

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

It has been a busy couple of months since my last column, and in an attempt to keep you all abreast of what is happening in the Town, I will get right to the matters at hand.

The Celebrate La Plata event, with its primary focus on the 10th anniversary of the devastating tornado that rocked La Plata on April 28, 2002, was a resounding success. I am certain that all who participated in this event departed with a renewed understanding of the affects of the storm and a renewed belief in La Plata's ability to rebuild and stand as a symbol to all of what can be accomplished when people work together in the best interest of the entire community.

The twist contest sponsored by Archbishop Neale School, the bed races, and all the other displays and events made Celebrate La Plata a special day that will be remembered for a very long time.

We have completed many of our budget sessions necessary to establish the Town budget for the next fiscal year. The coming year will be a lean year with lower revenue due to property devaluations and a continued shortfall in the highway user funds we receive from the State; funds that the Town uses to repair and maintain our streets and roads. But your Council is dedicated to maintain the high level of services we have provided in the past and will continue to do so.

The annexation of land in the Northern part of Town, commonly referred to as the WalMart development, still is a hot topic in La Plata. Notwithstanding numerous letters to the Editor in our local newspapers and comment on the street, which tends to divide people into two groups, those in favor of the development and those who are not,

Continued on page 3

EXPLORERS

The La Plata Police Department started an Explorer Post in April of 2011. The Explorers are a youth program for young men and women ages 14 (and have completed the 8th grade) to 21 years of age, interested in a career in law enforcement. The Explorer Program is through the Learning for Life division of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Explorers learn different aspects of law enforcement through training, community service, and public relations. Post 1888 helps out with Town Concerts, Celebrate La Plata, and various other community events. Explorer Post 1888 currently has six Explorers.



On Saturday, May 5th the La Plata Police Department's Explorer Post 1888 sent three Explorers and three advisors to the First Annual National Capital Area Law Enforcement Exploring Event at Camp Snyder in Haymarket, VA. The Explorers trained in Crime Scene Investigation, Crime Prevention, Crisis Negotiation, Emergency First Aid, and Traffic Stops. This training is credited towards several proficiency awards they can earn. They also got a chance to interact with several other Explorer Posts from the National Capital Region which encompasses Explorers from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia.

Explorer Post 1888 meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the La Plata Police Station Community Room located at 101 La Grange Avenue, La Plata, MD 20646. If interested in joining you can contact Advisor Pfc. Jason Posey #617 at jposey@townoflaplata.org or (301) 934-1500 ext. 617.



Town of La Plata



La Plata Tornado

COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Wayne Winkler, Ward 1

Spring is finally here and I so look forward to summer flowers, birds having babies and watching them learn to fly, our summer concerts, and walking the streets of La Plata meeting new people as well as saying hello to old friends.

As everyone knows we have a tough budget year because of depreciating property values and increases in the costs of goods and services. We were blessed with a mild winter. The Town didn't have to buy salt for the roads, pay overtime to plow, and roads did not deteriorate from freezing temperatures.

By the time you read this article we will have held the public hearing on our budget with no decrease in services, and no one will be furloughed. We do have issues that we must attend to, one

being road repair. Each year Counties and Municipalities receive money from the State for repair and resurfacing, this money comes from gas tax. The State Government has elected to keep this money for use in other areas and, I guess in their minds, we are to raise taxes or find some other way to pay for the repairs. In La Plata we are OK for a couple of years because of the good condition of most of our roads, but this will catch up with us in the future and, left unchecked, will create unsafe and hazardous conditions. I think part of the problem is State Delegates that have never worked in County or Municipal Government and I don't believe they know what we do and what budget constraints we are faced with. This is such a shame.

Our local delegation is supportive, but unfortunately the State delegation as a

whole pushes its budget problems down to local governments. La Plata's largest budget problem today is caused by the State taking about \$400,000 in gas taxes you paid for away from our community. La Plata has a long history of managing its finances well. It is unfortunate the State tries to fix its problems by trying to compel local governments to raise their taxes. La Plata will maintain its tax rate for the upcoming year, despite the State.

As I close I hope we have a mild summer, not like last year with a major flood and earthquake, and everyone comes out and enjoys the concerts, Memorial Day celebration, Town yard sales, Fourth of July, and Labor Day. One last thing, please recycle, it makes this a better place to live.

