



NORTHWOOD NEWS

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY THE NORTHWOOD-FOUR CORNERS CIVIC ASSOCIATION ■ FEBRUARY 2008

Bad News for the Montgomery County Budget: Revenue Shortfalls Mean Hiring Freeze, Other Cuts

By Carole Barth

Part One: The Operating Budget

Falling into the Gap. Just how big is the predicted budget gap? Expectations are that we will be \$401 million dollars in the hole for the Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget. That is roughly 10% of the County's current (FY08) operating budget. The State has its own budget crisis, so help will not be coming from that quarter.

According to the County

Executive, "It is not realistic to expect that this fiscal challenge will be resolved through future increased revenue estimates or even revenue enhancements."

County Executive Leggett, therefore, announced a hiring freeze in January:

"Given our projected \$401 million shortfall for the coming fiscal year, I feel it is prudent to hold off filling vacancies within County government, exempting only public safety and essential personnel. This freeze, combined with the 2% savings plan for this present fiscal year that I've forwarded to the Council, will help us save money now so that we can more effectively manage the financial challenges that lie ahead."

The FY08 Savings Plan would cut over \$23.6 million by delaying the implementation of new programs, re-deploying fire and rescue staff and equipment, cutting back on Police overtime, and reducing the number of police recruits and imposing general 2% cutbacks per agency.

What Would You Do?

Mr. Leggett is also sponsoring six budget forums through-

out the County in January to seek input from residents.

"These public forums give our residents an opportunity
(continued on page 3)

Next Meeting on February 13

The next meeting of the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association will be held on 13 February 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at the North Four Corners Rec Center. The Rec Center is located at the end of Southwood Road, just off Edgewood Drive.

All residents of the Northwood-Four Corners-Forest Knolls area are invited to attend and express their views. Please note that only paid members of the NFCCA are eligible to vote. (Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at the meeting.)■

INSIDE

What is CountyStat? 4

Jim Zepp explains the County Executive's new effort to be more responsive to citizen complaints.

The Continuing Insulation Story 6

Jacque Bokow updates us on just what it takes to install concrete insulation.

Proposed Adult Soccer Field for North Four Corners Park is Dropped from County Exec's Budget 10

Ike Leggett recommends the proposed field be dropped from the CIP.

Oh, Those Taxing Assessments! ... 15

Linda Perlman explains our new assessments.

FEBRUARY

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	
S	M	T	W	T	F	S

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After Five Years, It's Nice to Be Heard

For five years MNCPPC staff derided our community's sense of park stewardship. We were told repeatedly that North Four Corners Park does not belong to the citizens of Four Corners and that the regional need for adult soccer fields outweighs every other public good the park can conceivably provide. We were told that MNCPPC would never buy such expensive land for a "passive" nature park. We were called NIMBYs and staff said we were "afraid of changing demographics." We were exhorted to "pay the price" and accept that the County needs to "spread the pain." Despite overwhelming community opposition, Park and Planning has remained obdurate.

In December of 2006, I took hope from two points in Ike Leggett's inaugural speech. First he said, "I will make every effort to establish a highly inclusionary, transparent form of government. Those affected by our decisions must be involved from the very beginning, not when assumptions about projects have hardened into stone, and the train has all but left the proverbial station." Later in the speech, he said, "... It is not a bad thing to care about preserving the quality of life for your family and your neighbors—the quality of life that drew most of us here in the first place. That's anything but selfish; it's honorable!"

In January of this year, my hope became a reality as Mr. Leggett's North Four Corners Park CIP recommendation stated, "The Executive does not support this project due to significant community concerns that have not been fully addressed." (See "Proposed Adult Soccer Field Dropped from Executive's Budget," page 10.) Interestingly, NFCCA was not the only community whose concerns were cited in the CIP. In his comments on the Revenue Authority's capital budget request to expand Sligo Creek Golf Course, Ike Leggett states, "The Executive recommends deferring this project until community concerns have been resolved."

So thank you, Mr. Leggett, for your efforts to make Montgomery County government both responsive and responsible.

—Carole Barth

Bone & Brawn

Understanding the relationship between bone health, diet, and exercise patterns is the first step to maintaining bone health. Rebecca Davis, a Univ. of Md. Cooperative Extension educator, will lecture on how changes in diet and activity level can help increase strength and balance as well as maintain bone mineral density.

The free session is Tuesday, February 19, at 10:30 a.m., at the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20901. Call 301.681.1255 for more information or directions. ■

NORTHWOOD NEWS

Northwood News is published by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. The NFCCA represents the 1,493 households in the area bounded by Colesville Rd. (Rte. 29), University Blvd. (Rte. 193), Caddington Ave., and the Northwest Branch.

Any resident of this area is eligible to join the NFCCA. Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at any Association meeting or mailed to the treasurer.

Northwood News is published five times a year—in October, December, February, April, and June. To place an ad or discuss a story, please contact the editor.

