

The Council Report

2022 Annual Report & Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2024



MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
MICHAEL MEZEY, *Chairman*
BRUCE R. PIRNIE, *Vice Chairman*
ALFRED MULLER, M.D., *Secretary*
PAULA DURBIN, *Treasurer*
CAROLINA J. ZUMARAN-JONES, *Historian*
MICHAEL J. DORSEY

Forging Ahead

Melanie Rose White, Mayor

A few months back, I was sitting on a bench in front of The Willoughby, waiting for our Village shuttle bus. A man and his dog jogged by, and it was hard to tell which one was enjoying the run more. (The dog almost looked like he was smiling!) As you have probably noticed, over the past two years, the dog population in Friendship Heights has exploded. And, although I'll always have a soft spot for cats, I do enjoy watching our newest subset of four-footed residents. I love their energy and enthusiasm for checking out whatever lies in their path as they travel our sidewalks with their humans in tow. Simply put, they keep moving forward. . . .

Thinking about the past year, there are so many examples of how our community continues to forge ahead, to move forward, revitalizing and enhancing the quality of our lives. Here are some of those examples.

Despite the fact that there are more new employees at the Village Center than ever, they demonstrate the same level of commitment and talent shown by our seasoned employees. All of the staff is outgoing, kind, highly skilled, and ready to assist residents in any number of ways. I know I speak for the entire Council when I say that we are proud of every staff member and the outstanding job each person does day after day.

Our programs, services, and other amenities keep evolving, as well. There are more activities for families with young children, an enhanced and user-friendly Village website and revamped social media accounts, a wider variety of concerts and performances, and a refresh of the Center's interior including new door signage and a beautiful and popular aquarium.

Other examples of how the Village is moving forward are evident in other parts of our community, particularly on North Park Avenue. As this Annual Report goes to press, we are gathering opinions from residents through a survey on what they would like to see at the Red House at 4608 North Park. The Council and staff are eager to

read your responses and hope we can reach consensus on how to get the most use from this property.

On North Park and throughout the Village, our streetlights shine brighter after the installation of modern LED bulbs. Many residents are also anticipating the completion of Page Park as we move forward *and look forward* to having a spot that all residents can enjoy, including our younger residents (who will have a modest play area) and residents with mobility issues.

It is important to note that although our Village continues moving forward, we are not racing forward, haphazardly, especially when it comes to issues of controversy and extended debate. The Village has a strong history of "looking at all the angles," before making decisions, and I have no doubt that this will continue. For example, the Village Council's new ad hoc Public Safety Committee is cautiously weighing a variety of responses to the recent reports of crime in our community. In addition to our own measures, we will continue to work closely with the Montgomery County Police to ensure we are taking the necessary steps to keep residents safe.

Our Village cannot continue moving forward without the financial resources that allow us to keep improving our services. I am happy to report that for the 18th year in a row, your tax rate is the lowest allowed by our charter (4 cents per \$100 assessed value). Our robust reserves, built up over years of judicious management of Village dollars, also allowed us to negotiate the purchase of the Red House last year.

As you read through this Annual Report, I know that you will see even more examples of how the Village is forging ahead with new ideas, processes, approaches, and accomplishments—all in an effort to keep our community a highly desirable place to call home. During the coming year, I hope you will take advantage of what the Village can offer you, especially if you have not visited the Center recently. Please stop in and say hello to our fabulous staff, meet your fellow neighbors, and see for yourself what makes our community special. On behalf of the Village Council and staff, I wish each of you a healthy and rewarding 2023. See you at the Center!



2022 Village Report

Julian Mansfield, Village Manager

Jason Goldstein, Assistant Village Manager

It has been a very busy year for the Village of Friendship Heights. From confronting COVID-19 head-on, introducing state legislation to expand its procurement authority, purchasing the Red House, spearheading and supporting several development plans, and administering numerous programs and activities at the Village Center, the Village Council and staff continue to focus on enhancing our thriving community for its residents.

Village Council members remained in their same positions this past year: Melanie White, Mayor; Michael Mezey, Chairman; Bruce Pirnie, Vice Chairman; Alfred Muller, M.D., Secretary; Paula Durbin, Treasurer; Carolina Zumaran-Jones, Historian; and Michael Dorsey. The next Council election will be held in May 2023.

COVID-19 AND OUR UNWAVERING RESPONSE

Although the beginning of the year continued with COVID-19 in our community and across the country, we are proud of the response we provided to the residents of the Village. We partnered with Montgomery County to provide free rapid at-home COVID test kits along with N95 masks.

In mid-January, the Village agreed to be part of the County's efforts to distribute test kits and masks at public libraries, municipalities, and other community



COVID test kit and mask distribution at the Village Center.

groups. In the first half of the year, the Village handed out more than 6,000 masks and 3,000 rapid test kits, with seven distribution events held at the Village Center. The test kits and masks were provided by the County free of charge as part of a broader effort to distribute to area residents. Test kits and masks are still available on demand at the Village Center front desk.

