



# SOUTH FOUR CORNERS

## Citizens Association



*Building a stronger community, one neighbor at a time*

Sept/Oct 2019

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### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### **Sept 14, 2019 – 10 am**

Adopt a Road, Forest Glen Rd  
(meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

#### **Sept 16, 2019 – 7 pm**

SFCCA Community Meeting  
Schweinhaut Senior Center

#### **Nov 16, 2019 – 10 am**

Adopt a Road, Forest Glen Rd  
(meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

#### **Nov 18, 2019 – 7 pm**

SFCCA Community Meeting  
Schweinhaut Senior Center

#### **Jan 18, 2020 – 10 am**

Adopt a Road, Forest Glen Rd  
(meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

#### **Tues. Jan 21, 2020 – 7 pm**

SFCCA Community Meeting  
Schweinhaut Senior Center

## Next SFCCA Meeting

**Monday, September 16 at 7pm**

Schweinhaut Senior Center 1000 Forest Glen Road

A Conversation With:

**Marc Elrich**

Montgomery County Executive

Please join us on September 16 as we welcome Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich to our community meeting. He will first brief us on the priorities of his administration before spending the remainder of the meeting answering questions, and listening and responding to your observations and concerns.



Marc Elrich was sworn into office on December 3, 2018 as Montgomery County's seventh elected Executive. As an At-large member of the County Council for 12 years prior to last year's election, he represented each and every County resident. Before that, he served 19 years on the Takoma Park City Council, while teaching at Rolling Terrace Elementary School for 17 of those years.

While Mr. Elrich has remained a strong advocate for middle class and lower-income individuals and families, for environmental and consumer protections, and for tenant rights throughout his long career in public service, he perhaps is most widely known for his consistent opposition to excessive, unsustainable land use and development policies, along with his insistence that developers pay their fair share of the additional public services and infrastructure costs that their projects have generated.

This is a great opportunity for all of us to interact, "up close and personal," with the head of our County government, **so we hope to see you at the Senior Center at 7:00 PM on September 16!**

SFCCA meetings are held bi-monthly on the third Monday of January, March, May, July, September, and November at Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Rd. When the third Monday of the month falls on a federal holiday, the meeting is postponed, space permitting, to the following day.

## President's Corner

# CHANGE—IT'S COMING!

### Dear Neighbors,

As they say, that's one thing we can be sure of.

When we bought our house fifty years ago we were so impressed with the maple trees planted in the county right-of-way. Each lot had one or two trees, and the branches spread over the street, creating the feeling of a tunnel. Turns out that the wonderful trees have reached their end-of-life date, and they are dying. Since they are technically county trees, the county removes the dying or dead trees on request and will plant a new tree to be chosen from the Request List—maple or other. Change, but continuity also, since we still have the street trees.



In this community, our houses were built mostly between 1938 and just past WWII—good, solid houses in which families lived and children grew up. As the children left and the older people moved, the houses were usually sold to young families. Often changes were made to the houses, expanding them to accommodate different ideas of living space and more belongings. Those children also grew up and moved away, but the neighborhood remained

desirable. Don't-Close-Our-School battles were fought. A Master Plan was crafted to protect the neighborhood from commercial incursion. Roads were studied to see if some traffic relief could be found for the Level F Four Corners intersection. The larger Four Corners community fought a long, difficult battle against the potential developer of the vacant land bordered by the Beltway, Colesville Road, and University Boulevard. In the end the county purchased the land, and a new Blair was built on the triangle. Some other schools were closed, children were sent to the schools now assigned to our neighborhood, and families adjusted. Change, but also an amazing amount of stability in our neighborhood because it is desirable.

Through all of these years, volunteers in the South Four Corners Civic Association worked to keep our neighborhood a wonderful place to live. And we are still doing this. Our motto is kind of: *If you don't speak up they won't know you care and will do it their way whether or not that benefits us.* Living in America we can express our opinions to the governments and elected officials. I am thankful. Sometimes they even listen and work to make changes in what they propose.

