

Fall 1998

HOTLINE

FALL MEETING — OCTOBER 22, 1998, 7:30 P.M.

WEST LAUREL COMMUNITY CENTER

• MEETING TOPIC: HOTEL TUBBY'S?

The owner and the zoning attorney for Tubby's will be on hand to discuss the possibility of Tubby's allowing a hotel to be built on its property. This is a very important issue and maximum participation and input from WLCA members is needed.

For background, late this summer, Tubby's Diner approached the WLCA about support for it entering into an agreement to have a hotel built on the undeveloped portion of its property (*i.e.*, where the bus service had been located), which is zoned I-3. Apparently, some hotel chains have approached Tubby's owner about such a project. The WLCA Board had the owner and his attorney make a brief presentation at the September Board meeting. This was an exploratory meeting, where Tubby's was seeking to get a sense of the WLCA's feelings on the proposal. No actual plans are available at this time.

This is a complex issue, because WLCA desires to have both the Tubby's property and the adjacent Gudelsky property (see page 4) developed with I-3 uses which do not have an adverse impact on the community. A hotel is not a permitted use on the

• VOTE NOVEMBER 3RD!!!

Help West Laurel continue living up to its reputation as a community that comes out to vote on election day. This is a nonpartisan message. An important way of getting the attention of local officials is a high turnout percentage in State and local elections. At the September primary (when the Democratic party had a couple of hot races), West Laurel had the second highest percentage of Democratic turnout (38.5%) of the 20 precincts in the First Councilmanic District. West Laurel had by far the largest number of Democratic voters in the District and played a major role in the County Council race. Let's keep it up in November, and get our many Republicans and Independents out there too! West Laurel wins with high turnout!

property. At first, Tubby's considered a zoning change; however, they apparently concluded that a zoning change would be very difficult to achieve. At the September Board meeting, they proposed a change to the zoning law so as to permit hotel uses in the I-3 zone. The WLCA has consistently opposed text amendments designed to expand the use lists to permit what are otherwise not permitted uses, and we were very unhappy in 1994 when the District Council amended the residential zones to permit skating rinks in order to allow a facility at the southeast corner of Route 198 and Old Gunpowder Road.

So, while we would like Tubby's to develop an appropriate use, we are uncomfortable with either a zoning change or a zoning text amendment. Community input on this issue is very important. COME TO THE MEETING, LISTEN TO THE PROPOSAL, AND LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.

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Next Meeting — October 22, 1998

THE ICC REVISITED

• THE ICC IN AN ELECTION YEAR

If you are weary of reading articles on the Inter-County Connector (ICC), don't feel alone. The ICC, designed to connect I-270 to I-95, has been kept in print for over 50 years. Over the years, our patience has grown thin but the subject is very much alive and continues to evolve.

ICC Becomes Issue in Governor's Race

Both Maryland gubernatorial candidates are pro-ICC. Early in 1998, Glendening announced his opposition to the proposed ICC plans and appointed a Technical Solutions Group designed to study alternative solutions. However, this hand-picked panel is largely comprised of pro-ICC members (*i.e.*, developers, business leaders, etc.) and has little civic or environmental representation.

Glendening's opponent, Ellen Sauerbrey, supports the ICC and claims that Glendening has waffled on this key issue that affects the state's economic well being.

Many watchdog groups and newspapers predict that this billion-dollar road will be placed on a fast track after the November election, regardless of who wins the election. Many state and county politicians (Prince George's and Montgomery) have downplayed the issue or made recent statements that they are anti-ICC in order to gain voter support in a close election year. The bottom line is that some politicians may return to their pro-ICC ways after the election, because they too often listen to developers and the business community, instead of their constituents.

How Will the ICC Affect West Laurel?

In an election year as important as this one, we must avoid being one-issue voters. However, the ICC is certainly a threat to Laurel because one of the most recently considered plans (Route 198 Hybrid) calls for bringing all the traffic through Laurel on Route 198 at Sweitzer Lane.

Under the most-cited plan, the ICC would run for 17.5 miles, roughly parallel to and about four miles north of the Capital Beltway, beginning just north of

Rockville and running east to Laurel. Once built to Laurel, it would run about another 17.5 miles to US 301 south of Bowie.

In recent months, 16 intersections in PG County have been identified for improvements. The press reports that millions of dollars have been allocated to these intersections in an effort to improve congestion on the Beltway. Route 198 at Sweitzer Lane has been selected as one of those intersections. West Laurel residents may have observed the traffic studies that were conducted at Sweitzer Lane and Route 198 during August.

These same intersections were identified by critics of past ICC studies as offering little or no relief to Beltway traffic. These improvements may be nothing more than an attempt to make the next ICC study more defensible against opposition.

In addition to road improvements, the State continues to buy land in the right-of-way for the ICC. In recent months, the SHA spent \$11.96 million for the purchase of a 142-acre parcel in Burtonsville. They also sent a letter to Burtonsville homeowners stating that the state would be purchasing their land. Not until Councilman Praisner raised the issue to the Governor did the SHA claim the letters were a mistake and issue a retraction.

Why Your Vote Counts

Most of the critical decision making (*i.e.*, voting, studies, land purchase and budget) is done at the State level. However, the County Councils do have a say in planning issues via the County Master Plan.

West Laurel residents voting in the next elections, whether residents of Prince George's or Montgomery counties, need to understand how the ICC will affect their quality of life and impact our community.

The position a politician takes on the ICC will vary depending on which variation of the ICC you want to discuss. Most of our elected officials (*i.e.*, Dorman, Frush, Moe, Menes, Maloney) oppose the ICC in general and, specifically, the hybrid that would terminate traffic on Route 198.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

However, the entire legislative body decides on these issues and our representation alone may not be enough to prevent the ICC from coming to our doorstep. That's why our community needs to encourage our elected officials to be proactive and get the votes we need to protect this community.

The Montgomery and Prince George's County Executives are strong advocates for building an ICC with little regard to the concerns of environmental groups and established communities such as ours. Take the next few weeks to learn more about this subject, and let your elected officials know how you feel about the ICC.

In this election year, you can be certain the ICC will be a hot topic. If you would like more information from the WLCA, please come to the General Meeting, which will be held **Thursday, October 22, at the West Laurel Community Center beginning at 7:30 PM.**

- **NEW MULTI-MEDIA ART CLASS**

Coming soon... to the West Laurel Community Building. A multi-media art class for kids ages 6 to 12 years old. The class is scheduled to take place on Wednesdays from 6-7:30 p.m., beginning in mid-January. The class will last for 6 weeks. More information on this class, including registration info, can be found in the upcoming MNCPPC Winter Guide. Anyone interested in teaching more art classes OR other classes in the West Laurel Community Building should contact **Dee Dee Sisson at 301-953-7882.**

- **PLEASE PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON SUMMER PLAYGROUND**

Do you have ideas or feedback you would like to give in regards to the MNCPPC Summer Playground program held at Bond Mill Elementary School? If so, please put it in writing as soon as possible and send to: **Kathy Consoli**, NCPPC Northern Area Office, 1500 Merrimac Drive, Hyattsville, MD 20783.

- **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH UPDATE**

The West Laurel Neighborhood Watch would like to thank everyone who made a contribution to the Watch through the last Hotline newsletter or at a meeting. These funds help us continue our efforts and increase our level of success.

As you may have noticed, the neighborhood has been inundated with loud car stereos, a topic of neighbors and civic leaders throughout the neighborhood this summer.

The Watch is working closely with police and the WLCA to find a solution to this issue. If you know anyone who has one of these super-duper car stereos and plays it loudly while driving through the neighborhood, please ask him/her to be respectful of the people who live here and **TURN IT DOWN!** We have taken action on this matter and hope to have positive results in the near term.

If you would like more information on this or any other neighborhood watch issue, please come to our monthly meeting, held at 7:30 PM the third Thursday of each month, at the Community Center.

- **WELCOME BETHANY COMMUNITY CHURCH**

West Laurel will soon have its first church. **Jim and Win Smith** have finally settled the fate of Maiden's Fancy Estates, the 43 acre tract on Riding Stable Road across from Jerald Road. Bethany Community Church has obtained the portion fronting on Riding Stable Road, and intends to commence construction in the spring. We welcome the church and its members to West Laurel, and encourage our members to go meet our new neighbors at the Fall Festival they are holding October 24th & 25th. **SEE THE INSERT FLYER.** In addition to the church, four estate homes will be built on the back side of the property. As part of the approval of this project, the Smiths agreed to enter into covenants with the WLCA with the intent of limiting the potential impact of the church use. These covenants were signed by the parties and have been recorded in the Montgomery County Land Records.

NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

• **WANT TO GET GAS AT PROPOSED SWEITZER LANE DINER?**

Let us clarify that. We have just been contacted about a proposal to place a diner and gas station at the northeast corner of Route 198 and Sweitzer Lane (in West Laurel) on or adjacent to the Harrison property. Years ago, the WLCA fought a gas station on that corner (successfully, obviously). The twist this time is that the owners also own 6 acres on the north side of Sweitzer Lane between the WSSC property and Malaya Place. They would be willing to donate the 6 acre parcel to the WLCA in exchange for a rezoning of the parcel fronting on Route 198. We have little information on this project at this time; however, it is likely to come before the Board and may be a topic at the Winter Meeting. The zoning attorney on this proposal is the same one doing the Tubby's presentation at the Fall Meeting, so we may be able to ask some questions and get a rough idea of what the membership thinks about this idea.

• **SMITH PROPERTY**

The Maiden's Fancy Manor portion of the Smith Property is being readied for development. Trinity Homes has purchased the property and has commenced clearing the land off of Straughn Drive in preparation of construction. The WLCA supported the Smith's plans on this development a couple of years ago, because the plan is for high quality single family homes that are compatible with the existing homes. After the Straughn Drive portion is complete, additional homes will be built of the end of Kent Road and Kaybro Street. A total of 36 homes are planned.

• **RETURN OF BARTON JOINT VENTURE?**

It's one new development proposal after another. Just before printing, we got word that new investors are considering purchasing the Barton Joint Venture project (south side of Route 198, opposite the block plant and Shell). Those of you with long memories will recall that this is an industrial/employment development which had strict traffic conditions imposed upon its approval. The developers took the conditions to court, and the WLCA and County Council successfully defended the conditions all the way to the Court of Special Appeals. We will keep you posted on any news.

• **NEW SWEITZER LANE OFFICE BUILDING**

Trammel Crow, a national real estate development company, has submitted a site plan to build a 4-story, 120,000 square foot office building on Sweitzer Lane across from the Crestar Bank building. This development is part of the approved subdivision for the Maryland 95 Corporate Park, and the traffic impact was taken into account (supposedly) years ago. **WLCA President Tom Dernoga** and **First Vice President John Dollen** met with Trammel Crow's real estate representative and attorney to review the plans. While the WLCA has concern about the failing nature of the Route 198/Sweitzer Lane intersection, because this project was taken into account at subdivision, we have no leverage at this time. The WLCA Board has decided to not oppose this project because it is in accordance with the Subregion I Master Plan, permitted zoning (E-I-A) and the approved subdivision plan, and if furthers the WLCA policy of placing all employment and office uses in the business park rather than on Route 198.

• **GUDELSKY PROPERTY: REQUEST FOR WATER & SEWER CATEGORY UPGRADE**

In July, the attorney for the Gudelsky property (SW corner of Route 198/Old Gunpowder Road (*i.e.*, Country Music Theater)), which is zoned I-3 (low intensity industrial) contacted the WLCA to see if we would support an upgrade in the water & sewer category from 4C to category 3. Category 3 allows the actual development process to commence. We were told that the category upgrade would make the property marketable and facilitate a sale by Mr. Gudelsky. Because of the critical location of this property, the WLCA Board would like to see the property developed with a quality I-3 project. However, the WLCA did not have sufficient time to react to the request before the County Council vote. The County Council rejected the upgrade request, but the WLCA offered to work with Mr. Gudelsky to develop an acceptable project. We have had no response to this offer.

TEEN SERVICE DIRECTORY

• HELP OUR TEENS

Help a teenager learn responsibility and be productive, all while earning money.

The WLCA has received parental approval to make the following names and phone numbers available. The WLCA is merely serving as an information clearinghouse, with no warranty of the quality of work, and no liability for the working conditions.

Parents, please check out all requests for services before allowing your teen to go to someone's house!

On the flip side, before hiring a teen, check around to make sure that they are responsible and capable of doing the job! Ask for references.

- **Nicole Ashby**
Niles Drive, 498-1130
(Baby Sitting, House Sitting)
- **April Atkinson**
Weaver Court, 490-4170
(Baby Sitting, House Sitting)
- **Jo Anna Atkinson**
Weaver Court, 490-4170
(Baby Sitting, House Sitting)
- **Brett Barcheski**
Parkway Drive, 301-490-1067
(Yard Work, Babysitting)
- **Brooke Barcheski**
Parkway Drive, 301-490-1067
(Yard Work, Baby Sitting)
- **Daniel Bryan**
Kent Road, 490-7912
(Drivable Errands, Lawn, Gutters, Baby Sitting)
- **Matthew Bryan**
Kent Road, 490-7912
(Lawn ,Gutters, Baby Sitting)
- **Sarah Criscuolo**
Kenny Road, 490-4259
(Baby Sitting)
- **Jason Folks**
Clayburn Drive, 490-0797
(Magician - Children's Parties, Pet Sitting)

- **Jesse Folks**
Clayburn Drive, 490-0797
(Pet Sitting)
- **Laura Kimes**
Burton Lane, 490-4268
(Baby Sitting)
- **Barry Lee-Moran**
Jerald Road, 776-4689
(Yard Work, Baby Sitting, Household Chores)
- **Shara Leibson**
Forest Mill Lane, 490-8251
(Baby Sitting, Pet Sitting)
- **Lindsay Leibson**
Forest Mill Lane, 490-8251
(Baby Sitting, Pet Sitting)
- **Mark Lee, Jr.**
Ashland Drive, 317-5428
(Yardwork, Painting, Car Washing, Baby Sitting)
- **Michael Ostrander**
Bradford Drive, 490-1582
(Yard Work, Painting, Car Wash, Baby Sitting)
- **Jennifer Santoro**
Straughn Drive, 953-9673
(Baby Sitting)
- **Courtney Simmons**
Cissel Road, 776-3351
(Baby Sitting, House Sitting)
- **Steven Whitman**
Goodman Road, 776-1120
(Yard Work, Baby Sitting)

If you have a teenager interested in providing services in the neighborhood, call **WLCA President Tom Dernoga (301) 490-3286**. The next directory will be published in the Winter of 99.

HOTLINE Contributors

THANKS TO HOTLINE CONTRIBUTORS:

Ron Holmberg, John Dollen, Laurice
Crawford, and Tom Dernoga.

1998-1999 WEST LAUREL CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOARD

PHONE NUMBERS

<u>WLCA OFFICERS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NUMBER(301)</u>
President	Tom Dernoga	490-3286
1st Vice President	John Dollen	725-3202
2nd Vice President	Barbara Sollner-Webb	604-5619
Rec. Secretary	Mary Lehman	498-0694
Treasurer	Laurice Crawford	490-8684

DIRECTORS

AREA I

(2-year)	Larry Timian	490-0959
(1-year)	Jurgen von Bredow	549-3150
Alternate	Jim Ludlam	483-9855

AREA II

(2-year)	Hamilton Brown	498-9517
(1-year)	Bill Ferguson	776-6993
Alternate	Stephanie Mayer	490-9393