We also provided COVID vaccination clinics in partnership with Giant Pharmacy in March and again in

May, and we kept residents up to date with information regarding vaccine clinics in our nearby area.

VILLAGE FILLS KEY STAFF POSITIONS

The Village filled several key roles this year to ensure operations continued to run smoothly while maintaining the stellar service residents come to expect. Earlier in the year, Bryan Hudzina was hired as the Village Center's new Front Desk Supervisor, followed by the appointment of Jason Goldstein as Assistant Village Manager in June. Current Financial Assistant, Donna Bryant, expanded her role to Facilities Manager/Financial Assistant in June, while Dale Conway was hired in November as the new Assistant to the Program Director.

WEBSITE TRANSFORMATION, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ALERT SERVICE

To better serve residents, the Village's website was completely redesigned earlier in the year with several interactive and user-friendly features. We designed a new calendar function that lists all of our upcoming Council meetings, events and activities, and you can set up reminders through your own calendars. We also established an online payment system for permit applications, expanded our photo gallery to show the diversity of the Village and its residents, expanded the FAQ section, incorporated a text size option for better viewing, and implemented online forms for ease of submissions. The Village revamped its social media presence by redesigning its Facebook page and ensuring more current content. In addition, we created social media accounts on Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube to further keep the community informed of our activities. We also implemented an alert service that notifies residents of emergencies, announcements, Council meetings, and programs and activities at the Village Center. The program has become quite successful, and we urge those residents who have yet to sign up to do so by using this QR Code with your phone. It's free, completely voluntary, and residents can cancel at any time.



SEEKING TO REVISE VILLAGE CHARTER TO INCREASE PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY

Section 66-10 of the Village charter (last amended in 1994) requires the Village to advertise for bids for any expense greater than \$5,000, while also lacking any

provision for spending above that amount in an emergency. Because of this limitation, the Council voted unanimously earlier in the year to request assistance from Maryland Delegate Marc Korman to work on charter amendment legislation to provide expanded emergency procurement authority and to increase the bid threshold to \$20,000. A draft bill was presented to the Montgomery County Council in November for input, and the legislation will be submitted to the Maryland State legislature in January 2023. If passed by the House and signed by newly elected Governor Wes Moore, we anticipate the Village's charter amendment to take effect this summer.

DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING ISSUES

4608 North Park Avenue (the Red House)

In August, the Village Council unanimously agreed to purchase 4608 North Park Avenue (the Red House next to 4620 North Park) at a cost of \$3 million. Discussions between the Village and the previous owners began earlier in the year, following the Village's application to the County Historic Preservation Commission to have the house designated for historic preservation.

At a public hearing on June 22, the Commission narrowly voted not to recommend the property for historic preservation. The Commission agreed with the staff report that the property did not meet the County's criteria for preservation, which include the architectural significance of the house itself, the historic context of the property and its surroundings, and the importance of the original owner.

Subsequently, the Council agreed to sell the development rights at 4608 North Park to Donohoe Development Company for \$1 million. This will offset the cost of the



4608 North Park Avenue

property and allow Donohoe to apply the additional square footage to its 5500 Wisconsin Avenue development project (see below for more details). The Council, with recommendations provided by the Com-

munity Advisory Committee, will distribute a survey to residents in 2023 to get input on how the house will be used by the public.

5500 Wisconsin Avenue Development

In 2021, Donohoe Development Company and Carr City Centers purchased the properties on the 5500 block of Wisconsin Avenue and submitted plans to the Montgomery County Planning Board to build a new 18-story apartment building with approximately 300 units. The community was also contacted, including the Council, for feedback and comments. Since then, the Council has worked diligently to ensure the sketch plan submitted to the County's Planning Board would not cause any detrimental impacts on the Village or its residents. Initially, the Council opposed the development project and conducted numerous rounds of negotiations with Donohoe.

Eventually, a settlement agreement was signed between the Council and the developer that led the Village to drop its opposition and support the project. The agreement required some changes that the Village requested in the original plans, such as relocating the apartment building's entrance from the corner of South Park and The Hills Plaza to the private street, providing vehicle pick-up and drop-off spaces in front of the entrance, and providing parking spaces for delivery vehicles on the private street. The developer also agreed to pay the Village \$1,000,000 to transfer to the Wisconsin Avenue project 32,718 square feet of density from the Village's recently purchased Red House property. The density transfer will be used principally to widen the 7th floor of the Wisconsin Avenue building to be about the same size as the first 6 floors. The density transfer will not increase the height of the building. Subject to final project approval by the Planning Board, it is anticipated that demolition of the existing building and ground construction will begin by the fourth quarter of 2023.

