

VILLAGE OF NORTH CHEVY CHASE - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: Adrian Andreassi, Chair

Financial Management

- The Village completed a successful audit of its FY19 activities with Lindsey & Associates without any extension requests. A financial highlight is that the Village's net position increased by \$158,905 and the Village's fund balance increased by \$109,085. This includes both operating and capital expenditures for FY19.
- The Village's Fund Balance as of March 30, 2020 totaled \$1,617,754, exceeding last year's balance (\$1,481,360) by \$136,394. The Village has approximately \$1.14 million with UBS in a combination of FDIC-insured Certificates of Deposits and a money market account. In addition, the Village holds over \$100,000 in savings bonds, due to mature in 2023. The remaining balance is in a Suntrust checking account with sufficient liquidity to address monthly invoices and unforeseen timely needs.
- Recognizing the significant uncertainty with respect to state income taxes and highway user revenue for FY21 and beyond, the Village Council approved a conservative FY21 budget that reduces projected state income tax by 30% and assumes no revenue sharing (tax duplication) which traditionally totals \$25,000. The budget also accounts for \$85,000 in capital expenditures for trees (removals and plantings), streets, and sidewalks with a net income of close to \$69,000.
- The Village opened up an escrow account at Suntrust Bank to hold security deposits received from certain permitted activities, primarily new home construction and additions/modifications to the exterior of homes.

Capital Expenditures

- The Council approved the following capital improvement projects this year:
 - Upgraded sidewalk on 3800 Inverness along chain link fence to address uneven surfaces and convert from asphalt to cement (cost of \$15,138)
 - Purchased new, wheeled recycling containers for each household (225) to accommodate the shift to dual-stream recycling (cost of \$9,112)
 - Removed 9 trees that were dead/dying and planted 10 trees (cost of \$18,660). The Village worked with its arborist to provide a list of beneficial trees for replanting in areas where trees were removed over the past year and provided that list to residents whose properties are adjacent to the trees for input into the tree selection.
 - Addressed additional pedestrian safety by installing pedestrian-activated, solar-powered flashing lights at the crosswalk at Kensington Parkway and Montrose and "children at play" signs along Dundee Dr. In addition, pedestrian signs were replaced with "stop for pedestrian" signs at Kensington Parkway and Kenilworth, and signs were installed restricting parking over storm drains on the 3700 block

of Kenilworth and restricting commercial vehicle parking along Kenilworth and Montrose. The Village also worked with Pepco on the installation of 3 additional light fixtures on existing poles within the Village (still awaiting installation) (cost of \$18,901).

Intergovernmental Relations

- Over the past year, the Council was very active (and remains so) in monitoring developments related to the I-495/I-270 “Managed Lane Study/P3 Program”, which is looking at expanding those highways by up to 4 lanes. In response to Governor Hogan’s proposal to move Montgomery County Beltway Expansion from Phase II to Phase I of the I-495 & I-270 P3 Program, the Village sent a strongly worded letter to Comptroller Peter Franchot, vehemently opposing reconsideration of the decision taken this past June to have Montgomery County as part of a Phase II development. Among the concerns raised in the Village’s letter were the significant adverse impact on the Village of having Connecticut Ave as one of the access/exit points for the toll lanes, as well as total lack of transparency in how the project is being conducted, including SHA’s unwillingness to identify those residents who had received correspondence from SHA regarding the need to access residential properties to conduct surveys related to the project. The Village’s concerns were also reported at length by Maryland Matters, an on-line publication which follows issues of importance within the State of Maryland. The Board of Public Works ultimately approved keeping Montgomery County as part of Phase II and continuing consultations with Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties on I-495 widening and possible alternatives. While the Board vote is an overall positive for the Village in the near-term, the Village Council remains very concerned about proposals for Beltway expansion and the potential adverse impacts on Village residents, as well as fiscal and environmental issues more generally. The Village Council will continue to express those concerns and continue to work with its State and Federal congressional delegations, Montgomery County officials and other stakeholders.
- When the Village learned about letters sent to residents by State Highway Administration (SHA) noting the need to access their property as part of the P3 toll lane assessment, the Council engaged its Congressional representatives – Delegates Al Carr, Jared Solomon, and Emily Shetty, and Senator Jeffrey Waldstreicher. Delegate Carr submitted a public information request to SHA requesting information on which properties received such a letter. SHA would not disclose that information, citing privacy restrictions in the Public Information Act. As a result, the Village’s delegates drafted legislation to modify the Public Information Act to require disclosure of such information moving forward. The Village prepared letters of support on the draft legislation.

- The Council monitored closely a proposed Montgomery County zoning change (ZTA 19-01) related to accessory dwelling units. The Council sent a letter to all Montgomery County Council officials expressing concern about the draft legislation and advocating for a more thorough analysis of the impact of the proposed zoning changes on single-family household communities. Upon the County Council adopting the legislation, the Council reviewed ways to mitigate the impact of the legislation with respect to Village parking and construction impacts and incorporate those in updates to the Village's Code of Ordinances (discussed further below).

Services

- The Village successfully transitioned from single stream to dual stream recycling, helping to facilitate the repurposing of more recyclable material at the Shade Grove Transfer Station. In support of this effort, the Village also procured new recycling containers for each household, as noted in the capital expenditures section.
- While the storm drains in the Village are managed by Montgomery County, the Village has tried to mitigate flooding issues around various storm drains by placing "no parking over storm drain" signage at relevant locations and including leaf/detritus removal around storm drains to the scope of work with the Village's leaf removal and landscaping contractors.
- Village management continued to update its email distribution list through Constant Contact to facilitate timely messages to residents on such issues as COVID-19 resources, construction activities that could affect traffic flow, leaf removal, and snow/ice removal. The Village currently has up-to-date information for approximately 85% of Village households. All residents are strongly encouraged to ensure that Village management has accurate phone and email information for them.
- The Village continues to prioritize keeping residents informed - through more in-depth newsletters – on Village finances, public policy issues affecting the community, and management issues facing the Council. The Village has also sought to keep residents abreast of opportunities to engage in important issues affecting the neighborhood (such as the I-495/I-270 expansion, accessory dwelling unit legislation among others), by highlighting public fora, Montgomery County Council meetings, and advocacy campaigns, largely through the Village listserv.
- Village management has established points of contact at the State Highway Administration and various utility companies (Pepco, Washington Gas, WSSC) to keep abreast of work around the Village and inform residents of upcoming projects, particularly along Jones Bridge Rd, including donation of land at Jones Bridge and Montrose for a bioswale/rain garden.
- The Council approved 12 permits this fiscal year to date, totaling \$1,320, the majority of which related to fences and dumpsters. As of May 5 in FY20, the Village approved 2

demolition/new home construction permits for 3712 Kenilworth Drwy and 3818 Inverness.

- The Village updated its survey of Village trees with the arborist from Titan Tree Care. The Village continues to monitor closely the health of Village trees and ensure that timely prunings and overall maintenance is undertaken. The Village has spent over \$18,720 in FY20 so far in this regard (which is in additional to the \$18,660 in capital expenditures for trees).
- The Council appointed a Village resident – Martin Crowson – to Montgomery Municipal Cable’s Board to support public broadcasting to municipalities.

Ordinances and Resolutions

- The Council adopted a Site Management Conditions Agreement to protect the Village right-of-way and the safety and security of Village residents during certain permitted activities (new home construction, building additions/modifications, sport courts, swimming pools and garages). The Village now requires a home owner and any contractor or other responsible parties employed by the home owner to sign the document and commit to its provisions in order to receive a full refund of a required security deposit. The guidelines address pedestrian safety, appropriate noise levels, notification requirements for activities that could impede traffic flow, contractor parking, and job site cleanliness.
- The Village updated its Code of Ordinances, formally adopting revisions at its April 21, 2020 meeting. Highlights are:

Chapter 3 (Building Permits)

- Require a Site Management Conditions Agreement for certain permitted activities in order to protect the Village right-of-way and the safety and security of Village residents.
- Include overnight parking of trash trucks and trailers in permit requirements
- Address Accessory Dwelling Units and short- and long-term rental licensing
- Elaborate on tree protection
- Remove language related to non-conforming fences and hedges

Chapter 4 (Residential Property Care and Management)

- Clarify tree plantings in Village right-of-way
- Establish consistency with County fines for not removing and disposing of feces from a domestic animal and unwelcome or unsolicited threatening physical contact or close proximity from a domestic animal

Chapter 5 (Trees and Shrubs)

- Include definition of canopy trees
- Elaborate on tree protection
- Expand on trimming and removal of trees on private property

Chapter 6 (Vehicles and Traffic)

- Clarify definition of commercial vehicles and parking requirements
- Add definition for junk vehicles and parking restrictions
- Include criteria for speed humps

- The Council approved an updated Permit Application and corresponding permit fees which coincide more equitably with neighboring municipalities and support the Village in retaining funds for road maintenance and new tree plantings, in particular.
- Per Maryland State Government requirements, the Village received approval from Maryland State Archives on its policy and schedule to retain and dispose of its records. This will allow the Village to condense material at a storage facility in Kensington.
- The Council passed the following resolutions, which are posted to the Village website:
 - Adoption of County's Hazard Mitigation Plan and Debris Management
 - Participation in Sustainable Maryland Certification Program
 - Participation in National Flood Insurance Program
 - Approval of County's MOU related to Debris Management
 - Emergency Elections Ordinance for 2020

Community Engagement

- The Village helped to support a successful, annual July 4 picnic and hopes to do so again this year, depending on social distancing guidelines put forth by the Governor and County.
- The Village's Environment Committee was formally established at the start of the fiscal year. Committee members participated in a training of the Sustainable Maryland Certification program, which included identifying resources to share with Village residents on such issues as native tree plantings, stormwater management, and composting, among others. The Environment Committee also prepared monthly articles for inclusion in the Village newsletter related to pesticide use, waste reduction, and mitigation of climate change. The Committee was preparing for a Village-wide celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day prior to social distancing requirements, which will hopefully be rescheduled once such requirements are lifted.

LOOKING AHEAD

- The Village will be exploring additional opportunities to enhance community-wide social gatherings beyond the annual 4th of July picnic and Earth Day celebration. Resident suggestions are very welcome.
- The Village has contracted with a civil engineering firm to assess the medium- to long-term capital expenditure requirements for road and sidewalk maintenance to ensure its reserves will address future needs. Their assessment is anticipated around June.
- The Village will be finalizing a donation of land to SHA/Montgomery County at the intersection of Montrose and Jones Bridge Rd. to facilitate a bioswale/rain garden as part of the MD185 (Connecticut Ave)/Jones Bridge Intersection Improvement project.
- The Village will be completing an assessment of the costs associated with converting street lights to LED.
- The Village has reached out to Montgomery County's Automated Traffic Enforcement Unit to include Kensington Parkway in a study of vehicular speeds and to determine whether or not speeding cameras may be appropriate for that road.
- The Village hopes to arrange for pick up of items that could be donated the day prior to bulk trash pick up.