The Mayor and full Council were in attendance at the June 12 meeting, along with the Town Clerk Stacey Malmgren and about a dozen residents.

Glen Echo Park Report
Absent was National Park Service representative Aaron LaRocca, and the biggest news there is that he won’t be regularly attending Town Council meetings from now on. Instead, he will come only when there is a need for him to update the Council in person. His submitted notes show no updates regarding the Clara Barton House rehab, the removal of ash trees on Park property, or the partnership agreement between the County and the Park, all of which are ongoing.

As part of a larger conversation about the use and safety of Oxford Road, a NPS engineer has been tasked with exploring what a reconfiguration of the current exit lane would look like if it allowed for two-way traffic—as an exit and entrance. Also, after complaints about the chain along the parking lot at Oxford as a nighttime tripping hazard, the posts and chains are to be removed soon. To deter drivers parked on the grass from exiting off the curb at Oxford and University Avenue, the original purpose of the chain, boulders will be put along that border in the fall.

Mayor Polak reported on a meeting he had with NPS Superintendent Alex Romero. They discussed possible improvements to Oxford Road including removal of the current speedbump, the addition of two new speedbumps, and improved signage. The cost estimate of $15k was deemed excessive and ways to bring it down are being explored. The Mayor also got explicit permission for use of the Park’s parking lot for Town Hall events.

Town Business
Responding to resident complaints about the use of Round Up for weed control on Town streets, the Mayor has asked resident Holly Shimizu—an outspoken critic of such toxic chemicals—to propose alternatives.

For years, resident and real estate agent Jane Stevenson created a charming Town Directory. In the time since she retired, no one has assumed the mantle, until now. Two other real estate agents in Town—Alec Graham and Patty Sieber—have taken on the project. There was much discussion at the Council meeting about next steps and how much information should be included—just phone, or email and cell phones too? The consensus was that they should include whatever information people are willing to share and that the directory should remain in paper format only, but be updated yearly. Alec has put flyers in everyone’s mailbox asking for updates to home phone, cell phone, and email that you’d like included, and Patty collected many residents’ info at the polls on election day. If you have not yet shared your updated information, even if it’s just a home phone, please contact Alec@alecgrahamrealtor.com or at 301-320-7719.
Council Member Stiglitz met with an engineer from the County’s Department of Transportation early one morning at Princeton Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard to watch the middle schoolers crossing over to catch the school bus. They witnessed just how dangerous that crosswalk is for kids at rush hour, and the engineer plans to watch that intersection for the last week of the school year. Then the Transportation Department can conduct a full traffic study and weigh solutions. Mr. Stiglitz expects to have an update in the fall.

The Town will have a new trash and recycling service provider—Elegant Recycling and Refuse Services (a subset of Unity Waste and Recycling)—starting July 1. The decision was made at the May Council meeting, but could not be reported until Waste Management of Maryland (our former provider) had been notified. The following occurred at the May meeting:

Waste Management did not show up to this meeting (“its absence speaks volumes”) to make its case for a contract to continue our trash and recycling pick-ups. The work contained within the two proposals, from WM and from Unity, are equivalent, but Unity’s proposal was $1,100 less per month. Stacey Malmgren reported that the reference from a Unity client, Chevy Chase, was sterling. Resident Gloria Levin speculated that Unity’s lower price is because Unity’s partner (Elegant, who will actually serve the Town) is non-union. Although Unity, in its earlier presentation, asked that complaints from residents be communicated via telephone to Elegant’s field supervisors so they can be remedied on the spot, resident Renny Springuel suggested that the Town have a way to learn of the pattern of complaints for Town oversight.

The important information for residents is that the pick-up schedule will remain exactly the same. That is, recycling and yard waste on Monday, trash on Tuesday and Friday, bulk on the
last Friday of each month. And while not discussed at the Council meeting, here’s the phone number for Elegant for any questions or complaints: 240-278-2698.

Council Member Spealman presented his list of Council responsibilities and initiatives, which you can find listed in the June issue of The Echo. He took suggestions from the other Members about next steps, primarily a fleshing out of details, so the Council can decide which “jobs” might be appropriate for Town citizens.