Code Corner – Rental Licenses

If you are renting a house, an apartment, or part of your home, it must be inspected and licensed. Renting a property that has not been inspected or licensed may increase the liability of the property owner in the event of an incident with a renter. All rental dwellings, dwelling units, and rooming units, let or rented for human habitation, shall be licensed and regulated in accordance with chapter 155 of the Town Code to ensure the protection of the health, welfare, safety, and morals of persons residing in those units and rooms.

No person shall let or rent for human habitation any dwelling, dwelling unit, or rooming unit unless its owner possesses a current operating license issued by the Town for that specific dwelling. Operating licenses are issued for a period of two years from the date of issuance.

If you suspect a property is being rented without a license, contact La Plata's Manager of Inspections, James Yates at jjates@townofaplata.org or (301) 934-8421.

\$500 BEAUTIFICATION GRANT



This is a great outlet for Home Owner Associations, school projects, scout groups, civic organizations, individuals, businesses, and other La Plata community members to do something that benefits you, the Town, and all who visit La Plata.

Grant recipients for the previous grant round include: Grace Lutheran School, Garden Upgrade Project; Hickory

Ridge, Quince Island Enhancement Project; Matula Elementary School, Sign Spruce Up Project; Quailwood HOA, Parkway Enhancement Project; Catherine Lavery, Redwood Lake Repair and Update Project; Walter J. Mitchell Green Team, Green Team Beautification Project.

Grant applications will be available for download from the Town's website www.townofaplata.org, or you may get them directly from Danielle Mandley at (301) 934-8421 or dmandley@townofaplata.org. Grant applications will be reviewed by La Plata's Beautification Commission following the next application deadline, September 1, 2012, and successful projects will receive up to \$500 to help bring the idea to life. Thank you for your interest in helping our community by focusing on ways to make La Plata a better place.

"Volunteers bring beauty to life"

An important notice to Town of La Plata residents about... Sewer Back Up Damage

Damage to your property because of a sewer back up is a potential problem for every Town resident connected to the public sewer system. You may not be aware that from any point in the system, the introduction of items such as disposable diapers, tree roots, grease and excessive rain or snowmelt, can cause sewer backups in spite of regular Town maintenance. The Town of La Plata cannot guarantee that your sewer system will never back up and in most cases is not responsible to pay for damages resulting from a sewer back up. If your sewer line does sustain a blockage, call the La Plata Department of Public Works at (301) 934-8421 before calling a plumber.

Protection from financial loss caused by sewer backups can be obtained by requesting the addition of this coverage to your homeowner's insurance policy.

CONSERVATION MINI-GRANTS

Help make La Plata a better place for you and the environment. In order to help turn some of your ideas on helping our environment into reality, the Town offers Conservation Mini-Grants. Several grants of up to \$500 for projects that positively benefits La Plata environmentally are available for the September 1, 2012 application deadline.

Find a way to inspire action, educate the community, or directly benefit our environment. This is a great outlet for Home Owner Associations, school projects, scout groups, civic organizations,

individuals, businesses, and other community members to do something that benefits you, the Town, and the environment. Grant applications are available for download from the Town's website, or you may get them directly from Town Manager Daniel Mears at (301) 934-8421 or dmears@townoflaplata.org. Successful projects will receive up to \$500 to help implement the idea. Thank you for your interest in helping our community, and the Town can help you make that happen.

Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

July 4th

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

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.

TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Roy G. Hale

Council:

Wayne Winkler Ward 1

C. Keith Back Ward 2

Paddy Mudd Ward 3

Joseph W. Norris Ward 4

Town Manager:

Daniel J. Mears

Treasurer: Robert W. Oliphant

Assistant Town Manager:

Michelle D. Miner

Town Clerk: Danielle Mandley

Project Manager: Steven F. Schroeder

Police Chief: Cassin B. Gittings

Director of Planning and Community

Development: David M. Jenkins

Director of Operations: Robert F. Stahl, Jr.

