L. Paige Whitley**, Chair, History and Archives Committee, Cumberland Avenue and **Atsuko Horiguchi**, Chair, Equity and Inclusion Committee, Essex Avenue

On January 18, 2022, the day after Martin Luther King Day, the History & Archives Committee and the Equity & Inclusion Committee co-hosted a joint Zoom forum for SomerseT residents, "SomerseT, Slavery, and Segregation." **Paige Whitley** (Cumberland), a local researcher and Chair of the History and Archives Committee, presented a historical overview of our area covering slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and early segregation, providing glimpses of the past through new sources not usually included in SomerseT's institutional history. Recent research indicates, for example, that in 1906, SomerseT was part of a group of white communities thwarting a nearby Black development called Belmont.\*

The event—which included Whitley's presentation, Q&A, and small-group discussions—was moderated by Equity and Inclusion Committee Chair **Atsuko Horiguchi** (Essex). Nearly 60 participants engaged actively, and reflected on the history presented and what it might mean for

residents, both present and future. Whitley encouraged residents interested in working on historical research projects to contact [historyandarchivescommittee@townofsomerset.com](mailto:historyandarchivescommittee@townofsomerset.com).



Screenshot from Whitley's presentation

[EDITOR'S NOTE: If you missed this event or want to revisit it, recordings will be available at: 1) The Town's YouTube channel (<https://bit.ly/3nHFCFG>), 2) the Montgomery Municipal Cable Channel (<https://bit.ly/3Ksn1XI>), and 3) the Montgomery Municipal Cable Channel's website (<https://www.mmctv.org/video/>)]

\*Research conducted by Neil Flanagan and Kimberly Bender; the documentary video, "Belmont: The Lost Plan for a Black Chevy Chase," can also be viewed at <https://youtu.be/qq8sNOU2UA0>.

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## ON MY MIND

### On the Issue of Gun Violence

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, *Warwick Place*

Realizing that national issues like climate change, income inequality and voting rights violations are at the forefront of the daily news these days, I am sure that most of us understand, regretfully, that Congress seems to be at a standstill in addressing them. This is unfortunate.

Thus, it seems to me that our best opportunities to begin to solve these problems are at the State, local and grassroots levels. This is where we can all contribute.

From what I have heard and read over the holiday season, especially in Town, crime is going to be the foremost topic on County voters' minds this election year. Of course, the most serious aspect of this subject relates to the issue of gun violence.

I have been a long-term member of the group Mayors Against Illegal Guns (<https://mayors.everytown.org>). There I have united with others in similar positions regarding our duty to do our utmost to protect our residents from this serious threat. I take every opportunity to advocate for policies and positions to address this.

As the group's statement of principles asserts, "Every year nearly 40,000 Americans are killed with guns and 85,000 Americans are shot and wounded as a result of gun assaults, unintentional shootings, attempted gun suicides and shootings by law enforcement, devastating families and communities across the country, with a disproportionate impact on Black and Latino/a/x people."

Another group with which I have been associated is Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence ([mdpgv.org](http://mdpgv.org)), which is a leader at the state level at a time when gridlock has stymied gun legislation at the federal level.

Now is the time for Somerset residents to collectively raise their voices to challenge decision makers to take action. I hope that several of our committees will take up this topic and make formal recommendations to the Town Council.

It's long past time.

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Monday thru Friday  
301-657-3211 | Fax: 301-657-2773  
TTY users call Maryland Relay

### SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL

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# Winter Comes to Somerset

Creek cleanup followed by snow—then MORE snow!



*Photo of Sam Wender, courtesy of Joseph Wender (Warwick). Photo of the Town of Somerset sign, courtesy of Paige Whitley (Cumberland).*

## FEBRUARY 2022 TOWN CALENDAR

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Pool Committee Meeting, via Zoom\*  
7:30 p.m.

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Equity & Inclusion Committee Meeting, via Zoom\*  
8:00 p.m.

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Town Hall closed in observance of Presidents' Day holiday  
All Day

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Town Council Meeting, via Zoom\*  
7:00 p.m.

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Town Council Work Session, via Zoom\*  
5:30 p.m.

