

PROPOSED BUILDING ORDINANCE PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

The Land Use Committee presented to the Town Council on January 9 a new ordinance intended to help protect the Town's character by limiting the height and bulk of buildings and promoting compatible building practices. Following introduction of the ordinance, a substantial portion of the January Council meeting was used to review it. A work session for the Council with the Land Use Committee and the consulting firm will be held on January 17. Residents can hear the Council's questions and thoughts on the new ordinance at this work session. Residents also will be able to learn about the ordinance, ask questions, and give comments to the Council at additional town meetings to be scheduled later in January and early February. One or more formal public hearings on the ordinance will be held before its consideration by the Council. These dates will be announced by mailings, postings on the web site and the February Forecast.

The committee's ordinance was developed with the assistance of Jakubiak & Associates and its subcontractor, Studio27 Architecture. The Council commissioned Jakubiak over a year ago to provide the Land Use Committee with technical support in its work on revising the Town's building code. The Land Use Committee, under the leadership of Julia Miller, worked extensively with the consultants for more than a year, studying the Town's character and developing a plan and ordinance that would ensure that new construction was consistent with or enhanced that character. Members of the committee include town residents with professional backgrounds in law, land use, real estate, architecture, and data management.

The consultants determined that the new setback ordinance put in place almost two years ago is working well. Therefore, no changes will be made to it. With the advice of the consultants, the committee is recommending that the Town reduce allowable height for houses an additional two feet from the county's standards and that it adopt a new requirement that limits the height of any exterior wall to 36 feet from the ground to the eave. The height of accessory buildings would also be lowered.

The committee's proposed ordinance relies on Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as the primary vehicle for regulating the size of houses and accessory structures such as garages. This widely used residential tool (now being considered by both Rockville and the Village of Chevy Chase) requires that the size of houses and accessory buildings be proportional to the square footage of the lot. Allowable size is determined by multiplying a predetermined number (usually in the range of .3 to .5) by the square footage of a lot. For example, if the FAR is .3 and the lot is 6000 square feet, the buildable square footage for that lot would be 1800 square feet.

The committee recommends the adoption of a baseline FAR for the Town of .3. In recognition of the difficulties with varying lot sizes in the town, it is also recommending that every lot be guaranteed a minimum of 2,500 square feet, without consideration of FAR, and that total, allowable square footage be capped at 5,000. It's important to understand that FAR may be increased beyond the base FAR by meeting standards that when used, preserve and enhance the Town's character, up to a maximum FAR of .15. Each standard is worth .01 FAR and over 20 standards have been developed.

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Examples include:

- Donating a conservation easement or having a designated historic landmark.
- Preserving and planting shade trees.
- Reducing lot coverage and impervious surfaces.
- Adding or retaining features, such as a walkway to the street, front and side porches, and one-story rooms.
- Limiting the length of exterior walls without an offset
- Not having a front-loading garage.

FAR may also be increased by .05 by adding an addition rather than demolishing an existing building and constructing a new house.

The proposed ordinance also includes limitations on the number and size of front-loading garage doors and recommends that all new and replacement driveways be constructed with permeable materials.

TOWN HIRES PURPLE LINE CONSULTANTS **Long Range Planning Committee Update**

Pat Burda, Chair and John Navratil, Committee Member

The Town has recently hired Samuel Schwartz LLC (SSC), a transportation consulting firm based in New York, to assist the Town in addressing the impact of the Purple Line light rail project proposed for the site of the Georgetown branch of the Capital Crescent trail, on the Town's northern border. In response to its Request for Proposal, the Town received several responses and three applicant firms were interviewed by an interviewing committee consisting of Council members Kathy Strom and Mier Wolf, Long Range Planning Committee Chair Pat Burda, and Town Manager Todd Hoffman. While each of the three firms interviewed were qualified for the project, the committee was most impressed with SSC, in part because it had the most experience working on behalf of communities affected by mass transit projects. We encourage you to visit their website at www.samschwartz.com to learn more about their work.