Resident Concerns
Gloria Levin was upset when she saw some trees being removed from the upper Wellesley right-of-way. Matt McFarland was supervising. Both parties attended the Council meeting to discuss. Matt said that he got permission to bring down the trees at the March Council meeting, but the minutes didn’t include it, and it occurred under Mayor Beers. This was how it was reported in the April

Echo: “Matt also asked to remove a dead tree and an unsightly walnut tree from the property and possibly replace with new trees. The Mayor said that sounded fine.” It was agreed that discussion of the removal of trees should be included in the minutes in the future.

This also raised concern that the license for the use of that part of the right-of-way by the adjoining three households hasn’t been signed. Those residents have taken on neighbor Tom Helf as legal council and the issue may be more complicated than first thought. Mr. Stiglitz, who has discussed the matter with Tom said there were matters of licensing versus easement, insurance, duration, and causes for termination to be considered.

Town Expenses
In May, the Town paid $4,184 to Waste Management of Maryland, $2,567 to Chapel Valley Landscaping, and $2,300 to Lee’s Tree Service.

—EMILY PARSONS

Town’s pro-rata share of state income taxes (up by $6,062). Also worth noting, advertising revenue from The Echo was over budget by $1,140 (thanks to all our wonderful advertisers!).

The Town also achieved expense efficiencies across every major budget category including payroll, professional services (including legal, insurance and bonding, and other professional services), fixed operating expenses, Town services (including a significant decrease in Refuse & Recycling of more than $23,000) maintenance, and public services. The biggest savings came from capital improvements. Last fiscal year’s budget anticipated a major overhaul of the Town Hall’s elevator, at an anticipated expense of $120,000, which was not incurred.

Glen Echoans will be (continued next page)
pleased to learn that the Town does not anticipate raising taxes in FY-2018, and plans to extend the current property tax rate of $0.14 per $100 and the personal property tax rate of $0.80 per $100. However, the Mayor and Town Clerk did observe there was some debate about the County’s projection of the property tax base. Since property taxes are by far the largest revenue item in the budget at $108,500, Town property tax rates could be revisited mid-year if it is found that the County underestimated the base.

Modest increases in revenue are expected over last year’s budget relating to Town rental income from the Post Office, Town Hall use, and the Town-owned parking lot on Tulane Avenue. There was some discussion as to whether the rental rate the Irish Inn pays for the use of the parking lot should be increased in the coming year, especially if the Town maintains and insures the lot. This will be explored at a future Council meeting but is not reflected in the budget. The Town also anticipates $500 in additional revenue over last year’s budgeted numbers from Echo advertisers. By and large, the Council opted to make conservative revenue estimates that hew very closely to last year’s.

The Town anticipates a modest increase in Payroll expenses which reflect annual increases in the Consumer Price Index as well as a modest increase in the cost of auditing services for the Town. The Council anticipates almost a $10,000 increase in legal expenses over last year’s actuals. In justifying this increase, the Mayor observed that the Council is considering many initiatives that may require legal insight, and that the Council no longer has the benefit of former Mayor Debbie Beers’ legal expertise on hand and may require more regular advice from the Town’s legal counsel.

The Town’s recreation budget (which generally pays for the Town’s various parties throughout the year) is also anticipated to increase from last year’s $6,000 to $7,000 in anticipation of recognizing Mayor Beers’ many years of Town leadership.

In news that may be welcomed by many Town residents, the Town has also entered into an agreement with a new garbage collection vendor—Elegant Waste Management. The Town anticipates saving $15,000 annually with the new contract. The Mayor expressed optimism that Elegant’s professionals would leave less trash in the street following their collections—here’s hoping!

There are several changes in the Town’s Public Maintenance budget line-items. Reflecting last year’s actual expense of $14,734,
the Council agreed to decrease the landscaping budget from $25,000 to $20,000. The Town Hall maintenance budget was increased from $20,000 to $30,000. This is $5,000 more than what was actually incurred in FY-2017 in anticipation of replacing the carpeting in Town Hall. The street sweeping budget was increased from $10,000 to $16,000, which essentially mirrors the amount spent in FY-2017. The snowplowing budget remains flat at $13,000, which is $6,594 less than what was incurred in FY-2017, though it was observed by the Council that it was a relatively mild winter.

