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Public Hearing on Noise Control Ordinance

At its **Wednesday, January 13** meeting, the Town Council will hold a public hearing on a proposed noise control ordinance that would establish "quiet hours" during which construction activities and the use of motorized equipment would be prohibited in Town. The Town would continue to rely on Montgomery County noise regulations, which use decibel levels to control noise-producing activities, at all other times, specifically during the majority of daylight hours.

The Town's Environment Committee initially proposed a noise control initiative that continued to rely on Montgomery County noise level limits as a standard in the Town and called for increased Town enforcement of these limits. The Council discussed how the initiative would be administered given the Town's limited resources, especially outside of normal working hours. The Council asked staff to make recommendations for alternative approaches to controlling noise, including investigating the use of quiet hours. Both the Town Council and staff felt that using quiet hours as the standard to control noise during certain times of the day (i.e. nighttime hours), rather than relying on decibel levels, would make both compliance and enforcement easier.

Public Hearing

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Home Energy Conservation Workshop

Learn how to save money and energy in 2010 at a home energy conservation workshop run by Town college students and tailored to our Town on **Wednesday, January 6** at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall. Students from the Town's popular Climate Corps will give you dozens of easy and low-or-no-cost tips on how to reduce your home electricity, gas, and oil use. Learn how many dollars, kilowatts, and BTUs you can save by taking simple steps such as properly setting your thermostat, water heater and lighting controls, changing lightbulbs, and properly using and maintaining appliances. Learn about the Town's new Home Energy Audit and Improvements Assistance Program, offering residents up to \$600 toward professional home energy audits and recommended improvements, and about Clean Currents, providing wind power options for your home electricity source. This activity is sponsored by the Town's Climate Protection Committee. For further information, please contact the Town Office at 301-654-7144 or by email at townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org.

The FORECAST is published monthly by the Town of Chevy Chase, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; 301-654-7144; townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org. Kathy Strom, Editor. Copies are mailed to each address in the Town and posted on the Town website, www.townofchevy Chase.org.



Greetings from the Mayor

Kathy Strom

Happy New Year! As we commence calendar year 2010, we are half way through the Town's fiscal year. At this mid-year point, we wanted to update residents on the Town's projected income tax revenues for this fiscal year, based on information recently provided by the State of Maryland. Our Town receives income tax distributions from the State, and these funds form a key part of our budgeted annual revenue. In recent years, we have spent less than we have received and, as a result, have been able to maintain healthy financial reserves.

This year, however, the Town, like other governmental entities, has been affected by the downturn in the economy. The State does not share income tax data or revenue projections with the Town or the County, making it extremely difficult to project future revenues. Nonetheless, anticipating the impacts of the recession, the Council budgeted for the Town to receive in this fiscal year only half of the income tax revenue received last year. Despite this conservative approach, current projections indicate that revenues for this year may fall below the amount projected in the Town's budget. The exact amount of the shortfall remains uncertain but does not appear to be substantial in the context of the Town's reserves.

The Town's ability to provide its core services and programs, such as our garbage collection, recycling, leaf collection and snow removal, will not be affected in any way. In January, the Town Council plans to discuss its options for balancing the budget and will carefully monitor spending until we know what revenues we will receive for this fiscal year. Fortunately, the Town estimates spending conservatively and has spent an average of five percent less than projected in each of the past several years—an annual amount equal to slightly more than one-half of the potential decline in revenues for this year. The Town Council plans to work closely with Town staff and auditors to realize these and other savings in order to minimize the impact on Town finances while ensuring that the Town provides high-quality services to our residents. We will continue to keep you informed on these budgetary issues.

January

- Tuesday, January 5 – Committee Chairs' Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 6 – Conservation Energy Workshop Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Thursday, January 7 – Purple Line Mitigation Advisory Board, 7 p.m.
 - Monday, January 11 – Land Use Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Tuesday, January 12 - Public Services Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 13 – Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Public Hearing on Noise Control Ordinance
 - Sunday, January 17 – Sunday Afternoon for Families, 4 p.m.
 - Monday, January 18 – Long Range Planning Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Tuesday, January 19 – Neighborhood Watch Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 20 – Community Relations Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Thursday, January 21 – Environment Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Tuesday, January 26 – Climate Protection Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - Wednesday, January 27 – Council Work Session, 7 p.m.
 - Proposed Changes to the Water Drainage Management Ordinance
- [Please check the Town website for up-to-date details about Town events and meetings.](#)

CRIMEWATCH

12/10/09

A resident called to report that her daughter was assaulted at 6:10 p.m. on Elm Street. A man approached her to ask for directions to the Metro, then he assaulted her. She screamed, attracting attention from a woman walking on Elm Street. The man left the scene in a car that was parked down the block.

