

Lutherville Community Association
General Meeting, March 10, 2020
Lutherville Volunteer Firehouse
Minutes

Attendees included some LCA board members, about 20 community members, and Officer Arnette, from Baltimore County Police Department.

President Marcia Hettinger welcomed everyone and introduced Baltimore County Police Officer Arnette, filling in for Officer Davis, who is ill and could not attend tonight.

Officer Arnette has been with the BCPD for 22 years and has been in community outreach for 13 years. Officer Arnette noted that recent carjackings have subsided with the arrest of suspects. There's currently nothing trending on their radar. Scams tend to increase this time of year and she gave advice to avoid being scammed, and safety tips. Many thefts from autos are from unlocked cars, and garage door openers and vehicle registrations are being stolen as well. She suggests keeping your registration on your person vs in your car.

An attendee asked about a recent carjacking in Towson but she did not have information about that. Another person asked about crime in our area vs the rest of the state. She's not familiar with overall crime statistics in the state.

For our area, theft from auto seems to be the most prevalent crime. In response to a question, Officer Arnette does not think that Nextdoor or other social media is an accurate source of crime. Posts are often blown out of proportion. BPD has not had success gaining access to Nextdoor, beyond one officer getting access. With all of the other sites and databases they update and have access to, it is cumbersome to monitor Nextdoor as well.

A resident asked if there has been an increase in mail theft, as a couple of local churches have had mail/checks stolen. Another neighbor mentioned doorbell cameras and whether they effective and a good idea. BPD receives footage sometimes, which can be helpful.

An attendee mentioned the Kohl's parking lot and lack of lighting. Officer Arnette is familiar with the property and knows they've had light surveying done, but will follow up with the owners. BPD has looked at lighting at night in the area, and they have requested that those businesses increase their lighting.

A question was asked about the MTA light rail parking lot and whether it's under MTA police or Baltimore County? The concern is that often in the middle of the night, there are police lights flashing in the parking lot. Another neighbor believes it's to deter crime, not response to criminal activity. Officer Arnette does not believe there is an uptick in crime in the light rail parking lot.

Someone asked about lighting vs cameras for commercial areas/parking lots, and which is best. Officer Arnette replied both are desired. Another neighbor complained about a motion-activated security system at the car dealership where a loud voice responds telling them that the building is closed. It is very loud and bothersome.

Allen Hicks — Roland Run stream restoration; Jones Falls Sewer Project

Roland Run project is supposed to be completed. We had been promised that they would replace trees that did not survive, however they are walking back on that project. They are now saying they're not

sure why the trees washed away and not sure they will be replaced. Other issues include erosion of the stream, DPW cut down additional trees and built a temporary bridge over the stream — this is contributing to erosion of the stream.

The entire project has not been completed (particularly from the end of Trebor Court to Morris Avenue), and they are citing that one of the neighbors would not allow them to do that work, but DPW was able to access the property from a different way. DPW removed about 65 trees. They've talked with DEPS about the issue, in addition to Wade Kach, Delegate Stein, Michelle Guyton and plan to discuss with Chris West.

Rita Nabhan — Special Events

Santa on the fire truck visited West Lutherville Park instead of driving throughout the entire neighborhood as they had done in the past and was very time consuming. The new way worked well and brought families together at the park. LCA Easter Egg Hunt will take place April 4, rain date April 11. Details on Facebook, Nextdoor, Listserve. We will need help with egg donations, hiding eggs, donation of chocolate bunnies for finders of golden eggs.

Ernie Shea — Public Facilities

Greening of Lutherville project:

Dead and dying trees — they are making progress working with neighbors to remove dead or dying trees. Planting trees — there is a meeting March 11, 7pm to discuss a program with Baltimore County. The County will plant one tree per front yard for free. Ernie has the types of trees available.

Storm water project —will be starting sometime this year; now in survey stage; to address water run-off from the firehouse that runs down to Bellona, Division, and Melancthon. Someone asked where the water run off will go? Ernie replied that it should run into storm drains, and responded to a question that it could eventually flow down to Roland Run. The resident was not pleased with that answer and asked to keep in touch regarding this project.

Terri Byrd — Traffic

A speed trailer was installed at the firehouse in order to help with speeding on Bellona Avenue. Terri said she can continuously request the speed camera and will have it placed in areas where she hears the most complaints. She will keep requesting the camera. Data from the camera will be used by BPD to place officers in the future to monitor traffic.

A bill has been introduced to reduce truck size on some roads, which will be voted upon on March 12, and is expected to pass. The result is to curtail large trucks on some roads, like Seminary Avenue, with signage.

Jeff Dier — Security

Jeff raised the traffic bottleneck at Greenspring Drive in Country Club Park. One idea is to allow cars to park across the street on county property, but the county is not in favor of that idea. They will continue to work on it.

A meeting was held recently with area community associations and local shopping center representatives. Officer Davis reviewed crime data, tips, etc. One idea raised is to install cameras at the Lutherville light rail station, and Chris West offered to help us after the legislative session.

Jeff encouraged residents to report all criminal activity. Eric Rockel reported that based on his research, the Cockeysville precinct was down overall, except aggravated assault.

Eric Rockel — Zoning

We are in the midst of the rezoning process in Baltimore County. The only real request in the LCA area — the Kia dealership would like to purchase the Kirsch Cleaners property to expand their display lot.

A recent trend in the greater area is zoning requests to allow building of apartments, some on top/in retail areas — for instance Heaver Plaza, and Kimco's properties at the Giant shopping center. If they get the zoning change, they will still need to go through a development process with community input, public hearings, etc. Other properties in the area have tried similar projects in the past, but were unsuccessful (like near Bluestone; on the property currently occupied by Poulet; etc).

One resident mentioned that with many retailers going out of business, one thing to keep in mind is apartments can replace those empty retail properties.

Lutherville Station is another property that could be proposed for redevelopment in the future. Feedback was asked for potential redevelopment into retail, apartments, specialty store, etc. Traffic was raised as a foreseeable problem if that property is redeveloped into a large business. For the most part, the building is currently empty. Another resident raised the idea of mixed use development, which could include apartments, retail, office. Another attendee mentioned senior housing would be attractive, as they could use public transportation, might cause less traffic by using the local stores.

Wade Kach has put this site and others in his district as an item to be examined in this comprehensive zoning process. One place already zoned for apartments is at the corner of Deereco and Padonia — they are proposing 200 apartments and a hotel to be built; Lutherville Station is also part of this process.

Right now Kach has proposed to take the northern half of Lutherville Station (currently parking lot) to low density residential (single family housing).

The first hearing is this Thursday night at Loch Raven High School.

A resident raised the issue of infrastructure, particularly sewage, and the impact new building on Lutherville Station will have. School construction is also an issue.

Two meetings will take place in April and June to discuss and have community input with Wade Kach.

The LCA board has keep the following 4 priorities: Traffic, schools, storm water management, open space

Marcia Hettinger — Towson University Big Event will be held on April 25.

Meeting adjourned