



VILLAGE OF NORTH CHEVY CHASE: MONTHLY NEWSLETTER JULY 2020

JULY VILLAGE MEETING

July 21, 2020 – 7:30 PM – Zoom platform
(instructions will be sent to the Village’s email list) *Approval of June Mtg Min *Treasurer’s Report *Permits *Chicken Coops *Capital Improvement Projects – Village streets, tree plantings

IMPORTANT NOTICES

COVID-19

The Village hopes all residents are staying safe and well. Per Village emails, below are recommended websites to receive up-to-date information on COVID-19.

For the latest updates from the County on COVID-19, including a data dashboard to highlight progress on criteria for reopening the County, please go to:
<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/RightNav/Coronavirus.html>

For the latest updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, please go to:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

While schools and public facilities are closed, Montgomery County government services are continuing.

Check the county's website for updated information on public services:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OEMHS/COVID19-Closures.html>

Taxes: In light of COVID-19, Maryland’s Comptroller has extended the deadline for tax filings and payments to July 15, 2020. Please be sure to include the Village of North Chevy Chase as your “city” at the top of your State Tax Return. In the past, Village residents’ income taxes have been sent to other municipalities in error due to misfiling. For electronic filers, the Political Subdivision Code for North Chevy Chase is 1618.

2020 Census: This is a reminder to please complete the 2020 census at

VILLAGE COUNCIL

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Secretary: Maury Mechanick
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Treasurer: Chas Stuart
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<https://2020census.gov/> (which has been extended in light of COVID-19). The Village's response rate currently totals **69.0%** (as of July 1). Please note that census responses will impact numerous critical services to the citizens of Maryland, including resource allocation by the federal, State and County governments to our Village in the event of disasters. It is estimated that every Marylander not counted costs the State \$18,000 per person over the next decade.

Welcome New Residents: Juan & Mary Mayagoitia recently bought 3602 Husted Driveway. They met in grad school at Georgetown University, got married in 2015, and along with their toddler son, Sebastian, are excited to join our community and make new friends. Please wave hello to them on your morning or afternoon stroll.

Village Tree Plantings: The Village Council is considering offering an opportunity for homeowners within the Village to request that the Village plant a tree(s) on their property, outside of the Village right-of-way. This could include front, back or side yards, assuming appropriate space and avoidance of structures such as utility wires. While the Village hopes to accommodate all requests (based on the response from the email sent to Village residents on July 3, 32 trees have been requested to date), it will respond on a first come, first serve basis based on the capital budget set aside for the year. If the number of requests exceed the allotted money, residents will be put on a wait list for the following year. Property owners can request up to two trees per year, per household. Residents would be responsible for all costs for tree maintenance after the expiration of the 1-year warranty by

Stadler Nurseries. The recommended native tree species can be found on the Village website and at <https://northchevy Chase.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Recommended-Trees-Village-of-North-Chevy-Chase-07.02.2020.pdf>. If you are interested, please contact the Village Manager by July 17, as the Council will be assessing potential capital cost requirements at the July 21 Council meeting.

Village Social Gatherings: While the Village supports residents socializing safely this summer, please note that no Village streets can be blocked off for private social gatherings at any time. The Village Council would like to remind residents of the County health officer directive issued on June 18 stating that residents (except those under the age of two and those with health conditions that make breathing difficult) must wear face coverings whenever they are in public and physical distancing is not possible. Outdoor gathering guidelines include limiting to 1 person or household per 200 sq ft or a maximum of 50 people, whichever is lower. The Village Council will explore opportunities for a Village-wide social gathering later this year – when it is safe to do so - since the annual 4th of July party was cancelled.

Pet Waste: Residents are requested to please dispose of pet waste properly. Waste is to be bagged and placed in Village trash receptacles or the pet owner's household waste. Pet waste is not to be placed in neighbors' trash receptacles, including yard waste and recycling containers.

Dog Barking: Many residents are now at home full-time. Barking dogs can be very disruptive.

If you leave your dog unattended in your yard, please be mindful of barking. Please try to bring the dog in if it makes noise for more than a few minutes, and don't leave it outside when you are not at home. Your courtesy is appreciated

I-495/I-270 Toll Lane Project: State Highway Administration will release a draft environment impact statement (DEIS) this Friday (July 10) related to the toll lane project. According to a Bethesda Beat article (July 6, 2020) "Debate over I-495/I-270 Widening to Ramp Up Again" "Work on the I-495/I-270 DEIS — said to encompass 18,000 pages, including technical reports and other supplementary studies — has been underway since March 2018. The public will have 90 days — through the first week in October — to comment on the report's findings. Beginning Friday, the DEIS will be accessible online, with hard copies available for examination at State Department of Transportation offices throughout Montgomery County, as well as the West Bethesda and Rockville post offices. While local libraries remain closed due to the pandemic, copies of the DEIS also will be available in trailers in the parking lots of several library branches — including Chevy Chase, Davis (North Bethesda), Kensington Park and Potomac. Six public hearings on the DEIS — four virtual and two in-person — have been scheduled for August and September."

Purple Line: The companies constructing the Purple Line filed a notice of termination on Tuesday, June 23 unless the State reaches a new agreement and settles on the issue of cost overruns and extended delays to date, totaling around \$519 million. On June 24, the contractors filed a notice to lay off more than

700 employees working on the project if a settlement is not reached by August. The companies' contract has an exit clause, allowing departure from the project if total delays reach 365 days; however, Maryland's Department of Transportation considers a notification of termination to be a default of the contract. Approximately 30% of construction has been completed to date. "The county budgeted a total \$223 million for the project — \$54 million directly toward the Purple Line project and \$169 million toward county-funded, supporting projects, including the Capital Crescent Trail, Silver Spring Green Trail and a new entrance to the Bethesda Metrorail Red Line station....According to Hannah Henn, senior engineer for strategic innovation at the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, the County has been billed \$59 million for the county-funded projects, but hasn't been billed yet for any direct amount for Purple Line costs." County Executive Marc Elrich has recently indicated that Montgomery County will not provide any funds for the Purple Line. (Bethesda Beat, "Purple Line Contractors File Notice of Plan to Lay Off More Than 700 Employees", June 24, 2020)

In addition, a number of State legislators, including from Montgomery County, have highlighted that the Purple Line contract dispute is justification for intense oversight of Governor Hogan's proposed I-495/I-270 expansion/toll lane project, which would be structured as a public-private partnership like the Purple Line. The legislators have already demanded that State Transportation Secretary Greg Slater "provide a detailed history of the four firms that have expressed interest in bidding for the \$9 billion to \$11 billion contract, their track record

on big-ticket projects around the globe, and how they would handle disputes with the state or their contractors “ (Maryland Matters, “As Dispute Over Purple Line Rages, Lawmakers Press MDOT for Info. On Highway Project Bidders” June 23, 2020).

Lastly, a new study by Montgomery County notes that Purple Line stations need better sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrians and bicyclists since no additional parking will be available at those stops except those next to metro stations that already have parking.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

Boundary Study: The study of school boundaries commissioned by MCPS has been delayed 6-months due to MCPS’s COVID-19 response requirements. An anticipated target release date of the final report is December 1. The report will include an interactive tool to allow community members to see how potential boundary changes might look and how those changes may impact a particular school. Additional community engagement efforts will also need to be rescheduled in light of the pandemic.

Maryland Municipal League (MML)

Statement: The Village joined dozens of other municipalities in Maryland in supporting the statement by MML President (full statement here:

<https://www.mdmunicipal.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=633>) condemning racism, bigotry, and hatred in all forms and committing the organization to uphold the values written into the U.S. Constitution that express freedom, justice, and equality. MML reiterated its efforts to support the 157 cities and towns of Maryland and the 1.5 million Marylanders who live in

them, to confront society's racial disparities and both conscious and unconscious biases - whether in education, housing, criminal justice, health, jobs, or other aspects of American life.

Noyes Library Volunteers:

The historic Noyes Library for Young Children in Kensington is seeking volunteers to serve on the Library Advisory Committee (adult and high school age community members) to make recommendations on library collections, services, programming, staffing and facilities, including a projected building renovation. Meetings are held approximately 5 times per year and are currently being conducted remotely. For more information, please visit <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Library/board/noyeslac.html>. Applications can be sent to <https://mcgmd.wufoo.com/forms/q1hx790p0xihc8w>.

Village Directory: A number of residents have contacted the Village Manager trying to obtain contact information for their neighbors and other residents given the limited information in the online directory on the Village website (password protected). If you are comfortable with your contact information (name, address, phone, email) be included, please inform the Village Manager.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM JUNE COUNCIL

MEETING (*Please note that the official minutes will be approved at the next Village meeting and will be posted on the website after*)

Secretary’s Reports for May 2020 Council Meeting and Annual Meeting- Approved.

Treasurer’s Reports for April and May 2020
April and May 2020 combined income totaled \$71,998, and operating expenses were \$18,891

(including waste removal, landscaping and lawn mowing, trees, wages and taxes, office and communications, street lighting, sign/street maintenance and professional fees). Fiscal year to date revenues through May 2020 of \$430,345 have exceeded expenses of \$201,152 by \$229,192. Capital expenditures for the current fiscal year to date come to \$59,002, incurred for tree removals and replacements, improved street signage and illuminated crosswalk signs and sidewalk replacement on Inverness. (It should be noted that a resident inquired about changing the pedestrian signs at Kensington Parkway/Montrose (which were installed by the contractor given the impression it served as a school crossing area) to “stop for pedestrian” signs, per the original plan. The Village Manager will follow up with the contractor to replace those.) Total current assets as of May 2020, consisting of operating balance plus reserves, come to \$1,681,130.

Permits

- **3712 Kenilworth Driveway** – Application for new fence approved (note: submitted in connection with a previously approved new home construction permit at the same address).
- **3801 Inverness Driveway** –Application for major renovation project (more than 250 sq feet) approved. Required Site Management Conditions Agreement has been executed as well as payment of \$5000 security deposit.
- **3804 Montrose Driveway** – Application for built-in backyard exterior oven, approved.

Tree Maintenance/Removal Proposals – The Council approved maintenance activities with Titan Tree Care and Bartlett for a number of Village trees. Residents nearby those trees will be notified of upcoming work.

Backyard Chicken Coops – Pursuant to applicable Montgomery County zoning requirements, backyard chicken coops are permissible in R60 and R90 zone residential areas (the Village contains lots in both of those zones) subject to certain conditions, including setback requirements of 25 feet from the lot line and 100 feet from a neighboring dwelling and a restriction on roosters. While to date no formal request for a

backyard chicken coop has been submitted, inquiries regarding what permitting requirements, if any, would be imposed by the Village on such activities have been received by the Village Manager. Extensive discussion occurred on the question of whether the Village should adopt its own permitting process with respect to chicken coops and, if so, what requirements should be required by the Village as part of the permitting process. Council members have researched what other municipalities in the State of Maryland have implemented, including requiring neighbors’ consent and the option of withdrawing a permit if there are concerns about vermin, odor, noise or other factors. Views from residents favoring a Village permitting process and from residents opposing it (leaving this entirely as a County matter) were expressed during the discussion, without resolution. The Council will consider this matter again at its July meeting.

Pet Waste Receptacles – A desire to better encourage pet owners to pick up and properly dispose of pet waste was raised, including whether certain measures, such as attaching waste disposal bags to fire hydrant pole attachments, was an appropriate or sufficient measure to address this issue. To further assist the Council in addressing this issue, additional information will be obtained from other municipalities as to measures they have undertaken, associated costs and other practical considerations.

Capital Improvement Projects for FY 2021 and Beyond –Due to a delay in receipt of the study conducted by Clark/Azar and Associates, the civil engineering firm with whom the Village has contracted, further discussion of this item will be deferred to the July meeting.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

(Courtesy of the Village’s Environment Committee)

Beautiful Organic Gardens and Lawns

It is good to see many more residents indulge in nature and their gardens during this time of social distancing. Nature offers mental and physical restorative properties that people are starting to recognize and appreciate during these

challenging times. As gardening and lawn care become increasingly popular, it is important to understand how it can be maintained in a healthy and natural manner. It is possible to have a beautiful garden and lawn without the use of chemical pesticides!

The Montgomery County Pesticide Law aims to protect pesticide usage on lawns, playgrounds, mulched recreation areas, and childcare facilities. Pesticide exposure can adversely affect neurological, respiratory, immune, and endocrine systems in humans, even at low levels. Children are especially sensitive. Parkinson's disease among other illness have been linked to pesticides in some manner.

It is essential to note that private gardens/lawns are not islands onto themselves but rather part of a community ecosystem that impact the surrounding soil, water and air. As the COVID-19 virus is teaching us, we are all interconnected and the health and actions of one can affect the health and quality of life of many. None of us would knowingly spread toxic materials around where they would affect the life and well-being of our children, pets and ourselves.

A healthy and pesticide-free lawn depends on the products used. Identifying acceptable products is essential for the resident's own use and/or to inform their landscaping company. If the product has an EPA registration number, it is generally not allowed. Rather, if it has an OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) logo, and/or an EPA National Organic Production (NOP) logo and/or a statement on the labels that it is exempt from EPA registration under 25(b), it is allowed. Keep in mind the County Law does not prohibit the sale of pesticide products, so it is the responsibility of the consumer to purchase what is permissible by law. Product labeling can often

be confusing, therefore the County encourages the use of organic chemicals and provides a list of permissible products, <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/lawns/Resources/Files/2019-pesticide-law-compatible-products.pdf>.

Other good resources include:

<https://beyondpesticides.org/resources/pesticide-gateway> and

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/lawns/>

An organic lawn supports the local environment, people and pets with management practices that utilize natural biological cycles of the land without the use of synthetic chemicals. The Village of North Chevy Chase encourages its residents to inform themselves about the risks of pesticides and products they purchase and the benefits of maintaining a healthy lawn. The County is rewarding homeowners that have adopted a pesticide-free approach and wish to demonstrate to their neighbors that a lush and beautiful green lawn can be achieved organically. To register, go to <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/lawns/homeowner/enroll.html>

CALENDAR (2020)

(Please note there will be no newsletter during the month of August)

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| July 11: | NCC Christian Church
Food Drop Off (2-4 PM) |
| July 21: | Village Council Meeting
7:30 PM Virtual |
| Sept 15: | Village Council Meeting
7:30 PM |
| Sept 19: | Bulk Trash Pick-Up |