

ECA Newsletter

February 2024

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1. 2024 ECA New Year Brunch

The annual ECA New Year Brunch was held on January 7 at the Edgemoor Club. Quite a few people came out to meet friends and neighbors and enjoy the food and refreshments. Everyone seemed to have a great time. If you could not make it, we hope to see you next year. If you have any suggestions about ways we can improve this annual event, please [email me](#).

Once again, many thanks to the Edgemoor Club and its members for allowing the ECA to use their facilities and especially to Club Manager Mary Gardiner for being so helpful. Thank you also to ECA Board members Huda Montemarano and Alicia Tompkins for making all the arrangements, and to neighborhood volunteers Kathleen Wheaton, Naomi Freeman, and Gladys Richter, as well as everyone else who pitched in to help with cleanup.



2. Time to Pay 2024 ECA Dues

As I noted in an email last week, it's time again to pay your \$35 annual ECA dues. In a few weeks, we'll send out the annual reminder notice by mail. But, if you'd like to scratch something off your New Year to-do list, and save us the resources needed to send you the reminder letter, visit the [Membership and Dues](#) page of the ECA website and make your 2024 dues payment right now. You'll find instructions for paying online (recommended) or by mail with a personal check.

3. Snow Reminders

We recently had our first significant snowfall in quite a while. Here are a couple of friendly reminders about what to do when it snows.

- Residents are responsible for clearing the sidewalks. That includes sidewalks that are in the public right-of-ways in front of or beside their property. Some of us seem to have forgotten this one since the last snowstorm. According to Montgomery County:

[County Code Sec. 49-17](#) requires residential, commercial, and of multi-unit apartment building property owners to clear their public sidewalks, driveways, and entrances within 24 hours of the end of a snowstorm.... Help keep our communities and neighbors safe by doing your part. If your neighbor is elderly or disabled, you can assist them by clearing their sidewalks and checking on them during storms. Residents who wish to report an unshoveled sidewalk can call 311 (240-777-0311). Reports must include an exact address.

Note the part about helping neighbors. If you are unable to clear your sidewalk, and you have trouble finding someone to do it for you, post a message on the neighborhood email group ([EC-Net](#)), and ask for help. There are lots of people in the community who would be glad to lend a hand.

- The Montgomery County Department of Transportation's [Winter Storm Information Portal](#) has all kinds of information about storm preparedness, snow removal, plowing schedules, and more. You can also submit a snow-related service request there.

4. Legislation Related to Residential Zoning

Two proposed changes in law, each intended to address the housing supply shortage, were recently introduced in the Montgomery County Council and the Maryland State House and Senate. If passed, they could affect the zoning rules in single-family residential neighborhoods. What the proposals would look like in final (if passed) remains to be seen, as does the effect (if any) they may have on our neighborhood.

- On January 16, Montgomery County Council President Andrew Friedson and Vice President Kate Stewart introduced Zoning Text Amendment 24-01, a measure that would change the zoning laws to:
 - Allow the construction of small multi-unit buildings and townhouses in residential detached zones as a conditional use when associated with a religious assembly or private educational institution and
 - Establish development standards for compatibility and require certain affordability thresholds for these projects.

You can read the full proposal [HERE](#). A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 27, 2024.

- On January 24, Maryland House Speaker Adrienne A. Jones and Senate President Bill Ferguson introduced, at the request of Governor Wes Moore, a pair of bills titled The Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024, which would, in part:
 - Prohibit a local legislative body from prohibiting the placement of certain manufactured homes in a zoning district that allows single-family residential uses under certain circumstances;
 - prohibit a local jurisdiction from using an element of an adequate public facilities law to deny a certain permit for a State-funded affordable housing project or to restrict or limit the development of the project in certain manners; and
 - Require local jurisdictions to allow an increase in density of certain qualified projects in certain districts or zones for certain properties formerly owned by the State, located within a certain distance of a rail station, or owned or controlled by a nonprofit organization.

You can read the full bills here: [HB 538](#) and [SB 484](#). A hearing on HB 538 is scheduled for February 20.

The ECA Board will be following these proposals and we'll pass on any additional information or developments. Should you wish to contact your State or County elected representatives about any of them, you can find their contact information on the Government & Voting page of the ECA website [HERE](#).

5. Little Falls Parkway Update

As you probably know, Montgomery Parks has been working on modifications to Little Falls Parkway since 2016, when a bicyclist was killed when trying to cross the roadway on the Capital Crescent Trail. Several configurations have been proposed, discussed and tested. The current configuration has been in place temporarily since November 2022.

In May 2023, the County Council asked Montgomery Parks to develop an alternative plan for Little Falls Parkway to replace and improve the current temporary configuration. After soliciting and receiving extensive public comment, the Council held a work session on the resulting plan on January 23, and voted to adopt the revised plan.

Briefly, this will involve keeping the section of the Parkway between Dorset Avenue and Arlington Road a single lane in each direction for motor vehicle traffic. However, unlike the current configuration, the motor vehicle lanes will be on opposite sides of the existing grass median strip. On the west side of the median, the two existing asphalt lanes will carry southbound motor vehicle traffic in one and, separated, two-way bicycle traffic in the other. On the east side of the median, the two existing asphalt lanes will carry northbound motor vehicle traffic in one lane. The other lane will be blocked off, but retained for emergency vehicle use, between Dorset and Hillandale Road, and removed from Hillandale to Arlington. The previous plan for a “linear park” has been abandoned.

You can see the revised plan in detail [HERE](#). Note that page 17 of that document is a map of the entire area showing the changes to be made. The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission still has to review the plan.

6. Edgemoor Tip of the Month – Need Help with Government Services?

Are you doing battle with the IRS? Having a major problem with Motor Vehicle Administration? Can't get the County to trim a dangerous tree in the right-of-way? Our elected representatives all provide constituent services that can help you when you are unable to resolve an issue with a Federal, State, or County government agency.

Certainly, an elected representative's office shouldn't be your first stop when dealing with government agencies. But, when your best efforts to resolve a problem by working with an agency have been for naught, it might be time to get professional help. That's where United States Senators and Representatives (for Federal agencies), State Senators and Delegates (for State agencies), and County Councilmembers (for County agencies) come in. They know who to call, how to call, and when to call to get action.

If you're afraid that contacting your elected representative would be a waste of time, consider this – [Last year, U.S. Representative Jamie Raskin's office resolved 5,736 constituent casework requests and recovered over three million dollars for constituents.](#)

Don't know who your elected representatives are, or need their contact information? As mentioned in item 4, you can find this info on the Government & Voting page of the ECA website [HERE](#).

Thank you to ECA member Nancy Leopold for this tip.

Do you have a tip you'd like to share with your neighbors? Please email me your suggestions [HERE](#).

The ECA Newsletter is a compilation of information relevant to Edgemoor area residents. It is distributed on an occasional basis on the EC-Net email list.