



Forecast

JANUARY 2022

NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE



Monday, January 3

Land Use/ Planning*, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, January 5

4-H Committee*, 5 p.m.

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Community Relations*, 7 p.m.

Thursday, January 6

Climate/Environment*, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 12

4-H Committee*, 5 p.m.

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Town Council, 7 p.m.

Monday, January 17

Martin Luther King Day
Town Office Closed

Monday, January 24

Book Club Meeting, 7 p.m.
see page 3

Wednesday, January 26

4-H Committee*, 5 p.m.

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Public Services*, 7:30 p.m.

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Online Fraud Event, 7 p.m.

see page 3

Thursday, January 27

Online Fraud Event, 7 p.m.

see page 3

Sunday, January 30

Kids Scavenger Hunt, 3:30 p.m.

see page 3

* Town Committee meeting
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*Please visit the website calendar
for more information on, and
instructions to join, these meetings.*

Staying Hopeful....

As we welcome 2022, we had hoped for a more optimistic start to the new year. Just a few months ago, we anticipated the steady decline of the pandemic, the return of larger social occasions and parties, and a renewed ability to travel. We were set to sally forth. Now, quite suddenly, we're anxious once again. The Omicron variant is sweeping the world, and we don't yet know its duration and severity.

However, we do know some things. Vaccination remains vital and receiving a booster shot is a matter of urgency. Masking is essential, and I'm sure we're all heartened to see compliance with indoor masking in this area. We also have the tools, such as Zoom, to continue our meetings and engagements. And we will retain our hope that Omicron will abate over the next few months, and we'll regain confidence that we are, finally, truly, emerging from the pandemic.

...and Staffing for our Future

In the meantime, here in our Town, we can be certain that the services we rely upon are and will be maintained to a consistently high standard. For these services -- provided both remotely and on-site -- we thank our dedicated staff: Todd Hoffman, our Town Manager; Dave Walton, Permitting Manager; Miguel Hernandez, Maintenance Assistant; and Emily McCarthy, Constituent Services Aide. These four do the work that, some years ago, was covered by six full-time employees.

What also is certain is that the workload on the staff and the Council has grown significantly. We have major projects involving the former 4-H property development; Zimmerman Park redevelopment; the prospective creation of new parks near the Farm Women's Market; and addressing storm water management. Other time intensive matters, such as possible County-initiated zoning changes, are ahead of us.

The Council therefore decided that it was time to hire an Assistant Town Manager to ensure that all of this work could be accomplished. We are very pleased to welcome Brian Wood, who takes on this position this month. Brian had previously worked for the D.C. government and most recently was Assistant City Manager for Auburn, Maine. He brings experience in managing civic projects, a commitment to community engagement, and plenty of enthusiasm. With Brian joining our team, we can continue to deliver the services you expect and take full advantage of opportunities to further improve our community. Welcome to our Town, Brian.

– Mayor Barney Rush

NEWS & NOTES

Public Hearings Scheduled for January Council Meeting

The following public hearings are scheduled for the January 12 Town Council meeting. If you are unable to attend the Council meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. via Zoom video conference, you may submit comments to townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org. Please visit the Town website for more information.

Proposal to Lower Town Voting Age to 16

The Town Council will hold a public hearing on a proposal to lower the Town voting age to 16 for residents who wish to participate in Town elections. Following several public outreach meetings in November and December to discuss and hear from residents about the merits of this proposal, the Council voted 4-1 at its December meeting to introduce a resolution to implement this change. Mayor Rush opposed the change, stating his preference to permit voting by residents who turn 18 by the November election date used for state and federal elections. Lowering the Town voting age requires a Town charter amendment, which, if adopted by the Council at its January meeting, would become effective 50 days after adoption, barring any petition that would require a referendum.

Proposal to Remove 'Do Not Enter' Restriction on Maple Avenue at Aspen Street

The Town Council will hold a public hearing on a proposal to remove the entry restriction on northbound Maple Avenue at Aspen Street. This signage change would allow traffic to exit onto East West Highway via Maple Avenue instead of via Aspen Street, Chatham Road and Meadow Lane from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Removal of this entry restriction is recommended in the Town-wide traffic study because Maple Avenue has fewer confronting homes, has additional width (i.e., approximately 28' versus an average of 22'), and offers better sight lines than the other routes used during afternoon rush hour. A recent traffic speed and volume study showed that approximately 50 to 60 cars per hour do not heed the posted entry restriction and travel through the intersection. Approximately 90 cars per hour make the legal right turn onto Aspen Street during the two-hour restriction.

East West Highway Crosswalk Safety

In December, the Council discussed the new pedestrian crosswalk on East West Highway near Maple Avenue and whether it adequately provides for safe pedestrian passage across East West Highway. The Council would like to ask residents to weigh in on this matter. We encourage you to use this crosswalk (with all due caution) and let us know your thoughts on both its safety and usability. Please send your observations and comments to townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org.

Residents May Request Traffic Calming Devices

We would like to remind residents that the Council recently simplified the process for requesting traffic calming devices, including radar speed signs and speed humps. A radar speed sign can be approved following a petition and public hearing, with no traffic analysis required. We have seen a substantial reduction in speeds on East Avenue since the Town installed its first radar speed sign there. Also, the Town's revised speed hump policy simplifies the petition process for new speed hump requests, reduces the speed threshold to support installation of new speed humps, and streamlines the engineering standards to be reviewed in evaluating requests for new speed humps. Please visit the Town website for more information.

Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers Banned January 1-October 14

Residents are reminded that, effective January 1, 2022, the use of gas-powered blowers is prohibited from January 1 through October 14. The Town Council approved this ban in response to resident concerns about noise and other impacts of this type of landscaping equipment. The regulations exempt gas-powered snow blowers and sprayers. Montgomery County noise regulations also remain in effect in the Town.

SPECIAL EVENTS

TOCC Book Club Meets January 24

Our Town of Chevy Chase Book Club will meet January 24 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall to discuss *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro, a tale of a companion robot chosen by a sick child. Save the date for our next meeting on March 14 when we will discuss *Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker* by Jennifer Chiaverini, a historical novel on the remarkable friendship between Mary Todd Lincoln and her seamstress Elizabeth Keckley, a freed slave. Join us for wine, snacks, and discussion. Covid protocols observed.

Stay Safe Online: Protect Yourself from Fraud

Learn how to protect yourself from identity theft and online scams so that you can more safely use the internet from your smartphone, tablet, and computer. The Town is offering two sessions, led by our very own Town resident, Brian Geffert, Global Chief Information Security Officer at KPMG International. A session for parents will be held on Wednesday, January 26 at 7 p.m. via Zoom, and a session for seniors will be held on Thursday, January 27 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Please RSVP to 301-654-7144 or townoffice@townofchevychase.org.

Kids Winter Scavenger Hunt

Join us for a free kids winter scavenger hunt at the Lawton Center playground on Sunday, January 30 at 3:30 p.m. The scavenger hunt will be geared towards ages 1-6, but all ages are welcome. There will be snacks and prizes!

Winter Clothing Needed

Did you get a nice warm coat or sweater as a holiday gift? There are people who could use your last year's clothes. Interfaith Works provides free clothing to thousands of Montgomery County families. Please donate clean, gently used or never used warm coats, gloves, mittens, scarves, hats, sweaters, pants, and socks to those in need. Also needed are waterproof warm winter wear, for those who are outside in the cold rain or snow. Since the town hall is still open only part time, the clothing box will be located on the front porch of Marjorie Shaw and Barney Rush, at **6917 Maple Avenue** (between Stanford and Pine Place). This project is sponsored by the Community Relations Committee.

Chevy Chase @ Home in January

Navigating Life's Journey: Independent Living Options; Friday, January 7, 2022, 1-2:30 p.m.: This will be the second event of our new "Navigating Life's Journey" series, in which you will learn how to navigate your options for each stage of aging. In this session, representatives from local independent living facilities will discuss the different models of independent living and how to choose the right place.

Arts of the Islamic World; Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 1-2 p.m.: The arts of the Islamic world encompass a great diversity of traditions far ranging in geography and historical period -- from North Africa to India and since the advent of Islam in the late seventh century. Explore selections from the museum's more than 2,200 Islamic art objects in an interactive online tour with one of the docents from the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art.

Peter Ross Range, Author of "The Unfathomable Ascent: How Hitler Came to Power"; Friday, January 28, 2022, 1-2 p.m.: CC@H member Peter Ross Range will speak on his book, "The Unfathomable Ascent: How Hitler Came to Power." Range is a journalist who has covered war, politics, and international affairs. A specialist in Germany, he has written for Time, the New York Times, National Geographic, the London Sunday Times Magazine, Playboy, and U.S. News & World Report, where he was a White House correspondent.

Registration is required for all events, and there is no fee. All events are via Zoom. For more information on events, visit <https://www.chevychaseathome.org>.

Town of Chevy Chase

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This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

Climate & Environment Tip of the Month: *Spare the Salt!*

When snow and ice melt, the salt on roads, driveways and sidewalks gets dissolved with it, washing into adjacent storm drains, and making its way to our local waterways. Once in the water there is no way to remove the sodium chloride, and at high concentrations salt can harm fish and plant life. Salt is also a pet paw irritant, and it can seep into soil in your own yard, which can harm plants, and kill off microbes important to soil health and fertility. Here are some winter salt best practices:

- Avoid using salt if at all possible. Sand, ashes, or kitty litter are good alternatives if traction is the issue. Sand is definitely a better bet below 15 degrees Fahrenheit, when salt will be ineffective. Avoid using salt if the temperature is forecast to get above freezing for several hours of the day -- the ice will melt naturally, or enough so that you can easily scrape or shovel it away.
- Try de-icing products that are less harmful than sodium chloride. Alternative chemicals that are better for the environment are calcium magnesium acetate (CMA), calcium chloride or magnesium chloride. Strosniders in Bethesda carries several alternatives.
- If you must use salt for safety purposes, shovel or scrape first. The less snow and ice, the less salt you'll need to use. Use the smallest amount possible, then wait. It can take time for the salt to have its intended melting effect.
- After the snow and ice have melted, if you have leftover dry salt and/or sand, sweep it up for reuse, or proper disposal. If you just leave it where it sits, it will eventually wash off into the watershed or your yard.
- For reinforcement of these points, here is the County salt website:
<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/water/Education/winter-salt-tips-and-best-practices.html>.