



**Monday, February 2**  
Land Use\*, 6:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 4**  
Community Relations\*, 7 p.m.

**Thursday, February 5**  
Climate/Environment\*, 7 p.m.

**Saturday, February 7**  
The Great Zucchini, 3 p.m.  
*see page 3*

**Wednesday, February 11**  
Tiki Night, 5 p.m.

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Town Council, 7 p.m.

**Monday, February 16**  
Presidents' Day  
*Town office closed*

**Tuesday, February 17**  
Public Services\*, 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 18**  
Town Screening, 7 p.m.  
*see page 3*

**Thursday, February 19**  
Long Range Planning\*, 7 p.m.

**Sunday, February 22**  
Chili Dinner, 5 p.m.  
*see page 3*

**Monday, February 23**  
TOCC Book Club, 7 p.m.  
*see page 3*

**Sunday, March 1**  
Book Talk & High Tea, 1 p.m.  
*see page 3*

\* Town Committee meeting

## Governor's Proposed Housing Bill Would Restrict Town Authority

Last year, we believed we had secured a significant legislative victory in Annapolis -- one that clarified the authority of Montgomery County municipalities to establish setback and massing limits for housing with up to four units. A setback is the minimum required distance between a building and a property line, while massing limits regulate the overall size, height, and bulk of a structure. Separately, the County passed legislation, which the Town supported, allowing multi-family housing with an affordable ("workforce") housing component along major corridors like Connecticut Avenue and East-West Highway.

Now Governor Moore has proposed a sweeping new bill that would substantially undo what was achieved last year. This bill, the Starter and Silver Homes Act of 2026, will be considered in the legislative session that has just begun. Key provisions include:

- Front and rear setbacks could not be greater than 10 feet, state-wide. Both the Town and County require a front setback of at least 25 feet and a rear setback of at least 20 feet.
- Side setbacks cannot be greater than 5 feet on each side, compared to the County requirement of 7 feet per side and the Town's requirement of 8 feet for one side and 18 feet for both sides.
- Maximum lot coverage limits would be eliminated. The County imposes a maximum lot coverage of 35%.
- Property owners would be permitted to build townhomes by right, provided they are in a row of at least three units. (Duplexes could not be built by right).

The full text of the bill is available at [bit.ly/HB239](https://bit.ly/HB239). Its provisions would severely restrict our authority to regulate development and would, over time, have a major impact on our Town. Further, the bill could be counterproductive to the Governor's goal of providing more affordable housing. For example, a builder could exploit the relaxed setbacks and build a larger single-family home. Also, it would undermine the County's "workforce" housing initiative.

We are engaged with neighboring municipalities to forge an alliance that will advocate before our State Delegation, County officials, and the Maryland Municipal League. We will defend our local authority and stay abreast of possible amendments to the legislation. I intend to testify in Annapolis when the respective committees hold hearings.

Within the Town, we have engaged both the Land Use Committee and the Long-Range Planning Committee. We would also like to hear from you. In addition, please reach out directly to our State Delegation and County Councilmember Friedson to express your views. We welcome your participation in this important discussion.

– Mayor Barney Rush

## Town Council Meets February 11

At its February 11 meeting, the Town Council will discuss a municipal response to three housing bills sponsored by Governor Moore during the 2026 General Assembly session. The Council will also discuss sponsorship of state and county election forums as well as ongoing initiatives of the Climate and Environment Committee. If you are unable to attend the February Council meeting, you may provide comments on any subject to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org).

## Municipal Committee to Sponsor Candidate Forums

Several Chevy Chase municipalities are forming a committee to host candidate forums this spring for County Executive, District 1 County Councilmember, and At-Large County Councilmembers. The committee currently includes representatives from the Town of Chevy Chase, Chevy Chase Village, Chevy Chase Section 5, and the East Bethesda Citizens Association. Town Councilmember Colella will represent the Town. The committee will meet soon to begin planning the forums, and more information will be included in subsequent editions of this newsletter.

## Bradley Lane Safety Study Update

At its January meeting, the Council discussed the status of SHA's Bradley Lane safety study. In the near term, SHA has agreed to implement two safety improvements: widening the edge line striping on the north side of Bradley Lane to increase the buffer between vehicles and pedestrians, and installing additional truck restriction signage on Bradley Lane and intersecting roads. The Town is also separately pursuing installation of a speed camera on Bradley Lane to help reduce vehicle speeds.

The SHA is not yet prepared to commit to installing speed cushions on Bradley Lane. The devices are currently being evaluated through a pilot program, and SHA will not approve speed cushions as a standard measure on state highways until that evaluation is complete.

## Please Help Clear Town Sidewalks of Snow & Ice

The Town clears public sidewalks when snow accumulates to six inches or more and may also clear them in lighter accumulations if conditions warrant, such as an approaching hard freeze. After each storm, the Town announces via Town Crier whether it will clear sidewalks or if residents are responsible for doing so within 24 hours. However, even when the Town activates its program, the contractor may be delayed in completing all 20 miles of sidewalks, and by the time crews arrive, packed snow and ice may be difficult to fully remove.



For these reasons, we encourage residents who are able to clear sidewalks promptly when winter weather occurs -- speed matters, as snow and ice become harder to remove over time. Residents who need help can contact the Town Office to connect with a Town Teen for hire or consider a seasonal contract with a landscaping company. This is especially important for those away during winter, as uncleared sidewalks are most often in front of homes where residents are not present. Please look out for elderly neighbors and those who may be traveling and consider helping clear their sidewalks.

## Calling All Town Teens -- Earn Money While Helping Neighbors

Are you a teenager looking to earn extra money? The Town Teens program connects young people with neighbors who need help with odd jobs -- and with winter here, snow shovelers are in high demand.