Editor

Jacquie Bokow
10603 Cavalier Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20901
301.593.8566
nfcca@verizon.net

Join the Northwood Baby Network

If you have an infant or preschooler, you should join the Northwood Baby Network. It's free and it's fun!

Parents and their children meet once a month, rotating among members' homes.

The time (during the day) and place changes each month.

Contact Kirsi Ampe at ampejk@bellatlantic.net or 301.754.0416 to join or to get more information. Get to know your neighbors! ■

Balancing the MoCo Budget

(continued from page 1)
to tell me what's important to them as I prepare next year's operating budget for submission to the County Council on March 17," said Leggett. "In light of the shortfalls that we are facing, input from residents for the FY09 budget is crucial in helping us determine priorities." Citizens can also make suggestions online. To reach the online form go to www.montgomerycountymd.gov and click on the online form link under the "FY09 Budget" heading.

Future Shock. According to an article in the January issue of the *Civic Federation News*, however, the \$401 million dollar shortfall is only

Important Budget Dates for County

December: County Executive begins developing a recommended operating budget and performance measures for County programs

January 15 (every other year): County Executive submits his/her proposed capital budget to the County Council

March 17: The Executive's recommended operating budget is submitted to the County Council

First Week in April: The Executive's recommended performance measures for County programs are submitted to the County Council

June 1: County Council approves the final budget

July 1: New fiscal year begins

the tip of the fiscal iceberg. The six year gap (FY09-12) would be \$4.68 billion. One reason for this is rising personnel costs as multiyear contracts go into effect, providing step increases and wage adjustments for many County employees.

Part Two: The Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

This is County Executive Leggett's first full six-year Capital Budget. The Executive proposed a \$3.2 billion CIP for fiscal years 2009-2014. This is an overall spending increase of 1.1%. (The previous two CIPs recommended increases of 24.3% and 26.2%, respectively.)

Mr. Leggett's spending plan increases school construction funding to more than \$1.4 billion, the largest commitment ever made in Montgomery County. To provide schools with this level of funding, Leggett is proposing to cut County government spending by 9%.

In addition to North Four Corners Park (see article on page 10), several items in the CIP impact our part of the County. Funds are included to begin planning and design of the replacement or renovation of the 3rd District Police Station in Silver Spring. Continued funding is provided to complete the Silver Spring Transit Center, for construction of the U.S. Route 29 Sidewalk projects, and for the Silver Spring Library. There is also funding for a live music venue in downtown Silver Spring. ■

NFCCA BOARD

The Board of Directors for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association meets five times a year, in October, December, February, April, and June. Current officers for 2007-2008 are:

President

Carole Barth
10602 Lockridge Drive
301.593.7863
cbarth@mindspring.com

Vice President

Mark Weingart
309 Timberwood Avenue
301.593.5702
markweingart@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Linda Perlman
1203 Caddington Avenue
301.681.3735
LSPerlman@hotmail.com

Secretary

Vacant

At Large

Maureen Carrington
10400 Eastwood Avenue
301.681.0249
MCarrington@Month-Off.com

Ted Daniel
302 Marvin Road
301.593.0418
ted.daniel@mail.house.gov

Laura Hussey
10308 Edgewood Avenue
301.592.0646
laura_hussey@mindspring.com

Editor, Northwood News

Jacquie Bokow
10603 Cavalier Drive
301.593.8566
nfcca@verizon.net

What is CountyStat and How Will It Help Residents?

By Jim Zepp

Although it sounds like a line from the TV show *ER*, CountyStat is a new effort by County Executive Isiah Leggett to make local government agencies more responsive to citizen complaints and efficient in their operations. CountyStat is based on Gov. O'Malley's CitiStat, a process that he initiated as Baltimore's mayor for improving that city's public services and which was an expansion of the CompStat police management approach largely credited with reducing New York City's crime problems in the 1990s.

Variations of the Stat systems have been widely adopted by State and local governments across the country as a solution to citizens' discontent with public services and as a mechanism for greater accountability of agencies and managers. Although it started with police departments, it has been applied to public works, transportation, employment

NFCCA Email Lists

NFCCA sponsors two email lists. One is the general NFCCA List Serve, containing community news, including crime news. Send an email to nfcca-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to join.

The second is for Northwood Parents. To join that list, send an email to northwoodparents-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Access is restricted to neighborhood residents. ■

services, and schools.

This style of public management involves regular meetings of the chief executive's managers and individual agency directors. Each meeting usually focuses on one agency or major program. Using a combination of statistical analyses, data maps, and citizen input from surveys and public forums, an agency's recent performance is examined against various service goals—such as repairing all reported potholes within 48 hours—or operational factors, such as reducing use of overtime by agency staffs.

Agency managers are expected to identify solutions to failures to meet service goals or trends of increasing complaints or negative developments. This creates an atmosphere which emphasizes the personal accountability by managers for their agency's performance. The intent is continuous improvement in government services and citizens' satisfaction.

