

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

The State of the Town

[Delivered by Mayor Gene Ambrogio at the April 24, 2007 business meeting.]

Since May 2006 the La Plata Town Council has taken action in order to positively affect the health and well-being of our citizens. The Council adopted a comprehensive smoking ban which is more strict than that of Charles County. The ban emphasized the avoidance of second-hand smoke inside and outside restaurants and bars. The Maryland legislature has now passed a statewide smoking ban effective early next year.

Our Town was the first in Charles County to adopt automatic fire sprinkler systems in newly constructed single and two family dwellings. The Council feels that this safeguard is a small price to pay to help to preserve lives.

The Council agreed to issue provisional ballots and eliminate a requirement that voters provide certain types of identification at the polls before being allowed to vote in Town elections. This will make it easier for every resident to exercise their right to vote. Staggered terms for Council members beginning in May 2009 will be eliminated and voters in all Wards will be able to cast their ballots for all members of the Town Council.

The recent memorandum of understanding signed between the Maryland Transportation Authority,

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Outgoing Councilmen Winkler and Back thanked by Town Council



Ward I Councilman Wayne Winkler and Ward II Councilman Keith Back prepare to cut and serve the cake at a reception held after their final Town Council regular business meeting on April 24, 2007.

Councilmen Winkler and Back were given framed Town of La Plata Seals and engraved clock/pen desk sets in appreciation of their years of dedicated service to the Town. Councilman Winkler served from January 2002 to May 2007 as Ward I Councilman and as Chairman of the La Plata Historic District Commission. Councilman Back served from December 2004 to May 2007 as Ward II Councilman, and from July 1999 to May 2007 as a member and as Chairman of the La Plata Planning Commission.

4th of July Celebration

On Wednesday, July 4, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., the Town is hosting a 4th of July Celebration at the Train Station, 101 Kent Avenue. The Train Station and caboose will be open for tours. There will be musical entertainment, a petting farm, moon bounce, hot dogs, lemonade, and ice cream – all free. For more information contact Michelle Miner at 301-934-8421.



Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days in observance of the holiday listed:

Independence Day Wednesday, July 4, 2007

If you have a **water or sewer emergency** after hours, call 301-934-8421 and follow the instructions given to report your emergency. The automated response system will alert the appropriate department to respond to you.

COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Jim Goldsmith Ward 1

As your new Council member from Ward I, I want to specifically thank all those citizens who took the time to vote on 1 May. I will do my best to justify the confidence you placed by casting your vote for me. I will do my best to serve you and all citizens of the Town of La Plata. I will start immediately to bring myself up to speed on the conditions affecting the Town. I will make myself available for training that will further prepare me to serve. I will also make myself available to address any questions you may have. I would be happy to attend any association meeting that my schedule permits. Just call me at 301-609-7250.

I feel my greatest strength is dollars and cents. I believe in a concept of "cost benefit analysis." For each dollar we spend there should be a benefit derived from that expenditure. Are we fixing a problem that is costing us money? If so, how much are we currently losing and how long will it take us to recapture the expenditure. If it is a safety issue, it must be corrected. If it is an expenditure that will improve the service to you then we should definitely consider it. But again we need to look at the expenditure to be made for the benefit to be derived. NOTHING IS FREE.

I will definitely be paying close attention to growth in the Town to ensure we have the water, wastewater treatment capacity, and infrastructure available to serve that growth. The past Town Council and staff had put plans in place to expand the wastewater treatment plant and dig new wells. The developer of the new Rosewick Crossing center with Lowe's and Giant will be digging a new well for their use and the rest of the Town citizens. They will

also make improvements to the sewage distribution lines for their center and other points within the Town. The Town has voted to increase the Major Facilities Fees for all new construction to ensure the new growth is paid by those coming to the Town and not paid by those already here.

A proper mix of residential and commercial is important to the vitality of a town. I will work to provide a proper environment for old and new business to grow and flourish while providing services for the citizens of our Town and surrounding community. Proper growth is important to all our citizens. Let's make sure we do it smart.

Again, I look forward to working for you as I serve on the Town Council.

