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As a result of the Town Commissioners' decision to reduce the Town property tax rate by 5 cents for the 2004-2005 fiscal year (from a rate of 20 cents to 15 cents), a refund the equivalent of 25 % will be paid out to property owners. The reduction decision was taken to provide some relief from the sizable increase in property taxes resulting from increased assessments and increased income tax revenues. The refund results from the fact that the tax rate reduction that was part of the Town budget process took place after Montgomery County had already processed tax bills. Montgomery County processes the billing and collection of property taxes for the Town at no expense to the Town.

Surveyors and Sidewalks

Many residents have seen the survey party over the past several weeks on High Street marking the road and taking measurements. This crew is doing preliminary work associated with the construction of sidewalks from Church Street to Longwood Recreation Center on the west side of the street.

This project has grown in complexity and expense because the SHA must deal with the outstanding issue of storm water runoff that has been a problem on the west side of High Street for years before sidewalks can be constructed. In any event, the Town Commissioners and many residents have sought sidewalks for years in order to provide safe access for pedestrians, strollers, and bicyclists to Longwood's facilities and the bike paths and sidewalks adjoining Longwood. While funding for this project is not set, we are reasonably optimistic that the project will ultimately happen. A related sidewalk project is also in the works on the east side of High Street that would replace and extend sidewalk from the old post office past the Brookeville Academy.

And More Surveyors

There has also been a survey crew working for the State Highway Administration at the High and Market Street intersection working on a possible traffic light that the SHA is considering to improve traffic flow and safety.

Upcoming Events

Planning Commission
September 7, 7:30PM

Commissioner's Meeting
September 13, 8:00PM

All meetings held at the
Brookeville
Academy

The Town Commissioners have been in contact with the SHA to ensure some Town input into any final decision on the light and how it might affect traffic flow.

Heritage Days

The annual Montgomery County Heritage Days event celebrating historic properties and preservation this year included the schoolhouse on North Street being restored by the Town. Diane Allan served as host and was assisted by two young volunteers, resident Eric Van Gelder and Brittany Mills from greater Brookeville.

Schoolhouse Restoration

Electrical work has been started that once completed, will allow carpenter Walter Blank to install the interior walls following insulation and to have the ceiling put in. It looks like completion may take place in late September.

MML Convention

Rick Allan attended the 2004 Maryland Municipal Convention in Ocean City (June 27-30) along with city and town officials from 120 municipalities from every part of Maryland. The convention, the largest ever, also saw many county and state officials and corporate representatives in attendance or participating. This year's convention theme was Governing better With IT (information technology). There were a number of workshops and meetings ranging from such subjects as municipal budgeting to a Small Towns Issues Forum and a workshop on Engaging Citizens & Building Community Partnerships. At the Inaugural Dinner addressed by Governor Ehrlich, Rick Allan

was inducted into the MML Municipal Officials Hall of Fame by State Comptroller William Donald Shafer for his nearly twenty-two years of service to the Town of Brookeville.

Academy Enterprise

Business was the best ever for Brookeville Academy rentals this past fiscal year. Net income almost doubled from the previous year. We believe there is no real need anymore to incur advertising expenses for the building anymore other than the modest listing with the Olney Chamber of Commerce and related telephone listings. The Town's website (www.townofbrookevillemd.org) has been very useful in managing the rentals as well as in marketing.

Bypass and New Bypass Sign

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/Section 4(f) Evaluation for the MD 97 Bypass project has been approved. This completes all the technical and governmental requirements necessary to go forward with design/engineering and construction - given funding. The Town has advised the State Highway Administration that it concurred with the FEIS and the recommendation to select Alternate 7 Modified. Commissioners Bob Heritage and Michael Acierno erected a new "Build the Bypass" sign at the south entry to town. The sign was updated to provide information to commuters sitting in traffic on how to contact Governor Ehrlich and/or County Executive Doug Duncan to express support for the bypass.

Census Job Opportunities

The Census Bureau is hiring for Field Representatives - a part time long-term position to fill vacancies in a number of counties, including Montgomery, Howard, and Carroll. Field Representatives conduct survey interviews in person and by telephone as part of the American Community Survey. Applicants must be able to visit their assigned addresses when people are most likely to be home and this typically requires evening and weekend work - it is not a 9 to 5 job. Representatives are paid for training and mileage. The position pays between \$10.53 and \$13.30 per hour. To apply, call the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-800-262-4236, then press number 1.

Town Flag Design Contest

Residents, including children, are invited to create designs for a Town Flag which will be carried in the Parade of City and Town Flags at future MML conventions and will take its place on the Town's flagpole from time to time. The First Prize winner will receive the special silver coin made for the Town's Bicentennial in 1994 and a \$100 Savings Bond. A Second Prize winner will be awarded a \$50.00 Savings Bond. The Town Commissioners will judge entries. Designs should be submitted by September 22, 2004 and shall be in color on paper or cloth no smaller than 8x11 inches. The winning design will be announced at the October 11th Commissioners Meeting.

Academy Wall Crash Damage

A vehicle of unknown size hit the stone wall early one Saturday morning and knocked down a sizable portion of the stone wall in front of the Brookeville Academy. Just missed was a historic Civil War sign marker recently erected by the State. The wall has been repaired.