The County Executive's Office has hired a staff, which will start holding CountyStat meetings this month. The process, information assets, and scope of reviews are expected to evolve and expand as experience is gained from early efforts. As part of this, the County will shortly implement a 311 call system for citizens to make non-emergency service requests. Along with a new CRM (Customer Relations Management) system to track complaints, this

will provide a means for generating data on how well agencies are responding to citizens. The County government Web site will soon have more information about CountyStat and these two initiatives.

Some concerns raised about other Stat programs are that: (a) there is a tendency to focus on those performance measures for which data is available, rather than what would be of more interest to citizens but harder to obtain information on, and (b) it is a reactive rather than proactive approach to government in that managers' attention is focused on responding to changes in service statistics. An example of the latter is that a service goal might be repairing reported potholes within 48 hours as opposed to addressing conditions that contribute to the creation of potholes, such as uncoordinated road work by utility companies and government agencies which results in poorly patched roadways.

Despite these challenges, the County Executive should be congratulated for his efforts to make local government more responsive and accountable to its citizens. This seems to be a sincere attempt at fulfilling his commitment to improving the quality and effectiveness of county government's actions. In the complex environment that elected officials and public managers face, the results of agency actions on citizens' lives can often get lost. ■

SIT. STAY. WE COME TO YOU!



Mobile Full-Service Pet Spa

Convenient alternative for your pet's grooming needs

Personalized grooming with a professionally certified groomer

All natural organic products used



Please call
240-429-0197
for an appointment

1ST CHOICE Home Improvements Without the Hassle

- ☆ Interior & Exterior Painting
- ☆ Replacement Windows & Doors
- ☆ Siding, Trim, & Gutter Covers
- ☆ Carpentry and Repairs

Serving homeowners like you since 1991!

301-229-9100

go1stchoice.com

MHIC 39468

Insured

The Continuing Insulation Story

By *Jacquie Bokow*

In the last issue of the *Northwood News*, I invited homeowners in the neighborhood to contact me about getting Air-Krete insulation in our homes. Twelve responded. Of the 13 total, seven are from the brick cooperative houses on Cavalier Drive and Belton Road and six from other parts of the neighborhood.

Doug Palmer of Palmer Industries came to my house on January 11. I invited all the folks who had expressed interest to hear what he had to say; since it was during the day, only six were able to attend. Let me tell you what he told us.

He spoke about the Air-Krete process and, with my house in particular, the difficulties in using it. My house has “brick on block” construction. What this means is that there’s a four-inch layer of brick on the outside, directly abutting a four-inch inner layer of concrete block. Every eight rows the bricks were turned on edge, crossing over the concrete layer. This looks very pretty outside, and creates a sturdy home, but makes it impossible to enter from the outside through the mortar. (Workers would have to drill through both the mortar between the bricks and then the concrete block, and wouldn’t know what they would find once they did, i.e., they might be hitting a stud, etc.) Too, this type of construction means there wouldn’t be a continuous vertical space between the

studs in which to inject the Air-Krete.

Also, with this type of construction, there’s only about an inch of space (sometimes less) between the concrete block and the inside drywall and there are usually cross braces horizontally placed, causing further obstruction. The Air-Krete mixture can still be installed, but it has to be done from *inside* the house. This would require at least four one-inch holes vertically up the wall to get into each space; these holes would be cut every 16" (between studs) around the perimeter of the house.

Working from the inside, of course, means bathroom wall tiles and kitchen cabinets create additional barriers. Mr. Palmer was frank with us: everything would have to be moved away from the outside walls and drilling the holes makes a real mess, with dirt and dust coming from the holes. Obviously, they take precautions to minimize the mess; their method is to place an adhesive plastic strip several feet wide on the floor around the inside perimeter of the home. Additionally, they need to get their truck close enough to the house to reach all the walls and they need access to a water hose.

Each inch of Air-Krete has an R-value of 3.9, so that’s the most we’d be adding to our home. The product has a lot of wonderful qualities—like being nontoxic, fireproof, a sound barrier, and bugs and mice don’t like

it—but it won’t add a huge barrier to the cold and heat outside. I don’t know what would, though, given the quirkiness of my house!

The job for my house would take two to three days. The first day, all of the holes are cut. The second day, the injection of the Air-Krete begins. The workers use electrician’s tape to probe the area behind each hole they cut, which is why it takes an entire day just to cut the holes. After the Air-Krete is installed, each of the holes is plugged with a styfoam plug, which would have to be patched before painting, a service they do not provide.

The upheaval would be great, if short in duration. Our queen-size bed barely fits in our small master bedroom; it would have to be dismantled to give them clearance to get at the wall. Fortunately, we had our bathroom remodeled four years ago and had pieces of foam insulation placed in the cavity, so we don’t need to have the Air-Krete there, saving the existing tiles. Others considering the process would have to remove tiles.

We have built-in bookcases covering one outside wall of our living room; hundreds of books and CDs would have to be removed—along with the shelves—before the workers arrived. In the kitchen, holes would have to be drilled *through* the cabinets that are against the outside wall; each would have to be emptied first, of course.