Councilman Scot D. Lucas Ward 2

I'd like to thank Keith Back and Wayne Winkler for their service to La Plata. Your time and effort demonstrate your commitment and dedication to our Town. Even though you are no longer on the Council, I know you will continue to serve the community in other ways. Thanks also go to those individuals who took time out of their busy schedules to vote on May 1. Sometimes I think we forget the importance associated with the right to vote. I hope more of you will exercise your right and let your voice be heard in 2009.

As many of you may know, three generations of my family are rooted here in La Plata. My maternal grandparents made La Plata their home in the 1950's when they moved to Wicomico Street. My mother and her siblings spent many of their formative years here. My paternal grandparents and my father and his brothers grew up in La Plata and perhaps did business with many

of you or your families. I was born in what is now Civista Hospital Center in 1971. I attended Archbishop Neale School for eight years before going on to graduate from St. Mary's Ryken High School. I have a beautiful wife and three fantastic children. I own a business in downtown La Plata on the corner of La Grange Avenue and Centennial Street. I am a volunteer for The La Plata Youth Soccer Association, The Waldorf American Little League, The United Way, Archbishop Neale School, and The American Red Cross. I am currently the President for The National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors of Southern Maryland.

As I begin my term as Councilman, there are a number of issues that I want to address. One of the most urgent issues is the planned growth for La Plata. Without growth, there is inevitable decline. But growth must be handled in a smart way. For example, our water and sewer system is almost to capacity. With more homes, businesses, and government offices planned, we will soon exceed the capacity of our current system. We must make improvements before the system becomes over taxed. In addition, growth will increase traffic and add more congestion to our already busy streets. It is my goal to keep La Plata's residents from being burdened with the costs associated with this growth.

There will be a lot more issues to deal with over the next couple of years. In the meantime, do what you can do to get involved, attend meetings, or at a minimum, send me your thoughts and ideas via e-mail to lucas4laplata@yahoo.com or via phone at 301-392-1045 or 301-481-7740.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

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LA PLATA TOWN SERVICES

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Charles County Sanitary Landfill, on Billingsley Road East, between Piney Church Road and Rt. 5, accepts household hazardous waste products the **first Saturday of each month during April through December, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: June 2, July 7, August 4, September 1, October 6, November 3 and December 1.** Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, expired prescription medicines and other poisons that are around your house. They ask that you keep the materials in their original containers whenever possible, and bring the items to the collection site in cardboard boxes for ease in unloading. *For more information call the Charles County Dept. of Public Facilities: 301-932-3599 or 301-870-2778; Landfill information service: 301-932-5656.*

Special Trash Pickup

Bulk items are picked up the first Monday of each month, or the following Monday if the first one is a holiday. Large amounts of loose material (such as brush) should be bundled or bagged in such a manner that the weight is less than 50 lbs. The Town reserves the right not to pick up items too heavy to safely handle. General construction cleanup and hazardous materials are not eligible. Items must be at curbside

by 7:30 a.m. on pickup day. Call Town Hall before pickup day to be placed on the list. Minimum fee: \$11.00 for 5 minutes loading time; each additional minute is \$1.00. A fee of \$6.00, or the current Landfill disposal fee, shall be charged for each tire collected. *Billing for special trash pickup is included on your quarterly utility bill.*

Yard Waste Pickup

Containers of yard waste ONLY - leaves, grass and shrub clippings, brush or branches - may be put out on your regular trash day for pickup that day **or the next day.** The containers must be marked "Yard Waste." Brush or branches must be bundled, weigh no more than 50 lbs. per bundle, and the branches may not be larger than 4 inches in diameter or more than 4 feet long. *Plastic bags are not allowed - if you bag yard waste you must use paper bags.*

Permits are Required for Home Repairs

With the upcoming summer season, residents will begin checking off their "to do" lists and making plans for home improvements. Just a reminder: building permits are required for sheds, decks, swimming pools, room addi-

tions, and additional living space. In some instances, approval may also be required from your homeowners' association before a building permit can be issued. Contact the Town Hall at 301-934-8421 for more details.

Yard Sale Signs Do Not Require a Sign Permit

Yard sales are another popular summer event. While no sign permit is required, there are a few rules in the Town Code about posting yard sale signs:

- ❖ Only one (1) such sign shall be on the lot where the yard sale is located, plus no more than one (1) additional sign shall be located on a different private property, provided such property is not a private common area.
- ❖ Such sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area per side and forty-two (42) inches in height.
- ❖ Such sign shall remain in place only from 5:00 p.m. on Friday until 8:00 a.m. on the following Monday.
- ❖ Signs may not be placed in a public right-of-way, and they may not be attached to a utility pole, light pole, telephone pole, stop sign, traffic sign, etc.

Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

If your regular trash collection day is:

Independence Day
Wednesday, July 4

Trash will be picked up on:

Thursday, July 5

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Port Tobacco Players (PTP) present *The Pajama Game*

June 29 - July 15, 2007: Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m.; Sundays at 3:00 p.m.

A romantic comedy from the creators of "Damn Yankees," brimming with songs and dances. Visit the PTP web page (www.ptplayers.com) for more details about this and other upcoming PTP productions. Ticket information: \$15 - Adults; \$12 - Seniors (60 and over) and Students (through high school). For reservations, call the PTP box office at 301-932-6819.

AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL...

Hundreds of residents came out on the beautiful spring day of April 28 to “Celebrate La Plata.” The day began with the dedication of the Star Memorial Garden in remembrance of the victims of the 1926 and 2002 tornados, and continued at the Town Hall with children’s entertainment, food and business displays. The dedication plaque at the Star Memorial Garden displays this message:

THE STAR MEMORIAL GARDEN

The La Plata Community Garden Club dedicates this garden to all those who restored and rebuilt our town following the devastating tornado on April 28, 2002.

The granite star in the center of the courtyard commemorates the star which stood on this site atop the original water tower until it was destroyed by the tornado. The brick walkway marks the path of the tornado through the town.

The five benches memorialize those who died in the 2002 tornado and the 13 school children who died in the tornado which struck La Plata on November 9, 1926.

More powerful than the forces of nature is the spirit of the townspeople of La Plata.

Dedicated April 28, 2007



The courtyard in the Star Memorial Garden.



Port Tobacco Player Encore Kids performing at Town Hall.

LA PLATA HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY WRESTLING TEAM RECEIVES PROCLAMATION FROM TOWN COUNCIL



The La Plata High School Varsity Wrestling Team received a Proclamation from the Town Council at the March 27, 2007 meeting, congratulating them for their achievements during their 2006 and 2007 seasons. During their 2006 season, the team had a final record of 18-0, were the state dual meet champs and the state tournament champs, were the Southern Maryland Athletic Conference (SMAC) dual meet and tournament champs, were the regional dual meet and tournament champs, and had ten state qualifiers, five place finishers, and one state champ, who was the first state champ in La Plata history. During their 2007 season, the team had a final record of 18-0, are the state dual meet champs – the first time in Maryland history that a Maryland Class 4A/3A team has repeated, are the regional dual meet champs and the SMAC dual meet champs, won their 5th consecutive SMAC

tournament and their 4th consecutive regional tournament, the team placed second at the state individual tournament, and had eleven state qualifiers, six place finishers, and one state champ.

Members of the team are Jake Shilling, Dane Orzechowski, Thomas Brannon, Jason Arnold, Scotty Carter, Tanner Shaffer, Michael Good, Brent Mowry, Tyler Shymansky, Andrew Szoch, Tony Ingagliato, Alex Ingagliato, Joe Sharp; *Extras:* Andre Capoen, John Thomas, D.J. Low, Chase Ursitti; *Statistician:* Connie Capoen; *Coaches:* Todd Sharp, John Pankhurst, Josh Hettel.

TOWN OF LA PLATA GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

Councilman, Ward I:	James Goldsmith	75	Councilman, Ward II:	Scot D. Lucas	13
	Reginald Kearney	11			

JUNE 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>Country Memories</i> 1	2 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
3	4 Special trash pick-up day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 6/1 to schedule)	7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:30 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>25th Hour Band</i>	9 8:30 p.m., Screen on the Green— <i>Barnyard</i> (Rain date: June 16)
10		7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>Roadhouse</i>	16 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
17	5:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting	7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>Jimmy Rhythm & The Rhythm Breakers</i>	23 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 8:30 p.m., Screen on the Green— <i>Akeelah & the Bee</i> (Rain date: June 30)
24		(Town Council regular meeting rescheduled to 6/19)	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>United States Naval Academy Band</i> "The Electric Brigade"	30 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market

JULY 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 Special trash pick-up day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 6/29 to schedule)	9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting (rescheduled from 7/4) 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	INDEPENDENCE DAY – TOWN HALL CLOSED (Wednesday's trash will be picked up on Thursday, July 5.) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., 4th of July Celebration 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>Wicked Jezebel</i>	7 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
8		7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>The Blue Crabs</i>	14 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
15	5:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting	7:00 p.m., Town Council work session	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>Steve Potter Blues Band</i>	21 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market 8:30 p.m., Screen on the Green— <i>Open Season</i> (Rain date: July 28)
22		7:00 p.m., Town Council regular meeting	8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market		7:00 p.m., Concert— <i>Special Blend Band</i>	28 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Farmers' Market
29						

COUNCIL COLUMN (CONTINUED)

Councilwoman Paddy Mudd Ward 3

Welcome to our new Town Manager Dan Mears, his wife Maureen and son Danny! Also I welcome Jim Goldsmith and Scot Lucas, our new Councilmen. Also many thanks to the La Plata Community Garden Club and the Firemen's Association for the wonderful Star Memorial Garden and Fire Museum!

I want to take this opportunity to try to explain what decisions are made by the Council and what decisions were made by the Vision Team, etc. "The Vision Implementation Team expressed the preference that new development be based on the style of the late 19th and early 20th century examples that typify La Plata's historical development." La Plata was a late 19th century railroad town in the middle of an agrarian

economy. We had the opportunity to rebuild much of the downtown after the 2002 tornado. Design guidelines were put into place in 2003 to try to ensure that the new development fulfilled the Vision Plan goals. Many questions have been asked about the central business buildings being so close to the street. The goals include a walking downtown – accomplished by pulling the businesses to the street with a 5 foot sidewalk, outdoor seating, pocket parks, few curb cuts and parking behind the buildings. Another series of questions pertain to the need for so many drug-stores. The commercial highway zoning category allows for them! The Council has expressed our wishes for a different type of retail – especially in the central business area. We of course would like more upscale retail – bookstores, small restaurants and I for one would like a

Trader Joe's market. We cannot tell the property owners what to build – merely make our wishes known as all the residents of La Plata can do.

Residential annexations were approved in the 80's and 90's to increase our population to about 25,000 in the next 20 years. Three very large developments are in the works. This Council has agreed that our town should stop growing at 25,000 and we should concentrate on services and employment opportunities for this population. Growth is inevitable. La Plata cannot return to the sleepy little railroad town whose population stayed stable for so many years. But with a lot of hard work and much planning we can retain our small town atmosphere and values. After all, those are the things that attracted many of us to move here.

LEGISLATION RECENTLY ENACTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL

(Full text copies of legislation are available at the Town Hall, 305 Queen Anne Street, or on the Town's web page at www.townoflaplata.org under "Legislation".)

- Ordinance 07-1 Election Ward Boundaries Map Update – Updates the Election Ward Boundaries Map to include within a councilmanic ward the properties annexed into the Town known as the "Potomac Investment Group, LLC and Maryland State Highway Administration Annexation – 23.02 Acres" and the "Rosewick Limited Partnership Annexation – 74.6032 Acres."
- Ordinance 07-3 Board of Appeals – Notice of Hearings and Time Limitations – Alters the filing procedures and time required to set a hearing date for matters to come before the Town Board of Appeals; alters the length of time when certain decisions of the Board of Appeals shall lapse.
- Ordinance 07-4 Purchasing – Competitive Bidding – Amends the amount of expenditure exempt from certain competitive bidding and advertising requirements.
- Ordinance 07-5 Separation of Title of Clerk-Treasurer to Town Clerk and Town Treasurer – Amends the Town Code to provide for the separation of the title Clerk-Treasurer to the titles of Town Clerk and Town Treasurer; defines certain terms.
- Ordinance 07-6 Town of La Plata FY2007-2008 Tax Rate – Adopts the Town's FY2007-2008 Tax Rate.
- Ordinance 07-7 Amended Town of La Plata FY2007-2008 Financial Plan/Budget – Adopts the Town's FY2007-2008 Financial Plan/Budget.
- Ordinance 07-8 Amended Fee Schedule – Adopts the Town's Fee Schedule.
- Resolution 07-1 La Plata Commerce Center Indenture – Waives the Town's right to enforce a certain August 22, 1978 Indenture involving the La Plata Commerce Center with respect to a proposed Site Plan submitted on behalf of Levin Construction Corporation for the construction of a building to house the High Road School.
- Resolution 07-2 Charter Amendment – Purchasing – Competitive Bidding – Amends the Town Charter to amend the amount of expenditure exempt from certain competitive bidding and advertising requirements.
- Resolution 07-3 Charter Amendment – Separation of Title of Clerk-Treasurer to Town Clerk and Town Treasurer – Amends the Town Charter to provide for the separation of the title Clerk-Treasurer to the titles of Town Clerk and Town Treasurer.
- Resolution 07-4 Pipeline Crossing Agreements with CSX Transportation, Inc. – Authorizes Acting Town Manager Joseph W. Norris to execute and deliver the agreements on behalf of the Town.
- Resolution 07-5 Adoption of "Hazard Mitigation Plan, Charles County, Maryland, April 2006" – Adopts the "Hazard Mitigation Plan, Charles County, Maryland, April 2006."
- Resolution 07-6 Employment Agreement between the Town of La Plata and Daniel J. Mears – Approves an employment agreement between the Town and Daniel J. Mears; authorizes Mayor Ambrogio to execute and deliver the agreement on behalf of the Town.

HOW LA PLATA GOT THE COURTHOUSE

Submitted by Wayne Winkler

In a continuing effort to keep the history of La Plata alive, I want to share an article with you that I found in the *Times Crescent*, a local newspaper no longer in business, dated April 19, 1978, and written by someone named Eleanor.

"The following is excerpted from Kittie Newcomb's presentation on La Plata to the Bicentennial Committee."

"La Plata was just a crossroads in an Oak Forest until the Stonestreeets on the West and the Chapmans on the East gave the Pennsylvania Railroad the land it needed for a right of way to build their railroad in 1869. The Town, which was destined to become the most important settlement in the county, was really a creature of this railroad because of the scheduled stop called La Plata Station. The station, still in use, consisted of a warehouse and passenger waiting room. It is interesting to note that this portion of the Pennsylvania Railroad from Bowie to Pope's Creek is really the main line of this company established in order to obtain a branch line into Washington, D.C., which territory had already been franchised to another railroad.

"La Plata had a rather tumultuous beginning, whose background goes back to the last quarter of the 19th Century. The then county seat of Port Tobacco was a storm center of a bitter political battle concerning the moving of the county seat to La Plata or Chapel Point. La Plata, three miles inland to the East, boasting a railroad siding and a telegraph station, was growing and began to demand the Court House. A special election was held in May of 1892 to determine whether the Court House should remain at Port Tobacco or be moved to La Plata. Port Tobacco easily won, but less than three months later the Court House burned, although not before the records had been carefully removed!

'Obviously an incendiary act, no one was ever prosecuted. Feelings ran high. It seemed impractical to rebuild the Court House at Port Tobacco. Another special election was held in 1895 to dete[r]mine whether to move the county seat of Charles to La Plata or Chapel Point, and to La Plata went the victory.

'Thus in 1896 the county seat was moved to La Plata and the Court House built of red

brick in an imposing but unattractive Victorian style. In 1954 the Greek Revival façade facing Charles Street was added as the South addition to the original. In 1974, the center section and North addition have been completed in Georgian design. Its graceful cupola with gold dome and fluttering weathervane pierces the skyline of the town.

Next to the Court House, facing Charles County is another historic building, Christ Church of Port Tobacco Parish. Built in Gothic style in Port Tobacco, it was moved to La Plata

in 1904. Its stones were numbered and carried by oxcart to the new county seat and reconstructed as represented in the present church. A fire in 1906 caused the rebuilding of the inside and at this time an addition of a bell tower was made to the West end. Christ Church, Port Tobacco Parish, one of the 30 original Church of England Parishes created in the Province of Maryland by an Act of Assembly, 1692, is continually visited by history buffs and those seeking outstanding examples of stained glass.'

2007 Summer Concert Series

All concerts are free and open to the public. Concerts begin at 7:00 p.m. on the west lawn of the Town Hall. Please bring a lawn chair or a blanket. Refreshments are available for purchase. An after-hours recorded message will advise of concert cancellations due to threatening weather: call (301) 934-8421. **Please do not bring pets or alcoholic beverages to the concerts.**

June 1	25 th Hour Band (Meet and Greet the Mayor and Council; free ice cream)
June 15	Roadhouse
June 22	Jimmy Rhythm & the Rhythm Breakers
June 29	United States Naval Academy Band "The Electric Brigade"
July 6	Wicked Jezebel
July 13	The Blue Crabs
July 20	Steve Potter Blues Band
July 27	Special Blend Band
August 3	United States Navy Band "The Cruisers"
August 10	Sam Grow Acoustik
August 17	United States Air Force Band "Silver Wings"
August 24	Southern Maryland Concert Band
August 31	United States Navy Band "Sea Chanters"
September 7	The Winstons

TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Gene Ambrogio
Council:

Jim Goldsmith Ward 1
Scot D. Lucas Ward 2
Paddy Mudd Ward 3
Vic E. Newman. Ward 4

Town Manager:
Daniel J. Mears
Assistant Town Manager:
Patricia L. Bembe
Assistant Town Manager:
Michelle D. Miner
Town Clerk: Judith T. Frazier
Treasurer: Joseph W. Norris

Project Manager: Steven F. Schroeder
Director of Planning and Zoning:
Catherine N. Flerlage
Director of Public Works:
Stephen A. Murphy
Police Chief: Cassin B. Gittings

305 Queen Anne Street,
La Plata, Maryland 20646
Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Telephone: 301-934-8421 / 301-870-3377
La Plata Police Department: 301-934-1500
Email: mminer@townoflaplata.org
Website: www.townoflaplata.org

ADULT MOSQUITO CONTROL

The Maryland Department of Agriculture recognizes that the annoyance caused by moderate to large numbers of mosquitoes can adversely impact the quality of life for citizens and visitors in Maryland. Control of populations of mosquitoes in residential areas will be conducted in accordance with this policy. **The Town of La Plata contracts with the Maryland Department of Agriculture to provide mosquito control.**

The guidelines used for control are: The adult mosquito population must meet, or exceed, a minimum density to justify the application of pesticide. Two measurements of adult mosquito density are used in Maryland: (1) landing rate counts, and (2) light traps. The minimum landing rate threshold to initiate spraying of insecticide with ULV ground application equipment is 1 mosquito landing on an inspector in a 1-minute period. The minimum light trap collection to warrant ground spraying is 10 female mosquitoes, of a species known to feed on humans, per night. The minimum action thresholds for aerial application of an insecticide for nuisance adult mosquito control are: (1) an average landing rate count of 12 mosquitoes per minute; or

(2) a light trap collection of 100 female mosquitoes per night.

Tips to Rid Your Community of Mosquito Breeding Sites

- ❖ Clean rain gutters to allow water to flow freely.
- ❖ Remove old tires or drill drainage holes in tires used for playground equipment.
- ❖ Store plastic wading pools inside or turn them upside down when not in use.
- ❖ Turn over or remove clay pots and plastic containers.
- ❖ Dispose of all empty beverage containers, plastic wrappers, discarded toys, etc.
- ❖ Check for trapped water in plastic or canvas tarps used to cover boats, pools, etc. Arrange the tarp to drain the water.
- ❖ Replace water in bird baths at least twice a week.
- ❖ Remove pet food and water dishes that are not being used.
- ❖ Don't leave garbage can lids lying upside down. Be sure water does not collect in the bottom of garbage cans.
- ❖ Flush water in the bottom of plant holders twice a week.
- ❖ Fix dripping outside water faucets.
- ❖ Turn wheelbarrows upside down when stored outside.
- ❖ Check around construction sites or do-it-yourself improvements to ensure that proper backfilling and grading prevent drainage problems.
- ❖ Check ornamental ponds, tree holes and water-holding low areas for mosquito larvae. Call the nearest Mosquito Control Office (see below) if you find, or suspect, mosquito larvae are present.
- ❖ If ditches do not flow and contain stagnant water for one week or longer, they can produce large numbers of mosquitoes. Report such conditions to a Mosquito Control Office. Do not attempt to clear these ditches because they may be protected by wetland regulations.

*Maryland Dept. of Agriculture Mosquito Control-Southern Maryland Office:
301-373-4263*

NEW WATER, SEWER, AND TRASH COLLECTION RATES

After conducting work sessions and holding a public hearing, the Town Council adopted Ordinance 07-6, dealing with the FY2007-2008 Tax Rate, Ordinance 07-7 Amended, dealing with the FY2007-2008 Budget, and Ordinance 07-8 Amended, dealing with the FY2007-2008 Fee Schedule. The ordinances become effective July 1, 2007. Copies of legislation are available at Town Hall, 305 Queen Anne Street, or on the Town's web page at www.townoflaplata.org under "Legislation".

The tax rate remains the same, \$0.32/\$100 of assessed value. The following rate changes become effective on July 1, 2007, and will be reflected on the 3rd quarter (July-August-September) billing to be mailed to you in October. Generally, the rates have been increased approximately 10% to keep the income in pace with the increased costs due to inflation.

Water: from \$2.00 to \$2.20/1000 gallons used

Sewer: from \$5.72 to \$6.29/1000 gallons water used

Refuse Collection – Residential (quarterly amount):

- Curbside: from \$57.30 to \$63.03
- House side: from \$80.90 to \$89.00

Refuse Collection – Commercial: Rates will also be increased approximately 10%. Please call the billing office for further details.

Recycling Surcharge: from \$8.50 to \$8.75 quarterly (increased approximately 3%)

MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED)

Town and County for the park and ride on Washington Avenue illustrates how the town and county continue to work together. The county will pay for the electric and public telephone bill and the town will be responsible for the maintenance of the facility and for snow removal.

La Plata has contracted a traffic engineer to present a comprehensive Transportation Traffic Study, in conjunction with the Charles County study. By coordinating with the County and using the same engineering firm, we are able to share information and save taxpayer dollars.

The St. Mary's Avenue streetscape project has been completed. In addition, Phoenix Run and Hickory Ridge neighborhood streets were repaved thereby providing smooth driving surfaces and a commitment by the town to preserve and maintain our streets.

The Council has authorized the Acting Town Manager to negotiate a new site for the public works department. The Department is outgrowing its facility and the Council wants to relocate it to an area of town that is not primarily residential.

The Town of La Plata continues to sponsor concerts, movies, parades and town festivals for the enjoyment of the community. In addition, we have recently partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the Festival of Scarecrows as a fundraiser for our

local hospital. This event drew much praise and interest and will be featured again next Fall, along with a new event, the Taste of La Plata.

A much-needed new water tank was constructed in the northeast quadrant of La Plata to increase the capacity for water storage and also to help with fire protection in that part of town.

Our refuse crew now operates a new 27-yard trash truck. The larger size and capacity will decrease the number of trips to the landfill, thereby increasing the efficiency of this service.

The Council negotiated with developers for an additional \$180,000 to be used for infrastructure improvements.

This year, the Town has experienced an increased interest from various retailers. The Design Review guidelines, in effect for several years and promoted by the Town Council, have been used to uphold an esthetically pleasing appearance to the business establishments in the Town.

The Council appointed a water and sewer advisory committee to focus attention on problems associated with the collection system and wastewater treatment plant and has endorsed the implementation of an aggressive preventive maintenance program. The Council voted to purchase several flow meters so the Town will be able to recognize Inflow and Infiltration problems by identifying the source

and making necessary repairs.

The Treasurer is pleased to report the town is fiscally healthy. Our debt ratios are within suggested guidelines for our assessable base and income. New commercial and residential construction and property assessments remain strong and business personal property tax adds revenue to the Town General Fund Revenues. Although these numbers are in the "black" we must remember that with the growth come new demands for services. In the past rates were held artificially low and did not keep up with maintenance. This year the operating budget expense for the Sewer Fund will be over by about \$150,000. Therefore, the rates will need to increase more than usual to cover present and future I&I repair work.

The Council had many work sessions which dealt directly with improvements to the Town. The ideas that emanated from these work sessions will be shared with the new Town Manager when that person is hired.

On behalf of the Council, I want to recognize and thank Michelle Miner, Joe Norris and all of the Town employees for the extraordinary job they did during this past year in the absence of a Town Manager. Due to their efforts and diligence, services to our Town and its residents were carried out smoothly and without interruption. We are all grateful for the cooperation that was evident among everyone.

NOW OPEN IN LA PLATA AND COMING SOON TO LA PLATA

[This information is current as of May 4, 2007, and correct to the best of our knowledge. For more information, please contact Carol Rollins, Development Coordinator, Town of La Plata, at crollins@townoflaplata.org or 301-934-8421, ext. 116.]

The following businesses were issued Commercial Occupancy Permits during March and April 2007:

Law Office of Hammad S. Matin, 105 Centennial St., Ste. 300
Inkhouse Tattoo, 600 Charles St.
Target Employment Office, 600 Charles St.
Mattress Corner, 6541 Crain Hwy.
Longevity Personal Training, 6770 Crain Hwy.

The following businesses will be opening soon in La Plata. Those businesses that are located within a shopping center are listed by the name of that center.

Others include their location address.

All include the estimated year of opening.

La Plata Plaza
Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robbins (2007)
Famous Footwear (2007)
Target (2007)

La Plata Plaza North
3 Brothers Pizza (2007)
FedEx/Kinko's (2007)
La Plata Plaza Cleaners (2007)
Moe's Southwest Grill (2007)
PETCO (2007)

La Plata Village Center
Texas Roadhouse (2007)

Rosewick Crossing

Giant (2008)
Lowe's (2008)

Arizona Pizza,
105 Centennial St. (2007)
Walgreen's, 6300 Crain Hwy. (2008)
Dash-In & Shell,
6305 Crain Hwy. (2007)
PNC Bank, 6315 Crain Hwy. (2007)
Roy Rogers, 6505 Crain Hwy. (2007)
Popeye's, 6591 Crain Hwy. (2007)
Paige's of Time Early Learning Center,
207 Kent Ave. (2007)

Daniel J. Mears hired as Town Manager



The Town Council is pleased to announce the hiring of Daniel J. Mears as La Plata's new Town Manager. Mr. Mears will begin work by July 1, 2007. The Council engaged in a national search to find an individual who had the right blend of experience that would serve La Plata well. The position was previously held by Douglas R. Miller, who served as Town Manager for eighteen years.

Mr. Mears currently serves as the Assistant City Manager and the Economic Developer for Hazelwood, Missouri. Previously, he was the City Manager for Ellisville, Missouri. Mr. Mears is a Credentialed Manager through the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), as well as a Certified Economic Developer through the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).

Mr. Mears is originally from the east coast and has family in Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware. He will move to La Plata with his wife Maureen and son Danny.

Meet the Town Staff — Jeffrey Hitaffer



Meet the newest member of the La Plata Police Department, Jeffrey Hitaffer. Officer Hitaffer is a man of many talents. Jeff was a Baltimore City Police Officer for 5 years before an injury forced him out of the job he loved. He worked hard to get healthy and at 34 years of age he graduated May 4th from the Southern Maryland Criminal Justice Academy. Jeff gave high praise to the academy and did state this academy was much tougher physically than the Baltimore City Academy. While Jeff was between police careers he developed new talents. They include singing, acting, dancing, and baking wedding cakes. Just before the academy started Jeff was performing at Toby's Dinner Theatre in Columbia in the role of Ritchie Valens in *The Buddy Holly Story*. This performance was good enough to be invited to the UK to perform at the request of the writer of *The Buddy Holly Story*. When asked, Jeff will tell you he really wants to be a police officer, but no one can say he didn't make it in the theater. Jeff is single and hopes to be moving to the La Plata area in the near future.

Town Notes is a publication of the Town of La Plata. If you would like to submit a Community Announcement item (subject to Town approval and space availability), please send it by e-mail to jfrazier@townoflaplata.org.

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