The most significant change in the Town’s budget appears in the line item addressing Town Hall Improvement, which has been reduced from $120,000 to $10,000. As mentioned earlier, the elevator renovation was not undertaken in the previous fiscal year. Mayor Polak observed that if an elevator replacement was undertaken in the coming year it would likely be financed rather than paid for out of the Town’s cash reserves. The Mayor also said that elevator reliability could be improved by adopting a better operations and maintenance plan.

The sidewalk budget remains flat at $20,000 though Council Member Stiglitz proposed that the Town purchase and install an LED stop sign, to be placed on Oxford Road to improve pedestrian safety. It was also observed during the meeting that the option to swap 2 Vassar Circle for Town-owned land on Tulane Avenue was withdrawn, and its owner and Town resident Aaron Hirsch has submitted a new proposal that the Town purchase 2 Vassar Circle outright. The details of the proposal were not discussed at the hearing. The Council did wonder whether it should explore rezoning the Town-owned land on Tulane Avenue to position it for a possible new use; however, this was tabled for a future Council meeting.

Mr. Hirsch also recommended that the Council consider replacing the Town Hall telephone system with a more economic Voice Over IP system and look into a lighting retrofit to save on operating expenses. This recommendation was seconded by resident (and Echo reporter) Thom Amdur, who also suggested the Town make a donation to the Glen Echo Park Aquarium. This suggestion was opposed by the Council, as it has a long-standing policy not to make charitable donations on behalf of the Town, but Council Member Costello suggested this policy be revisited at a future Council Meeting. —THOM AMDUR
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Mid-summer is a perfect time to start some annual plants from seed, especially plants that bolt, or go to seed, in the summer. These can be started afresh and will provide a late summer or fall crop. For example, my French chervil (Anthriscus cerefolium) is covered with ripe seed. I am collecting plenty from the plants and spreading the seed in the same container, scratching it into the soil. Within three to four weeks, the chervil will begin a new crop. So easy. The parsley–French tarragon flavor of chervil is incredibly delicious and blends well with most foods. I am always delighted to have it in abundance. This same technique can be used successfully with a number of other beloved annuals such as arugula and cilantro, which are on my roof garden. The seeds are ripe when they darken and develop a hard outer shell as the mother plant is fading. At this time, I spread seed back into the same container or try them in a new location. If you do not have seed, they are easily available at a garden center.

Mid-summer is also a great time to locate a few new interesting greens. Mache, also known as corn salad or lamb’s lettuce (Valerianella locusta), has been used in American kitchens since the 17th century. Corn salad is a cool-season annual that enhances any salad. Thomas Jefferson grew mache at Monticello and recorded saving seed in 1794. Native to Europe, North Africa, and western Asia, corn salad has been known to escape cultivation in North America and can become weedy in agricultural fields. Mache grows well in cool or mild weather conditions, so it is best to begin seed outdoors in late July or early August. The leaves are spoon shaped, around three inches long and form a large rosette. They add a mild, nutty flavor to salad or can be used as a cooking green. The mild flavor of mache blends nicely with strong-flavored greens such as mustard. I particularly want to try golden corn salad because of its intense nutty flavor similar to that of peanuts, tahini, or walnuts/hazelnuts. Golden corn salad (Valerianella eriocarp) is indigenous to Mediterranean countries. In France, the golden type is generally referred to as mâche d’Italie (Italian corn salad). I know of no sources in the United States, other than seed saver exchanges. I am trying to track it down that way or will look for it when I travel abroad. The brilliant chartreuse-green foliage will brighten the garden and leaves can be harvested for a delicious cold season salad. It is said to be quite easy to grow and will grow up to ten inches tall. I will report back on any luck I have in locating seed.