AREA III

(2-year)	Dr.Scott Fisher	776-8238
(1-year)	Ron Holmberg	604-7598
Alternate	Gordon Anderson	490-8684

AREA IV

(2-year)	Barney Walsh	490-7357
(1-year)	Lucy Grimes	490-0414
Alternate	Irene D'Amato	490-8441

AREA V

(2-year)	John De Berardinis	725-6502
(1-year)	Elizabeth Schwartz	776-0542
Alternate	VACANT - Please Volunteer	

ZONING/RECYCLING/Historian

John Dollen 725-3202

ENVIRONMENTAL

Justin Chappell 470-1655

HOTLINE COORDINATORS

Ron Holmberg 604-7598

John Dollen 725-3202

WLRC OFFICERS

President	Chuck Lavin	490-8996
Vice President	VACANT - Please Volunteer	
Secretary	VACANT - Please Volunteer	
Treasurer	VACANT - Please Volunteer	

WLRECCENTER INFORMATION

725-9572

LAUREL LEADER COLUMNIST

Chris Folks 490-0797

Listed above are the Officers and Area Directors currently serving on the WLCA Board (Consult the map included in this Hotline to determine who your Area Directors are!). Board meetings are held monthly, usually on the second Thursday, at the Community Center at 7:30 p.m. and are open to anyone. Call your Area Director if you would like to attend a Board meeting or if you have a concern you would like brought before the Board. **General Meetings** will be held in October, February and May, usually on the third Thursdays of the month at the Community Center at 7:30 p.m.

MORE COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

• **SIDEWALKS FOR BOND MILL STUDENTS**

Some of Bond Mill and its tributary streets have sidewalks so children can walk to school. However, some do not. The rule of thumb is that any Bond Mill Elementary student who lives within 1.5 miles of school must be bused to school unless sidewalks are available.

Many of our streets do not have sidewalks and subsequently we have to use bussing in the neighborhood. This is expensive and creates added traffic. Many parents would let their children use the sidewalks if they were available.

Over the summer, the WLCA contacted **Angie Como** (County School Board Member) regarding this matter. Angie's office provided us with the student demographics in areas that do not have sidewalks. She agreed with the need for more sidewalks and less bussing, and encouraged our efforts to get more sidewalks.

A meeting with County officials, **Angie Como**, and the WLCA will be scheduled in the next few weeks to discuss this issue. The intent of the meeting is to determine if we can get sidewalks and how long it would take to have them in place.

If you would like more information on this subject, please contact **John Dollen at (301) 725-3202 or via email at dollenj@erols.com**.

• **PROPOSED BY-LAW AMENDMENT: INCLUSION OF BIRMINGHAM DRIVE**

As discussed at the Spring Meeting, residents of Birmingham Drive on the south side of Route 198 (in Montgomery County) have requested to join the WLCA. The membership had a positive reaction at the Spring Meeting; however the issue arose too close to the Meeting to allow for a legal amendment of the By-Laws. Since that time, the WLCA Board has approved the following By-Laws Amendment, which the membership will vote on at the Fall Meeting. The purpose of this proposed change is to extend membership to interested Montgomery County residents who do not belong to an active civic association and whose community is in close proximity to the WLCA's southwestern boundary. The proposal would modify Section 1.03, as follows:

"1.03 The boundaries of the Association are:

- The Laurel City limits on the east;
- On the south by Route 198 including properties abutting on the south side;
- The Patuxent River on the north; and
- On the west by the Prince George's County line and Riding Stable Road including properties on any roads abutting Riding Stable Road, and including properties on Birmingham Drive."

• **PIT BULLS MUST BE REGISTERED!**

Don't forget that Prince George's County passed a law outlawing ownership of pit bull terriers. Violation of the law is a criminal offense which can subject the owner to as much as a \$1,000 fine or 6 months in jail. The law allows owners to keep pit bulls which they owned prior to November 1, 1996, but the owners must have the dog registered with Animal Control and have it specially tagged. The law defines pit bull terrier to include "Staffordshire Bull Terrier," "American Staffordshire Terrier," "American Pit Bull Terrier," and mixed dogs which have the appearance of being predominantly of one of these breeds.

