

The Brookeville Times

January 2005

Mark Your Calendars

Planning Commission Meetings - February 1, 7:30 p.m.
Commissioner's Meetings - February 14, 8:00 p.m.

Did You Know? The Town of Brookeville is one of 157 municipal governments and two special taxing districts throughout the State of Maryland that belongs to the Maryland Municipal League. The MML is a voluntary, nonprofit, nonpartisan association controlled and maintained by city and town governments. MML works to strengthen the role and capacity of municipal government through research, legislation, technical assistance, training and the dissemination of information for its members. MML is the only statewide organization in Maryland composed solely of municipal officials and devoted to the promotion of all branches of municipal administration. Brookeville is also a member of the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT). The Town joined LGIT soon after it was formed as a non-profit association authorized by state law in 1987 following a dramatic increase in private insurance company rates for local governments. Brookeville's Primary Liability and Property Coverage costs are paid to LGIT and claims and losses on the member's behalf are paid by LGIT just like insurance. The difference from private insurance, however, is that LGIT is owned and managed by its member local governments to meet local risk management needs and not to make a profit by selling insurance. Any excess funds that result after payment of claims and expenses may be returned to LGIT members. This month, Brookeville is the featured member at the LGIT web page (www.lgit.org).

Holiday Party. This year's Holiday Party was the biggest yet with entertainment provided by the three period-costumed members of the Live History Band who entertained with a diversity of music and instruments upstairs and downstairs. There was music for adults and children. Residents brought their usual contributions of great dishes that were consumed with gusto. With many hungry children to feed, Domino's had to be called in to provide pizzas. There was an immediate consensus that pizza should become another part of the Holiday party tradition. Additionally, a fresh look will be taken at how to achieve a more effective utilization of space and logistics and ensure an abundance of food to make this always popular get-together of townspeople even more so.

Community Policing Comes to the Academy. The Town's Brookeville Academy is hosting as a public service the Fourth District Community Organized Outreach Policing program (4D Co-Op) for six consecutive Thursday evenings (7 to 9:00 p.m.) starting January 6th. Brought to the Olney/Brookeville area by Officer Rob Musser, 4D Co-Op is designed to provide a close-up look through a series of seminars including such subjects as police operations and procedures, training, conducting crime scene investigations, effective crime prevention, and related matters. Participants will be able to express their concerns and learn how they can participate in making their communities safer. The program is open to anyone over 18 who lives in or works in the Olney area and is willing to undergo a criminal background investigation.

Planning Commission Gets Help. The Brookeville Planning Commission is made up of hard working citizen planner volunteers. They have been extremely busy with subdivision reviews, hearings, and meetings for the past year - all of which need to have adequate public records maintained. Additionally, public notification of meetings, maintenance of files, communication among the Planning Commissioners and with developers and the Historic Preservation Commission and County staff, and other administrative activities represent a significant and important workload. The Town Commissioners have provided funding for a part time Planning Commission Secretary to perform this workload and to free up the time of Planning Commissioners to concentrate wholly on the matters before them. The new secretary is Margaret Van Gelder

Brookeville and Sandy Spring Museum Collaboration. The Town Commissioners decided at their December meeting to transfer the Town's collection of historic photographs, newspaper clippings, non-governmental records, and related items over to the stewardship of the Sandy Spring Museum. Rick Allan, President of the Commissioners, stated that the Commissioners all felt that the public interest would best be served with Brookeville's collection being joined with the much larger Sandy Spring community-wide collection. There it could be properly catalogued and professionally preserved while also made easily accessible for public research and display. Allan added that this action would not only fill a gap in the Sandy Spring collection but might also encourage more local residents to make donations to the collection. According to Allan, much of the documentation and research related to Brookeville properties, people, and events was originally done by Sylvia Nash and presented to the Town years ago. There was also significant research and archival work, some done with outside funds, done by several former and present resident volunteers in anticipation of the Brookeville Bicentennial in 1994. "Today, we don't have the space or the professionals and volunteers needed to do justice to this collection and Sandy Spring Museum has the human resources and is building a new research library. The timing is perfect for this transfer," Allan said. The transfer of materials has already begun.

Traffic Light Meeting and the Residents Prevail. State Highway Administration representatives provided an informational forum for Brookeville residents on SHA's proposal to install a traffic light at the intersection of High, Market, and Water Streets (Rt. 97). The public informational meeting was scheduled after Rick Allan and Delegate Karen Montgomery (District 14) met with Nancy Floreen, At-Large County Councilperson, and SHA District Engineer Charlie Watkins concerning the proposed traffic light. Everyone agreed at that meeting that it was important to give residents an opportunity to hear about the light from the SHA standpoint and then give input. Many Brookeville residents turned out for the meeting and voiced their concerns. The SHA officials expressed appreciation for many of the points raised with regard to the likelihood of a traffic light causing unintended safety hazards and dangers and increased pollution and noise rather than resulting in more efficient traffic flow and safer conditions. As a result of the meeting, SHA indicated they were inclined not to move ahead with the project and have notified the Town Commissioners to that effect. This meeting was an excellent example of the importance of residents participating in meetings like these and expressing thoughtful opinions and suggestions. It is effective more often than not and that's the way the democratic process works best.