Late summer is also a time when I plant seeds or plants of some of my preferred edible flowers that are also beautiful garden plants. My favorites are pot marigold (Calendula officinalis), heartsease (Viola tricolor), and nasturtium (Tropaeolum majus ‘Alaska’). Petals of pot marigold are great in a salad or can be used as a substitute for saffron. These plants are so cold hardy, they sometimes survive the winter and emerge as happy early spring flowers. The same is true for heartsease, also known as Johnny Jump-Up which is a cheery, delightful small violet that blooms especially well if you pinch off the old flowers. When you look down at the heartsease flowers, you will notice that they are smiling up at you. The flowers have a mild, slightly sweet flavor and are great when added to salads, on top of cakes, or added to ice cubes. Plants grow well in sun or light shade and grow to a height of six to eight inches. The edible flowers of nasturtium (Tropaeolum majus), as well as its leaves and flower buds, have a sweet watercress flavor. Soak seeds in warm water overnight prior to planting. I like to plant nasturtium in containers or along border edges. The cultivar known as Alaska, which has white and green variegated leaves, has done especially well for me.

Plan and plant now to add spice, flavor, and beauty to your fall garden! — Holly Shimizu

Holly in the Ivy

French chervil

Mache

Nasturtium
There was no shortage of respondents to an appeal for memories of Mayor Debbie Beers, who served Glen Echo for more than thirty years. Mayor Beers retired in May, but her impact on the Town will last well beyond.

Glen Echoans—past, present and future—owe a huge debt of gratitude to Debbie for her long-term custodianship of our unique town, in matters large and small. Many Town residents served shorter stints alongside her, as Council Members and clerk treasurers, but she was the constant. Thanks also to the Beers family—Don and the four children, now all adults—for “loaning” Debbie to Glen Echo for 24 years as Mayor and 8 as Council Member. —Gloria Levin, former Council Member

Let Us Praise

Don and Debbie at the Glen Echo Gala in May

My first Town Council meeting was the first meeting after Snowmageddon (February 2010). People were sharing their frustration about lack of parking—the plows hadn’t been able to come in for days! Some residents had shoveled out spaces and were reserving them, with cones or deck chairs. One resident said that parking should be available to everyone and you can’t reserve spots. The murmuring in the room made it clear that it was the opinion shared by everyone in the room. Debbie replied “Well, I disagree. If I’ve taken 5 hours to shovel out a spot, I’d like to be able to use it when I return home.” You could practically hear the necks snap as people turned to look at her. It was so simple and strong in dissent, definitely the minority opinion. But it was logical, and I think most people in the room re-evaluated their stance. It was a minor issue (there were bigger tussles that I got to see later), but I had a new respect for her. To this day, when I need to speak up and I know I might be the only voice, I think of her. —Nicole Fraser, former Town Clerk

The McGunnigles were more than a little happy to have lived for 11 years next to Mayor Debbie Beers, a person we found to be dynamic in pursuing the best for Glen Echo. As short term editors of The Echo we attended many Town Council meetings where Debbie was always measured and politically astute. She encouraged free discussion of issues but was able to bring matters into clear focus in ways that were exceptional. We were especially thrilled with Debbie’s campaign to bring gas to Glen Echo, the result being a financial benefit for many of the Town residents. We were also grateful for the many “off duty” chores Debbie performed on behalf of residents for so many years. No easy task for a working woman and a mother. She will be sorely missed. —Jim and Sally McGunnigle, former Echo editors

Debbie Beers has served as the Town of Glen Echo representative on the Board of Directors of the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture since 2002 when the organization was formed to manage the Park. She has been a
great person to represent the Town’s interests, but has also been an important part of the leadership of the Park and helped us think through numerous issues. She understands the history of our arrangement between the County and the NPS and has special insight into how all that can work for the Park (and the Town). I personally have enjoyed getting to know Debbie and her husband and have really appreciated them hosting the annual holiday party for everyone who works and volunteers at the Park. We wish her best of luck in future endeavors and hope she continues to remain involved with Glen Echo Park.

— KATEY BOERNER, Executive Director, GEPPAC

Debbie Beers has an amazing passion and deep commitment to the Town of Glen Echo. For almost thirty-five years she was either on the Town Council or served as our Mayor. She was consistently prepared for any issues that arose and gave time and thought into possibilities and potential conflicts for the Town. She has been a strong advocate for our Town in community meetings. Her love for the Park and all that it offers has been inspiring. She can always be seen walking our streets and the path to the Canal with an endless appreciation of the natural setting we all enjoy.