TREASURER'S REPORT

THE 1998-99 WLCA BUDGET WILL BE VOTED ON AT THE FALL MEETING.

Please read the information below and bring any questions or comments to the Fall General Meeting. WLCA has generally kept a balanced budget, but it has been hard with a fluctuating number of members (between 781 and 906 the last five years). We need 440 residences to balance this year's budget, but more members would help in some of the big issues coming up. We're proud to be one of the largest civic associations in the County, and having that stature is an effective tool in certain forums. To that end, we can be more effective with more members. Please join the WLCA and support your community.

WLCA PROPOSED BUDGET 1998-99

	Approved 96-97	Actual 96-97	Approved 97-98	Actual 97-98	Proposed 98-99
Hotline Issues	2400	2608	2400	2288	2400
P.O. Box	60	58	60	58	60
P.O. Permit	85	85	85	85	85
Cub Scout Sponsorship	300	300	300	300	300
Fire Dept. Donation	150	150	150	150	150
Rescue Squad Donation	150	150	150	150	150
Grad Night Donation	100	100	75	75	100
WL Rag Tag band	100	100	50	50	50
Bond Mill PTA Carnival	0	75	75	75	75
Neighborhood Watch	0	0	0	0	0
P.G. Civic Fed Dues	25	25	25	75	75
Office Supplies	200	22	150	90	150
Zoning & Legal Fees	500	0	200	222	200
Refreshments	175	149	175	147	175
Misc. Expenses	175	0	200	150	200
PA System	400	1645	0	0	0
Total	4820	5467	4095	3915	4270

Income	No. of Members	Dues	Total
1993-94	781	@ 5.00	3905
1994-95	906	@ 5.00	4530
1995-96	843	@ 5.00	4215
1996-97	824	@ 5.00	4120
1997-98	456 Residences	@ 10.00	4545
Estimated income for 1998-1999:	450 Residences	@ 10.00	4500
Checkbook balance 9/1/98			8648

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

SUPPORT YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION

FOR \$10...TEN GOOD REASONS TO JOIN THE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

To all our neighbors, old and new, **we need you to join the West Laurel Civic Association.** What have we done for you lately? A lot. And we will continue our efforts to make this the best neighborhood in Prince George’s County. But we need your support to do the things we do. We can think of at least ten good reasons why West Laurel residents should join WLCA. **We’re committed to:**

1. Preserving the beauty and tranquility of our neighborhood.
2. Monitoring proposed and pending development in and around West Laurel to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood.
3. Opposing undesirable or inappropriate projects (the ICC, country music theatre, Redskins stadium).
4. Tracking legislation at the county and state levels.
5. Providing testimony on policies and projects affecting our area.
6. Communicating concerns to and requesting assistance from elected officials.
7. Holding regular, community-wide meetings.
8. Updating residents via the *Hotline* and special notices.
9. Working with the police to keep crime down.
10. Supporting other organizations including the Bond Mill, Laurel High School, Cub Scouts, Laurel Fire and Rescue Squad and P.G. Civic Federation.

Mail your check for \$10.00, payable to WLCA, to: **Laurice Crawford, 16300 Gales Court, Laurel, MD 20707** or stop by the table at the **October 22 General Meeting** at the West Laurel

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Dues: \$10.00_____

Comments _____

Please send your Membership Application to:
West Laurel Civic Association, Laurice Crawford, Treasurer
16300 Gales Court, Laurel, MD 20707

West Laurel Civic Association
P.O. Box 449
Laurel, MD 20725

Bulk Rate
Postage Paid

Permit #3505
Laurel, MD 20725



HOTLINE — Fall '98

The Newsletter of the West Laurel Civic Association