Mr. Palmer gave us a quotation of \$2,940. Ours is
(continued on page 8)

For all Your Real Estate Needs,



Call *Maureen Bovich*

Office Direct: 301 388-2625

Personal: 301 502-0601

Email: jmbovich@aol.com

Serving Northwood, Forest Knolls & Kinsman Residents for over 10 years

Listings in Northwood/Forest Knolls/Kinsman As of 1/16/2008

<u>Active</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Bedrms</u>	<u>Full Baths</u>	<u>Half Bath</u>
10420 Eastwood Ave	\$525,000	Cape Cod	3	1	0
105 Belton Road	\$449,900	Rambler	3	3	0
205 Hannes St	\$410,000	Rambler	4	2	0
423 Kerwin Rd	\$360,000	Rambler	4	2	0
130 Kinsman View Cir	\$699,900	Colonial	7	2	1
63 Kinsman View Cir	\$399,250	Townhouse	4	3	1
305 Ladson Rd	\$460,000	Cape Cod	3	1	0
10703 Lombardy Rd	\$379,000	Raised Rambler	3	1	1
10705 Lombardy Rd	\$389,000	Rambler	3	1	1
10709 Lombardy Rd	\$400,000	Rambler	4	2	0
11201 Lombardy Rd	\$395,000	Rambler	3	2	0
1016 Loxford Ter	\$439,500	Split Level	4	2	1
1134 Loxford Ter	\$389,900	Split Level	4	3	0
905 Malta Ln	\$359,900	Rambler	3	2	1
201 University Blvd W	\$459,900	Cape Cod	7	3	0
402 Royalton Rd	\$419,500	Rambler	3	2	0
405 Royalton Rd	\$389,000	Rambler	3	2	0
112 Woodridge Ave	\$495,000	Cape Cod	3	1	1
<u>Contract</u>					
216 Thistle Ct	\$399,875	Split Level	4	2	0
501 Royalton Rd	\$399,900	Rambler	3	2	0
1117 Caddington Ave	\$379,900	Split Level	4	1	1

** Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed **



12520 Prosperity Drive, Suite 105, Silver Spring, MD 20902 301-388-2600



Blue Heron Wellness...Enhance Your Well-Being



Not visited Blue Heron Wellness yet? Here's your opportunity. Call Today!



\$69.99
1-Hour Massage
 New Clients
 (reg. rate \$85)

\$259
Introductory Acupuncture Package
 (Includes evaluation & two follow up treatments, reg. rate \$320)



Yoga • Massage • Acupuncture • Herbal Medicine

1023B Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD, 20901
 301-54-3330 | BlueHeronWellness.com

Conveniently located on Route 29 above Trader Joe's, enter behind California Tortilla

Gift Certificates always available

What NFCCA Membership Does

By Linda Perlman

Thanks to everyone who has joined the NFCCA because of the dues form and envelope enclosed with the December 2007 issue of the *Northwood News*. Your membership dues to the NFCCA pay not only for the newsletter, but also for the civic association's advocacy on community and neighborhood issues ranging from the North Four Corners Park to crime concerns, home ownership, parenting and education matters, and local political issues.

The NFCCA's activities in the past year have extended from representation of your interests at County budget hearings, to Neighborhood

Night Out (against crime), to a community "yard" sale at Forest Knolls Elementary School, to swimming at a pool party at Forest Knolls Pool, and "An Inconvenient Truth" movie night. We hope you will participate in the NFCCA's activities and join with us to extend our activities to persons and neighborhoods that have been less involved in the civic association.

I'm happy that we're surpassing the 2007 membership totals, but in an area of almost 1,500 households, membership and participation should be much higher. Please let us know what your interests are and how we, as a neighborhood association, can better meet your needs. ■

Insulation Story

(continued from page 6)
 one of the smallest of the cooperative homes, so I suspect others will cost more. A neighbor on my block was quoted \$3,300. No group discount was offered, although I sent an email asking Mr. Palmer if he would offer this if enough of us sign up. Others interested will need to get a individualized bid for their own houses, as each is different.

My husband and I have still decided it would be worth it and plan to have it done in the spring. I intend to keep everyone posted on the process and whether we notice any difference in our heating/cooling bills afterward. So stay tuned! ■