Please report all crimes to the Montgomery County police at the non-emergency number 301-279-8000. For emergencies, call 911. Any information you can give to the police about criminal or suspicious activity in Town will help to make us safer. In addition, please report incidents to the Town Office at 301-654-7144 so that we can notify our off-duty Montgomery County police officers. Also, when you report crimes to the Town Office, you help us provide accurate crime information in Town Crier notices and the FORECAST. Crimes reported to the police are included in Montgomery County, Bethesda Station, Second District crime reports. We provide a link to those reports on our website.

Public Hearing on Noise Control Ordinance

(continued from page one)

In September 2009, the Town Manager presented a proposal based upon quiet hours, as used in neighboring municipalities. The Town Council discussed this proposal at subsequent Council meetings and introduced an ordinance at the December 2009 meeting. The major provisions of the ordinance are as follows:

- (a) No construction activities shall commence prior to 7:00 a.m. on weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. on weekends and all federal holidays. Construction activities shall end no later than 7:00 p.m. on all days.
- (b) As used herein, "construction activities" means temporary activities directly associated with site preparation, assembly, erection, repair, alteration, renovation, construction, or demolition of improvements, or other similar activities, including but not limited to, moving heavy equipment, delivering materials, loading or unloading, operating equipment with audible "back-up" warning devices, and allowing engines to idle.
- (c) Special Noise Limits: It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in, or permit another to engage in, the following conduct:
 1. Sound a horn or other signaling device on any motor vehicle except as an emergency or danger warning signal; or
 2. Except in an emergency, operate outdoor power equipment such as a lawn mower, chainsaw, leaf blower or other motorized equipment or device between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on weekdays or between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. on weekends and all federal holidays.

We look forward to receiving all resident comments on the proposals. If you are unable to attend the **January 13** meeting to testify in person, you may e-mail comments prior to that date to townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org or submit written comments to the Town Office, 4301 Willow Lane, by January 13. For more information, please call the Town Office at 301-654-7144.

Coffee with the Town Manager



Todd Hoffman will host the monthly "Coffee with the Town Manager" on **Wednesday, January 20** from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Town Hall. We encourage you to take this opportunity to stop by the Town Office and chat with Todd about issues that are important to you and the Town. If you cannot attend the coffee, but would like to discuss an issue with Todd, you can call the Town office at 301-654-7144 and arrange a meeting with him or e-mail him directly at thoffman@townofchevy Chase.org.

Town's Energy Assistance Program: Meet the Energy Efficiency Experts

January 28, 7-9 PM, Town Hall

Climate Protection Committee

Are you aware that the Town will pay you to save money, have a more comfortable house, and contribute to a better climate? In October, the Town Council approved a pilot Energy Audit and Improvements Assistance Program that provides up to \$600 in rebates to residents who get a Building Performance Institute-certified home energy audit (reimbursement up to \$200) and make energy efficiency upgrades in their homes. The pilot includes only 50 households. By mid-December, 39 families had signed up and 5 had received rebates. Approximately ten spaces are still available if you wish to participate in this program. Don't miss out on this great opportunity! To help you sign up and find a qualified home energy efficiency auditor, the Climate Protection Committee meeting is sponsoring an evening show-and-tell program with several home energy efficiency contractors certified by Maryland's "Home Performance with Energy Star" program. Many of these contractors have worked in the Town. At the meeting, you'll be able to meet the experts, sign up for the program, and schedule audits. Please come meet the energy efficiency experts on **January 28, 7-9 PM** in the Town Hall. Call the Town Office at 301-654-7144 if you have questions. The application for the program is available on the Town website or in the Town Office.