\*Login information for Zoom meetings will be sent via email the week prior to the meeting. Residents may also email [town@townofsomerset.com](mailto:town@townofsomerset.com) for log in and dial-in information.



# Town Council News

## Changing Somerset Code for Setbacks for House Projections

*Ordinance 11-21-2: An ordinance to amend the Code of Ordinances to amend and clarify the exemptions from setbacks for projections*

**By Council President Steve Surko, Uppingham Street**

Over the last year, during the course of routine building permit application reviews, the Council has identified a number of issues with our current Town Building Code (<https://ecode360.com/SO3592>). We have discussed these issues in some depth at our open Council Work Sessions, and have identified §112-14 Building requirements; stormwater drainage (d) Exceptions for projections and appurtenant structures as a source of particular contention. This section describes exemptions that allow buildings to extend into (i.e., violate) required boundary setbacks without Council review.

At the November 15 Council Work Session, we introduced Ordinance 11-21-2, to amend the Code of Ordinances and clarify the exemptions from setbacks for projections. The proposed ordinance states, in part: "the Town Council finds that the exemptions for projections, which are based on historical forms of construction, are difficult at times to apply to contemporary forms of construction and should, therefore, be deleted." In other words, because setback exemptions would not be included in the Town Code, any deviation from the setback would require Council approval.

We considered whether Ordinance 11-21-2 would result in more box-like houses. At our Work Session on December 16, the Town Attorney noted that several neighboring jurisdictions have similarly dealt with this situation by eliminating the exemptions for projections and appurtenant structures — and have not experienced an aesthetic shift to boxier houses. That said, some Council Members expressed an interest in maintaining some exemptions (e.g., front porch, rear deck). To inform its decision on the proposed ordinance, the Council encourages residents to submit their comments to the Town Manager ([manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com)).

## Improving our Tree Code

**By Robin Barr, Council Member, Essex Avenue**

Somerset is a Tree City, USA. We all love our trees and I remember fondly the glorious colors we saw last fall. That majesty is one of Somerset's true treasures. Our Town seeks to preserve this tree canopy and we have a chapter in the Code (Chapter 182) that is only about managing trees on our land.



Despite our strong sentiments on trees, and the Town's own prior efforts to translate these sentiments into effective code, we have been losing tree canopy for quite a few years. Some of the reasons are the compromises that we make to maintain our quality of life. For example, PEPCO now requires us to avoid planting Town canopy trees that would interfere with lines when wind and snow bring branches down. That means we lose canopy trees to prevent power outages.

Given that kind of compromise, it is more important than ever that our Code is as effective as possible in protecting and expanding this majestic canopy. In a substantial effort, our Parks and Natural Resources Committee (Chaired by **Kristen Khanna**, Uppingham) has recommended several changes to strengthen the Code and Council will decide whether to adopt these changes at our next meeting on February 7.

The committee seeks to broaden our consideration of trees being removed to include effects on retaining stormwater on the property. It also asks that the Town

*Continued on page 5*



## Town Council News

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consider the recent (five year) prior history of trees being removed from the property. When a replanting plan is proposed, the committee asks that we better specify the maturity of saplings when they are planted, the choice of trees planted (with native canopy trees preferred), and the maintenance period required when owners are expected to plant replacements at their own expense for any trees that fail.

In the current Code, the Mayor can approve the removal of up to two trees while a request to remove three or more trees needs to be considered in an open Council Meeting — where neighbors may raise concerns. The Council is also considering an amendment that bases the standard on the sum of the diameters of the trees to be removed (at a particular height) rather than on the number of trees. In effect, several small trees would be considered by the Mayor, while one large tree (i.e., canopy tree) would need open Council review with an opportunity for neighbors and other residents to comment.

If you have thoughts on how we can protect our trees by using the Town, please do attend the Council Meeting on February 7. Or you can send an email with your comment to [manager@TownofSomerset.com](mailto:manager@TownofSomerset.com).

### Accessory Dwelling Units in Somerset

**By Robin Barr, Council Member, Essex Avenue**

In-law suites, granny apartments — they are known by many names. In our County's Code, they are called "accessory dwelling units" (ADUs). Somerset has a few of these ADUs already and our Council is seeing requests for more such units. As a few concerns arose over the need for the additional on-site parking space for at least some ADUs, we decided it worthwhile to develop new regulations to guide our decision-making on future requests.

