Sandy Spring Civic Association

Ross Body Community Center, Sandy Spring, MD 20860

(Meeting Virtually by Zoom during Covid-19 Pandemic)

December 12, 2022 (Zoom meeting for 29th meeting in a row)

**Attendance**:

Board Members – Dr. Daryl Thorne, President; Basile “Whit” Whitaker, Vice President; Christine Hill Wilson, Treasurer; Douglas Farquhar, Recording and Correspondence Secretary

General body – approximately 10

Guest: Judy Hruz, Greater Olney News

Attendance Total (approximate): 15

**Meeting called to order**: 6:31 p.m. by Daryl

The bulk of our meeting was devoted to a report from Officer Dan McNickle, the Montgomery County official in charge of placing speed cameras on roads in Montgomery County, who was an invited speaker.

Mr. McKnickle said that he will consider whether speed camera(s) should be placed on Brooke Road, in response to complaints about people speeding down that road, especially on their way to one of our neighborhood high schools or elementary schools. In response to questions, he said that the number of speeders has gone up rapidly since the advent of COVID: he explained that people got used to driving much faster when there were fewer people on the road, but have continued to drive at excessive speeds even though traffic has picked up to something approaching pre-COVID volumes. He added that, although the numbers of people speeding has increased, the number of citations for speeding issued by police officers has dropped (he said that police have other priorities). He described the process for determining where to place speed cameras, but added that the County is permitted under state law only to place speed cameras on roads where the speed limit is 35 mph or less. He said there is legislation proposed in the State legislature that would increase that limitation to include roads where the speed limit is 45 mph or less.

He said that his department considers complaints and requests from communities, and generally measures speed of existing traffic and other conditions prior to placing a camera. He said that his department has plenty of equipment, including extra cameras, but not enough staff to keep up with the requests.

In response to an SSCA member’s frustration over noisy cars and speeding near Friends House, he said that police departments do welcome information about people speeding, if license plate numbers are provided. He said that citations cannot be issued based on a citizen complaint, but police generally will attempt to contact car owners with warnings.

In response to other questions, he said that speed bumps bring objections from emergency services, and that speed cameras are effective in reducing the amount of serious speeding (camera citations are issued if drivers exceed the limit by at least 12 mph), but only where the cameras are located.

The Treasurer’s Report (attached) was read and accepted. Christine mentioned that Paypal is available for people to pay their 2023 membership dues.

As to the Ashton Implementation Advisory Committee, Doug mentioned that he had talked about the southeast corner of the Ashton intersection (four parcels there are owned by the Sandy Spring Bank) with a representative of the Bank who is responsible for its facilities. She told Doug that the Bank has been approached by developer Fred Nichols, who has made a couple of presentations, including some conceptual designs, for the southeast corner (Fred’s company owns the remaining parcels on the corner). She said that she is sensitive to community interests in keeping density lower than Fred Nichols wants, the Bank does not have a contract or even an arrangement with Fred, and that Fred keeps assuming that the Bank will be on board, even though the Bank does not have a deal with Fred, or even a proposal from Fred. She said that other developers have contacted the Bank to see if they Bank is willing to sell its portion of the property. She said she has told them the Bank is not interested in selling its land holdings.

Daryl had to leave the meeting early, so Whit assumed the chair. He asked (again) if anybody would like to serve as an SSCA officer next year. Nobody volunteered, and the officers currently serving were re-elected to serve in 2023.

There was a discussion about other speakers who could be invited to speak to SSCA. Invitations will be issued to our new District 7 County Council member Dawn Luedtke, and to new Council President Evan Glass.

Whit also gave a brief summary of the procedure being followed to replace Delegate Eric Luedtke, who has been appointed as the Chief of Legislative Affairs for our new governor, Wes Moore. Basically, the county Democratic Central Committee will decide on two nominees for the Delegate position, forward them to the Governor, and the Governor will appoint one of them.

The meeting adjourned about 7:20 p.m.

 Respectfully submitted,

 Douglas Farquhar,

 Recording and Correspondence Secretary

Approved: