

Forecast

JUNE 2017

NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE



Thursday, June 1

Community Relations*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 6

Lawton's Antiques Roadshow
Lawton Center, 2-4 p.m.

Monday, June 12

Climate and Environment*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 14

Town Council
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, June 15

Public Services*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Monday, June 19

Town Council Work Session
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Monday, June 19

Long Range Planning*
Lawton Center, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 21

Purple Line Mitigation*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, June 22

Land Use*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, June 22

Land Use*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, June 29

Bethesda Downtown Plan*
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

* Town Committee meeting

Message from Mayor Mary Flynn

Congratulations to our newly elected members of the Town Council, Joel Rubin and Cecily Baskir! I thank them for volunteering to serve the Town, and likewise thank everyone who voted in the May election. Special thanks and best wishes go to Fred Cecere, outgoing Councilmember, for two years of dedicated service. I also want to acknowledge Scott Fosler, outgoing mayor and current treasurer, who demonstrated strong, steady, and respectful leadership in a year full of challenges, and Barney Rush, our incoming vice mayor, who worked ably as Town treasurer and tirelessly led the Special Committee on the Bethesda Downtown Plan. To keep our local government going strong, I ask you to please consider volunteering some of your time and expertise to a Town committee. You'll find committee descriptions in this Forecast. All are welcome!

Also in this Forecast is a special insert prepared by the Town's Special Committee on the Bethesda Downtown Plan. It will bring you up-to-date on the County Council's final resolution to adopt the Bethesda Downtown Plan, how the Town and neighboring communities contributed to the public discussion, and upcoming legislation and implementation guidelines related to it. The community-based work required a tremendous amount of sober analysis and coordination over many months, and it paid off with better transitions between the downtown core and neighboring communities. Please read the insert for specific accomplishments and ongoing concerns.

The Town's Special Committee on Purple Line Mitigation continues to meet with the assumption that the Purple Line will be built. The committee is currently focused on achieving clarity and appropriate use of noise level metrics, rights of homeowners whose private trees abut the construction area, evaluating requests from MC-DOT, and acquiring official comment and review privileges for plans related to the segment that borders the Town. The Town's Public Services Committee and the Montgomery County Parks Department (a department of M-NCPPC) are also helping the Town understand options for an underpass near the current Lynn Drive access path.

Finally, the Town Council passed a balanced budget in May. We are lucky to build on the hard work of prior Councils and our Town Manager, Todd Hoffman, who achieved significant cost reductions in personnel and other expenses. I feel confident that we will continue to enjoy quality services and community-strengthening activities within our budget. All financial information is online at <http://www.townofchevy Chase.org/188/Financial-Information>.

I wish everyone a happy start to the summer and hope to see you at the next public Town Council meeting on June 14.

Volunteer for Town Committees & Boards

Dear Neighbor,

Each year in June, the Town Council begins the process of seeking volunteers for the Town's standing committees and filling vacancies on the Town boards and commission. We encourage you to consider volunteering for one of these bodies so we can involve as many residents as possible in Town affairs.

In July, I will appoint, with the advice of the Town Council, residents to serve on each of the Town's five standing committees for a period of one year beginning in September. Following is a list of the committees, including a short description of each:

- **Climate and Environment:** Inspires and facilitates energy conservation and environmental stewardship by the Town and its residents.
- **Community Relations:** Encourages a strong sense of neighborliness through community activities and communications.
- **Land Use:** Guides building and redevelopment within the Town using available planning tools.
- **Long-Range Planning:** Identifies emerging issues that require longer-term planning and analysis. The Council is also considering asking this committee to take on greater responsibility for monitoring activities in county and state government likely to impact our Town.
- **Public Services:** Advocates for high-quality Town services for our residents.

I also will appoint one resident to serve on the Town's Election Board, one resident to serve on the Town's Ethics Commission, and one resident to serve on the Town's Water Board. Following are brief descriptions of these bodies:

- **Election Board:** Oversees all Town elections, including making appropriate provisions for nominations, printing ballots, appointing tellers and/or judges and supervising the polls.
- **Ethics Commission:** Receives, verifies and maintains all financial disclosure forms required by the State of Maryland.
- **Water Board:** Hears requests by property owners who have had a water drainage plan denied by the Town.