Montgomery County's Code is already very helpful and touches on parking, height, and setback factors. But given the limited parking space allowed by our narrow streets, we believed a new law that allows our own decision making in Somerset makes most sense. Our proposed amendment requires that a new parking space be created if parking for three cars is not already available on the property on which an ADU would be located.

ADUs may be used to house a family member — an adult child, an in-law, and so on. They may also be used to generate rental income; this use requires a rental license from the County. ADUs require a kitchen area, bathroom facilities, and a sleeping area. They are frequently created as space within the existing house — basement apartments are typical. Occasionally, they are separate buildings in the back or side yard.

We can see ADUs as affordable ways for students or other young people to live in Somerset — a close-in community that might otherwise be beyond their reach. Or we can see them as ways to use space in our homes now available after children have grown, gone forth, and prospered (we hope!). The possible uses are limited only by our imagination — and our budgets, and the permitting required, of course.

The Town Council introduced the proposed Code amendment at our January meeting, and we will be voting on adopting it at the upcoming meeting on Monday, February 7. Please bring any questions about the proposed Code to that meeting. Or you can send an email ahead of the meeting to [manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com).



# Letters to the Editor

## CHANGE THE SOMERSET VOTING AGE TO 16

Dear Neighbors,

Currently, the right to vote in Town of Somerset elections is limited to residents 18 years old and older. I propose that the Town Council lower the voting age to 16. Including teen voices in Town decisions would benefit both our Town and our teens.

Five cities in Maryland have already lowered their voting age to 16, including nearby Takoma Park and Hyattsville. These cities have experienced higher voter turnout rates among 16- and 17-year-olds than among older populations.

Here's why we should lower the voting age in Somerset:

1. Town issues affect teens too. Lowering the voting age would allow teens to express their views and would be more inclusive of all residents.
2. Many teenagers are already involved in advocacy, as shown all over the world, as well as by some of our residents. If teens are already changing the world as citizens, shouldn't their interests be represented in their local community?

3. One can start driving before 16. If teens can be trusted in this life and death matter, they can also be trusted with responsible voting.
4. There is a trickle up effect. Teens will start talking about Town issues with those in their households, causing the adults to be more interested and more likely to vote.
5. This is an opportunity to strengthen the lacking civics education in our country. By getting this opportunity to vote while still living at home, teens will have the adults in their households to help them learn about the issues and approaches.
6. Studies have shown that the younger someone starts voting, the more likely it is to become a habit, meaning they will vote in more elections when they are older.

If you support this proposal, please add your name to this petition for the Town Council to lower the voting age from 18 to 16 for Somerset elections: [bit.ly/33EWNah](https://bit.ly/33EWNah)

Parents, please show this to your children, who may not follow Town news because they think it does not involve them — which is exactly what should change!

Amalia Levitin (17)

Trent Street

## IMPLICATIONS OF NEWLY ADOPTED TOWN CODE REGARDING NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION

*[This Letter to the Editor previously appeared as a December 30, 2021 post in the Somerset-list as a response.]*

Dear Neighbors,

The building permits granted by the county for two properties on Little Cumberland represent misguided applications of inadequate county regulation of new home construction.

In the case of the development at the first property for which a county and town permit were granted, the County allowed a 50% waiver of the requirement for on-site storage of stormwater runoff generated by impervious surfaces. Because of years of inaction on the part of the

Somerset Town Council, at the time the town permit for this property was considered, there was no capacity to apply more rigorous town regulation.

The issues surrounding the permit were not new or novel. The urgency of the situation at hand prompted the current Town Council members to request that the Stormwater Study Committee propose how best to improve regulation of new home construction in advance of submitting its more comprehensive report to the Council this winter; the Committee did so, with the result that the Council moved as quickly as it could to consider, approve and provide notice of code changes. This process requires several months.