Join Neighborhood Watch Volunteers

The Town Council encourages you to join the twenty-seven residents who have volunteered to work with the Town in developing a Neighborhood Watch Program. The volunteers will meet on **Tuesday, January 19** at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall to work on a written plan for the program and the responsibilities for the block captains. The more residents involved in the program, the more successful the program will be. For your convenience, the Town has DVD recordings of **Community Relations Committee** training sessions taught by representatives of the Montgomery County Police Department. You can borrow these DVDs to watch at your convenience. For more information or to volunteer to become a block captain, please contact Scott Egloff, the Town coordinator for the program, at (301) 907-3263 or the Town office at (301) 654-7144.

Census Form 2010 – 10 questions, 10 minutes

In March 2010, the US Census Bureau will send a census packet to every address in the Town. The package will consist of a 10-question form and a postage-paid envelope. The 2010 Census form asks 10 questions to determine the number of people living in your home, each person's name, age, sex and race and if you rent or own your house. Completed forms are to be mailed back by April 1, 2010. If you do not return the form by that date, census takers may visit you between April and July. To protect yourself against identify theft, fraud or other scams, before speaking with a census taker, make sure he/she provides an official government badge and personal ID.

The Census DOES NOT ask about the legal status of respondents or for their Social Security numbers. The Census Bureau does not send out any confirmations that your form was received. Any request for census information from the Census Bureau will be clearly identified as coming from the U.S. Census Bureau and as OFFICIAL BUSINESS of the United States. It is a federal offense for anyone to pretend they represent the Census Bureau. The Census does not ask for information by e-mail.

Council to Discuss Proposed Water Ordinance Changes

The Town Council will hold a work session on **Wednesday, January 27** at 7 p.m. to discuss possible changes to the Town's Water Drainage Management Ordinance proposed by the Town's Environment Committee. Residents are encouraged to attend this work session and may submit comments on the proposed changes to the Town Office at townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org or to 4301 Willow Lane. Following the work session, the Town Council may consider regulations or an ordinance effectuating the proposed changes.

In the fall of 2008, the Town Council asked the Environment Committee to conduct a review of how the Town's Water Drainage Management Ordinance has been implemented. A working group of the Committee interviewed various "users" of the ordinance, including applicants, Town staff, the Water Board, and participants in Water Board hearings. The Committee also posted a notice of the review in the Forecast and on the Town website, soliciting comments from interested residents, such as neighbors of properties where a drainage system had been installed pursuant to the ordinance. Upon completing its review, the Environment Committee concluded that the ordinance represents sound policy, but needs some provisions clarified or some administrative practices changed, or formally adopted, to allow the ordinance to operate more smoothly and effectively.

Following is a synopsis of the changes to the Water Ordinance proposed by the Environment Committee.

- **Maintenance:** The current ordinance requires that applicants for a water drainage plan submit a maintenance schedule with their application; however, the ordinance does not mandate minimum maintenance standards. The committee recommends that the Town engineer develop minimum maintenance standards for those pieces of equipment most commonly used to meet the requirements of the ordinance. This will help standardize and clarify the maintenance expectations under the ordinance.
- **Inspections:** The ordinance gives the Town the ability to inspect water drainage systems to ensure they are functioning correctly. The Town staff adopted an administrative process whereby each system would be inspected annually for the first five years after it was installed. The committee recommends strengthening the Town's inspection protocol by requiring a system inspection within six months after the final installation inspection and annually thereafter, in perpetuity.
- **Calculation Methodology:** The Town engineer currently uses the "Soil Conservation Service Curve Number Method" in order to calculate the required retention volume of water under the Town ordinance. The ordinance does not specify a particular calculation methodology, and different methods result in different storage volumes. The committee recommends that the Town officially adopt the Soil Conservation Service Curve Number Method as the official calculation methodology under the ordinance. The committee also recommends that the information available on the Town website and in the water drainage application include more details on this methodology.
- **Permeable Surfaces:** The wording of the ordinance requires a water drainage plan if a project adds 700 or more square feet of impervious surface to a property. Several applications have been submitted that include permeable pavers or concrete. The use of these materials to meet the requirements of the ordinance needs clarification. The committee recommends that improvements constructed with these types of materials be included in the calculations required under the ordinance. However, such materials should only be allowed to absorb rainwater that falls directly on them if they are installed on slopes less than 5 percent, and they may not act as infiltration systems for other rainwater. The committee recommends that the Town engineer develop minimum maintenance standards for these materials.
- **Notice to Neighboring Properties:** The ordinance requires notice of the filing of a water drainage application to be sent to surrounding properties; however, the ordinance is not clear on what role, if any, comments submitted by residents should have on the engineer's approval of a drainage plan if the technical requirements of the ordinance are met. The committee recommends that the staff continue their existing practice of delivering notices to neighbors and helping residents understand the requirements of the ordinance as it relates to a specific project or property. Additionally, the committee recommends expanding the notice of the filing of a plan by requiring a sign to be posted on the subject property indicating that a water drainage application has been submitted to the Town.
- **Supplemental Guidelines:** The ordinance refers to a supplemental document that contains best practices; however, the document does not necessarily correlate with the specific technical requirements of the ordinance. The committee recommends that the ordinance be changed to reflect that the supplemental document contains best practices, not requirements.
- **Alternative Engineering Methods:** The committee recommends that the Town clarify for applicants, through the website and other means, that the Town's consulting engineer will consider alternative engineering methods, such as rain barrels and rain gardens, as part of a drainage plan, as long as these methods are permitted by the State Design Manual and otherwise meet the technical requirements of the ordinance.