If you are interested in volunteering to serve on any of the Town's committees, boards or commission, please submit a brief note expressing your interest to the Town Office **by June 30, 2017**. Your correspondence may be submitted in person, by mail or by e-mail to townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org and should include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and a few sentences about why you would like to serve on that particular body.

On behalf of the entire Council, I would like to extend a special thanks to all of you who have served on one of these bodies over the past year. The dedication of your time and talents provides an invaluable resource to the Town and continues to strengthen and improve our community.

Sincerely,



Mary Flynn
Mayor

TOWN EVENTS

The following events are brought to you by the Town's Community Relations Committee.

Play Date in the Park

Saturday, June 17, 9 a.m., Lawton Center Playground

Play Date in the Park returns Saturday, June 17 at 9 a.m. Town toddlers, preschoolers and their families are welcome for a morning of play at the Lawton Center Playground. We will provide juice boxes, coffee and bagels. Families with infants and all older siblings are welcome. Please RSVP to the Town Office at 301-654-7144 or townoffice@townofchevyCHASE.org.

Independence Day Picnic and Parade

July 4, 12-2 p.m., Lawton Center Grounds

12 p.m.: Parade & Dixieland Band

The parade will begin at 12 p.m. led by the Dixie Land Trio. Come to the Lawton Center at 11:30 a.m. to decorate your bikes, scooters, wagons, and baby carriages. The Town will provide decorating supplies.



12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.: Picnic

Town residents will be treated to barbeque catered by *Red, Hot & Blue* and the famous *Ben and Jerry's* ice cream truck. Vegetarian options are available upon request. Bring your appetite and picnic blanket!

The reading of the Declaration of Independence at this event has become a tradition. We encourage readers of all ages to take part. If you would like to volunteer to read a few lines, please email Town Office at townoffice@townofchevyCHASE.org or 301-654-7144.

Please RSVP by June 23 to the Town Office at 301-654-7144 or townoffice@townofchevyCHASE.org.

Interested in volunteering for the 4th? Contact the Town Office.

AROUND CHEVY CHASE

Think you might live in a Sears house? Historical Society project could confirm

The Chevy Chase Historical Society is surveying Chevy Chase, Maryland, for “kit” houses – the well-built and enduring pre-cut houses offered by companies like Sears Roebuck, Montgomery Ward and Alladin Houses in the first half of the 20th century.

Starting in the early 1900s, Americans could order a complete “home by mail” from catalogues featuring hundreds of house styles and have the parts delivered, in stages, to the nearest railroad station. Kit houses were extremely popular in the 1920s and 1930s and have enjoyed a resurgence in recent years, as evidenced by the higher home prices that confirmed kit houses can command.

If you know or think you have a kit house and are willing to be contacted by the Chevy Chase Historical Society or a kit house scholar working with CCHS, email a photo of the house with your name, street address and phone number to kithouses@chevyCHASEhistory.org by June 30. For further information on the kit house survey and photos showing the wide range of Sears kit house styles, visit www.chevyCHASEhistory.org.

Town of Chevy Chase

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Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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TOWN COUNCIL

Mary Flynn, Mayor

Barney Rush, Vice Mayor

Cecily Baskir, Secretary

Scott Fosler, Treasurer

Joel Rubin, Community Liaison



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CC@H June Events

On **Thursday, June 1, 7 to 9:30 p.m.**, CC@ H will present part two of our important series on Health Care and Aging: **When Times Get Tough: Facing Chronic Illness and End-of-Life Care.**

Despite advance directives, elderly patients and their families and caregivers often struggle with medical intervention decisions as the end of life approaches. **Dr. Christina Prather**, specialist in geriatrics and palliative care at George Washington University Hospital, will lead a discussion of the medical and ethical issues surrounding end-of-life care. A short documentary, "**The Last Campaign of Governor Booth Gardner**," will be shown as part of the program at the Chevy Chase Village Hall.

Join us on **Tuesday, June 20**, from **2 to 4 p.m.** also at the CC Village Hall, to learn **All About Gargoyles**. Wendy Gasch, author of "**Guide to Gargoyles and Other Grotesques at Washington National Cathedral**" will give us a virtual tour highlighting these fascinating sculptures.

