



COMMUNITY NEWS

Together Strengthening Our Community

Fall 2008 Edition

ERIC OLSON -DISTRICT 3 PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Neighbors,

I hope you had an enjoyable summer. Much has been happening in our District 3 office and in the County these past few months, and there is much to look forward to this fall and winter.

We've maintained a strong focus on land-use and transportation planning, resulting in most areas of District 3 either involved in a public planning process now or about to enter a planning process. We have outlined most of these plans on pages 4 through 5 of this newsletter, and encourage your participation.

I want to acknowledge the sacrifice and heroism of County Police Corporal Richard Findlay, killed in the line of duty in June. Each day that our law enforcement officers go to work, they do not know what they may face, and they put their lives on the line. I am grateful for the brave work that our officers do on a daily basis.

There have been, unfortunately, a number of incidents involving our law enforcement community over the last few months that greatly concern me, and which are the targets of review. I have particularly been seeking answers to the tragedy that occurred at the home of Berwyn Heights Mayor Cheye Calvo. My statement regarding this issue can be found on page 2 of this newsletter. Our Corrections Department has also been under scrutiny for several serious incidents that have occurred there, and in response the Director of Corrections was removed.

Like many communities across the region and throughout the country, Prince George's County continues to grapple with the devastating effects of the ongoing decline in the national and state economies. We will weather this economic downturn, but budget cuts are being made. We are seeking to maintain our services but are not filling vacancies for the time being, and employees are being mandated to take days off without pay, while some projects are being deferred to later dates to save money.

Despite the challenges we face, there is much progress occurring. As always, please contact my office, 301.952.3060, if there is anything we can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Eric Olson
Council Member, District 3
(301) 952-3060
EOlson@co.pg.md.us

Si desea recibir el boletín de noticias en español, por favor llame al número: 301-952-3060.

*Please visit our website for County information:
www.co.pg.md.us/District3*



Council Member Olson walks the community with members of the Frenchman's Creek Condo Association.



Council Member Olson speaks with the student body of Riverdale Elementary.



Councilman Olson and Mayor Steve Brayman take turns operating heavy equipment at a ground-breaking ceremony for College Park's downtown parking garage, being built by the City of College Park, and scheduled for construction this year.

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
 (301) 952-3060
ERIC C. OLSON
 Council Member
 3rd District

August 2008

Eric Olson Statement on Berwyn Heights incident

Berwyn Heights Mayor, Cheye Calvo, and his wife, Trinity Tomsic, are my friends and are upstanding members of our community. I have spent considerable time with Cheye and Trinity and the Berwyn Heights community during this ordeal and am glad that their good names have officially been cleared by the Prince George's Police and the State's Attorney's office. However, the Calvo-Tomsic family and the community deserve answers to questions that remain. I have been in contact with our Police Chief and Sheriff and am asking many of those questions of them.

It is tragic that the Calvo-Tomsic family had to endure what they have gone through, and I continue to offer them my deepest sympathy for their loss and for the hurt they suffered as innocent victims of a drug smuggling operation and the subsequent law enforcement actions associated with the drug investigation. As a public official representing the citizens of Berwyn Heights and District 3 of Prince George's County, I am pursuing more information from law enforcement about the level of investigation that occurs prior to entering a home, how the warrant was served, the procedures for this kind of operation, and why the Calvo-Tomsic family's dogs were killed, among other questions.

Mayor Calvo and his wife have called for a federal review of the actions taken by County law enforcement associated with this particular case. I believe such a review can help clarify what occurred - how and why - and ultimately they will receive answers to the outstanding questions. The answers can assist how our County moves forward from this in a positive way.

I have also spoken with members of our County's law enforcement community during this period and know that it has also been difficult for their ranks. The men and women of the County's law enforcement community put their lives on the line every day for the residents of Prince George's County, and I appreciate the difficult and stressful job they do to protect our residents.

For the good of all of us in Prince George's County, we need to move forward with a better understanding of what happened. I look forward to hearing the conclusions of the federal review of this case and working with all parties for positive resolutions.

County Administration Building - Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772



Mayor Cheye Calvo joins Councilman Olson for the Councilman's meeting in Berwyn Heights.

Strong Communities, Neighborhoods Coming Together



Council Member Olson walks the Martins Woods neighborhood with residents.

In past newsletters, we have reported on the importance of having a well organized neighborhood civic association and have encouraged

residents to contact us if you are interested in learning more about your neighborhood's association, or if there is not a civic association, if we can assist in helping residents form one.

This year, I am happy to report several more neighborhoods have organized. Larry Jackson helped lead the effort in the Princess Garden Hickory Hills neighborhood of Lanham to revitalize their civic association; Dwayne Stanton helped a new association recently take shape in Martins Woods; Lisa Davila helped form an association

at Riverdale Overlook; and under leadership from Kari and Derek Fisher and Sam Doyle, residents of the Acredale Community have also joined together.

Several other neighborhoods are in the process of organizing. Please contact Wanda Brooks of my staff for more information about civic associations at: wjbrooks@co.pg.md.us or at 301-952-3060.



New Paint Branch Parkway Bike Path Crossing

Councilman Olson is joined by College Park City Council Members Mary Cook, Bob Catlin and Patrick Wojahn, College Park Mayor Steve Brayman, Senator Jim Rosapepe, and civic association presidents Morgan Gale, Monroe Dennis, and Jerry Anzulovic as they cut the ceremonial ribbon for a new, safer pedestrian/bike path crossing for the College Park Trolley Trail at busy Paint Branch Parkway. This crossing is used by commuters to the College Park Metro Station, by runners, bicyclists and strollers, and by University students. Pedestrian and bike safety is a key priority and we are working hard to expand our bike trail system and to link our existing trails. Expanding trails and increasing pedestrian and bike safety are important for increasing alternative transportation options and for recreational uses.



Prescription Drug Discounts

The County Council recently learned of a program through the National Association of Counties (NACo) that Prince George's County is participating in to help lower prescription drug costs for County residents. It is a free program. Residents may obtain cards that can be presented at most major pharmacies in the County that provide a discount for prescriptions. The discount drug card cannot be used with any other insurance. These Free Prescription Drug Discount cards can be obtained by calling (301) 883-7879, or picking them up at 1701 McCormick Drive Suite 200 Largo, MD 20774.

DISTRICT 3

Planning and Development News

As mentioned in my last newsletter, I have worked hard to encourage our Planning Department as well as developers to launch public planning processes to ensure that the public is involved in guiding development adjacent to our communities. Much has happened over the past few months and below is a brief update of the status of some of these processes. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dannielle Glaros in my office at 301-952-3060 or dmglaros@co.pg.md.us.



Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Study

On **October 22, 2008 from 7 – 9 pm** at St. Bernard's Church Crystal Room, Dineene O'Connor, Senior Community Planner and Jan Townsend, consultant, will present the draft action plan on the Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Study for community comments. Please come and help prioritize the action items for this area. The concept drawings envisioning the future of the area done by the UMD Senior Landscape Architecture students will also be available at the meeting in case you missed the earlier presentation back in May. This is the last step before the Revitalization Study is formally presented to the Prince George's County Planning Board and concludes. More details can be found at www.mncppc.org/cpd/CKAR.

Glenn Dale, Seabrook and Lanham Area Sector Plan & Sectional Map Amendment (SMA)

On June 26th, the Glenn Dale, Seabrook and Lanham Area Sector Plan held its first community-wide meeting. Over 100 residents were in attendance to hear more about the plan and help prioritize goals. Over the summer, a smaller group of residents representing the planning area have been participating in community advisory group meetings on a host of topics including public facilities, parks, transportation, and the environment. Planning staff are adding additional meetings for this planning area for October, November and December.



For more information on meeting dates, topics and location, please visit www.mncppc.org/cpd/gdsl.

Seabrook Station on Lanham-Severn Road in Lanham.



New Carrollton Metro Plan

In November, the New Carrollton TDDP/TDOZ draft plan will be available for public comment. Bill Washburn, planner, will also be available to make a presentation on the plan to community groups. A formal public hearing on the plan will be scheduled for an evening in January in Upper Marlboro. If you cannot make it, testimony can be submitted by mail up to 15 days after the hearing to Ree Floyd, Clerk of the Council at 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772. This plan will guide development in this area for at least the next 15 years, so your participation and comments are vital. More information can be found at www.mncppc.org/cpd/New_Carrollton_TDDP_TDOZ.

US Route 1 Sector Plan Update

The update to the Route 1 Sector Plan will be starting this fall. One of the key parts of the update will be a 6-day design charrette coordinated by Dover, Kohl, and Partners, consultants who are assisting on the plan. The charrette will be held from **December 5th-December 10th**. Charettes are a popular way to engage residents

and connect citizens directly to the experts drafting plans. Residents do not need to attend events every day; however, the consultants will work daily to be ready to present a product to the public that responds to their concerns by the end of the charrette. Key activities for residents will include: an initial presentation on Friday, December 5th, a community workshop on Saturday, December 6th, open studios scheduled on several days where residents can just drop in, and a final presentation on Wednesday, December 10th. The presentations will be located at the College Park City Hall. Times TBA. The plan covers Route 1 from Fordham Ct (just south of Guilford) to the IKEA. For a more detailed description of the boundaries or for more details on the plan, please visit www.

Countywide Plans

Two important countywide plans are currently being updated—the Master Plan of Transportation and the Prince George's County Transit Service and Operations Plan. A draft of the Master Plan of Transportation will be available this fall for public comment. This plan will update bike/trail networks, transit and road improvements. More information can be found at www.mncppc.org/county/Transportation_MP/. The Prince George's County Transit Service and Operations Plan is a 5-year plan to guide transit improvements in the County. A copy of the proposal can be found at www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/Government/AgencyIndex/DPW&T/.

Route 450 Sector Plan

In Spring 2009, the Planning Department will initiate a Sector Plan for Route 450 between BW Parkway & Veterans Parkway. Stay tuned for more details.



Purple Line Update

The Public Hearings for community members to provide input on the preferred route of the Purple Line have been scheduled. The Maryland Transit Administration has been evaluating several different options for how the Purple Line will travel through our communities from New Carrollton Metro Station to Riverdale to College Park, UMD and eventually Silver Spring and Bethesda.

The need for alternative public transportation connecting our communities and employment centers (New Carrollton, M-Square and UMD) has never been greater as gas prices increase and we confront climate change. I strongly encourage you to attend these hearings and let the state know your thoughts on the Purple Line alignment. More details can be found at www.purplelinemd.com/.

Hearings have been set for:

Saturday, November 15th
New Carrollton
Municipal Center
11 AM - 3 PM
Open House starts 30 minutes
before public hearing.

Wednesday, November 19th
Ritchie Coliseum - UMD
College Park
5 - 9 PM

Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Task Force Update

As reported in my last newsletter, the County Council passed legislation I sponsored in the spring to form a County-wide Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Task Force. This Task Force, which I am chairing, is comprised of non-profit leaders, representatives of various county agencies, the school system, law enforcement, Park and Planning, and social services, among others. We are reviewing the recommendations from the 2004 Gang Task Force report conducted by Prince George's and Montgomery Counties to see how much has been done and what recommendations have not received the attention they need. We are focusing attention on prevention and intervention – i.e., how to reach kids before they take the wrong path and how to help young people who may be in bad situations but who, with some assistance, can get on the right path.

We have heard from law enforcement experts who have seen the worst cases

Council Members Olson and Campos discuss the initiatives and recommendations of the Task Force. Below, members of the Task Force review the resources compiled to combat gang and youth violence.



and directly from individuals who have successfully made the transition out of a criminal lifestyle. Solutions will not be easy, quick, nor comprehensive, but we can do better at reaching young people and their parents who need help early and help guide them toward better choices. We will have our Youth

and Gang Violence Task Force work wrapped up with a report this fall.

My intention is that this Task Force will only be the beginning of the effort to focus serious attention on our youth and on those problems that attract young people to violence and/or gang activity.



Council Member Olson speaks to the Parkdale High School community about addressing youth violence.



Sponsored by
 Prince George's County Executive Jack B. Johnson
 Prince George's County Police Department
 Prince George's County Board Of Education
 Prince George's County Public Schools
 Prince George's Chamber of Commerce
 Mid-Atlantic Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



**Call
 301-333-4000
 to Report
 Truant
 Students**

All calls remain anonymous and confidential.



Legislation Update

This summer, the County Council passed several of Council Member Olson's bills:

Alternative Energy Tax Credit:

Established a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for homeowners who install solar or geothermal energy sources. The County is now formally establishing the program, so more details on how to apply will be available soon. For now, please contact the County Treasury at (301) 952-4252.

Climate Change, "Cool County" legislation:

Passed a resolution to join a regional effort to address climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by the County.

Farmers Markets:

Decreased the fee for vendors at Farmers' Markets in the County to encourage more vibrant farmers markets.

This fall, I will introduce several new bills for Council consideration, including:

Historic Properties

I am seeking legislation to allow for a quicker, easier process for people to add their homes to the historic property list. This does not mandate that properties be added to the historic list, rather it would allow a property owner to add their home if they qualify and desire it

to be added, making it eligible for rehabilitation tax credits.

Stiffening Penalties for Overcrowded Rental Homes

In District 3 and particularly in areas around the University of Maryland, neighborhoods are experiencing problems with overcrowded rental homes. Under County Code, no more than five unrelated people can live in a rental house. This is based on health, safety and welfare concerns. Currently, there is only a \$500 penalty for violation of this code provision, which provides very little incentive for those who are renting to more than five unrelated individuals to not look the other way when their houses are overcrowded. In an effort to protect neighborhood quality of life and to protect renters from potentially dangerous housing conditions, I am introducing a bill to substantially hit violating landlords in their wallets. Under my legislation, a first offense would be doubled to the maximum fine allowed under state law, which would cost the violating landlord \$1,000 per day.



In June, Councilman Eric Olson coordinated a small business open house to encourage new businesses at the historic Riverdale Park Town Center.

Small Business Workshop for District 3 Residents

Have you ever wanted to open a small business? Are you a small entrepreneur looking to expand? Councilman Olson is sponsoring a small business workshop on Thursday, November 20 from 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm at Park & Planning Headquarters, 6600 Kenilworth Avenue, and we hope if you are interested, that you can attend. Light refreshments will be served.

Councilman Olson is interested in seeing more small, local businesses open and thrive in our communities and he is bringing together small business experts to help residents explore their entrepreneurial interests. We have invited the County's Economic Development Corporation, the State's Small Business Initiative, non-profit groups like the Washington Area Community Investment Fund, as well as local lenders and others with small business expertise to make presentations and meet one-on-one with residents interested in opening or expanding small, local businesses.

Small, local businesses help strengthen our community because they are run by residents who live in our neighborhoods, and who have a vested interest in Prince George's County. The profits from local businesses largely stay within the community rather than going to a corporate headquarters in another state. This helps grow our local economy and strengthens the fabric of our community. If you are interested in attending or if you have questions, please contact Dannielle Glaros of my staff at: dmglaros@co.pg.md.us. Please RSVP by November 7th.



**Eric Olson
Council Member
District 3**

County Administration Building
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive,
2nd Floor
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE PAID
UPPER MARLBORO, MD
PERMIT 34

For more information throughout the year, please visit my website at www.co.pg.md.us/district3 or email tsmayah@co.pg.md.us to join our E-News which is emailed monthly and includes announcements and events.

Warning! Parking Regulations and Fines



I have heard from a number of residents who have received \$50 tickets from the County's Parking Authority for the violation of "Parking Against the Flow of Traffic." Parking the opposite way is a violation of the Maryland Traffic Code, and enforcement of this and other parking violations have been stepped up by the County's Parking Authority as part of the County's Livable Communities Initiative. This has been reported in the media, but I wanted to make sure that each District 3 resident is aware of this long-standing state traffic regulation so drivers can comply and avoid being ticketed.

Good Luck Road Speeding

I convened a meeting this summer between Parkdale High School's Principal, the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation, the police from New Carrollton, Riverdale Park, and the County, elected officials from New Carrollton and Riverdale Park, and representatives of the Madison Hill and Kingswood neighborhoods, in response to complaints of speeding and traffic violations on Good Luck Road. Partly to blame is the practice of drivers stopping in the roadway to drop off or pick up students at Parkdale, which creates a hazard. Police will be making it a priority to prevent this dangerous activity. There is also state legislation to

allow speed cameras in school zones, which we hope will pass this year, allowing cameras to be placed along Good Luck Road with its five schools – Parkdale, Lamont Elementary, Robert Frost, Robert Goddard, and Duval High School. The police agencies are cooperating on this problem and the Department of Public Works and Transportation is considering other possibilities. There are several areas in our district where speeding is a concern, and we are working to address each of them. Please encourage others to drive safely and observe posted speeds on Good Luck Road and throughout our County.