The full text of the recommendations is posted on the Town's website. Please call the Town Office at 301-654-7144 for more information.

Town Has Laws Regulating Solicitors

The Town of Chevy Chase has laws that regulate the activities of door-to door salespersons, also known as solicitors. Any solicitor must have a valid license from both the County and Town to sell any goods or services to Town residents. Solicitors also must file a bond with the Town to ensure compliance with Town laws and the delivery of any promised goods and services. Solicitations may take place from 9 am to sunset every day of the week.

While the prescribed hours of solicitation apply to all commercial enterprises, they do not apply to organizations that solely express political or religious views and do not engage in the sale of goods or services. Interest and advocacy groups, charitable organizations, political candidates and proselytizers are some examples of those who are exempt from the prescribed solicitation hours as long as they are not offering anything for sale. The Supreme Court has ruled that canvassing by these groups and individuals cannot be regulated as strictly as solicitation by commercial entities.

If a resident does not wish to be solicited, the Town recommends that the resident post a sign reading "No Solicitation of Any Kind" in a place conspicuous to all visitors. If a solicitor or advocate does not leave a resident's property immediately upon being told to do so, the resident should call the police.

Manna Monthly Weigh-In Community Relations Committee

Thanks to all of you who have contributed food for the non-profit Manna Food Center this fall. We will continue to collect food in the Town Office and at Town-sponsored events through the winter months. To date, residents have donated 657 pounds of food to Manna. Each time you shop, you may wish to simply buy one extra item for the food drive. When a grocery bag is full, drop it at the Town office or call 301-785-0933 for a pick-up. If you are interested in assisting with this project, please contact the Town Office.

657 lbs

SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

The Town will continue its sidewalk snow removal program this winter. This year we will assist with the clearing of public sidewalks when snow accumulates to 3 inches or more. This snow removal plan will assist residents with clearing sidewalks following significant snowstorms, when help is needed most. ***If the accumulated snowfall is under 3 inches, you will be responsible for clearing the sidewalk abutting your property.*** The snow removal will begin as soon as practically possible after the end of a snowstorm, and the Town's contractor will do all it can to limit excessive noise. This program includes snow removal from public sidewalks only, so clearing your driveways and walkways is still your responsibility. In icy conditions, the Town Manager will use his discretion in determining whether to salt and sand public sidewalks. The Town will continuously update information on the sidewalk snow removal program on its website and on the Town's telephone answering machine, so it will be accessible to you throughout the winter season.