Friendship Heights Urban Design Study

The Montgomery County Department of Planning will kick off the Friendship Heights Urban Design Study in early 2023 that will compare state-of-the-market development scenarios in Friendship Heights with the potential of current zoning. The study will analyze possible urban design scenarios for redevelopment of select sites in Friendship Heights in light of the current zoning and existing recommendations of the 1998 Friendship Heights Sector Plan. The Study will be informed by

ongoing efforts by the DC Office of Planning along Wisconsin Avenue. Since the Village's eastern border runs along Wisconsin Avenue, we urge all residents to stay abreast of the Study and its findings. Please visit the Planning Board website for additional information. Also, as part of the Wisconsin Avenue Development Framework planning process, the DC Office of Planning held two in-person Community Design Conversations in November and December to explore future development scenarios and public space enhancements in Tenleytown and Friendship Heights. Participants attended a facilitated experience and shared their thoughts



A rendering of the proposed 5500 Wisconsin project as seen from Wisconsin Avenue.

around development scenarios that maximize housing and affordable housing production as well as opportunities for streetscape and public space enhancements at key blocks along the Wisconsin Avenue corridor. If you didn't attend the Community Design Conversations, you can provide feedback on the public space design and development scenarios in Tenleytown and Friendship Heights on the DC Office of Planning's website.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS

Page Park Renovation Project

In early 2022, following a public design competition to revamp Page Park, the Village Council selected GreenSweep for the project. The first phase of construction began in August and will take four to six months to clear out the area, protect the surrounding trees, and build out the new park. Phase 2, the shorter stage lasting approximately one month, will begin in early spring 2023 with the installation of landscaping, irrigation, lighting, and sod. The park will continue to be closed to the public, with the exception of the pedestrian path

along the east side of the park that continues behind 4615 North Park Apartments and leads to the Town of Somerset. In addition, the Council voted unanimously earlier in the year to recognize longtime Village resident Cleo Tavani with a plaque inside the park for her efforts in creating Page Park.

Pedestrian Safety at S. Park Avenue and The Hills Plaza

The Council addressed earlier in the year the continuous safety hazard of crossing The Hills Plaza on S. Park Avenue and voted unanimously to employ several safety measures. For instance, a rubber speed hump with yellow reflectors was installed in the southbound lane of The Hills Plaza at the intersection of South Park Avenue (near the police statue). An LED solar-powered pedestrian flashing warning sign was also installed at the corner for easier nighttime presence. Council member Bruce Pirnie, who serves as Chair of the Parks and Grounds Committee, led the effort to obtain the speed hump, and conducted a brief survey that showed a decrease in the number of cars that did not stop at the stop sign after the speed hump was installed. It appears to be working well so far. Also, a camera was placed at the corner that feeds into the Village Center.

Proposed Dog Park at Willard Avenue Park

In July, the Montgomery County Department of Parks held a virtual public meeting with the community to present its preliminary sketch plan for a dog park to be constructed in Willard Avenue Park on the grounds of the house located at 5320 Willard Avenue. The County confirmed there was a strong demand from the local community to expand Willard Avenue Park to include a dog park. The Village Council agreed, and in September, it unanimously showed its full support and believed this type of amenity was long overdue for our community. The Council hopes this issue can be revisited once the new members of the Planning Board become settled in their positions in the new year.

THANK YOU

Although it has been a very busy and trying year for our entire staff, they have consistently worked hard to provide residents with stellar service. We commend our team's efforts throughout a challenging year. We have a great team at the Village Center. Please stop in and take advantage of the many wonderful programs and activities being offered. Wishing all Village residents a very healthy, happy and safe 2023.

Treasurer's Report

As we continue to emerge slowly out of the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects certainly lingered for much of 2022. Nonetheless, the Village continued its strong financial position. We ended FY22 with a sizable surplus of \$724,000. Much of this was the result of a significant increase in income tax revenue generated by a large jump in taxable income earned by our wealthiest



taxpayers. As you can see in the proposed budget for FY24 on the following pages, for the 18th consecutive year we are holding

the property tax rate steady at 4 cents per \$100 assessed value, the lowest amount allowed under our charter. We anticipate a budget surplus once again in FY24. As always, there will be two public hearings for residents to provide input on the proposed budget, on February 13 and March 13. Following the March 13 hearing, the Council will vote to set the budget and tax rate. Here are some highlights for next year's proposed budget:

REVENUES

Most of the Village's revenues come from taxes on property and income. The largest source of revenue is our share of the income tax that residents pay to the State. The Maryland Revenue Administration gives us projections for Village income tax revenue. Next year's estimate is \$1,430,000, which is essentially the same amount we anticipate receiving by the end of the current fiscal year. The unusual increase generated by our wealthiest taxpayers last year is not anticipated to recur in FY24.