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## Letters to the Editor

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Unfortunately, the second development on Little Cumberland was considered by the Town Council on Dec. 6th, *the day before* the new, rigorous Town Code regarding construction of new homes became effective. The County granted this development a waiver of virtually all of the requirements for on-site storage of stormwater runoff and the Town had no capacity to impose different requirements.

These properties will be the last to be developed without the Town's new rigorous requirements regarding use of permeable driveways and the storage of rooftop runoff on-site. The changes also enforce a process in which the Town and the building permit applicant engage in discussions at the design concept stage, when they can

be most productive in protecting the tree canopy and land area suitable for green infrastructure to deal adequately with runoff. New requirements are applicable to all development, including multiple-family dwellings.

In its upcoming report, the Stormwater Study Committee will be offering recommendations on more comprehensive regulatory changes regarding building permits for additions and renovations. As a member of the Committee, I have every confidence that the Town Council and Mayor will give serious consideration to the recommendations, as they have to date.

Julie Greenberg  
Falstone Avenue

### GENERAL PERMITS

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#### BUILDING PERMIT

##### **4524 Dorset Avenue**

- Demolition Permit
- Wall/Fence Permit
- Building Permit
- Driveway Apron Permit
- Dumpster Permit

#### TREE REMOVALS

##### **5502 Greystone Street**

- Southern Magnolia – 24"
- The tree has a crack between two trunks and some decay at base.
- Tree is hazardous

##### **4910 Essex Avenue**

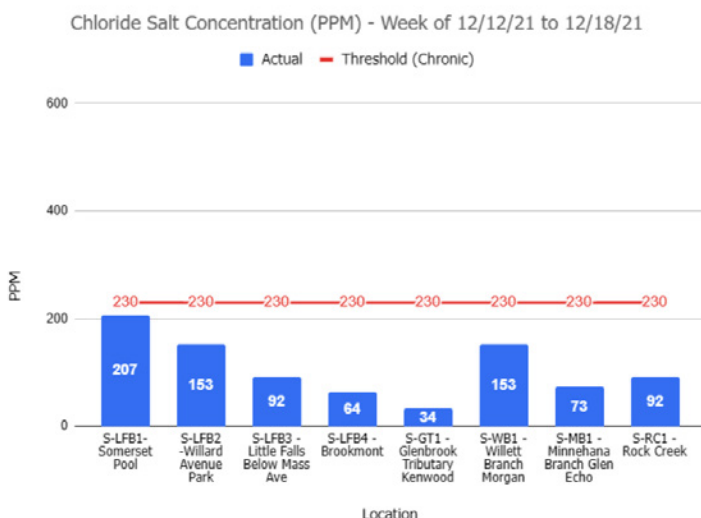
- Southern Red Oak – 18"
- The tree is hollow at the base and is hazardous.



## Too Much Salt: Somerset Needs to Rethink Its Road Treatment Policy

Urban streams like Little Falls Branch have it tough in the winter. As usual, the culprit is us. Because it is safer to have clear streets free of ice and snow, the people who plow also put down salt — in huge quantities. As soon as snow and ice melt, much of that salt ends up in the creek where it is toxic to the fresh water organisms. According to the WSSC, “it only takes one teaspoon of salt to pollute 5 gallons of water to a level that is toxic to fresh water ecosystems.” The salt also ends up in our drinking water, which pulls from the Potomac River. In the last few years, the level of salt in the water entering WSSC filtration plants has increased steadily.

To document the effect of road salts on salt levels in local waterways, the Little Falls Watershed Alliance (LFWA) has been testing sites along Little Falls and other creeks in the watershed. They have run tests before and after it snows. What they found is that the baseline for the creek where it passes through Somerset is already nearing toxic levels; after the January 5th storm, it rose above toxicity, from a baseline of 203 parts-per-million (ppm) of salt to over 440 ppm. According to the EPA, 230 ppm is “chronic” (as shown in the graph) and thus toxic to aquatic life. Moreover, as the LFWA figure below shows, salt levels near the Somerset Pool prior to any snow events exceed levels found in the rest of the Little Falls watershed, including the Willett Branch which receives stormwater from downtown Bethesda.