Summer Safety Tips



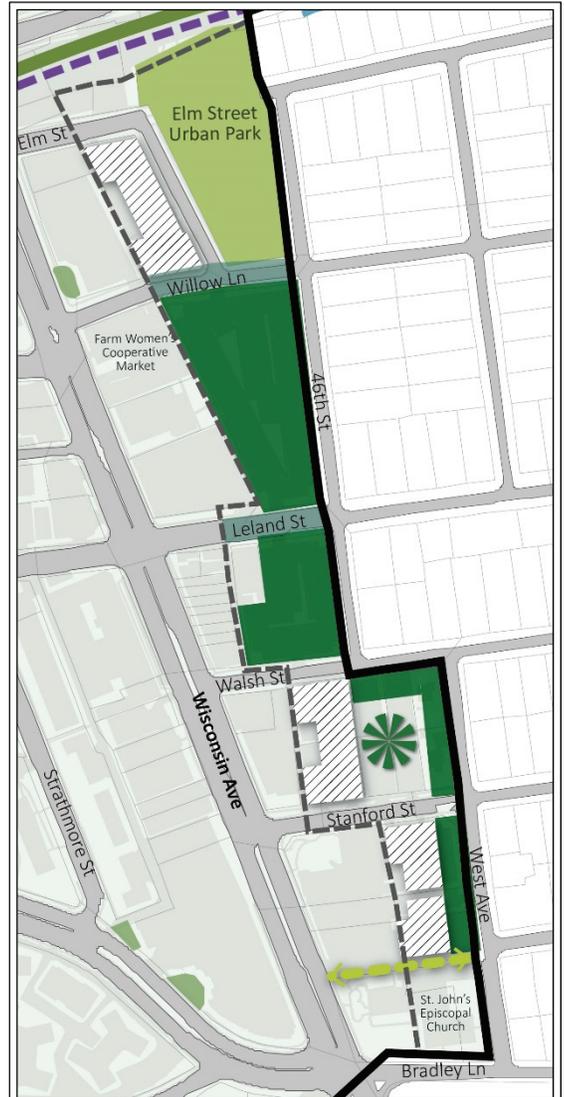
The Town would like to remind residents of some simple yet important tips for summer safety. Remember to keep your house and car locked at all times; keep outside lights on at night; notify your neighbors when you will be away, and call 911 to report suspicious activity. More information is available on the Town website.

Vision for a New Bethesda: County Council Approves the Bethesda Downtown Plan

On May 25, after nearly two years of public discussion, the Montgomery County Council approved the new Bethesda Downtown Plan by a vote of 8 to 1.

The Plan:

- Envisions more parks and recreational space, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets, and increased units of affordable housing.
- Permits much taller buildings – up to 25 to 30 stories on central downtown lots – and offers greater flexibility to developers to build the amount of floor area they want.
- Allows total development up to 32.4 million square feet of built floor area in downtown. This is 8.8 million square feet more than the amount on the ground today, or the equivalent of one and 1/3 Pentagons.
- Aspires to protect neighborhoods through proposed creation of additional parks and a “Greenway.” See *illustration at right*.
- Recommends reopening two elementary schools and establishing a southwestern county consortium consisting of the B-CC and Whitman school clusters to address overcrowding at middle school and high school.
- Assumes that increased congestion will be manageable, given Bethesda’s mass transit options. The County Council rejected staged development, strongly supported by communities and the Council staff, that would have required an increase to 55% in the number of workers and residents who shift from driving their own cars to using other modes of travel during rush hours before permitting the final 2 million square feet of development to proceed. Instead, the Council authorized a plan to achieve this goal, with annual progress reports, but with no requirement to suspend building if the goals are not achieved. Transportation improvements at designated intersections, including Connecticut and East-West Highway and Connecticut and Bradley, are also recommended.



	Recommended/Enhanced Open Space
	Potential Open Space (Location TBD)
	Illustrative Potential Development

The layout above presents the vision for green space – parks and the greenway – along the Town’s border. Realizing this vision will require a financing plan.