Interest income was the topic of much discussion during Council meetings last year, which led to the Council's decision to retain an independent financial adviser to manage Village investments. Interest rates remained very low early in 2022, then began to rise steadily as the year progressed. Our projected interest income for FY23 (\$65,000) will be significantly higher than the budget estimate, and we are projecting an even higher amount (\$100,000) for FY24.

Revenue from parking tickets has rebounded from the steep reductions we experienced during the COVID pandemic. The resolution in 2022 of a longstanding dispute over municipal tax duplication payments has resulted in greater revenue for the Village in this category (municipal revenue sharing), which should be sustained in future years. The Maryland General Assembly approved legislation providing for increases in municipal highway user revenue, which is reflected in our budget projection. The Village's property at 4602 North Park Avenue continues to be leased to a group of artists, which provides rental income.

EXPENDITURES

Our staff salary expenses were reduced due to the high rate of staff turnover that began in the summer of 2021, as we said goodbye to several longtime employees and hired new staff members at lower salary levels. A 3 percent raise is budgeted for FY24, which will still leave the total expenditure below the budgeted figure from the previous year. Now that our full staff team is in place we look forward to continued progress and stability in 2023.

We experienced higher than anticipated legal fees over the past year as a result of our involvement with the 5500 Wisconsin Avenue development project and the settlement agreement that was subsequently negotiated between the developer and the Village Council. With the anticipated approval of the development plans by the County, we should see a reduction in legal fees next year. Following the purchase of the 4608 North Park Avenue property, we added an expense line item for maintenance and repairs needed to bring the house up to code and to prepare it for its future use. As noted in the footnotes accompanying the budget, the purchase price of \$3 million is reflected in the General Fund Balance for FY23. The Village is owed \$1 million by the developer for the transfer of development rights from the 4608 property, which we anticipate receiving in FY24.

The proposed budget for FY23 follows. As always, the narrative hits only certain highlights; the footnotes to the budget offer a more complete explanation of the categories indicated. My thanks to our Council members and staff for our collective efforts to maintain a high level of services while keeping the tax rate at its low level.

—Paula Durbin

Friendship Heights Village: Proposed Budget for FY2024

REVENUES:	Actual FY22	Budget FY23	Est. Actual FY23	Budget FY24
Property tax ¹	\$644,503	\$640,000	\$640,000	\$640,000
Income tax ²	1,764,477	1,464,000	1,425,000	1,430,000
Municipal Revenue Sharing ³	109,612	95,245	110,000	110,000
Gas/highway tax ⁴	85,209	70,000	68,000	85,000
Parking violation income ⁵	265,492	250,000	275,000	275,000
4602 N. Park Avenue rental	28,560	36,000	36,000	36,000
Interest income ⁶	12,872	10,000	65,000	100,000
Village Center rental income	495	0	1,000	2,500
Permit and License fees ⁷	22,081	25,000	8,000	15,000
Newsletter ad income	29,488	30,000	30,000	30,000
Village Center program/misc. income ⁸	9,851	13,000	15,000	15,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$2,972,640	\$2,633,245	\$2,673,000	\$2,738,500
EXPENDITURES:				
General Government	Actual FY22	Budget FY23	Est. Actual FY23	Budget FY24
1 Elections	\$0	\$6,500	\$6,500	\$0
2A Financial admin. and accounting ⁹	9,533	13,000	12,000	12,000
2B Administrative costs ¹⁰	22,719	12,000	13,000	13,000
2C Memberships and conferences ¹¹	27,592	25,000	30,000	35,000
2D Legal counsel and consultants	176,993	50,000	160,000	50,000
2F Village Council reports	0	3,000	3,000	3,000
3A Salaries ¹²	662,820	740,000	700,000	721,000
3B Health and life insurance ¹³	185,503	220,000	222,000	227,500
3C F.I.C.A.	50,586	56,500	53,550	55,150
3E Retirement contribution ¹⁴	46,240	55,000	54,500	56,200
4A Xerox copiers	767	1,000	4,000	4,500
4B Aquarium	0	0	5,000	5,000
4C Heating and cooling maintenance	14,087	12,000	12,000	12,000
4D Bldg. security system maintenance	9,306	4,500	10,000	10,000
5C Bldg./General liability insurance ¹⁵	12,583	11,690	11,690	12,040
6 Telephone and utilities	43,340	35,000	40,000	35,000
7 Hospitality and special events ¹⁶	8,161	15,000	8,000	8,000
8A Equipment and supplies ¹⁷	13,620	14,000	17,000	17,000
8B Office and building furniture	5,309	5,000	7,000	7,000
8C 4608 N. Park Ave maintenance ¹⁸	3,011	0	65,000	5,000
8D 4602 N. Park Ave maintenance	9,315	15,000	12,000	12,000
8E Computer equipment/supplies	9,751	10,000	12,000	10,000
8F Center maintenance/repairs	39,023	35,000	85,000	35,000
8G Maintenance service ¹⁹	22,004	15,000	20,000	20,000
Total General Government	\$1,372,263	\$1,354,190	\$1,563,240	\$1,355,390
Public Safety				
9A Security patrol contract	\$62,695	\$60,000	67,000	\$69,000
9B Police Field Office ²⁰	2,162	2,000	2,000	2,000

9C Security vehicle maintenance ²¹	6,511	7,000	7,000	7,000
Total Public Safety	\$71,368	\$69,000	\$76,000	\$78,000
Public Works	Actual FY22	Budget FY23	Est. Actual FY23	Budget FY24
10 Bus contract ²²	\$472,338	\$495,000	\$516,000	\$535,000
11A Street maintenance	0	15,000	5,000	5,000
11B Sidewalk maintenance	6,820	20,000	10,000	10,000
11C Snow removal	33,676	50,000	50,000	50,000
11D Storm drain maintenance	6,805	0	5,000	0
12A Waste collection ²³	13,675	14,000	16,000	16,000
12B Recycling	1,375	1,200	1,200	1,200
13 Street lighting	22,060	20,000	18,000	15,000
14 Street signs	5,665	5,000	5,000	5,000
15 Trees	10,045	10,000	5,000	10,000
16 Villagescape ²⁴	12,084	14,000	14,000	14,000
Total Public Works	\$584,543	\$644,200	\$645,200	\$661,200
Health/Social Services				
17B Health/Social services ²⁵	10,780	12,000	11,000	11,000
Total Health/Social Services	\$10,780	\$12,000	\$11,000	\$11,000
Recreation and Parks				
18C Lecture fees	2,125	10,000	5,000	10,000
18D Musicians' fees	22,938	20,000	25,000	25,000
18E Instructors' fees	(3,906)	0	0	0
18F Trip fees	(4,641)	3,000	3,000	3,000
18G Art/theme shows	220	3,000	1,000	3,000
18I Consumable supplies	1,648	4,000	4,000	4,000
18K Lunches, brunches, teas & dinners	7,416	14,000	10,000	12,000
18M Center special events ²⁶	22,409	35,000	25,000	30,000
19 Reading Room materials	2,558	3,000	3,000	3,000
20C Village newsletter	29,417	29,000	35,000	35,000
21A Village Parks: Electricity	1,047	1,500	1,500	1,500
21B Village Parks: Water	8,697	10,000	10,000	15,000
21C Village Parks: Fountain maint.	13,033	20,000	20,000	20,000
21D Village Parks: Lighting maint.	1,236	3,000	2,000	2,000
21E Village Parks: Furniture	(23,378)	2,000	2,000	2,000
21F Village Parks: Walkway maint.	2,060	3,000	3,000	3,000
21G Art fund	0	3,000	0	3,000
23 Landscaping contract	123,506	100,000	105,000	105,000
24 Arborist contract	5,350	15,000	20,000	20,000
Total Recreation and Parks	\$209,675	\$278,500	\$274,500	\$296,500
Total Operating Expenditures	\$2,248,629	\$2,357,890	\$2,569,940	\$2,402,090
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$724,011	\$275,355	\$103,060	\$336,410
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$2,972,640	\$2,633,245	\$2,673,000	\$2,738,500
GENERAL FUND BALANCE²⁷	\$6,252,935	\$6,528,290	\$2,788,288	\$4,124,698
CAP. IMPROV. FUND BALANCE²⁸	\$11,298	\$11,298	\$11,298	\$11,298
OPEB TRUST FUND RESERVE²⁹	\$1,335	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$3,000

FOOTNOTES

Revenues

- 1 The special tax rate for the Village of Friendship Heights (not less than 4¢/\$100 nor more than 20¢/\$100 on assessments based on 100% of value), set by the Friendship Heights Village Council, was 4¢/\$100 in FY2023 and is proposed to be 4¢/\$100 for FY2024, which begins July 1, 2023.
- 2 Estimate reflects the portion of the County tax rate returned to the Village from state filings.
- 3 An agreement between the County and municipalities (including special tax districts) requires the County to reimburse special tax districts for a portion of certain expenditures, which currently includes park maintenance, health services, and road maintenance.
- 4 This amount is derived from a State formula based on the number of registered vehicles at Village addresses.
- 5 Parking violation income is collected by Montgomery County. The Village revenue share is 75%.
- 6 Interest is from Village funds placed in State approved investments. Interest on the Capital Improvements and OPEB Funds, included in the audit figure, is not included in the budget.
- 7 Permit fees are paid by contractors who occupy public rights-of-way (streets and sidewalks). By law, the fees defray only the reasonable administrative costs of maintaining the permit system and are currently \$250. Certain license fees are also received from the State.
- 8 Includes a percentage of art sales and commission from produce market sales.