How does the salt get into the waterways? It doesn't go away when the snow and ice melt. It travels with stormwater down the storm drains directly into streams and drinking water reservoirs. Excess salt on grass seeps into the ground and contaminates the ground water, which in turn feeds the creek. This seepage also leads to salt contamination of wells, a growing problem.

### What can the Town and individuals do to keep salt out of our waterways?

First and foremost, be salt-wise. Use only what is needed and sweep up the excess after the storm. It can be used again. It doesn't take much to de-ice a 10-square sidewalk — only 12 ounces or a coffee cup full. Alternatively, if possible just use a shovel and no salt!

Second, the Town should consider alternative de-icing treatments. Other towns in the area, such as Martin's Addition and Garrett Park, use brine or sand instead of salt.

Third, if the Town chooses to continue to use salt, the Town should ensure that contractors follow Maryland State guidelines for road treatment and salt dispersal.

**Given the current salt level in the Little Falls Branch and in our groundwater, we need to stop endangering drinking water supplies and water quality, and begin to rethink our road treatment policies.**

Have questions? Please contact the Environment Committee at: [tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com).



IN MEMORIAM

# Dave Marblestone

( 1 9 3 6 – 2 0 2 1 )

By **Barbara Marblestone**, *Trent Street*

Dave Marblestone, who resided in Somerset for over 45 years, died peacefully in late December following a struggle with pancreatic cancer. His wife, Barbara, and his daughters, Ruth and Judy, were with him in his final days. His three grandchildren, for whom he had endless time and patience, joined him often via FaceTime.

Dave was born in 1936, in Taylorville, Illinois. He was a graduate of the University of Illinois in 1958, received a master's degree in Soviet Studies from Harvard University in 1961, and a J.D. from the University of Michigan in 1963.

After a clerkship with the U.S. Court of Claims, Dave spent nearly his entire career as an attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice, most of those years working with the Civil Rights Division, whose mission was close to his heart. While he dealt with employment, fair housing, federally assisted programs, and even criminal law, his single longest stint at Civil Rights was devoted to enforcing the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He was a friend and mentor to junior attorneys or anyone else who sought his counsel, always willing to share his knowledge and to teach others. His calm and mild manner belied a strong determination and commitment to truth and justice. He cared deeply about the less fortunate among us, advocating for human rights in Darfur, volunteering as a math tutor, and campaigning for political candidates whom he supported.

His wide-ranging interests included bird watching, listening to music, reading, golf, and genealogy research. And, in his 80s, he decided to shoot baskets at a nearby gym. He was a timer for the Somerset Swim Team, and he shared barbecuing rights for the team with former neighbor, Dan Clemmer.

# From the Mayor's Desk

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin



In recent weeks, we have received a number of complaints about trespassing cats causing property damage and creating a general annoyance in several Town locations. Does everyone realize that this is against the law? Yes, Montgomery County Code Section 5-203(a)(3) says that a pet owner "must not allow an animal to enter private property without the property owner's permission." The fine is \$100. The staff and I would appreciate residents' cooperation in this matter. Also, all pets must be licensed—and vaccinated.

Our citizens often receive recognition in local and national media outlets for the good work they are doing. One example was a recent article in *Bethesda Magazine* about **Amy Hoang-wrona** (Grantham). I extend kudos to her.

In the same issue, the magazine published an article on Somerset resident and prosthodontist **Dr. Kambiz (Kaz) Fotoohi** (Warwick). I encourage you all to read these two articles. And please, everyone — always let us know when you run across such news stories.

On January 12, our State Legislature convened its yearly three-month session in Annapolis and there are many important issues for the Senators and Delegates to consider. I recommend that all residents follow the news from the State House this year. One of the best ways to do it is by signing up for the daily news service from Montgomery Community Media, **[mymcmedia.org](http://mymcmedia.org)**. As I am still the MCM board president, please contact me any time with your comments or questions.



## Somerset's Helping Hand Is Just an Email or Phone Call Away

If you need a ride, someone to pick up some groceries or a prescription, a ride to the Metro, or even if you just want to get to a friend's house, please contact **Somerset Helping Hand**. We have a list of 30 Somerset volunteers who can help.