CLEARING TOWN STREETS

In winter, making sure that Town streets are cleared of snow and ice is a Town priority. You can contribute to our efforts by following these instructions. When snow or ice is forecast for this area, cars must be parked either in driveways or on the ***even-numbered sides of the street, unless otherwise posted.*** Parking in a driveway will not only protect your cars from possible accidents or damage but assures that more of the roadway can be cleared. This practice also provides more parking spaces for residents without driveways. The odd-numbered sides of all streets, unless otherwise posted, should be left free of all vehicles so that we can plow the snow from them. To help avoid the frustration that occurs when a snow-plow covers your driveway with snow after you have shoveled, stand facing the street and shovel snow to the right into the yard instead of into the street. The Town begins plowing Town streets when two inches of snow has accumulated.



Shades of Green

From the Environment Committee

TOSS OUT YOUR INCANDESCENT BULBS NOW!

Many of us have replaced a few of our incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). Why not consider changing out your entire house to fully realize the benefit of current technology? After all, the incandescent bulb is the same inefficient contraption that was invented more than a 100 years ago, putting much of its energy in heat, not light. How many other 100 year old electrical devices are you still using today?

CFLs save you money! Regardless of your position on global warming, from an economics perspective, you're better off tossing all your incandescent clunkers now, even before they burn out. They cost more to operate and drive up the demand for more energy generation – which in the U.S., is largely from coal. At our relatively high local energy rates, CFLs pay for themselves in less than three months.

Check out the math: Suppose you use a 100-watt incandescent and a 23-watt CFL bulb side by side every day for five hours. With Pepco's average per kilowatt cost of 17 cents, including all taxes and surcharges, it costs \$2.30 per month to operate the incandescent and 65 cents to operate the CFL. Factor in the purchase cost of \$1.50 for the incandescent and \$7.00 for the CFL, and you'll break even after 75 days. Every day thereafter you are saving money. Multiply this across the dozens of lights in your house, and it adds up to meaningful savings both in terms of money and the environment.

Here's proof! Hear from one of our committee members, who spent \$725 in 2007 to change over his entire house -- 100 sockets -- to CFL's: "Tracking my Pepco bills before and after the changeover, I'm realizing a 35% per year savings. That's like taking my house off the electric grid every third year! With savings of about \$80 per month, or \$960/year, in electric costs, I no longer get upset when my kids forget to turn off the lights." String this savings over the seven-year life of all those CFL bulbs and that's significant money in your bank account, less need for new power plants, and less pollution in our atmosphere.

For additional insights on CFL bulbs, check out Shades of Green on the Town website.

Chevy Chase at Home January Events Joan Hoover, ChevyChase@Home

Burst forth into the new year with an extra bit of fun! Chevy Chase at Home will provide you the opportunity with two more of its wonderful Tuesday Mix and Mingles, arriving **January 5 and 19**. They will be held, as usual, at the convenient Chevy Chase Village Hall, from 2 to 4 p.m. On January 5, the Book Club will discuss "Founding Mothers" by Cokie Roberts, and on January 19, our neighbor Tim Healy will entertain us with his guitar. Do drop by to visit with friends, old and new, to play some cards, brush up on your computer skills or just enjoy the refreshments. You'll be glad you did. And you will want to save February 2 for a new group, led by Sandy Geller, called, "Myself Growing Older: Stories and Reminiscences." Come enjoy the stories, and share some from your own life.

www.townofchevychase.org

Sunday Afternoon for Families

January 17, 4 p.m., Town Hall

Beatrice Pickles will be our guest performer.

Beatrice Pickles is portrayed by Alison Gee.

Skip across time with Mistress Beatrice Pickles. Beatrice will weave tales about Kings, Queens, Dragons, Castles, Fairies, and Knights. Although always fun and fantastical, Beatrice's stories are centered on positive values and choices. She leads her audiences on journeys of imagination that teach as they entertain. She currently is on the faculty at

Family Fun

Imagination Stage. She has performed in the StoryTheatre series for young children there for the past three years presenting New and Used Fairy

Tales. Kids are the stars! In Beatrice's interactive plays, the children in the audience become the stars of the show. With costumes and props provided by Beatrice, children expand their creativity by becoming characters in one of Beatrice's plays creating a living breathing fairytale! Admission is free. The Town encourages all to bring a food donation for the Manna Food Drive.

Save the Date!

The Town will host the 16th Annual Chili Dinner on Sunday, February 21.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

2010!

Town of Chevy Chase

4301 Willow Lane
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Bethesda, MD
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TOWN COUNCIL

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