Barbara Ciment

Associate Broker, Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc

\$250 Million in Career Sales

Top Office Producer Since 1988

(H) 301-622-7002 (O) 301-949-7070



barbara@ciment.com
Web: www.ciment.com



Call For My Free Market Analysis & Home Prep Strategy

Sales in Northwood January 1- December 31, 2007

ADDRESS	SALE PRICE	STYLE	BR	BA/ HBA	DOM	SUBDIVISION
107 Northwood Ave	\$545,000	Cape Cod	3	2	22	Northwood Park
10708 Eastwood Ave	\$539,000	Split Level	4	3	41	Northwood Park
1004 Playford Ln	\$490,000	Split Level	5	2/1	10	Forest Knolls
10708 Margate Rd	\$485,000	Rambler	5	2/1	51	Northwood Park View
830 Loxford Ter	\$480,000	Colonial	4	2/1	142	Forest Knolls
807 Malta Ln	\$465,000	Split Level	4	2/1	43	Forest Knolls
311 Marvin Rd	\$460,000	Colonial	3	1/1	18	Northwood Village
306 Dennis Ave	\$459,000	Cottage	2	2	28	Northwood Park
125 Southwood Ave	\$459,000	Cape Cod	3	2	76	Northwood Park
418 Eisner St	\$459,000	Colonial	4	2/1	14	Northwood Park
10702 Eastwood Ave	\$459,000	Cape Cod	5	2/1	38	Northwood Village
11019 Lombardy Rd	\$454,000	Rambler	3	2	71	Northwood Park View
1003 Caddington Ave	\$449,950	Rambler	4	2	138	Forest Knolls
309 Dennis Ave	\$449,500	Colonial	4	1/1	20	Northwood Village
709 University Blvd W	\$445,000	Split Level	4	2/1	75	Northwood Village
10617 Eastwood Ave	\$444,000	Cape Cod	3	3	62	Northwood Village
404 Royalton Rd	\$440,000	Rambler	3	2	63	Northwood Knolls
215 Thistle Dr	\$440,000	Split Level	5	2/1	196	Northwood Park View
10713 Lockridge Dr	\$440,000	Rambler	4	3	92	Northwood Park View
425 Kerwin Rd	\$440,000	Cape Cod	3	2	85	Northwood Village
406 Kerwin Rd	\$438,000	Cape Cod	4	2	6	Northwood Village
10204 Sutherland Rd	\$435,000	Rambler	3	2	13	Northwood Park
827 Caddington Ave	\$435,000	Split Level	4	1/1	202	Forest Knolls
312 Dennis Ave	\$435,000	Colonial	5	2	138	Northwood Park
416 Royalton Rd	\$429,000	Cape Cod	4	2	50	Northwood Knolls
315 Timberwood Ave	\$425,000	Cape Cod	3	2/1	90	Northwood Park
508 Royalton Rd	\$413,000	Cape Cod	4	2	15	Northwood Knolls
313 Marvin Rd	\$410,000	Colonial	2	2	141	Northwood Village
1303 Caddington Ave	\$410,000	Split Level	4	1/1	5	Forest Knolls
10707 Eastwood Ave	\$410,000	Cape Cod	3	2	142	Northwood Village
322 Hannes St	\$405,000	Split Level	5	2/1	53	Northwood Park
800 Whittington Ter	\$405,000	Split Foyer	4	3	10	Forest Knolls
301 Irwin St	\$400,000	Raised Rambler	3	2/1	19	Northwood Park
11109 Lombardy Rd	\$399,900	Rambler	5	2	128	Northwood Park View
137 Kinsman View Cir	\$395,000	Townhouse	3	2/1	5	Northwood Park View
49 Kinsman View Cir	\$392,000	Townhouse	4	3/1	24	Northwood Park View
205 Thistle Dr	\$390,000	Split Level	4	2	81	Northwood Park View
25 Kinsman View Cir	\$388,000	Townhouse	4	3/1	181	Northwood Park View
10612 Margate Rd	\$380,000	Split Level	3	1/1	115	Northwood Park View
317 Ladson Rd	\$380,000	Cape Cod	4	1	104	Northwood Village
1015 Chiswell Ln	\$375,000	Split Level	3	2/1	142	Forest Knolls
10506 Edgewood Ave	\$375,000	Split Level	3	2/1	86	Northwood Knolls
1011 Loxford Ter	\$370,000	Split Level	3	2/1	10	Forest Knolls
9 Kinsman View Cir	\$361,000	Townhouse	3	2/2	108	Northwood Park View

This is not intended as a solicitation if your property is already listed with a real estate agent. MRIS Data subject to revision. Copyright 2008

Proposed Adult Soccer Field for North Four Corners Park is Dropped from County Executive's Budget

By Carole Barth

I am happy to report a very important victory in our fight to save Rachel Carson Meadow. County Executive Ike Leggett has released his first full six-year capital construction budget and proposed program (CIP). Mr. Leggett recommended Park and Planning's proposed soccer field project be dropped from the CIP. The recommendation reads, "The Executive does not support this project due to significant community concerns that have not been fully addressed. The Executive recommends that the proposed Park and Planning Bonds and Program Open Space be used to fund other priorities."

This is a much better outcome for us than if Mr. Leggett had merely indicated that the expenditure would not be prudent in the current budget climate. It recognizes that, even if more money becomes available in the future, any plan needs to consider the impact to the surrounding community. When I spoke to him, Mr. Leggett specifically mentioned the letters he had received from the community. It is good to know that our input actually made a difference. Too often, government speaks to the public but forgets to listen.

As exciting as this news is, we can't stop our efforts yet. To date, park planners are proceeding as if nothing has happened.

