



# FOREST ESTATES NEWSLETTER

Forest Estates Community Association, Montgomery County, Maryland

## President's Message

By Alison Gillespie, FECA President

Welcome to the first FECA newsletter of 2020! As we all struggle to do what we can to keep each other healthy during the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19, I remain truly glad to have such a generous, kind group of people living all around me here in our little neighborhood.

As you'll see in this newsletter, our community has truly risen to the challenge of taking care of one another during this highly unusual, scary and stressful time.

One of my favorite memories of this neighborhood will always remain the week we all took the kids on a bear hunt. The playgrounds were quiet and barricaded-off to prevent gatherings with the onset of the new coronavirus (COVID-19). I know people put bears in their windows and yards to give the children a fun distraction and game to play. But let me tell you that every bear (and then later, every heart) in a window made me feel warm and happy, too, when I went for long, socially distant walks down our streets.

Our response to COVID and our coming together to take care of each other was no surprise to me as a long-time resident. In fact, over the last year leading up to COVID we've seen a flurry of civic activity and engagement, as usual.

In 2019, the Forest Estates Community Association (FECA) hosted many new events in addition to the already wonderful, long-established traditions and activities such as the Farmer's Market, July 4 BBQ, and Halloween parade. In the late summer we hosted a Scavenger Hunt, Halloween Parade, Dios De Los Muertos, and an Ice Cream Social for National Night Out. On New Year's Eve, many of us put out special lights and decorative candles in a new tradition known as a Lantern Walk. *Continued on p.2*

## Inside This Issue

President's Message	1,2
Our Neighbors, Our Neighborhood	1,3
Sligo Creek Parkway Open For Weekend Activities	3
Beltway Expansion Threatens Neighborhood	4
Put the Forest Back In Forest Estates	5,6
Recycle Right	6
Neighborhood Events in Forest Estates	7
Contact Info and Farmer's Market	8

## Our Neighbors, Our Neighborhood

By Ray Heinsman

We have an amazing neighborhood and it has never been more evident than this past month. We've collected boxes of snacks, hand sanitizer, masks and lotions for Holy Cross Hospital and food for the Manna Food Center. We've gathered to support health care workers at the hospital and our events team created Bear Hunts and Hearts for Healthcare to have fun and safe activities for our families. One of the best things that has happened is the creation of Forest Estates Neighbors Helping Neighbors (FENHN). *Continued on p.3*



**President's Message**  
Continued from cover

I have always been particularly proud of our neighborhood's welcoming culture and civic activism, and this year proved that our spirit remains strong. It was inspiring to see neighbors host an informational session on solar power, and to once again host numerous visits from our local elected officials who spoke at the Farmer's Market and FECA meetings. Many of us have also worked hard on the Forest Glen/Montgomery Hills Sector Plan, participating in numerous feedback sessions with the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (MNCPPC). This year, as a part of that sector plan, we applauded our elected officials for committing to build a new pedestrian entrance to the Forest Glen Metro station on the eastern side of Georgia Avenue and prioritize changes to the section of Georgia Avenue south of the Beltway. I am hopeful these changes will one day make commuting safer and easier for all.

Although the sector plan incorporated many of the principles of the county's Vision Zero initiative for eliminating traffic related pedestrian deaths, there's


much that's needed in order to make our neighborhood and our surrounding community truly walkable and bikeable. Many have also noted that we need to calm the car traffic inside of Forest Estates. I'm pleased to announce that in 2019 we re-invigorated a long dormant Traffic Safety Committee now led by resident Anna Priddy. If you'd like to help, please reach out to Anna: [anna.o.priddy@gmail.com](mailto:anna.o.priddy@gmail.com).

We are still awaiting final permitting on the new playground set to be erected in Getty Park this spring. There have been numerous delays over the past two years, but as the person who chaired the neighborhood playground refurbishment committee, I feel sure that the new equipment (once it is installed) will be amazing and add a great deal to the neighborhood. (In the fantasy version of things, I dream that the playground will be built and we can open it and celebrate that we are also all going to get COVID-19 vaccinations on the exact same day. I tend to dream pretty big.)

If you have an idea for an event or a concern about the neighborhood, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [alisonupstairs@gmail.com](mailto:alisonupstairs@gmail.com).

# FOREST ESTATES

## THE 2019 NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

	HOMES SOLD	AVERAGE SALES PRICE	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	PROPERTY VALUE % INCREASE 2018-2019
Single Family 	15	\$526,000	17	4%
Townhomes 	9	\$410,000	19	9%

Values remain up, houses are selling FAST!  
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## Our Neighbors, Our Neighborhood

*Continued from cover*

FENHN provides a responsive, safe service in Forest Estates that links neighbors needing assistance with fellow neighbors who are volunteering to help during the COVID-19 pandemic. Assistance is for Forest Estates residents who are sick, at high-risk or who otherwise need to stay home.

Volunteers provide grocery shopping assistance and pick up and deliver medication. They are also available to call or email neighbors who are lonely, anxious, have health conditions or who would just like to connect with a caring neighbor. Also, they share timely, relevant, COVID-19 resources through the FECA list serv and FENHN Facebook page on county, nonprofit and community offerings during the pandemic.

FENHN is comprised of a team led by Elissa Laitin, Karen Maricheau, Traci Harris Jenkins, Sara Rothman, and Laura Pawlowski. They work together on coordinating the program. This involves taking requests of neighbors, who need help, and linking them to neighborhood volunteers. They use Google Voice to forward calls to their cell phones and also have a designated email address to communicate with neighbors in need. Also, the team reviews services and makes plans/decisions on a weekly phone meeting. There are about 60 neighbors who volunteer to fulfill neighbors requests. Requests are generally filled within the same day.

The committee promotes the program by posting signs, in key areas of the neighborhood and provide weekly list serv email updates to let neighbors know that help is available.

All requests are limited to those that are done outside a neighbor's home without face to face contact. Medi-

cations and groceries are left with receipts on doorsteps or porches, no passing through doors. Payments are arranged between volunteers and neighbors in ways that are trackable and eliminates hand offs.

What are neighbors saying about FENHN?

*"Not just food for the table, but also food for the soul! With deepest gratitude," Esther and Mary on Sanford*

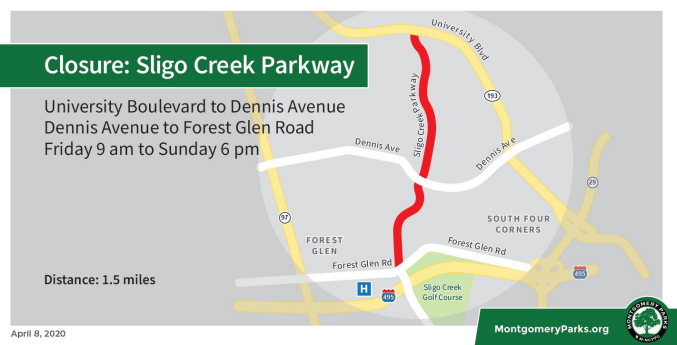
*"Within a couple of hours my groceries were delivered by a very cheerful, helpful volunteer. The whole experience was terrific." Sara on Woodman Ave*

Neighbors needing help can contact FEHNN (301) 478-4472 or emailing FENHN2020@gmail.com

## Sligo Creek Parkway Open For Weekend Activities

By Ray Heinsman

Members of our neighborhood were instrumental in persuading M-NCPPC to open up opportunities for us to be able to safely exercise in our amazing park resources come rain or shine. If you haven't taken a stroll or bike ride down Sligo Creek Parkway, closed to traffic Friday 9am till Sunday 6pm, it's great for the soul, physical, and mental health and is a whole different experience than the trail. I've found it a great way to feel connected to our community while safely maintaining appropriate social distancing.



## Episode V: Beltway Expansion Strikes Back

By Valerie Grussing

The Beltway Expansion saga has taken on a life of its own, much like a trilogy with a trilogy prequel and sequel, whose ultimate conclusion seems increasingly likely to leave fans cheering and critics disappointed. The drama has been heightened by MD State Comptroller Peter Franchot, one of three voting members of the MD Board of Public Works (BPW), in addition to Governor Larry Hogan and Treasurer Nancy Kopp.

In May 2019, the Washington Post's John Kelly and other pundits predicted that Beltway widening was a done deal. To the community's credit, FECA members joined the Sierra Club and other local civic and environmental groups at a rally organized by our Councilmember Tom Hucker. 750 residents turned out in the rain to protest the Governor's proposal before the BPW vote. In June 2019, following a lengthy and contentious public hearing, the BPW voted 2-1 to proceed with the plan as a public-private partnership (P3) – including four amendments upon which Franchot's deciding favorable vote was contingent:

1. Delay the I-495 work to Phase 2, making I-270 Phase 1 (Prince Georges County work remains phase 3).
2. There shall be no "takings" of land to proceed before the final P3 agreement, following a competitive bid process.
3. The Request for Proposal for that process will stipulate that a percentage of toll revenue will be set aside for transit after the concessionaire had paid off all their construction costs (so the public would not see any transit revenue for 20-30 years, depending on volume and toll prices.)
4. Feasibility study for monorail from Shady Grove to Frederick (seriously).

Subsequently, Hogan announced that he would not honor the first and second of the amendments. Franchot then postponed a vote on the project at the December BPW meeting. Around the same time, MD Transportation Secretary Pete Rahn resigned (in the prequel, he had attempted to award a contract for toll lane construction to his former employer before required environmental reviews had begun) and State Highway Administration lead Greg Slater was promoted into the position. Recognizing a new opportunity,

Councilmember Hucker reiterated the Council's proposed alternative that accomplishes all three of the first amendments and goes further, with 10 percent of the toll revenue dedicated to grants to Montgomery County for transit improvements immediately rather than 20 years from now (as with the arrangement for the toll lanes in Virginia on 495 and the Dulles Toll Road). Logic prevailed and Hogan agreed to this proposal.

The proposal approved by the BPW on January 8, 2020, includes an improved American Legion Bridge, new or reversible lanes largely inside the current right-of-way on I-270, no widening of the Beltway, and 10 percent of revenue going to County transit grants. Kopp maintains the position that Maryland transportation officials still have not provided enough details, such as why a P3 would be the best approach.

This remains a measured victory for several reasons. Although it is allowed under review processes such as National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) for DOT to hire a contractor prior to completing the review, the P3 aspect precludes approval of the MD General Assembly and County Council (and thus voters). However, as it now stands, the Beltway won't be widened, and the County would receive a considerable sum for transit on an ongoing basis. For this, we thank our delegates and councilmembers who advocated tirelessly for our interests and mobilized the broader community to work toward a solution that would actually accomplish the project goal of relieving traffic congestion while protecting the environment and public interests. Our work is not done. We should continue to monitor the project's progress and support our county and state officials' efforts to hold the Hogan Administration accountable.

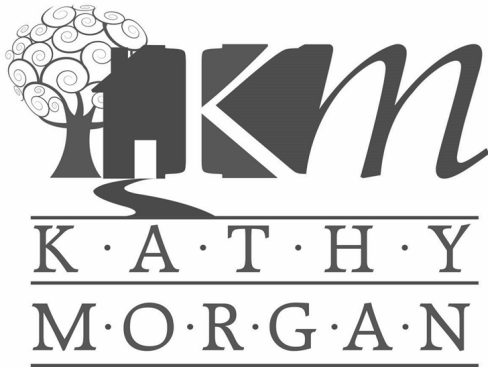


Gov. Lawrence J. Hogan Jr. (R), with then-state Transportation secretary Pete K. Rahn behind him, announcing his plans to widen Interstates 270 and 495. Maryland Governor's Office.

photo by Steve Kwak From Maryland Matters

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### Montgomery County Can Help Us Put The “Forest” Back In Forest Estates

By Kathy Gaudet

When you walk around our neighborhood, have you noticed how much tree coverage we have lost in the past few years? Some very large street trees have been cut down and others have been severely “pruned” by PEPCO. Homeowners have also had to take down some large backyard trees. The sidewalks in the summer are nowhere near as shady and cool as they used to be.

But Montgomery County is available to help residents get new trees planted at no charge to us. There are two main programs for homeowners to request free shade providers: Tree Montgomery and Street Trees.

From MontgomeryCountyMD.gov and more specifically TreeMontgomery.org: “Tree Montgomery provides free shade trees to property owners in Montgomery County. The program also plants and cares for the trees for up to two years free of charge. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is looking for places to plant shade trees on private land - residential, multi-family, parking lots, as well as HOA land and businesses.

When planted they will be 10-12 feet tall, and will grow to at least 50 feet in height. The Tree Montgomery program will work with private property owners to select locations and species. The shade trees are planted in the spring and fall. Trees are not planted in the summer.

Along with providing the tree(s) and planting for free, if desired, Tree Montgomery will provide up to two years of free aftercare including watering, mulching, weeding and pruning.”

The county planted a nice tree in my neighbor’s yard and periodically comes by to check on it. The system does work, albeit a bit slowly sometimes.

The TreeMontgomery website has additional information and forms to fill out. There may be a backlog, but you should get a general idea of when to expect your tree(s) when your application form is received. You can also call 311 to request an arborist to call you if you have questions.

For Street Trees, those planted on the area between the street and the sidewalk, or on the county right of way (ROW), you need to go through the Montgomery Department of Transportation.



Continued from p.5

## Montgomery County Can Help Us Put The “Forest” Back In Forest Estates

From <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-highway/tree/index.html>

“Planting usually occurs in late fall and early spring, but can occur in winter if weather permits. The Tree Maintenance Section tries to accommodate requests as soon as the next planting season arrives, but sometimes it may need to wait until the following planting season. A County Arborist will review an area and make a determination on what species of tree to plant. The size of the tree typically is determined by a number of factors that the Arborist takes into consideration. Large species are typically 2" in caliper and 10' tall and small species are 1 1/2" caliper and 7'-8' tall. Residents must request a new tree to replace one removed from Right-of-Way.”

To request a street tree, you will need to create a service request online by calling 311. They say that someone will contact you in 260 business days. In March 2020, I found a notice on my front door and a red dot on the curb. The new tree will be planted fall 2020 or spring 2021. Something to look forward to, but patience is required.

TreeMontgomery.org is chock full of great tree information. There are details and links to other ways to get free and discounted trees through programs like Backyard Buffers (20-30 free tree and shrub seedlings to property owners with a stream or drainage ditch on or adjacent to their property). For coupons for native trees, there are Leaves for Neighborhoods (\$40 coupon) and Marylanders Plant Trees (\$25 coupons). TREEmendous Maryland has grants for trees in public spaces. The website also has a fantastic database on trees with facts, pictures, diagrams and maps. Check it out for most things trees.

The MontgomeryCountyMD.gov is a gigantic website with so much information it is sometimes hard to find things. MyGreenMontgomery.org and TreeMontgomery.org are a bit more manageable and easier to navigate. If you have some spare time after ordering a new tree, dive in and see what other interesting and useful links you can find.

## Recycle Right

By Kathy Gaudet

You may have heard that China is no longer taking much of America’s recycling. But did you know that Montgomery County is not adversely affected? While the bales of plastic are not tracked once they leave our recycling facility, they are mainly shipped to domestic plants and mills. Currently, our county is not reliant on China.

One of the ways we can help keep more trash out of the landfill is by recycling correctly. The cleanliness and purity of the bales of plastic and paper determines the value that the county gets paid. A supplier with reliably clean recycling bales is able to get paid more and establish a better selection of buyers or commodity brokers.

One of the most important ways we can help is by not putting the wrong things in our blue bins. Plastic bags are a big No No for paper or plastic recycling. Not only are they not recyclable by the county, they clog up and can break the machines used to sort our recycling. If you collect your recycling in plastic bags, please remove everything from the plastic bag before you put items into the blue bins. Clean plastic bags can then be recycled in the white bins in front of many grocery stores, like Safeway, Giant and Whole Foods.

If you go to the MontgomeryCountyMD.gov website, you can search “Recycling” or you can look for “Solid Waste” under the Department of Environmental Services. There is a lot of good information, including about the Shady Grove Transfer Station off route 355 where you can do a self-tour and watch the recycling get sorted, by hand and by machine. It’s fascinating. You can read more about it on the website.

We are lucky to live in a county that is so committed to reducing how much goes into our landfills. There is a strong commitment to Zero Waste and recycling is a big part of that. We can help our county achieve this by recycling correctly. Look for future articles addressing questions you may have about recycling in Montgomery County.