— DIA COSTELLO, current Council Member

When The Echo asked for a recollection of life with the Mayor, I canvassed our four kids, Laura, Emily, Mike, and Andrew, who grew up in Glen Echo and for whom most of that time their mother was mayor of our town. For our family, it was just part of life for Debbie to be dealing with the problems of Glen Echo, large and small. A shared experience for those who have lived in this Town over the years has been periodically sitting in the dark, lit by candles or flashlights, because of yet another power outage. In our household, we all remember that scene being punctuated by Debbie making call after call to the Pepco municipal official hotline, demanding that the Pepco trucks find and fix the issue that was affecting Glen Echo, not giving up until the lights came back on. I can’t prove it, but I suspect that Glen Echo got more attention than other affected areas, as it can’t have been much fun for power company representatives having to face off with Debbie when she was fighting for her town.

— DON BEERS, husband of Mayor Debbie Beers

OUT AND ABOUT

The humidity is starting to make its ever presence known in the DMV, and with that marks the true start of summer. For those not fleeing to cooler climates and especially for those looking for ways to occupy the many rambunctious sons and daughters not in school, here are a few recommendations of what to do this month.

Celebrating its 50th Anniversary, the Folklife Festival will take over the Mall from June 29 to July 4 and July 6 to 9 with an especially family friendly theme of Circus Arts. Timely, considering the sunsetting of the Barnum & Bailey troupe with its last show in New York this past May. While a free event, you’ll likely still want to bring your wallet to indulge at one of the unique food stalls featuring classic circus food traditionally made to nurture troupes on the road throughout the ages.

If you have a visitor in town, be sure to catch the concert on the National Mall for Independence Day. It may be cliché, but it’s still magical to watch the fireworks billowing behind the Capitol stage. This year’s events are hosted by 90s heartthrob John Stamos with musical performances by The Beach Boys, The Blues Brothers, and The Four Tops.

Enjoy a movie marathon July 18–22 with a nightly film under the stars shown from 9 PM at the corner of Norfolk and Auburn Avenues in downtown Bethesda. Good excuse for a romantic picnic for two or cave in to a late bedtime to make it a family affair. It’s a great line-up with The Wizard of Oz, Field of Dreams, Dead Poets Society, Hidden Figures, and La La Land.

At the end of the month, make it out to the Rock Creek Park Tennis Center to watch some of the world’s top tennis champs fight to win at the Citi Open (July 29–August 6). Bring a blanket to act as a shield between you and the scorching bleachers. Fans provided for free.

Despite the bounty of activities in the area, there are a few not to miss in your own backyard. Clear your calendars for Sunday, July 16 from 5–7 PM for the annual Glen Echo summer picnic. Come out to the Town Hall to meet old and new neighbors alike. And, through September 7, enjoy free concerts (and an evening carousel ride) in Glen Echo Park every Thursday at 7:30 PM. The July lineup features a slew of big band performances all held in the Bumper Car Pavilion.

— MONA KISHORE
Ever wonder why Cabin John has a Fourth of July parade and we don’t? We’ve got classic cars, flags, pop-its and loads of kids to throw them. This year efforts are being made to get Glen Echoans out on our streets for a patriotic parade on July 4. Details are still being planned and word will go out on the Listserv. If you would like to participate, email angela.h.hirsch@gmail.com.

The weather finally cooperated and the skies were clear enough for some stargazing on May 26. About a dozen families, including several dozen kids, showed up at the Glen Echo park field to hear astronomer Kevin Marvel talk about what we could see. Besides searching for the first star (well, Jupiter), the second, the third, the attendees got to see Jupiter and two of its moons with Mr. Marvel’s telescope. He says we can try again in August or September when the great nebula of Orion will be visible.

In May, Glen Echo residents received postcard invitations to join an online community network called Nextdoor. It had been mentioned on several occasions at Town Council meetings by Matt Stiglitz as the means the County police is using to communicate with its district residents. In June, there was a robust discussion about the merits of this new network compared to the Yahoo listserv currently used by Town residents. The discussion was decidedly skeptical with concerns voiced about sharing personal information, too many messages, and the financial incentives of the Silicon Valley startup which created Nextdoor, a “free” service. The biggest issue for Glen Echo could be that it is more difficult to sign up for Nextdoor than our current listserv, and even that process seems to elude many. If you would like to join the Yahoo listserv, you simply need to email its moderator Dan Macy at danielpma-cy@gmail.com.

The Glen Echo Partnership for Arts and Culture recruited students from the University of Maryland’s architecture program to conceive a new Park master plan. The students worked with three distinct objectives in mind: preserve and utilize original historic buildings in new ways; address contemporary issues, like stormwater runoff, to increase the Park’s environmental stewardship; and develop new connections and buildings that will support dynamic programming and increase the Park’s economic sustainability. True to the directive, the master plan ideas range from innovative to downright whimsical. In one version, the Crystal Pool is re-envisioned as an amphitheater. Another recreates the panoramic views seen from the heights of the park’s rollercoaster in the 1940s and 50s through a series of elevated, loop-
ing pathways. GEPPAC’s strong desire to be a “dance destination” for the region was conceptualized in new and accentuated studio and exhibition space, and complemented with restaurants and park boulevards to create a district feel. The three plans were presented to the Glen Echo board in May. Most likely, once the key decision makers select their favorite ideas, a final masterplan will be commissioned and developed.

Earlier this year, Georgetown Heritage, a nonprofit organization formed to rethink the one-mile, nine-acre portion of the C&O Canal in Georgetown, hired the architect of Manhattan’s High Line. The period to comment on the scope of the project outlined on the NPS website ends July 7. Here is the official comment from the C&O Canal Association:

The plan’s objectives include many goals which the C&O Canal Association strongly supports, including improved access, signage, safety, and opportunities for expanded educational and cultural programs. The carefully planned addition of amenities such as drinking fountains and rest rooms would also be very welcome. Certain unde-

rused parts of the canal park, such as the Mile Zero/Tidelock area, deserve increased attention and visitation.

Any plan for the future of the canal in Georgetown should recognize that historic preservation must be an overriding consideration. The project brochure and the presentation at the scoping meeting show sensitivity to the unique qualities of the location; however, plans for development of “plazas” along and within the borders of the canal park are not clearly defined. Revitalization of the neighborhood is a worthwhile objective, but commercialization or overcrowding of the park must be strictly avoided.

We urge that all options for enhancement are fully protective of the longstanding charm and historical integrity of the canal and its towpath, associated structures and open spaces.

Real Estate Report
Two of the properties mentioned here last month—41 Wellesley Circle listed at $975,000 and 5806 Oxford Road at $899,000—are both under contract. The commercial property at 6110 Oberlin Avenue is still listed at $1,999,995. And coming soon is 30 Wellesley Circle, home to Michael Bobbit and Craig Hanna, listed at $775,000.

Glen Echo Town Hall Events
FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, July 5, 12, 19, 26 8 – 10:30 PM, free to Town residents

July 16 5–7 PM
TOWN SUMMER PICNIC
Buffet provided; bring a dessert, beer/wine, water/soda to share, and a picnic blanket.

Glen Echo Park Events
Dentzel Carousel $1.25 a ride, through August: Weds.–Fri. 10 AM–2 PM; Sat.–Sun. 12–6 PM (Carousel also open during concerts and other events.)

July 7 6–8 PM, Art Walk in the Park, First Friday of each month through September, open studios and artist demonstrations throughout the Park

July 9 3–5 PM, The Folklore Society of Greater Washington presents a Family Dance in the Spanish Ballroom’s back room, $5

Summer Concert Series
Thursdays at 7:30 PM in the bumper car pavilion, free

July 6 Mike Kamuf Little Big Band
July 13 Sweet Saludos
July 20 Brendan Pelan
July 27 U.S. Marine Band—Free Country

The Puppet Co. www.thepuppetco.org; 301-634-5380
The Wizard of Oz through July 23
Tiny Tots select Weds, Sats, and Sundays at 10 AM

Adventure Theater MTC
www.adventuretheater-mtc.org; 301-634-2270
Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook through August 14

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Holy Eucharist 8:00 a.m.
Nursery Care 9:15 a.m.
Choral Eucharist 10:30 a.m.
Wednesdays: Morning Prayer at 9:00 a.m.; Eucharist at Noon

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Sunday, July 21, at 7:00 p.m.
Organ Fireworks & Ice Cream Social

MISSION WORK THIS SUMMER
Water Ministry at St. Columba’s

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