

Minutes

Sandy Spring Civic Association
Ross Body Community Center, Sandy Spring, MD 20860
(Meeting Virtually by Zoom during Covid-19 Pandemic)

September 21, 2021 (by Zoom, for 15th month 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

Attendance: General body – Approximately 11

Guests: Bruce Goldensohn, Imad Aldean Ahmad, both from the Montgomery County Council Commission on Redistricting

Attendance Total (approximate): 17

Meeting called to order: 6:33 p.m. by Daryl

Agenda

The meeting began with a presentation, attached, by two representatives of the Montgomery County Redistricting Commission.

Redistricting occurs in the County regularly every ten years to account for changes as reported in the U.S. Census. This year, the redistricting commission needs to consider as well how to partition the County, because the membership of the County is changing from five district representatives and four at large representatives to seven district representatives and four at large representatives. The Commission will come up with some recommendations that will be presented to the County Council on or before November 15, 2021. The Council then decides how the redistricting will be done.

The new Council districts should be roughly the same in population, must be contiguous, and should be designed so voting power of minority groups is not diminished (in other words, minorities are neither spread too widely so that they have less critical mass in a given district, nor packed into a single district so that they only have a voice in the election of a single district Council Member). Additionally, incorporated areas like towns or cities should not be split between districts, and communities with common political interests should not be split up.

Meetings of the Commission occur on September 23 and on Wednesdays in October 2021. They are live-streamed, and the Commission welcomes comments from the public about how districts should be drawn, either generally or with regard to specific areas.

The County’s population has grown by about 10% in ten years, from just under a million people in 2010 to more than a million, now. Statistics were presented showing the decrease in white non-Hispanic individuals over that period and the growth in all minority groups. Maps were also

provided showing where concentrations of population are centered, and the median age of residents. Significantly, the speakers pointed out, the County has developed from having large areas with large concentrations of a single race in 1990, to now having very few, very sparsely populated areas that have large concentrations of a single race: in other words, the County is much more racially diverse than 30 years ago. The population of seniors is increasing; the population of toddlers is decreasing.

Daryl thanked the presenters for attending the meeting.

We then took up regular business. There was insufficient time to read and review minutes of the meetings in June and July 2021 (the SSCA did not meet in August, as is traditional). These minutes will be reviewed at the October 2021 meeting.

The Treasurer's report was read and accepted. It is attached.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to planning for the County Candidates Forums, which began with a session on September 20, 2021. Logistics were discussed. The Forums are sponsored jointly by the SSCA and the Ashton Alliance.

Daryl also noted the passing of Audrey Dutton, a long-serving Officer of the SSCA, a good friend to many of us, and a fixture of the community for her spirit, and for her work at Sandy Spring Friends School and at Dempsey's Restaurant in Ashton.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Farquhar,
Recording and Correspondence Secretary

Approved: October __, 2021