Send an email to **[HHSomerset@gmail.com](mailto:HHSomerset@gmail.com)** or call **Barbara Zeughauser** at **301-951-8560**, **Kathleen Kenyon** at **301-656-8581** or **Jim Berry** at **301-656-6089**.

If you would like to add your name to the volunteer list, please send an email to **[HHSomerset@gmail.com](mailto:HHSomerset@gmail.com)**.



# Manager's Corner

By Matt Trollinger, Town Manager

It is hard to believe we are already one month into 2022! Lots of exciting things are happening in Somerset:

## Budget

As briefly outlined in last month's Journal, Somerset's fiscal year starts July 1 and goes through June 30. Every year, the Town is required to vote on and adopt a new budget. Usually that occurs in May in order for the budget to go into effect by July 1, and to give a buffer in case circumstances change at the last minute. In order for that timeline to work, budget development starts now. We are lucky in Somerset to have a knowledgeable, creative, and hard-working Budget Committee made up of **Phil Young** (Chair, Greystone), **Ann Bolten** (Cumberland), and **Jon Medalia** (Surrey). All three have developed expertise in understanding the Town's fiscal situation, budgeting, and revenue sources (primarily income and property taxes). I want to take this opportunity to give them appropriate thanks, especially given that they are doing this important work as volunteers.

Over the past couple of years, given the uncertainty surrounding COVID, the main focus of our annual budgets was the continuation of basic Town services. The Town took a big hit in income tax revenues, which may be indirectly related to COVID, and necessarily pared down its budget by postponing certain longer-term plans (e.g., repairs of the streets, hiring an additional staff person to assist Town Committees). The Town has been prudent and frugal but has continued to address resident concerns and to respond to community requests (e.g., extending the pool season beyond the usual season, hiring a stormwater engineering firm).

We will need to make decisions regarding spending priorities. Like households, the Town cannot sustainably spend more than it takes in. And large projects are not always one-off expenditures. Our large amenities, such as roads, tennis courts, pool and pool house, Town Hall, etc., all require money every single year to maintain.

## American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Funds

The Town will receive money from the federal government as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, and the Council will decide how that money will best be spent, taking into account public comments. New guidance from the U.S.

Treasury gives the Town more flexibility in how that money can be spent. So the Town might consider a number of projects, including road repairs, sidewalk repairs, stormwater management investment, and streetlight upgrades, to name just a few. As mentioned before, this is one-time-only money—it does not change the year-over-year revenue of the Town, and this fact must inform decisions on how to spend these funds. *[Editor's Note: see Council President Surko's article on ARPA in the January issue of the Journal].*

The Town Council recently passed a Resolution that requires that expenditure and budgeting of ARPA funds be done through its regular budgeting process, while clarifying ambiguities in the law.

As with all budget decisions, resident input is an important part of the process. Please feel free to contact the Town Hall, the Town Council, or appropriate committees to make your voice heard in this process.

## Stormwater Management

The Town's Stormwater Management Study Committee (Chaired by **Ellen Globokar**, Dorset) has been working diligently for over a year to produce a report to the Town Council to make recommendations about next steps regarding this important topic. That process is nearly complete. The Town's engineering consultancy firm, the Low Impact Development Center, has nearly finished its report, which will be presented to the Council at an upcoming meeting.

The Council has already taken some first steps towards improving stormwater management in Somerset. But regulations have consequences, positive and negative, anticipated and unforeseen; and that is why resolving the issue of stormwater management is a continual process. It will require constant evaluation, modification of existing rules, and instituting new regulations.

## Pickleball

What a fun sport I have learned about over the past couple of months! As we head into spring and summer, Somerset anticipates instituting a pickleball pilot program to determine the extent to which we should invest in a fully dedicated facility. We have identified the basketball

*Continued on page 12*



## Manager's Corner

court abutting Wisconsin Avenue as a good location to pilot pickleball in Town. The pilot program is still in its developmental stage, but I hope everyone will enjoy and take part in this pilot program. Many thanks to **Bruce Charendoff** (Warwick) and his group for their work behind the scenes to research and help get this project off the ground.