Along with Sam Schwartz, who is an expert in transportation engineering and traffic safety and is widely respected for his congestion relief strategies (he is the man who coined the term "gridlock"), the other two principal representatives from SSC working on the project will be Harris Schechtman, who has 40 years experience in the area of transportation operations, and Annie Weinstock, a senior transportation planner with a focus on transit planning. In December, all three came to town and met with the Town Council at its monthly meeting and on the same night attended the Maryland Transportation Administration's (MTA) recent open house for the Purple Line at B-CC High School where they were introduced to representatives from the State, including Mike Madden and private engineers working on the project, and from the County, including Tom Autry. Additionally, Harris and Annie attended the Long Range Planning Committee's monthly meeting the next night.

As its scope of work, SSC will be reviewing MTA's ridership estimates and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). SSC will pay particular attention to the alternative alignments of the Purple Line that will be reviewed as part of the DEIS. SSC reps will meet with the Town Council and the Long Range Planning Committee on an ongoing basis in order to communicate the results of their findings and to advise the Town on next steps.

TOWN TOPICS

TIPS FROM THE ELECTION COMMITTEE...

To be eligible to vote in the Town Election, you must be a registered voter in the State of Maryland and you must have resided within the corporate limits of the Town for thirty days preceding any Town election. Voter application forms are available online at www.election.state.md.us. We also have application forms in the Town office. The Town office telephone number is 301-654-7144.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP

The Town will continue to pickup Christmas trees until January 15. Please make sure that all of the ornaments and wires have been removed from the tree before placing it on the curb for pickup.

CLIMATE PROTECTION COMMITTEE'S TIP OF THE DAY: REUSE YOUR COFFEE CUP

How many times do you go to a coffee shop and get a cup that gets thrown out when you're done? That's a waste of paper and energy and ends up as landfill (8 cups per week generates 6.5 pounds of waste per year). How about bringing a reusable cup with you? Some coffee shops even give you 10 cents off for bringing your own cup!

SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM THREE INCHES OR MORE

The Town will continue its sidewalk snow removal program this winter. This year we will assist with the clearing of public sidewalks when snow accumulates to 3 inches or more. This snow removal plan will assist residents with clearing sidewalks following significant snowstorms, when help is needed most. ***If the accumulated snowfall is under 3 inches, you will be responsible for clearing the sidewalk abutting your property.*** The snow removal will begin as soon as practically possible after the end of a snowstorm, and the Town's contractor will do all it can to limit excessive noise. This program includes snow removal from public sidewalks only, so clearing your driveways and walkways is still your responsibility. In icy conditions, the Town Manager will use his discretion in determining whether to salt and sand public sidewalks. The Town will continuously update information on the sidewalk snow removal program on its website and on the Town's telephone answering machine so it will be accessible to you throughout the winter season.

WHEN IT SNOWS - CLEARING TOWN STREETS

In winter, making sure that Town streets are cleared of snow and ice is a Town priority. You can contribute to our efforts by following these instructions. When snow or ice is forecast for this area, cars must be parked either in driveways or on the ***even-numbered sides of the street, unless otherwise posted.*** Parking in a driveway will not only protect your cars from possible accidents or damage but assures that more of the roadway can be cleared. This practice also provides more parking spaces for residents without driveways. The odd-numbered sides of all streets, unless otherwise posted, should be left free of all vehicles so that we can plow the snow from them. To help avoid the frustration that occurs when a snow-plow covers your driveway with snow after you have shoveled, stand facing the street and shovel snow to the right into the yard instead of into the street. The Town begins plowing Town streets when two inches of snow has accumulated.

ANATOMY OF A BUILDING PERMIT

From time to time, residents, architects, and builders ask about the sequence of actions and approvals necessary to obtain a residential building permit in the Town. The approvals required from both the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services and the Town can be confusing for anyone initiating a residential construction project. We have designed flowcharts that explain the process of reviewing and issuing Town building permits in accordance with Town Code requirements.

For your convenience, the flowcharts have been posted on the Town website. As always, you may you may call the Town Office at 301-654-7144 if you have questions.

MONTHLY REMINDERS

RECYCLE COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS IN THE TOWN OFFICE

Have you wondered where to recycle CFL bulbs? We have a collection box for the bulbs in the Town office. Just drop them by and we will make sure the bulbs are recycled properly. If you haven't picked up your complimentary bulb (one per household), we still have a supply in the office.