Expenditures

- 9 Includes the annual audit and financial statements required by law.
- 10 Includes taking of the minutes for the monthly public Council meetings, postage and stationery. May also include contracted administrative support.
- 11 Includes Maryland Municipal League dues and conventions attended by Council and/or staff.
- 12 Salaries of seven full-time and five part-time employees. (The Center is open seven days a week and four evenings until 9 p.m.) Volunteers provide additional support to staff.
- 13 Covers costs of health insurance and life insurance provided to qualifying employees.
- 14 Council contribution to employee retirement plan.
- 15 Includes Workers Compensation, Public Officials Liability, Fidelity Bond, and Building/General Liability.
- 16 Volunteer/staff annual appreciation dinner, condolence flowers, and holiday decorations.
- 17 Includes general cleaning products, restroom paper supplies, copier paper, and office supplies.
- 18 Maintenance of Red House property recently purchased by Village.
- 19 Contract for maintenance supplies and supplemental cleaning at Village Center. Maintenance employees were added to Village staff in November 2020.
- 20 Cost to maintain Police Field Office at 4602 North Park Avenue.
- 21 Cost of security vehicle provided by security contractor.
- 22 Contract for operation of shuttle bus, including vehicle, drivers, maintenance, insurance.
- 23 Includes collection of Center trash and recyclables and park trash six times per week. A community shredding service, twice per year, is also included.
- 24 Cost to install and maintain flower baskets on streetlight poles.
- 25 Includes cost of nurse consultation services and other health related programs.
- 26 Cost of four major seasonal events each year.
- 27 The Village purchased the property at 4608 North Park Avenue in early FY 2023 for \$3 million. The cost will be reduced by \$1 million to be paid by the developer of the 5500 Wisconsin Avenue project for the transfer of development rights from the North Park property (anticipated in FY 2024). The expense is not shown in the operating budget but is reflected in the decrease of the General Fund total for Estimated Actual FY 2023. Additional committed expenses totaling \$567,707 for the Page Park renovation project are also reflected.
- 28 The costs of completed or committed projects have been deducted. The Council may consider other capital projects. Money will be moved into the Capital Improvements Fund as required.
- 29 Reserve for payments into Montgomery County Trust for retiree health benefits. Additional money will be moved into the reserve as required.

2022 Program Report

Anne O'Neil, Program Director

After the uncertainty, chaos and concern caused by the coronavirus, COVID-19 vaccines gave us a degree of comfort. However, the year 2022 began with continued concern over a new coronavirus variant. As a result, in-person programming was limited in early 2022, and a number of groups opted to meet virtually via Zoom. We also returned to Zoom for virtual talks, such as a winter birding talk by Sneed Collard in Montana, and field trips, such as a look at the extraordinary life of Frederick Douglass by representatives of the Maryland Center for History and Culture. As winter was winding down and the variants seemed less threatening, residents were eager to return to a certain amount of normalcy.

While some groups, such as the Express Yourself aphasia group, continued to meet online, others slowly began to gather at the Village Center. Coffee and Current Events discussed and debated events of the day, the Friday Fiber Friends chatted as they knitted and crocheted, Great Books pondered literary classics, Chess players challenged their opponents, the Village Book Club reflected on a host of written works, and the Walking Club trekked through close-by neighborhoods. Drop-In Tai Chi returned for in-person sessions on Fridays. In-person concerts returned with a spectacular Tai Chi demonstration featuring swords, spears and students in March.

Concerts at the Village Center continued to draw enthusiastic audiences throughout the year, with

performances including guitarist Steve Hom and jazz vocalist Karla Chisholm; bluegrass band Big Howdy; the Washington Revels Maritime Voices; jazz vocalist Karen Lovejoy; jazz fusion band The Silver Sounds; Machaya Klezmer; a comedy night with Robert Mac; Seth Kibel and the Kleztet; Caliente; One Night Samba; Marty Nau; the World Jam Club; pianist Robert Hitz; Dixie Power Trio; pianist Margaret Singer; Duo Beaux Arts; Ann Joseph; Sara Jones. Jazz pianist Bob Boguslaw brought his band for a night of rousing jazz standards. Leigh Goodwin told an African-American story during a deeply personal musical tribute. Pianist Robert Redd and vocalist Sue Matthews filled Huntley Hall with jazz, cabaret and pop sounds. Jody Marshall and Ellen James presented an Irish program featuring the hammered dulcimer and the Celtic harp. Ray Apollo Allen brought the audience to its feet to sing and dance to Motown hits during a nostalgic and energetic performance. TransAtlantic, Tango Reo, and student members of the Friday Morning Music Club also appeared at the Center.

During a particularly inspiring performance, pianist and composer Haskell Small played the one-hand composition he created after suffering a stroke and losing the use of his left hand. Sean Harris and Wonder 101 dazzled a Wednesday night audience when the group transformed Huntley Hall into a Spanish tablao for an evening of flamenco dancing, music and authentic Spanish fare. Nationally known ventriloquist Willie Brown brought his comedic talents and his sidekick Woody to the Center for an evening of family-friendly humor. The Center also offered a number of special afternoon concerts, including a piano recital by Frederick Moyer, patriotic and Vaudeville-themed performances from Bernie Kellett, and a salute to veterans from Michael Dennison.