Bypass Update. At the traffic light meeting summarized above, Carmen Harris, State Highway Project Manager for the Brookeville Bypass, provided residents with a status report on the Bypass. She indicated that the preliminary design phase was to be completed within three months. It will then be able to move into final design if funds are found. Construction costs are estimated to be \$18 million at this time. It remains important for residents to keep the letters and emails flowing to elected officials regarding the importance of funding and building the Brookeville Bypass.

Public Hearing on North Street Subdivision Plan. The Brookeville Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on owner/developer Richard Kirby's preliminary subdivision plan for North Street (the former Lowder property). Kirby intends to create three lots that would allow him to build two new residences and garages in addition to the existing house on the third lot. North Street would be extended as a public street to encompass the currently privately maintained gravel drive. A point of contention was raised at the hearing by several adjoining property owners and a few other residents concerning the preliminary plan's proposed dedication of a fifty-foot right-of-way that would allow for either a roadway or pedestrian path connection between North Street as extended and Water Street. Another aspect of the proposed plan would have the developer dedicate 1.07 acres to the Town for park or communal space primarily on the hilly area behind the restored Schoolhouse. Most of the discussion, however, centered on objections by some residents to a road connection. Planning Commission Chair Chris Scanlon announced that the record was to be held open for written comments for another week and that the Planning Commissioners would be having further discussions on a series of recommendations, including the road connection, before any final vote on the overall subdivision plan was taken. A decision is expected this month.

Schoolhouse Update. The interior wooden walls and trim of the schoolhouse have been completed by carpenter Walter Blank and will be painted this month along with the ceiling. The heart-of-pine flooring and some final trim will be installed following completion of the painting. The electrician has

installed underground conduit to allow for Pepco to run its service lines to the schoolhouse electrical box so that the building can be provided light and heating. Lighting fixtures and window locks and pulls have been ordered. Town residents have already donated a wood-burning potbelly stove and several antique benches to help begin the furnishing of the building.

Holiday Party Help Needed - Several residents expressed interest in volunteering to help orchestrate the party next year and their volunteer status was quickly accepted. Anyone else interested in helping out should contact Susan Johnson at 301-924-5979.

TOWN OF BROOKEVILLE HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2004

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

- Reduced Town property tax rate \$0.05
- First Town Budget incorporating new accounting rules that require a "management discussion" that looks backward and forward
- Commissioner election under Staggered Terms Ordinance
- Local Government Insurance Trust recognition for 15 years of membership
- Incorporated new project/task management software system for commissioners
- Town interests represented at Maryland Municipal League Convention, Maryland Mayors' Association Conference, Montgomery County Chapter MML monthly meetings
- Designated and funded a secretary to the Planning Commission
- Continued to issue regular Town Newsletter and maintain web-site and new Academy use calendar
- Procured new computer and more efficient Town office furniture

TOWN APPEARANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Established and implemented Town streets maintenance cycle
- Enhanced public space and landscaping services
- Established regular professional custodial service for the Brookeville Academy
- Enhanced North Street plantings
- Removed dangerous street trees on Market Street
- Curb installation and culvert repair accomplished by State Highway Administration at Town's request
- SHA advises Town it will fund sidewalk construction and storm water control on High Street
- Received requested County analysis of Market Street repair/repaving costs

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND HAPPENINGS

- Brookeville Bypass given Final Environmental Impact Statement approval
- One Room North Street Schoolhouse restoration 95% completed
- Development/design work on three Town descriptive signs for the Schoolhouse, the Brookeville Angel, and the Newlin's Millstone initiated
- Town wins Montgomery County Preservation Award for the Schoolhouse
- Record doubling of rental income for Brookeville Academy received
- Town - Sandy Spring Museum historic archives partnership executed
- Two historic Brookeville residences and Schoolhouse participate in Sandy Spring Museum house tour fundraiser

NEW CONSTRUCTION/ADDITIONS

- Water Street subdivision completed with three new residences

- North Street Kirby preliminary subdivision with two new residences submitted to Planning Commission
 - "First Street" preliminary subdivision withdrawn (four houses)
 - Two residences completed major additions
 - New infill residence on Market Street completed
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