JOIN THE "TOWN CRIER" LISTSERV TODAY

We encourage you to join the "Town Crier," the Town's e-mail alert system. The listserv enables the Town to provide residents with time-sensitive alerts and notices, such as the schedule of snow removal on Town streets and sidewalks and the cancellation of events due to inclement weather. The "Town Crier" is designed to provide time sensitive information to you. We limit the use of these alerts so we do not inundate your mailbox. To subscribe, please visit the Town's web page. In the sign-up form, you will be asked to provide your e-mail address and check the types of information you would like to receive from the Town. You may modify, update or cancel your subscription via the "Manage Your Subscription" link in each e-mail you receive from the Town. If you have suggestions or comments about the listserv, please let us know your thoughts.

"TOWN NEIGHBORS" LISTSERV COMPLEMENTS "TOWN CRIER" ALERTS

Town residents can join a new e-mail forum called "Town Neighbors" to post messages about local events, exchange information about service providers and discuss Town issues such as traffic, crime and development. "Town Neighbors" is not affiliated with the Town of Chevy Chase or any civic, governmental, religious or political organization. It is a moderated listserv, which means all messages are reviewed before being posted. If you wish to become a member of this new e-mail forum, contact Susan Goodman at susangoodman@worldnet.att.net.

COMPLAINT/COMPLIMENT FORM ONLINE

We continue to remind you that if you have a complaint or compliment about Town services or a Town-related issue, we want to hear from you. To make it convenient for you, we have created a form that you can submit from the Town's website. The purpose of the form is to provide a system for tracking issues of interest to residents so that the Town staff, Town Council and Town committees can be more responsive to broader resident issues and make informed and continual improvements to the Town's programs and services.

THE MVA IS ON A ROLL!

Reminder: MVA On Wheels will be in Friendship Heights

Date: Monday, January 28, 10am to 2pm

The MVA on Wheels will be set up at the intersection of North Park Avenue and Friendship Heights Boulevard near the Friendship Heights Village Center. The mobile unit is usually in front of the Village Office on the fourth Monday of each month. (This month it is the fifth Monday.) For details of the services offered at the MVA on Wheels, call the MVA at 1-800-950-1682.

MARYLAND TAX RETURN 2007 FORM 502 RESIDENT

One of the major sources of revenue that the Town receives each year is the Town's share of income taxes, which each resident pays to the State of Maryland. Remember to write "Town of Chevy Chase" in the box marked city, town or taxing area. This will insure that a portion of your tax dollars will return to the Town. Do not assume that people at the state level understand the different municipalities which share the 20815 zip code.

TOWN EVENTS

DISCUSSION AND DESSERT

ELECTION 2008

Town Resident and Political Analyst Charlie Cook

January 15, 2008, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall

Town resident and political analyst Charlie Cook will be our first guest in the Town's 2008 Discussion and Dessert series. The series was designed by the Community Relations Committee to give residents an opportunity to hear the views and experiences of distinguished neighbors in an informal, home setting. In order to give more residents an opportunity to attend this event, we have changed the setting to the Town Hall, which seats seventy people. The event is free, but you must make reservations by calling the Town office at 301-654-7144. Don't miss this opportunity to hear what Charlie has to say about the 2008 Election.

Charlie Cook is Publisher of *The Cook Political Report*, and political analyst for the National Journal Group, where he writes weekly for *National Journal* magazine and *CongressDailyAM*. He also writes a regular column for the *Washington Quarterly*, published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and is a political analyst for NBC News.

Widely regarded as one of the nation's leading authorities on U.S. elections and political trends, Charlie has appeared on the ABC, CBS and NBC evening news programs, as well as on "Good Morning America," the "Today Show," "Nightline," "Meet the Press with Tim Russert," and "This Week...." He has also appeared many times on CNBC, MSNBC, CNN, C-SPAN, CNN and National Public Radio.

Before joining the National Journal Group in June of 1998, Charlie wrote for 12 years a twice-weekly column in *Roll Call*, the newspaper of Capitol Hill. Charlie also served as an election night analyst for CBS in 1990 and 1992, and for NBC in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004.

The New York Times has called Cook, "...one of the best political handicappers in the nation" and noted that *The Cook Political Report* is "...a newsletter that both parties regard as authoritative," while Bob Schieffer of CBS News has called the Cook Political Report, "the bible of the political community." *The Wall Street Journal's* Al Hunt once referred to Cook as "the Picasso of election analysis," while David Broder of *The Washington Post* has written that Charlie Cook is "perhaps the best non-partisan tracker of Congressional races."