After more than a year of social distancing, residents were eager to gather for community celebrations. April saw the return of our annual Community Day celebration, with barbecue, music, fun and games in Hubert Humphrey Park. In May, the Village Center teamed with the Paraguayan Consulate to recognize Paraguayan Independence Day with food, music and festivities. Our annual July 4th celebration also returned to Hubert Humphrey Park with residents enjoying hot dogs, popcorn, snow cones and apple pie, speeches by local politicians, rides on a trackless train, music by Frank Cassel and the Mountain Fever Band, and the camaraderie of friends and neighbors. In October, we



"Morning in the Night Garden" by Amy Sabrin of City Line Studios was in the Friendship Gallery show in October.



Nick Glakas led us on a virtual tour of Medieval English towns at the Village Center in April.

welcomed Fall during a festival that featured empanadas, whoopie pies, bluegrass music, games and crafts, and a hay play area for children.

Children enjoyed running through giant dinosaur-shaped sprinklers, playing dinosaur-themed games, and visiting with friends during a dinosaur splash party in Willoughby Park in August. During the summer the Center also hosted a neighborhood yard sale and a reception for new residents.

Residents tried sample class offerings during a one-day fitness expo at the Village Center in late August. Residents eagerly took part in exercise classes such as Tai Chi, Balance and Fall Prevention, Chair Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Pilates for Everyone and Balance, Movement and Memory. Students tapped into their creative side with art classes such as portrait drawing with Marianne Winter.

Elena Marra Lopez met weekly with residents for informal Spanish conversation classes and a beginning Spanish class. Mallory Starr introduced an English conversation club that continues to attract a diverse group interested in practicing the language.

Residents demonstrated a vast array of artistic styles during Saturday workshops on Ukrainian egg decoration by potter Natalia Kormeluk, and holiday floral arranging by Pam Maidl. Children and adults alike enjoyed decorating pre-constructed gingerbread houses during a December afternoon.

The Village Center welcomed back popular lecturer Nick Glakas who brought Medieval English towns and a three-day excursion to Paris to Village residents through his slides and stories. He also fascinated audiences with lectures on Alexander the Great and artists of the High Renaissance.

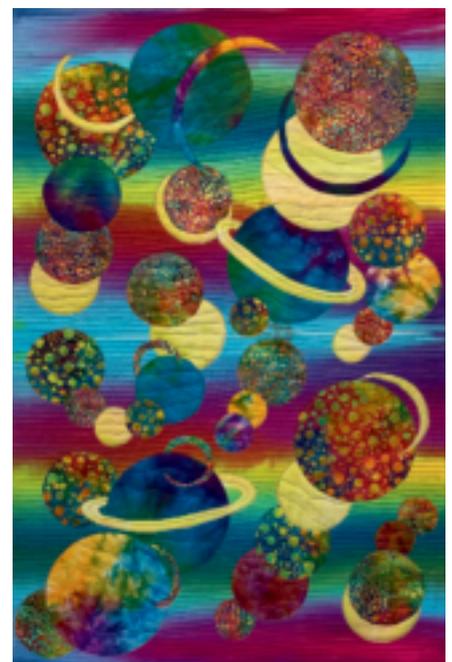
Speakers at the Village Center tackled a variety of

subjects ranging from finding ways to beat the blues to dealing with the volatility of the stock market to returning to travel amid lingering coronavirus concerns. Jenny Masur discussed the local heroes of the Underground Railroad. We also got an insider's view of the Chinese-American Museum of Washington, D.C., from its director. Folk singer Jesse Palidofsky offered a musical lecture on Peter, Paul and Mary. Sean Harris introduced our audience to the fascinating people, stories and landscape of Iceland.

In perhaps one of the most powerful presentations of the year, teacher and historian Natalia Kormeluk conducted a community conversation about the war in Ukraine, which included a firsthand account of the effects of the war from Ukrainian student Mariana Poshyvailo. Several authors appeared in person at the Village Center including Tom Connell, author of "Shadow of a Pilgrim," Sepehr Haddad, who wrote "A Hundred Sweet Promises," Harriett Edelson, author of "12 Ways to Retire on Less," Julie Potter, who wrote "Harnessing the Power of Grief," and Helen Schwartz, who authored "Thieves of Paris."

The Friendship Gallery hosted colorful multimedia exhibits and open art shows, ranging from photography to fiber to Chinese Brush. Special exhibits included celebrating months dedicated to African-American history, women, and Juneteenth. Our July show celebrated freedom with art from local artists.