On December 6, the Plan-

ning Board directed staff to try yet another redesign of the Olympic-sized adult soccer field proposed for North Four Corners Park. The Commissioners asked to see a design where the field would be built against the property line between the Oaks and the meadow. In other words, instead of placing the field at a diagonal in the middle of the property, this design would place the long side of the rectangle along the property line. The Commissioners proposed

this ostensibly to save more trees and to provide more of a buffer between the field and the houses on Timberwood and Pinewood.

Staff has responded with two versions of this option (each with a different parking lot configuration). Here is a link to the designs: www.mcparkandplanning.org/silverspring/public_projects/fourcorners_park.shtm (Alternative B is shown below). This rearrangement, how-

(continued on page 11)





BONDED & INSURED

Forest Glen Pet Solutions, LLC

Midday Walks
Pet Sitting
House Sitting
Medications

Laura Pawlowski
301.593.2445

forestglenpets@yahoo.com
www.forestglenpets.biz



Soccer Field Dropped from County Budget—Maybe

(continued from page 10)
ever, does not address community concerns. Due to the massive size of the field and the hilly terrain, these alternatives would still require massive earthmoving and would still destroy the existing trees. Moreover, this East-West field orientation would mean one team is looking into the sun. Choosing between these new designs and staff's latest preferred design (which is almost the same as their last version) is essentially meaningless. It's like choosing what color and model of bulldozer they use; the end result is still destruction of the meadow.

The Planning Board will act on these alternatives on January 31. At that time we should get a sense of how

willing they are to fight to get this item restored to the budget. Here is a link to see archived recordings of Planning Board meetings, decisions, and staff reports: mcparkandplanning.org/board/agenda/.

Even if Park and Planning decides to shelve the project, we will still want to participate in the County Council's budget process. The County Council will review the project this spring and, if they want to, they can put it back in the budget. Also, we still have to fight for what we do want (preservation of the site's natural character, a playground for older children, better maintenance, and better management). We also have to watch in

case Parks decides to re-permit the existing field to adult groups for all-day play. To help keep that from happening, we will continue looking at Park and Planning's needs assessment and alternatives study. Still, our request for sensible park spending remains very timely in light of continuing revenue shortfalls.

So if you are circulating petitions, writing letters, or preparing testimony for the Council, please keep it up. Thank you letters to Mr. Leggett and OMB Director Joe Beach would also be in order. And be sure to save the date for our first-ever Rachel Carson Meadow Festival on Sunday afternoon, May 4. ■

CLASSIFIEDS

MOVING SALE. Craftsman Mower '06 \$125 obo; B&D Trimmer/Edger \$75 obo; Craftman SnoBlo \$150 obo. PRCochran@hotmail.com.

PAY OFF Your Mortgage FAST! To learn how to have financial freedom, call 1-888-479-6850 for a recorded message. ACT now!

PET CARE. Dog walking, cat sitting, small furry animal and amphibian-loving family. We're close and we're ready. 301-651-3257.

GIRL SCOUT COOKIES, \$3.50 per box. Free delivery by February 13. Call Caroline, Junior Troop 6256, to order, 301-681-0249.

J.B.'s CONTRACTING. Remodeling, Bathrooms, Kitchens, Basements. James Bible, 240-603-5300, info @jbiblescontracting.com. Local.

YOUR AD HERE. Sell an item or a service to your 1,489 neighbors. A four-line 'Northwood News' classified costs only \$10/issue!

YOUR NAME IN LIGHTS! Well, maybe not in lights, but get a byline for an article you submit to the 'Northwood News.' See p. 2.



Save the Date
NFCCA's First
Rachel Carson
Meadow Festival
Sunday, May 4, 2008



Landscapes Plus

- ◆ Yard Clean-ups
- ◆ Mulching and Wood Chips
- ◆ Landscape Design and Installation
- ◆ Shrub/Tree Installation
- ◆ Lawn Renovation-Seeding/Fertilizing
- ◆ Landscape Consultations
- ◆ Shrub Pruning and Removal
- ◆ Flower-Perennial-Annual Installation

Avi Chertock
301-593-0577



Mention coupon for
\$5.00 OFF any
purchase **\$30 or more.**
Good through 2/28/2008!
Not valid with any other offers.

Hoover-Fisher Florist
Same Day Delivery
Local or Nationwide

Rt. 29 and University Blvd. in the
Woodmoor Shopping Center

301-593-4700 24 hrs
hooverfisherflorist.com



Erie
Insurance

CARL RUTAN
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

Auto • Home • Business • Life

9912 COLESVILLE ROAD
SILVER SPRING, MD 20901
301-681-0200 • Fax 301-681-8877

carlrutan@verizon.net

www.carlrutaninsurance.com

Current NFCCA Membership and Street Totals

The list below shows how many households—by street—have joined the NFCCA as of January 23. The second number represents the total number of homes on that street, followed by the percentage of membership. The total number of homes is 1,490. Check out where your street stands!