## Creating Community: Neighborhood Events in Forest Estates

by Liz Beck and Jill Matthews

In the era of communicating by text, and busy schedules keeping everyone on the go, it is rare to gather with neighbors and catch up in person. But with a robust list of community events, and a weekly farmers market, our neighborhood often gathers together to connect and communicate the old fashion way.

Since July, we have gathered for six neighborhood events. We kicked off the summer with a classic 4th of July BBQ. This event was truly a community effort with its potluck style meal and neighbors offering their grills and grill-master skills. What better way to wind down the summer than with an ice cream social? The FECA National Night Out/Ice Cream Social event was a favorite among Emergency Responders and elected local officials and Channel 5 showed up to cover the festivities. We consumed 20 gallons of ice cream while chatting with police, touring the police cruisers and fire truck, and marveling at the police horses. Heading into fall and enjoying perfect weather, we ventured out for a Neighborhood Scavenger Hunt. This small event, paired with the weekly farmers market, resulted in some good ol' competition. Prizes on the line included baked goods and the honor of being Leader for the Halloween Parade. A favorite among our littlest neighbors, the Halloween Parade gave kids a chance to show off their costumes prior to trick or treating. With pumpkin painting, cookie decorating, and a parade around the park, fun was had by all.



Just two weeks after our Halloween parade, we partnered with Montgomery County to create a Dia de los Muertos event: a celebration of loved ones who have died. This new event encouraged surrounding communities to visit our neighborhood park. The park was vibrant with a mariachi band, face painting, games, and a beautiful Altar de Ofrendas.



Finally, we ended the year with our first annual New Years Eve Lantern Walk. Our streets were twinkling with candlelight and neighbors opened their homes to offer treats. A walk around the neighborhood to reflect on the past year while wish neighbors a happy New Year was the perfect way to close out 2019.



As we enter a new decade, our resolution is to continue these traditions and bring you even more fun-filled events. Please email any event ideas you have to [ForestEstatesEvents@gmail.com](mailto:ForestEstatesEvents@gmail.com). If you are interested in volunteering to help at an event, or you are interested in planning an event, please let us know!



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To pay by mail, please send a check made out to "Forest Estates Community Association" to:  
P.O. Box 1782 Silver Spring, MD 20915

(Please make sure you put the 20915 ZIP code in the address.)

## Farmers Market and CSA Update

By Sandra Marquardt

We had a wonderful tenth year of the Farmers Market last year. We had presentations of some kind most every weekend, from art shows to bands and local musicians playing to a meeting with Delegate Emily Shetty. We also welcomed Jenny B Baking which launched as a new business by providing delicious baked goods each week.

A personal highlight for me was being awarded a citation from Councilmember Tom Hucker for founding and running the farmers market for 10 years. That made me super proud, and I thank all of you for helping it be a success, especially Laura Martin for coordinating the signage and sign volunteers all that time.

In addition, FECA Board Member Ted Martin and I were excited to be part of the Montgomery County Council Farmers Market Proclamation Day event in the Rockville Council chambers.



Celebrating our Forest Estates Market Staff  
I'd like to celebrate the fact that over the years, 23(!) teens from the neighborhood have staffed the market, learning about organic farming while also learning financial, sales and social skills.

## CONNECTING

Not sure how to join our neighborhood email listserv? Simply send an email with your name and street address to: [forestestates+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:forestestates+subscribe@groups.io)  
It's a great way to stay up-to-date on the latest news.

Also, follow The Forest Estates Community Association on Facebook!



County Councilman Tom Hucker at a Community Association Meeting

Thank you, Sign Volunteers!

The Board would like to thank the sign volunteers! The volunteers last year were: Laura Martin, Sara Cartmill, Diane Goldenberg-Hart, Valerie Grussing, Stephanie Joseph, Megan Keister, Anne McGuire, and Taryn Ramsey. Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped with the signs in the past as well!

The farmers market will not take place this year, but neighbors can still enjoy weekly boxes of Calvert Farm's super-fresh produce by signing up with Calvert Farm's seasonal "Community Supported Agriculture" or "CSA" box program. Please go to [www.CalvertFarm.com](http://www.CalvertFarm.com) for more information and the sign-up form. The produce is dropped off at my house for pick-up.

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