### Final Thoughts

- A reminder: starting in September, gas-powered leaf blowers will be banned in Somerset. Pamphlets are being created by the Town's Environment Committee to share with contractors, but please be sure to have that conversation ahead of time so that contractors are aware.
- We've actually gotten snow this year! Thanks to all for cooperation in helping the snowplows get curb-to-curb as much as possible. Moving cars off the street during the snow is helpful in this respect – in addition, it can help protect your car from salt spreaders.
- Congratulations to the Equity & Inclusion and History & Archives committees for their joint forum on the history of race relations, slavery, and segregation in Town. The committees' event was very informative and a testament to the important role that volunteers and committees play in Town.
- Thank you to all who have volunteered to serve on a Town Committee this year, and who were appointed or re-appointed at the January Council meeting!

# 2022 TENNIS FEES

Please pay your 2022 Tennis Fees to Town Hall  
**\$25 per family**

TWO WAYS TO PAY:

- (1) Drop off a check or cash to Town Hall or
- (2) Pay by Venmo: @TownofSomerset-MD. Be sure to write "Tennis Fees" and your name and address in the "notes" section, so the Town knows what the payment is for.



# For Your Reference

## TOWN OF SOMERSET COMMITTEES AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	COMMITTEE	CHAIR
Audit Committee	Chuck Edson (Surrey)	Parks and Natural Resources Committee	Kristen Khanna (Uppingham)
Budget Committee	Phil Young (Greystone)	Pool Committee	Matt Zaft (Dorset)
Communications Committee	Barbara Marenus (Surrey)	Public Safety Committee	Kumar Vaswani (Trent)
Environment Committee	Barton Rubenstein (Dorset)	Revenue Committee	Nick Fox (Cumberland)
Equity & Inclusion Committee	Atsuko Horiguchi (Essex)	Stormwater Study Committee	Ellen Globokar (Dorset)
History & Archives Committee	Paige Whitley (Cumberland)	Swim Team Committee	Jeff Mascott (Surrey)
Newcomers Committee	Phyllis Wiesenfelder (Cumberland)	Tennis Committee	Carrie Wofford (Essex)
		Traffic Committee	Elizabeth Hurwit (Dorset)

## TOWN COUNCIL CALENDAR 2022

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

(All times at 7:00 p.m. on a Monday, unless otherwise noted)

- Monday, January 3, 2022
- Monday, February 7, 2022
- Monday, March 7, 2022
- Monday, April 4, 2022
- Monday, May 2, 2022
- Tuesday, June 7, 2022  
(Note: Shavuot holiday goes through Monday, June 6)
- Tuesday, July 5, 2022  
(Note: Monday, July 4 is a holiday)
- Monday, August 1, 2022
- Tuesday, September 6, 2022  
(Note: Monday, September 5 is a holiday)
- Monday, October 3, 2022
- Monday, November 7, 2022
- Monday, December 5, 2022

### WORK SESSIONS

(All times at 5:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted)

- Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022
- Monday, February 14, 2022
- Monday, March 14, 2022
- Monday, April 18, 2022

# Council Meeting Actions

The following actions were taken by the Somerset Town Council at its monthly meeting, held January 3, 2022:

- Approved a three-month extension through April 2022 for the continued use of Zoom as a virtual Town Meeting setting.
- Approved Committee membership nominations.
- Approved a Town forum, presented by the Town's History & Archives and Equity & Inclusion Committees, on the history of racial segregation and slavery in Somerset.
- Approved amendments to the Parks and Natural Resources Committee Charter, as recommended by the Parks and Natural Resources Committee.
- Introduced Ordinance 12-12-1, an ordinance to regulate the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
- Adopted a Resolution establishing that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds shall be budgeted for expenditure as part of the Town's annual budget process, as recommended by the Town Budget Committee.
- Approved the 2022 Town Council Meeting Calendar. *(Editor's Note: see Council Meeting Calendar on page 13 of this Town Journal Issue)*

## CLASSIFIED ADS

BOZEMAN, MONTANA: Awesome Every Season! Ski Big Sky & the Bridgers! Fly fishing. Trail rides. White-water rafting. Hiking/ biking everywhere. Enjoy our 4-bedroom home on 20 acres with spectacular 360-degree vistas. Four-night minimum stay. Just four miles to downtown Bozeman. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at SRPVacationHomes@gmail.com or 301-717-8083.