SUNDAY AFTERNOON FOR FAMILIES

The Town is pleased to continue the very popular annual winter series of events for families. Each year, we sponsor an event one Sunday a month in January, February and March. Just walk over to the Town Hall for an afternoon of entertainment. We hope you will plan to attend the following events:

JANUARY

Bob Brown, the master puppeteer, will introduce our family series of events with his brand new production of *The Penguin's Playground*. The puppet show will be on **Sunday, January 27 at 4 p.m.** in the Town Hall. If you would like a preview of the show, visit the website www.bobbrownpuppets.com.

FEBRUARY

TOWN ARTISTS HOST AN ART PROJECTS WORKSHOP – LET'S CREATE!

A few of our favorite Town artists will host our second annual art projects workshop for children of all ages on **Sunday, February 24 from 2 – 4 p.m.** in the Art Room at the Leland Center. The children will have an opportunity to work with the artists on a variety of projects. Join us for this incredible opportunity to meet and create with some of our most talented artists.

MARCH

Magic is the theme for March. We will announce the date, time and the name of our guest magician in the February FORECAST.

TOWN COFFEE—THURSDAY, JANUARY 17

Join neighbors new and old for a Town coffee at the home of Elizabeth Mumford, 4301 Stanford Street, on Thursday, January 17, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Invite a new neighbor, catch up with long-time neighbors or make new friends. All are welcome, but please RSVP to Elizabeth at (301) 656-6124. If you want more information or would like to host one of our coffees, please call Maria Olsen at (301) 652-4370. Hope to see you!

A special thanks to Maria Olsen for organizing the Town coffees to welcome newcomers to the Town and encourage friends and neighbors to get together!

START THE NEW YEAR ON THE RIGHT FOOT

THE TOP FIVE: TOP STRATEGIES TO KEEP YOUR RESOLUTIONS AND TOP WAYS TO MAKE THEM WORK

Tuesday, January 22, 7-8 p.m., Town Hall

J.P. Montalvan, C.S.C.S., Executive Director of FitnessWise, a *Washingtonian Magazine* "Top Trainer" and former *Washington Post* Fitness Expert

Join us for an interactive, no-nonsense lecture on making 2008 the year you stick with it. Sign up at 301-654-7144 now for an opportunity to win prizes, enter a drawing, and to reserve your seat for what is sure to be a stimulating, informative conversation. Here's a teaser...

- #5 Only 15-30% of us keep our New Year's resolutions. Learn why and how to beat the odds.
 - #4 We buy over 25 million diet, exercise and health books every year, and over 80% of us don't use our health club memberships. Discover why books and gym memberships don't work and what does.
 - #3 High-protein, low carbohydrate diets were first popularized by Dr. Atkin's in the 1970s and remain popular today. Find out why high protein diets are part problem, part solution.
 - #2 "I don't have time" is the most frequent reason we don't exercise. Learn why and the best ways to regain the time.
 - #1 From walking to running, yoga to Pilates, and bodybuilding to stability training, many of us look for the best way to exercise. Discover what really works, and why.
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Join In As Performer, Participant, Applauder - Eighth Annual Recital Sunday, February 24, 2008 at 4 p.m.

Performers may be all ages, levels, and instruments. We have enjoyed beginners and professionals -- a rock band, clarinetist, ensembles, pianists, vocalists, etc. If you would like to perform please call Jean Lauderdale, 301-656-9029, jeandL@starpower.net for more information or to be placed on the program.

**Do you have an idea for a Town event that you would like to help organize?
We would love to hear from you!**

Please call us at 301-654-7144 or email townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS 2008 Election Judge Recruitment Program

The Board of Elections needs Election Judges for the upcoming Presidential Primary, February 12, 2008 and the General Election, November 4, 2008. Interested voters willing to serve can download the application from the website: www.777vote.org or call 240-777-8533 to request an application be mailed to them.

DIET FOR A NEW YEAR: GET THE SUV OUT OF YOUR PANTRY

Climate Protection Committee

Judith McGuire, Chair

According to some estimates, 40% of us resolve to change our diet each New Year. There are many reasons to do this, usually to promote health and to feel and look better. This year why not make some dietary changes to prevent global warming? Such changes also make your food more tasty and enjoyable.

The food system consumes over 15% of this country's energy, only half of which is used in actual production. A family of four consumes almost as much energy indirectly in food (not counting food calories themselves) as we do as gasoline.

Organic production systems use one-third less energy than large-scale non-organic farms. Grass-fed free-range animals use less energy than animals raised in confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), where animals are crowded together (usually indoors) and fed diets to accelerate weight gain during short lives. "If every U.S. citizen ate just one meal a week of locally and organically raised meats and produce, we would reduce our country's oil consumption by over 1.1 million barrels every week", says Steven Hopp in [Animal, Vegetable, Miracle](#).

Much of the climate impact imbedded in our food is due to transport. Shipping lettuce from California requires 36 times as much fossil fuel energy as it provides in food energy when it gets here! Do we really need raspberries from Chile, tomatoes from Mexico, grapes from California, and water from France or Fiji? If we ate just 10% of our food from local sources we would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 7 million pounds according to Fresh-Energy.org. You can buy local produce direct from local farmers at the Bethesda Women's Farm Cooperative on Wednesdays and Saturdays and at the Takoma Park farmer's market on Sundays. Even in the dead of winter you can usually get local apples, root crops, and leafy greens from these farmers. There are also Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs in our area where you buy a share of a farmer's harvest and receive weekly deliveries fresh from the farm in season. Ask for local foods at your grocery store and restaurants when you eat out and try to buy food consciously. Pineapples shipped refrigerated by air from Hawaii, for instance, generate 40 pounds of CO₂ per pound of pineapple! See [localharvest.org](#) for local food resources in our area.

Come spring, plant a vegetable garden (in soil enriched with homegrown compost) to make your diet really local. And drink your local water, too! If you don't like the thought of drinking tap water then buy a filter (<http://www.consumersearch.com/www/kitchen/water-filters/> has reviews of the most common kitchen water filters).

Processed foods have a much larger carbon footprint than the sum of their ingredients. Two pounds of prepared breakfast cereal, for instance, requires a half-gallon of gas just for processing. Eating oatmeal, homemade muesli or granola has a much smaller carbon footprint and costs a whole lot less than commercial breakfast cereals. They taste better too!

Eating less meat is also a positive step to prevent global warming. It costs 10 times more energy to produce a calorie of meat than a calorie of plant protein plus the methane emitted by animals has additional negative climate effects. Reducing the animal products (dairy, eggs, and meat) in your diet from 28% of calories (the US average) to 20% is the same climate equivalent as switching from a Toyota Camry to a Prius. The difference between someone eating 35% of calories from animal sources and a vegetarian is the same as the difference between a SUV and a Prius (see <http://geosci.uchicago.edu/~gidon/papers/nutri/nutriEI.pdf>).

What does this all add up to? The famous chef and cookbook writer, Alice Waters, known for her beautiful and delicious food, summarizes well the recommendations we have made here. "After all these years, I've distilled just about everything I know about cooking down to ... a few simple propositions" (from [The Art of Simple Food](#)):

- **Eat locally and sustainably**
- **Eat seasonally**
- **Shop at farmers' markets**
- **Plant a garden**
- **Conserve, compost, and recycle**
- **Cook simply, engaging all your senses**
- **Cook together**
- **Eat together**
- **Remember food is precious**

There are many reasons to eat a climate-friendly diet -- health, family togetherness, taste, environment, and supporting small farmers. If preventing global warming doesn't, then perhaps these additional benefits will convince you to change your diet this year.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

As we informed you in the December **FORECAST**, our printer was closed during the holidays so the January **FORECAST** will be mailed during the second week in January. We encourage you to visit the Town website for the most up-to-date Town news and to join the Town listserv to receive timely Town alerts.

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The **FORECAST** is published monthly by the Town of Chevy Chase, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; e-mail: townoffice@townofchevychase.org; phone: 301-654-7144; fax: 301/718-9631. Mier Wolf, Editor. Copies are mailed to all Town residents. The Town Council meets in open session the second Wednesday of each month in the Town Hall unless otherwise announced. All residents are invited to attend.

Town of Chevy Chase

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