Belton Road and Court, 6 (out of 48, 12.5%: 103, 104, 306, 412, 423, 428)	Irwin Street, 0 (out of 31, 0%)	21, 23.8%: 104, 111, 116, 123, 127)
Caddington Avenue, 5 (out of 83, 6%: 908, 909, 913, 1113, 1203)	Kerwin Road and Court, 5 (out of 42, 11.9%: 407, 410, 417, 508, 520)	Sutherland Road, 4 (out of 31, 12.9%: 10204, 10209, 10216, 10221)
Cavalier Drive and Courts, 7 (out of 53, 13.2%: 10601, 10602, 10603, 10613, 10703, 10705, 10713)	Kinsman View Circle, 0 (out of 85, 0%)	Thistle Drive and Court, 0 (out of 22, 0%)
Chiswell Lane, 1 (out of 39, 2.5%: 1025)	Ladson Road, 0 (out of 18, 0%)	Timberwood Avenue, 10 (out of 25, 40%: 204, 208, 305, 307, 308, 309, 311, 313, 315, 317)
Colesville Road, 0 (out of 22, 0%)	Lockridge Drive, 5 (out of 31, 16.1%: 10602, 10615, 10707, 10709, 10715)	University Boulevard, 1 (out of 48, 2%: 205)
Dennis Avenue and Courts, 2 (out of 43, 4.6%: 304, 404)	Lombardy Road and Court, 11 (out of 88, 12.5%: 10700, 10806, 10810, 10817, 10900, 10904, 10911, 11000, 11013, 11113, 11212)	Whittington Terrace, 0 (out of 15, 0%)
Eastwood Avenue, 3 (out of 53, 5.6%: 10400, 10405, 10408)	Lorain Avenue, 3 (out of 21, 14.2%: 10108, 10208, 10214)	Woodridge Avenue, 3 (out of 13, 23%: 108, 111, 115)
Edgewood Avenue, 10 (out of 72, 13.8%: 10209, 10301, 10308, 10404, 10409, 10428, 10610, 10212, 10213, 10228)	Loxford Terrace, 5 (out of 134, 3.7%: 816, 857, 920, 1001, 1105)	
Eisner Street, 2 (out of 32, 6.2%: 403, 404)	Malta Lane, 1 (out of 45, 2.2%: 813)	So, out of 1,490 possible members, the NFCCA currently has 132 members (or 8.8%). The street with the highest number of members is Lombardy Road and Court, which has 11 (out of 88 possible). The street with the highest <i>percentage</i> of members, however, is Timberwood, with 10 out of 25, or 40% of its homes joining.
Foxglove Lane, 1 (out of 5, 20%: 11104)	Margate Road, 8 (out of 50, 16%: 10610, 10703, 10803, 10808, 10811, 10812, 10818, 10828)	Some streets have an obvious advantage in the small number of homes. For instance, Foxglove Lane's percentage jumped from zero to 20% when only one home joined. And Loxford Terrace—our largest street, with 134 homes—could be #1 number-wise, but will be hard pressed to have the highest percentage.
Glenwild Road and Court, 8 (out of 33, 24.2%: 10600, 10602, 10610, 10612, 10619, 10618, 10621, 10707)	Marvin Road, 5 (out of 18, 27.7%: 300, 302, 306, 310, 315)	If you'd like to increase your street's standing, join the NFCCA by mailing your \$10 per household contribution (checks made out to "NFCCA") to the NFCCA Treasurer, Linda Perlman, 1203 Caddington Avenue. ■
Hannes Street and Court, 10 (out of 104, 9.6%: 104, 105, 106, 229, 307, 309, 403, 404, 410, 10912)	Mountain Quail Road, 3 (out of 28, 10.7%: 10400, 10414, 10416)	
	Northwood Avenue, 0 (out of 13, 0%)	
	Ordway Drive, 0 (out of 26, 0%)	
	Playford Lane, 0 (out of 31, 0%)	
	Pinewood Avenue, 3 (out of 13, 23%: 318, 319, 324)	
	Royalton Road and Terrace, 0 (out of 31, 0%)	
	Snowy Owl Drive, 5 (out of 23, 21.7%: 100, 107, 113, 119, 121)	
	Southwood Avenue, 5 (out of	

John Burgess Real Estate Group

The Home Buying and Home Selling Team... Where Our Clients Are #1



PREMIER



Full Service Residential and
Commercial Real Estate

301-681-5093

Now serving clients in Spanish... Ahora sirviendo en Español.

Search the MLS live at
www.JohnBurgessRealtor.com

info@JohnBurgessRealtor.com

EXPERIENCE the advantages
of working with **EXECUTIVES**



Realty Executives Premier
3919 National Drive, Suite 310
Burtonsville, MD 20866



ATTORNEYS AT LAW



SILBER, PERLMAN, SIGMAN & TILEV, P.A.

Formerly known as Silber & Perlman, P.A.

CELEBRATING
25 YEARS
IN PRACTICE

ESTATE PLANNING

Wills ■ Trusts ■ Powers of Attorney ■ Advance Directives

REAL ESTATE

Contracts ■ Settlements
Property Ownership Agreements

FAMILY LAW

Divorce ■ Separation Agreements
Custody ■ Adoptions ■ LGBT

Susan Silber
Linda Perlman
Kenneth Sigman
Metody Tilev
Kirstin Gulling

*Free parking
and convenient
to the Takoma
Red Line Metro*

TEL: (301) 891-2200

7000 CARROLL AVENUE, SUITE 200 ■ TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND 20912-4437 ■ WEB: WWW.SP-LAW.COM ■ EMAIL: LAWYERS@SP-LAW.COM

ADVICE ■ MEDIATION ■ LITIGATION ■ APPEALS

Oh, Those Taxing Assessments!

By Linda S. Perlman

My house at 1203 Caddington Avenue is worth \$432,730, according to the State of Maryland, Department of Assessments and Taxation ("SDAT") reappraisal of my property as of January 1. Only three years ago, the market value of my property, according to SDAT, was \$340,180. This means that my property has appreciated about 27.2% since January 1, 2005. This is less than the statewide average property value increase of 33.2% in the reassessed areas, but is substantially higher than the average Montgomery County assessment rise of 16.2% over three years.

Approximately one-third of Montgomery County properties are reassessed each year. All of the houses in the NFCCA area were reassessed this year and property owners should have received an Assessment Notice dated December 28, 2007. Assessment increases are phased-in over the next three tax years. However, if you occupy the property as your principal residence, then your annual assessment increase is capped at 10% because of the Homestead Tax Credit.

The Homestead Tax Credit is a state law that limits increases for property tax purposes to no more than 10% per year for owner-occupied properties. For the first time this year, homeowners in the NFCCA area (whose properties were reassessed as of January 1, 2008) must submit a one-

time application in order to receive the benefit of the homestead tax credit. Previously, this tax credit was granted automatically if the property was listed in the assessment records as the taxpayer's principal residence. The application requirement was instituted because some property owners were improperly receiving this tax credit on rental property and vacation homes. Your Assessment Notice included an Application for Homestead Tax Credit Eligibility which can be filed online (at www.dat.state.md.us and then click on the Homestead Eligibility Application link) or by mail.

Do not ignore the Application for Homestead Tax Credit Eligibility. If your house is your principal residence and you fail to apply for the homestead tax credit, then your property taxes *will* increase. For my house, SDAT estimated that, because of the homestead tax credit, I will not pay county property taxes on \$135,897 of assessment. This assessment amount, multiplied by the Montgomery County tax rate, divided by 100 equals the amount of my tax savings due to the homestead tax credit. Based on the levy year 2007 County property tax rate (\$0.916, per my property tax bill), I calculate that the homestead tax credit will save me \$1,244.82 in property taxes for the tax year beginning July 1, 2008.

If you think the New Market Value of your house

is too high, then you have the right to appeal by completing the appeal procedure form on the back of your Assessment Notice or by filing an online assessment appeal form. For assessment notices dated December 28, 2007, an appeal must be filed or postmarked by February 11, 2008. Please note that it won't be enough to simply claim that "my assessment is too high." You will need facts to back up your case as to why the Total New Market Value of your house does not reflect the actual market value of the property. This should include supporting evidence, such as examples of sales of comparable properties which support your assertion of the value of your house. You can obtain a copy of the assessor's worksheet for your property, and also copies of worksheets for other comparable properties, from the local assessment office (phone 240.314.4510 or email mont@dat.state.md.us). ■

Free Tai Chi Classes for 55+

Tai chi is an ancient system of gentle exercise that emphasizes relaxation, balance, and coordination. It is a series of quiet, supple movements known as a good, low-impact exercise which improves fitness and balance.

Free classes are held for folks 55 and older on Thursdays, from 10:00-11:00 a.m., at the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center at 1000 Forest Glen Rd. The instructor is Fred Nee. Call 301.681.1255. ■

**10% off
1040
Return**

- Schedule too busy? I do house calls
- 20 years experience
- Expert in construction taxation and accounting
- Hablo español
- Experto en impuestos de construcción
- Certified Quickbooks Pro Advisor

Convenient to Kemp Mill and
the Greater Northwood Area

Income Tax Preparation

I can prepare electronic
or paper returns for you,
your business,
or your estate



Bradley A. Ralph, CPA

bradley.ralph@verizon.net

Tel: 301 980 2852

Call with this ad by March 15 and get a 10% Discount on your return



Northwood's Resident Mortgage Expert will lower your payments!

*Hope you enjoyed the complimentary
ruler that was placed on your front door!*

- § **Interest rates have returned to near-historic lows** – Lock in a fixed rate **below 6%!**
- § No closing cost Home Equity Loans and Lines of Credit with fixed rate options
- § 100% financing & low-doc loans still available for the self-employed
- § 30 & 40 year loans with fixed rates & interest-only period keeps your payments lowest
- § Free, no-obligation, confidential consultations and credit report reviews
- § Refinance today and enjoy a month's vacation from your mortgage payment

Maureen Carrington

www.Month-Off.com

MCarrington@Month-Off.com

Mortgage Loan Consultant

301-681-0249 (Home)

301-651-3257 (Office)