Community Successes

Our Town worked closely with other communities through the Coalition of Bethesda Area Residents (CBAR). Together, presenting a united voice representing 25 communities and over 10,000 households, we achieved significant improvements to the original draft Plan:

- **Parks:** The Plan now designates four county-owned surface parking lots in Bethesda as future parks, instead of sites for development. This designation applies to the lots behind the Farm Women’s Market and between Leland and Walsh. Any plan to convert parking lots into parks will likely require retaining some parking spaces underground. Town residents participated in collecting over 3,000 signatures on a petition to support these parks.
- **Reduced Heights:** Maximum building heights have been significantly reduced for many properties along the east side of Wisconsin Ave. The Jaffe property, located just north of St. John’s Church and directly across from Town residences, now has a maximum height of 9 stories – as the Town had recommended – down from 14 stories in the draft Plan.

- **Greenways:** Development on lots that directly confront our Town and East Bethesda will be required to set aside a green strip – or “Greenway” – for public use. These will serve as transition areas between the core of downtown and our residential neighborhoods. As we had recommended, the minimum width for greenways was increased to 35 feet, instead of the 20-foot width recommended in the draft Plan, and with that width, the height of a new building on the property is limited to 35 feet. Another Town and CBAR recommendation was also adopted: To encourage even wider Greenways, developers will be allowed to add an additional foot in building height for each additional foot in greenway width that is provided, up to a 70-foot width and height maximum.
- **Capital Crescent Trail:** We were not successful in obtaining a Greenway along the Capital Crescent Trail, but we did gain a statement in the Plan that developers should “enhance the experience of trail users,” either through “activating uses”, such as an outdoor café, that draw people to the ground floor of buildings, or through setbacks and landscape buffers. Also, the Plan now includes the need for a tunnel for bicyclists under Wisconsin Avenue.
- **Knowing How Much Is Being Built:** CBAR discovered that the County uses a manual and error-prone process to track and calculate development. As a result of our advocacy, some errors were corrected and County officials agreed (verbally) that new systems must be developed. This system must provide transparent access to property-level data and be easily accessible online to allow policy makers, developers, and community groups to track progress towards the 32.4 million square foot development cap. We don’t want poor data and monitoring to lead to development beyond this number, which is meant to be a hard stop.

Community Disappointment

A major disappointment was not securing support for staging. This was our effort to assure development does not exceed the capacity of our roads, and hence degrade our quality of life. Our proposal of a “gate” – standards to be met before the final phase of development could continue - would have served as an action -forcing event, requiring all parties, including County government and developers, as well as residents, to work together to ensure congestion does not become excessive. Instead, we have an observation post. If the goal of controlling congestion by encouraging people to use other modes of transit is not met, the County Council may take action – or may not.

The Work Ahead

- **More Documents:** The County Council expects to vote in July on the new Bethesda Overlay Zone, which will include comprehensive zoning to implement the vision outlined in the Plan. In addition, Design Guidelines, under development by the County’s Planning Department, are expected to take effect by August. These guidelines will recommend standards for buildings, as well as for parks and sidewalks in the Plan area. The Town is deeply engaged in reviewing and commenting on both documents.
- **Parks Financing:** While the Plan sets out goals, it does not include many mechanisms to achieve them. In order to convert County-owned parking lots to parks, the County must develop a credible, actionable funding plan. We expect to be deeply engaged in developing such a plan over the next year. If one is not put in place, the default option will likely be development of buildings on much of the surface parking lot land, and we will lose forever our best opportunity for substantially increasing parks adjacent to our densely built-up downtown.
- **Staying Involved:** Plans are one thing. Implementation is another. We need to remain engaged, monitoring the ongoing development in Bethesda, calling attention to concerns such as school adequacy and road congestion, and demanding action from the County when needed. Without this involvement, we cannot be assured that the goals of this Plan will be achieved.

Thank you!

Residents of our Town have spent thousands of hours working on the Bethesda Downtown Plan: To understand it, develop positions, coordinate with other communities, enlist signatures on petitions, attend public hearings and work sessions, draft comments and position papers, and meet over and over with County officials. Much was achieved. **Thank you all, for all your efforts.**