Town Teens is a directory of local teenagers available for hire for tasks such as yard work, pet sitting, babysitting, tutoring, and snow shoveling. Residents rely on this list when they need an extra hand, and it's a great way for teens to build work experience, develop responsibility, and get to know neighbors in our community.

Signing up is easy. Visit the Town Teens page on the Town website ([bit.ly/TownTeens](http://bit.ly/TownTeens)) or contact the Town Office at [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org). You'll provide your name, contact information, and the types of jobs you're available to do. When residents need help, they'll reach out to you directly.

## The Great Zucchini, February 7

Join us on Saturday, February 7 at 3 p.m. in the Lawton Center Social Hall for The Great Zucchini, Washington's funniest and most magical preschool and kindergarten entertainer. The Great Zucchini will perform a colorful magic show where every child is a star and guaranteed to laugh! Space is limited.

## Tiki Night, February 11

Beat the winter blues with Tiki Time in Town! Join us for a fun Happy Hour from 5 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11 at The House of Foong Lin for epic tiki-style drinks at special TOCC Happy Hour pricing. Complimentary appetizers while supplies last. Foong Lin is located at 4613 Willow Lane. Enjoy fun music and decor! Hawaiian shirts a plus!



## Ain't No Back to a Merry-Go-Round, February 18

Did you know that our area was a birthplace of the modern civil rights movement? As part of our celebration of America's, and Montgomery County's, 250<sup>th</sup> birthday, join special guest Edith Bryant on Wednesday, February 18 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall to screen and discuss *Ain't No Back to a Merry-Go-Round*, a 2024 documentary film uncovering a pivotal chapter of the American Civil Rights Movement. The film chronicles the summer of 1960, when five Black students from Howard University sat on the "Whites-only" carousel at Glen Echo Amusement Park in Maryland, sparking the nation's first major organized interracial protest. Edith was a local 12-year-old girl who participated in the protests.

## RSVP for February 22 Chili Dinner & Sign Up to Help!



The Town will hold its popular Chili Dinner on Sunday, February 22 at 5 p.m. in the Social Hall of the Lawton Community Center. Dinner will include chili and hot dogs (including vegetarian and vegan options), sides, and desserts. Also, the Town will continue its support of the Manna Food Center, so please don't forget your checks, cash, or Venmo app to help feed families in the County. As always, chili will be served by Community Relations Committee members, but we need additional volunteers. If you can help, please let us know when you RSVP by February 16 to [bit.ly/TOCCchili](https://bit.ly/TOCCchili).

## TOCC Book Club Meets February 23

The next meeting of the TOCC Book Club will be on Monday, February 23 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall. We will discuss *Heartwood* by Amity Gaige. The novel is a literary thriller, a Maine wilderness survival tale and an exploration of mother-daughter bonds. All town residents are welcome.

## Book Talk and High Tea, March 1

Celebrate Jane Austen's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday! Although we missed the exact day (December 16, 2025), we are pleased to announce that Town resident Maria Frawley will be featured at a combination book talk and high tea on Sunday, March 1 from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Town Hall. Maria is a Professor of English at the George Washington University, where she teaches courses on Jane Austen and 19<sup>th</sup> century British literature. How better to discuss Jane Austen than to enjoy a traditional British high tea. Come with an appetite for scones, tea sandwiches, and desserts -- and for learning about Jane Austen.



The Town's Community Relations Committee is sponsoring this event, which aligns with the committee's intention to hold Town events during 2026 that celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States. To RSVP, please email Cathy Wolf at [designedtravel@gmail.com](mailto:designedtravel@gmail.com) with the number of attendees. The book will be available for purchase. Period costume is optional!

## Thanks for Another Successful Holiday Gift Drive!

The Family Justice Center extends heartfelt gratitude to Town residents for their incredible generosity during the holiday gift drive, supporting survivors of domestic violence and their families. This year, Town families contributed \$8,505. For those who still wish to contribute, visit [bit.ly/MCFJCTOCC](https://bit.ly/MCFJCTOCC). Special thanks to Cathy Wolf and Quynh Tran for their outstanding efforts in organizing this initiative.

## Town of Chevy Chase

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### TOWN COUNCIL

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*Rich Brancato, Vice Mayor*

*Carlo Colella, Treasurer*

*Tambra Leonard, Secretary*

*Quynh Tran, Community Liaison*



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

### *A Message from the Climate and Environment Committee*

On January 8, nine members of the Climate and Environment Committee and Mayor Barney Rush toured Waste Management's (WM) recycling facility in Capitol Heights, MD, where the Town's recycling is sorted, bundled, and sold for reuse.

After our recycling materials are unloaded, tractors and conveyor belts move them past optical scanners, blowers, spacers, and human sorters. Paper and cardboard are baled; glass is broken and cleaned; metals are separated; and plastics are sorted by #1, #2, and #5, with non-recyclables removed throughout and sent to landfills. WM assured us that about 80% of our materials are recovered and sold for reuse.

WM staff emphasized ways residents can raise that percentage: 1) Never put batteries in recycling -- especially the small lithium batteries. The facility has had 30 battery-caused fires since 2018, endangering the workers and equipment; 2) Keep ALL plastic bags out of recycling and especially do not bundle your recycling in a plastic or paper bag. Everything in bags will go to the landfill as the optical scanners cannot see through them; 3) Rinse out cans and bottles with food in them before putting them in your recycling bin. Food and liquid contaminated articles degrade the quality of otherwise recyclable materials. More information is available at [bit.ly/WMRecyc](http://bit.ly/WMRecyc).



### **Save the Date!**

*Native Plants for Sustainable Landscapes* by Drew Ashbury of Brookside Gardens  
April 12, 2 p.m., TOCC Town Hall