Kyi May Kaung, a Village resident and dissident from Burma, displayed her extraordinary fiber art in the context of the tragedies facing Ukrainians and the Rohingya. Music and travel also inspired two other exhibits this year. CityLine Studio is composed of 10 women artists who rent space at 4602 North Park Avenue. In addition to leading and offering lectures at



"In the Galaxy 4," by Donna Radner, was part of an exhibit of colorful fiber art by Fiber Friends at the Friendship Gallery.



Acclaimed author Sneed Collard gave a talk on his tropical birding adventures in June.

the weekly open arts studio at the Center, the studio also exhibited in the Friendship Gallery in October, held a Thursday night reception, and a weekend open-air arts fair.

Eager to resume travel for residents, the Village Center sponsored trips to the newly renovated Mormon Temple in Kensington, the Philadelphia Flower Show, a performance of "To Kill a Mockingbird" at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Contemporary American Theatre Festival in Shepherdstown, W. Va., the beach in Rehoboth, Del., and the Jackie Kennedy exhibit at Winterthur in Wilmington, Del.

Health care and staying healthy proved to be of particular interest to our residents. In late January, the Society for the Prevention of Blindness sponsored a virtual talk by glaucoma expert Arthur Schwartz. Free screenings were held at the Village Center in January. Later monthly sessions were held in person and the Society for the Prevention of Blindness continued support for those with low vision. Suburban Hospital offered online lectures on heart health, spinal stenosis, tummy troubles, stroke prevention, glaucoma, and obesity. Nurses from Suburban Hospital offered blood pressure screenings each Tuesday.

Kim Coleman discussed acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and different diets for different times of the year. Louisa Klein and Dinah Simpson offered a workshop on dealing with holiday stress by using yoga and sound therapy. In the spring, Giant pharmacists administered more than 80 flu shots to Village residents during a clinic at the Village Center in October.

From fitness to art to language, the Village Center is

fortunate and proud to have a group of dedicated and talented instructors. Residents eager to get in shape got a sample of our vast array of exercise class offerings during a one-day fitness expo at the Village Center in late August, taking part in exercise classes such as Tai Chi, Balance and Strength, Chair Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Pilates for Everyone, and Balance Basics, QiGong and Tai Chi Forms. Marianne Winter returned to offer classes in portraiture. Students also flocked to the Village Center to learn to play canasta and to practice their proficiency in Spanish and English.

Our weekly tea came back with a slightly different look as guests gathered and enjoyed gift bags with pre-packaged treats. At select times during the year, we also offered special afternoon teas, complete with music, china cups and tea pots, and treats. Special tea time entertainment included performances by pianist Ann Joseph, Brazilian guitarist Richard Miller, and singer Mark Hanak. Twin Springs Fruit Farm sold fresh produce to residents, even throughout the year. The Shred-It truck also made several appearances in the Village during the year.

Village residents showed their generosity and concern for those less fortunate in the community as they packed our little cardboard school bus with school supplies in August, filled our tables and stuffed our decorated boxes with food during drives in November and December.



November also brought the return of our annual artisan fair. After **Pianist Fred Moyer is always popular with Village residents.**

After a brief hiatus due to the coronavirus, this year's Pop-Up Artisan Shop proved to be the most successful yet, with more than 20 artisans, and food concessions and live music.

Thank you to all the volunteers who worked via Zoom to ensure that groups kept meeting and to those who offer their help at the Village Center. Residents continue to show resilience, creativity and community spirit that make the Village of Friendship Heights a unique and very special place to live.



2022 Annual Report and FY2024 Proposed Budget

www.friendshipheightsmd.gov
www.facebook.com/VillageOfFriendshipHeights
www.instagram.com/Village_of_friendship_heights

The Council Report
The Friendship Heights Village Council
4433 South Park Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815



Flower beds and our hanging flower baskets provide splashes of color throughout the summer.

SIGN UP FOR VILLAGE ALERTS

Residents can sign up to receive alerts concerning Village Center activities, Council and community meetings, emergency notices, and more. Sign up by visiting our website or using this QR code.



Pursuant to the provisions of Section 66-2 of the Montgomery County Code (1984 Edition), notice is hereby given that the Friendship Heights Village Council will conduct public hearings on Monday, February 13, 2023, and Monday, March 13, 2023, at 7:45 p.m. in the Village Center, 4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815, in connection with the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024, based on a proposed tax rate of 4¢/\$100 assessed property value. The final tax rate will be determined after the two public hearings. The Village Council will vote to establish the tax rate for FY2024 and notify the Montgomery County Council of said rate on or before June 1, 2023, pursuant to Section 66-2 of the County Code. A copy of the proposed budget is available at the office of the Friendship Heights Village Council, 4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815. Anyone desiring further information can contact Julian Mansfield, Village Manager, jmansfield@friendshipheightsmd.gov, or call 301-656-2797.

Notice of Public Hearings