PARIS, FRANCE: Picturesque Day and Nite! And more affordable than ever! Enjoy our one-bedroom apartment in the 2nd arrondissement — the heart of historic Paris. Walk to the Louvre, the Pompidou Center, the Seine and two Metro stops. Four-night minimum stay. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at SRPVacationHomes@gmail.com or 301-717-8083.

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.

HOME HEALTH AIDE. Available for new clients in Somerset and nearby. Whether for one or several days per week, she can provide services including hygiene/personal care, homemaking (cooking, shopping, household chores) and transportation to medical appointments and activities. Contact **James Wachob** at 301-656-5251 or Jwsomerset@msn.com

SEA COLONY - BETHANY BEACH - OCEAN FRONT APARTMENT - EDGEWATER BUILDING: 2 bedrooms plus 1 tiny one with bunk bed and 2 full baths. Immaculate and all updated. Has a few summer weeks available. **Contact Luba Marx** at 301-233-2727

*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.*



# Preliminary Agenda

(The final agenda is available and emailed to Town residents on the Friday before the monthly Council Meeting.)

## Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting February 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

The Somerset Town Council will meet via Zoom on Monday, February 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda and updates are posted on the Town website: [www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://bit.ly/3KrWkm4> Meeting ID: 854 5683 2742 Passcode: 284102

### Somerset Town Council

- Steve Surko,  
Council President
- Robin Barr
- Debbie Heller
- Kabir Kumar
- Shannon Rovak

## PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

7:00 p.m. Opportunity for residents to make public comments.\*

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

7:10 p.m. **Motion:** To consider approval of agenda as presented.

## CONSENT AGENDA

7:11 p.m. **Motion:** To consider approval of the following items without discussion:

- Agreement with the Somerset Elementary School P.T.A. to allow Camp Summerset use of the Town Pool and Town Tennis Courts in Summer 2022. Use of the pool would be for all three sessions below from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Mon– Fri. Use of the Tennis Court would occur from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. during Session 2, Mon. – Fri.
  - Session 1: June 20 – July 1
  - Session 2: July 5 – July 15
  - Session 3: July 18 – July 29

## NON-CONSENT AGENDA

7:12 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider a building permit application submitted by Chris Conlan of C. M. Conlan Contractors & Builders Inc., for the demolition and construction of a new single-family home at the property located at 5506 Trent St. The application includes a variance from Section 112-14(C)(3)(a) of the Somerset Code, which provides, in pertinent part, that all new building construction must include a stormwater drainage plan...[that provides for the] storage for all runoff from all rooftop surfaces. The applicant has received a stormwater waiver from Montgomery County due to the soil composition.

8:12 p.m. Building Administrator's Report

8:20 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To approve an application submitted by Robin Orseck for the removal of three (3) dead holly trees located on the property at 4722 Dorset Ave., and associated tree replacement plan, as recommended by the Town Arborist.

8:25 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To approve the removal of the dead Town Tree located at 4722 Falstone Ave. (Cherry), at the recommendation of the Town Arborist.

8:30 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To Adopt Ordinance 11-21-2, an ordinance to amend the Code of Ordinances to amend and clarify the exemptions from setbacks for projections.

8:45 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To adopt Ordinance 12-12-1, an ordinance to regulate the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

9:00 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To approve of a Resolution establishing a Procurement Policy for the Town of Somerset for contracting and hiring.

9:10 p.m. **Discussion:** Manager Report

9:20 p.m. **Motion:** Adjourn

*Continued on page 16*

## Preliminary Agenda

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### 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.

\*Questions should be submitted via email ahead of the meeting to [manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com) or [town@townofsomerset.com](mailto:town@townofsomerset.com).

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

The Mayor and Town Council may entertain a motion during the open meeting to close a portion of the meeting, in accordance with Section 3-305(b)(1)(7) of the Open Meetings Act (Maryland Code, General Provisions Article), to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

The Preliminary Agenda for each month's Town Council Meeting is posted on the Town website ([www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com)) seven days prior to the meeting. A copy is also posted on the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch.