

The Council Report

FEBRUARY 2005

News from the Friendship Heights Village Council—the elected governing body of the Special Tax District of the Village of Friendship Heights



MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
FRANCIS R. VALEO, *Chairman*
MAURICE J. TREBACH, *Vice Chairman*
ELIZABETH DEMETRA HARRIS, *Secretary*
ALVAN M. MORRIS, *Treasurer*
ROBERT M. SCHWARZBART, *Parliamentarian*
LEONARD E. MUDD, *Historian*

Council acts to reduce truck traffic through Village

The excavation phase of the construction of Wisconsin Place (the Hecht's site) has brought a significant number of dump trucks into the area on a daily basis.

When trucks started coming through Village streets on their way to and from the construction site (contrary to our understanding with the developer that the trucks would only use Wisconsin and Willard Avenues), we worked with New England Development and Turner Construction (the general contractor) to address this problem.

The developer responded by deploying flagmen at four intersections, which has virtually eliminated all cut-through truck traffic.

Meanwhile, also at our request, Montgomery County will be installing signs at the entrances to the Village (Somerset Terrace/Wisconsin, South Park/Wisconsin, Hills Plaza/Willard, Friendship Boulevard/Willard, and North Park/Willard intersections) saying "No Thru Trucks over 10,000 lbs."

These signs will not prohibit other trucks coming into the Village for legitimate purposes (e.g., trash trucks, moving trucks, delivery trucks, etc.). The signs will remain in place throughout the construction period, which is expected to last until 2008. We have asked that the County expedite its usual process for installation, and the signs should be put up soon.

Willard Avenue and Friendship Boulevard (south of Willard) remain the staging areas for dump trucks coming to the construction site. The developer is working with the County Police to reduce the disruption this has caused to

Village residents and commuters. Fortunately, this stage of excavation will be ending shortly. We have been advised by the developer that future excavation will not involve as many trucks.

Utility work will begin in early March at the intersection of Willard Avenue and Friendship Boulevard to connect the main sewer line for the new Hecht's store. This work is expected to take 3-4 weeks. The developer and the County have worked out a plan that maintains two-way traffic through the intersection at all times.

Parking spaces to be restored on Willard Avenue

As noted previously, the County's study of pedestrian safety on Willard Avenue led them to remove parking spaces on Willard near the North Park Avenue intersection. The study concluded that the parked cars impeded pedestrians' ability to see oncoming traffic while trying to cross from the south side of Willard.

After hearing complaints from residents of The Irene (including Council member Bob Schwarzbart), the County has come up with a plan to restore the spaces.

The sidewalk at the crosswalk on the south side of Willard will be extended into the adjacent traffic lane. Pedestrians will then need to cross only one lane to get to the median, which will improve their ability to see oncoming traffic. Additionally, cars will have to slow down on eastbound Willard as it narrows from two

lanes to one. The road will open back up to two lanes east of the crosswalk.

Not only can the County then put back the parking spaces that were removed, they should also be able to add a few more spaces east of the crosswalk. So it looks like a very good solution overall. The County will let us know when the work can be scheduled.

Some pedestrian safety lights still available

A limited number of flashing safety lights are still available—free—at the Center (limit one per person). The lights, suggested by Council member Trebach, come complete with lanyard and batteries, and are designed to make pedestrians more visible, especially at night. (*Please not that the small batteries may be hazardous to children.*)

Property tax appeals to be held at Village Center

We hope that condominium owners appealing re-assessments of their apartments have taken advantage of the arrangement that the Council made with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation to hold a limited number of personal hearings at the Village Center.

Owners who have filed an appeal requesting a personal meeting without knowing about this arrangement, and would prefer to have the meeting at the Village Center instead of in Rockville, call the Assessor's office at 301-279-1355 and request that your appeal be held at the Center (indicate "per Jack Brennan").

—Melanie Rose White
Mayor

The Council took the following actions at the January 10, 2005, meeting:

- Presented Initial Draft Budget for FY 2006;
- Approved increase in maintenance contract with Gali Service Industries for evening shift;
- Appointed Edith Fleshner and Joel Williams to serve on the Program Advisory Committee.

The Council took the following actions at the February 14, 2005, meeting:

- Held first public hearing on Draft Budget for FY 2006;
- Awarded exterior landscape maintenance contract to McFall and Berry; awarded interior landscape maintenance contract to Interior Garden Designs;
- Approved request to extend contract for shuttle bus service for up to 90 days under existing terms.

FORM
502 MARYLAND TAX RETURN 2004
(OR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING)

RESIDENT

Don't forget!

Montgomery **Friendship Heights**

YOUR FILING STATUS—See Instruction 1 to determine if you are required to file.
1. Single

EXEMPTIONS—See Instruction 10
Enter No. Checked (A) x \$1,850 \$

Please Print
Blue or Black Ink Only

Your first name Initial Last name
Spouse's first name Initial Last name
Present address (No. and street)
City or town State Zip code
Name of county and incorporated city, town or special taxing area in which you were a resident on the last day of the taxable period. (See Instruction 6)
Maryland county City, town or taxing area
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER(S) (REQUIRED)

MVA Mobile Office—Mon., Feb. 28, Mon., Mar. 21, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Friendship Heights Village Council
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Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-656-2797

Note new website and e-mail address:
Website: www.friendshipheightsmd.gov
E-mail: info@friendshipheightsmd.gov



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