We need all of us in South Four Corners to continue to fight for our community. Volunteers are always needed to attend meetings, form committees, talk to neighbors about issues. Come to the next civic association meeting and learn about some of the current issues.

***Karen Michels***

SFCCA.President@gmail.com

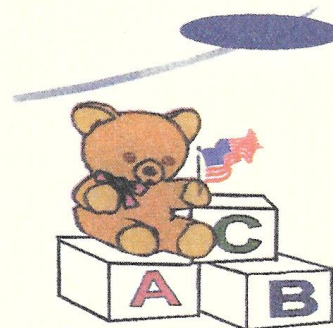


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# SHA FACING MOUNTING PRESSURES OVER TOLL LANES

By Laurence Dickter



I-270 and the Beltway

After both agencies responsible for stewardship of parkland adjacent to the Capital Beltway (I-495) skewed the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) for continuing to push for the construction of up to four toll lanes through sensitive stream valleys without considering any non-toll lane alternatives to ease traffic congestion in the region, SHA reversed course. SHA agreed to review a proposal favored by Montgomery County officials and others to divert I-95 through-traffic across the Intercounty Connector, down I-270 on new reversible lanes (to be constructed within the highway's existing footprint) and across a newly rebuilt American Legion Bridge into Virginia.

The SHA has agreed to review a proposal favored by Montgomery County that would eliminate any need to widen the portion of the beltway between I-270 and I-95.

Among the many elements of this proposal would be the elimination of any need to widen the portion of the Beltway between I-270 and I-95, thus sparing neighborhoods such as ours the very real prospect of having a destructive swath cut

through them to make room for the toll lanes that have been the central feature of Maryland Governor Lawrence Hogan's "traffic relief" plan since he first unveiled it two years ago.

This past June (as reported in the last issue of this newsletter), the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) formally announced its "non-concurrence" with the toll lane alternatives chosen by SHA for detailed study, faulting it for environmental and many other reasons.

One month later, the federal National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) also took a position of "non-concurrence" with SHA's chosen alternatives, while recommending that the proposal cited above also be reviewed.

Both M-NCPPC and NCPC cited federal law dating back to 1930 and a subsequent agreement between the two agencies prohibiting the conveyance, sale, lease, exchange or development of parkland under their jurisdiction for any purpose other than improvements that provide public benefits and are compatible with existing park use.

For instance, actions taken to enhance the quality of stream water running through parkland



would presumably be allowed. But as many have pointed out, the exact opposite would occur if four additional lanes of pavement were to be added to the Beltway, bringing with it a significant volume of additional storm water runoff that would end up in parkland.

What if SHA decides after completing its review that it still wants to go ahead with cutting new toll lanes through parkland, but NCPC still won't give SHA its formal concurrence? And/or what if M-NCPPC refuses (as Montgomery County officials have already suggested that it should) to deed over parkland under its control to the state for expansion of the Beltway? Under either scenario, would SHA still be able to proceed legally? In the final analysis, that is a question the courts may have to end up answering.

In a related development, SHA has decided to begin working on the lower portion of I-270 between the Beltway and I-370 first, instead of starting with the northern section from I-370 to Interstate 70 in Frederick where the highway goes from six lanes in each direction down to two. In arriving at this decision, SHA rejected repeated entreaties from Montgomery County elected officials and others to start with the northern section where some of the worst backups occur and the greatest relief is needed.

This decision, together with SHA's failure to prioritize the bottleneck over the American Legion Bridge, where any traffic relief plan would

by necessity also have to be focused, has caused some to question whether the project is more about maximizing toll revenue for the private operators of the toll lanes than it is about easing traffic congestion.

**It is clear to many  
that public  
pressure on  
Governor Hogan  
and state officials  
is having an  
impact.**

Moreover, there are many who remain skeptical that adding toll lanes alone to the Beltway and/or I-270 will provide effective, lasting relief from congestion. Or as NCPC Commissioner Beth White succinctly put it: "We are not going to build our way out of this problem."

So, a lot has happened over the summer. The question remains, though: "What does all this activity mean?" For starters, it is clear to many that public pressure on Governor Hogan and state officials from Secretary of Transportation Pete Rahn on down through SHA is having an impact. This also holds true for some of our own elected representatives and other key officials right here in Montgomery County and elsewhere who might otherwise have remained on the sidelines.

There also appears to be, as Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich recently put it, "a new

willingness (by Maryland state officials) to talk". This can only be seen as a good sign, especially if SHA follows through on its commitment to conduct a full and unbiased analysis of the County's proposals, which until now have been brushed aside by the Hogan administration.

However, as long as any one of SHA's four-lane Beltway expansion plans still has a path forward—and most, if not all of them still do—the threats to our environment, to our homes, and to some of our most highly valued community amenities, as well as to Maryland taxpayers, are all alive and well.

We are really just at the beginning of what promises to be a long process with lots of twists and turns along the way. The only thing that can be said for certain at this point is that superior organizing, pressure on key decision makers, and an effective media strategy will need to be applied more than ever in the days and months ahead, **before** the various agencies and levels of government that will play critical roles in the final outcome start making irrevocable decisions.

To keep up with the latest developments and to find out how to become more involved, one of the best sources of information is the advocacy group Citizens Against Beltway Expansion at [www.cabe495.com](http://www.cabe495.com). And you can find what SHA's position is on this and other issues at [www.roads.maryland.gov](http://www.roads.maryland.gov). ■

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## 2019-2020 Montgomery County Public Schools

September 3 .....	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
September 30 .....	NO SCHOOL - Students and Teachers
October 4 .....	Early Release Day
October 9 .....	NO SCHOOL - Students and Teachers
November 8 .....	Early Release Day
November 11 .....	Early Release Day
November 12 .....	Early Release Day
November 27 .....	Early Release Day
November 28-29 .....	HOLIDAY - Schools/Offices Closed
December 23-31 .....	WINTER BREAK - Schools Closed
January 1 .....	HOLIDAY - Schools/Offices Closed
January 20 .....	HOLIDAY - Schools/Offices Closed
January 24 .....	Early Release Day
January 27 .....	NO SCHOOL - Professional Day
February 17 .....	HOLIDAY - Schools/Offices Closed
February 28 .....	Early Release Day
March 27 .....	Early Release Day
April 6-10, 13 .....	SPRING BREAK - Schools Closed
April 28 .....	NO SCHOOL - Students and Teachers
May 25 .....	HOLIDAY - Schools/Offices Closed
June 15 .....	Early Release Day - LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

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## Public Works

# COLESVILLE ROAD RESURFACING BEGINS THIS MONTH

By Laurence Dickter

**R**elief is on the way. Finally. For those of you who thought the bumpy stretch of Colesville Road between Georgia Avenue in downtown Silver Spring and Sligo Creek Parkway would never get fixed, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) has some good news for you: beginning in September, the final construction phase of SHA's "safety and resurfacing project" will commence.

The work that is scheduled involves removing the top layer of asphalt (milling), resurfacing the roadway, and applying new pavement markings. SHA says that, "progress permitting," this should all be completed by year-end 2019.

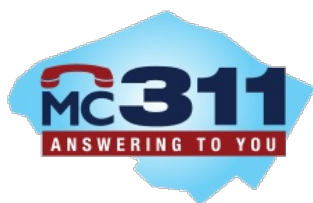
To keep the project on schedule, SHA says that work

crews may "intermittently" close lanes in both directions weekdays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and overnight Sunday through Thursday. It is also possible that some weekend utility relocation work may be necessary during the daytime hours over weekends. SHA warns that construction equipment in the area could cause some disruption as well.

SHA wisely advises drivers to "add extra commute time during construction and consider alternative routes". As in any road construction zone, you should expect reduced speed limits, narrow driving lanes and highway workers. In other words, please slow down when approaching and driving through any work zone. ■

## Resources

Everyone knows to call 911 during an emergency, but did you know that Montgomery County has a non-emergency, general information number? **Call 311 for all county government information and services,** Monday through Friday, 7 AM to 7 PM. Or visit their website at [www.MC311.com](http://www.MC311.com). Some examples:



- For Ride On bus information
- To discuss your Montgomery County property tax bill
- For recycling and trash pick up information
- For road and pothole repairs
- For building, construction, and zoning information
- To schedule construction permitting inspections
- For Health and Human Services information

To reach the MC311 Center from outside the County call 240-777-0311.

### Important Phone Numbers:

Montgomery County General Info & Service: 311  
Outside of Montgomery County: 240-777-0311  
TTY (for hearing impaired): 240-773-3556  
Police & fire emergency: 911  
Police non-emergency: 301-279-8000  
Fire non-emergency: 240-776-4700  
24-Hour Emergency Preparedness Hotline:  
240-777-4200  
Power outages, downed wires: Pepco 877-737-2662  
Website: <http://www.pepco.com/outage-center/>

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## Membership



### Support our community!

Become a member of the South Four Corners Citizens Association. SFCCA is the voice of our residential community. Its vigorous advocacy and events make South Four Corners safer, more beautiful and better connected.

### Join today! Only \$15 per year:

- Pay by cash/check at the upcoming SFCCA meeting
- Pay by check payable to SFCCA, send to: SFC Membership PO Box 792 Silver Spring, MD 20918-0792
  - Pay online using credit card or PayPal at <https://southfourcorners.com/membership/>

For more information contact Eileen Broderick, Membership, at [eileen@starpower.net](mailto:eileen@starpower.net)

## Volunteers Needed

### Make a difference close to home!

Join an active group of people committed to making South Four Corners a vibrant, safe and welcoming



community. There are several vacancies:

### Secretary

The Secretary, an elected position, takes the minutes during bi-monthly SFCCA meetings, types them up, and submits them to the Newsletter Editor for the next issue. This position is available to any SFCCA member in good standing, meaning you've paid your annual \$15 dues.

### Social Events Chair

The Social Events Chair plans and oversees social events throughout the year. Past events have included an ice cream social, movie night, community yard sale, Halloween parade, and holiday tree lighting. Get involved and help organize one or more events. It's fun!

## SFCCA Members Listserv

### Say "Yes!" to being in the know.

The SFCCA listserv is a great way to stay connected to our community. We encourage everyone who lives in South Four Corners to sign up and hear the very latest on recommended service providers, community events, advocacy updates, crime reports, yard sales, and more. Join in four easy steps:

1. Go to Yahoo.com and register to get a free Yahoo! ID. (Yahoo also calls this process creating an account.)
2. Search for the SFCCAMembers groups page at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SFCCAMembers>.

3. Click on the box that says "Join This Group!"
4. Include your street name and block number (e.g. 10100 block of Brunett), so you can be approved as a member.

Having problems joining? Still have questions? Go to <https://southfourcorners.com/listserv/> for FAQs.

Another useful social network is **Nextdoor**, which connects with many surrounding neighborhoods. Visit <https://nextdoor.com/> to sign up.

## SFCCA Officers & Chairpersons

### Officers:

Karen Michels, President • Laurence Dickter, Vice President  
Secretary **VACANT** • Richard Messalle, Treasurer

### Chairpersons:

Eileen Broderick, Membership • Nghi Nguyen, Neighborhood Safety  
Jane Jannotta, Newsletter Editor • Dave Nettleton, Newsletter Distribution  
Dave West, Listserv Manager • Emma Bennett, Website/Social Media  
John Holden, Welcome Bags • Social Events Chair **VACANT**  
Michael Lucy, Public Works • John & Peri Evanoff, Diversity & Inclusion

## SFCCA Addresses & Social Media

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**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/southfourcorners/](http://www.facebook.com/southfourcorners/)

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