

**Village of Friendship Heights  
Ad Hoc Community Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Environment**

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting on July 1, 2025**

**Persons in attendance:**

**Committee Members: Patricia Canessa (Chair), Martha Solt (Council Liaison), Sonya Starnes, Christine Knauer, Thomas Brody, Andra Miller, Evan Brown**

**Observer: Loretta McClure**

**Members absent: Emmanuel D'Silva, Inas El-Sabban**

**The committee meeting was called to order by Chairperson Patricia Canessa at 7:00**

**PM**

**1. Chairperson Canessa welcomed two new members, Andra Miller and Evan Brown, and asked all those present to introduce themselves to the group.**

**2. Christine Knauer volunteered to be temporary recording secretary to record minutes of this meeting.**

**3. Minutes of the prior meeting of June 3, 2025 were discussed and approved with several corrections.**

**3. Counsel Liaison Martha Solt then reported to the Committee on two issues:**  
**a. Liaison Solt briefly described the history and function of our Ad Hoc Committee to new members.**

**b. Ms. Solt also reported that she was asked by the Environment Committee at the Carleton building for an opportunity to meet with our committee. Our group then discussed the possibility of inviting all buildings within our village that have their own environment committees to meet with us to discuss mutual concerns and projects.**

**4. Chair Patricia Canessa then reported to the committee on the objectives of our group. She also described some of the projects we have undertaken in the past two years. Included in these past projects were a migratory bird protection presentation at the 2024 Village Community Day and a presentation on weather disaster preparedness at the Carleton building.**

**5. Christine Knauer then presented several issues of interest to the committee:**  
**a. A recent Washington Post article featured the harmful effects of road salt pollution on our regional drinking water which comes from the Potomac River and cannot be removed by water treatment facilities. Excess application of salt on roads and sidewalks in the winter continues to contaminate our local creeks which flow into the river. In 2023 our**

committee advised our Village Council of guidelines by Montgomery County for moderate use of road salt and asked it to give this information to all village buildings. In spite of this guidance, maintenance staff in these buildings continued to spread excess salt on their sidewalks in the winter. Martha Solt said she will check with the Village to see if there is some way the Council can regulate this use of road salt for next winter. The committee also discussed the possibility of using environmental resources in the State of Maryland and Montgomery County to meet with and train local building managers and maintenance staff in the safe application of salt.

b. The upcoming sale of the GEICO property will have a big effect on the environment of our village. The committee discussed potential impacts and the need to have contact with the Village Development Committee to stay updated on zoning and building plans for this large property next to our village.

c. Montgomery County Parks has posted a sign in Willard Avenue Park that announces it will spray invasive plants in the park with Aquamaster, which is an herbicide related to Roundup. The committee discussed the known side effects of this glyphosate herbicide on insects, butterflies, birds and humans. A motion was passed to have a committee member write a letter to the parks department telling them that we are opposed to the use of this herbicide and asking them to stop spraying it in our local park. Martha Solt said that the Village Council will have to review and approve this letter before it can be sent to the parks department.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Submitted by Christine Knauer  
Willard Towers  
July 5, 2025