Director of Public Works:

Jeffrey S. Garner

Senior Planner: Theresa C. Dent

Manager of Inspections: James Q. Yates

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

MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

the basic facts surrounding this petition are important for every citizen to understand. The Town Council voted in favor of the petition, on a 3 to 2 vote. A referendum petition was circulated and signatures were collected. In that at least 20% of the registered voters in La Plata signed the petition, the forms were submitted to the individual stated in State law to receive the petition forms and certify the signatures. That person is the Town Manager, Daniel Mears. With the assistance of the Charles County Board of Elections a sufficient number of signatures were certified and a vote was scheduled for this past April. Prior to the vote being taken, legal action was filed against the Town by the annexation petitioner on grounds that the petition forms, signed by the registered voters of La Plata, were not valid.

A hearing was held on May 3rd and the judge ruled that the referendum on the annexation was invalid based not on the forms submitted but on the procedures drafted by the Town Manager on the administrative steps that he would take to validate the signatures submitted. The procedures were nothing more than a clear statement of what would occur once the signature forms were received at Town Hall. The steps he would have taken, with or without, written procedures. The procedures by themselves were not challenged only the fact that they were promulgated by the Town Manager, and not the Town Council. Our legal counsel was very specific in advising the Town Council that the promulgation of procedures was not an action for the Council but was an inherent obligation of the Town Manager in carrying out his responsibilities under State law.

Where do we go from here? There is a 30-day window in which to file an appeal to the judge's ruling on May 3rd. The Council is currently considering all its options associated with this recent decision and will make its decision before the 30-day period expires.

It is truly unfortunate that an annexation petition has become so controversial and so convoluted. In all annexation petitions, the Council has specific obligations and the residents have a right to challenge a vote of the Council by referendum. This is the democratic process. There will be other annexation petitions, you cannot stop people from submitting requests, and it is possible that one or more of these will go to referendum. Albeit the current process has been difficult, to say the least, it is not unlike the aftermath of the tornado, when we came together as a community, there is little that we cannot overcome or accomplish.

As your Mayor, I am always interested in your comments, be they positive or critical. You may reach me at Town Hall (301) 934-8421 or at home (301) 934-4850.

LA PLATA TOWN SERVICES

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. Billing for special trash pickup is included on your quarterly utility bill.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Household hazardous waste collection for 2012 are on the first Saturday of



CHARLES COUNTY
HOUSEHOLD
HAZARDOUS WASTE
COLLECTION

each month through December from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the parking lot of the Department of Public Works building, located at 10430 Audie Lane, off of Radio Station Road in La Plata. Household hazardous waste collection is a contracted service and items cannot be accepted when the contractor is not on site.

Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, expired prescription drugs, and other poisons that are around your house. Please keep the materials in their original containers whenever possible, and bring them to the collection site in cardboard boxes to ease unloading.

For more information, call the Charles County Department of Public Facilities, Environmental Resources Division at (301) 932-3599.

Yard Waste Pick Up

Residential yard waste pickups will only take place on Monday and Fridays. Containers of yard waste ONLY – leaves, grass and shrub clippings, brush or branches may be put out on Mondays and Fridays. The containers must be marked “Yard Waste”. Brush or branches must be bundled, weigh no more than 50lbs. per bundle, and the branches may not be larger than 4 feet long. *Plastic bags are not allowed – if you bag yard waste you must use paper bags.*

Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

If your regular trash collection day is:
Wednesday, July 4

Trash will be picked up on:
Tuesday, July 3

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2012



National Night Out (NNO) is designed to bring residents, law enforcement agencies, community groups, and businesses together to celebrate crime prevention awareness while sending a message that crime will not be tolerated in our community. Each year, on the first Tuesday in August, people across America gather in their own communi-

ties to take a stand against crime.

For NNO, neighbors plan barbeques, picnics, cookouts, safety fairs, and other events to celebrate their efforts to maintain safe and healthy neighborhoods. They also get organized to promote police and community partnerships, crime, drug and violence prevention, safety, and neighborhood unity.

The purpose of NNO:

- Heighten crime and drug awareness.
- Through block-by-block organizing, support anti-crime efforts such as community oriented policing and safe streets.

- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and unity.
- Support community police relations and cooperation.
- Send a clear message that our neighborhoods are organized and are not prey for illegal activity.

Please join with your neighbors and law enforcement in this year's event. For additional information on how your community can participate in NNO contact Sergeant William Brooks of the La Plata Police Department at wbrooks@townoflaplata.org or call (301) 934-1500.

July 2012

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Yard Waste Pick Up Special Pick up, call before 4:00 p.m. 6/29	Yard Waste Pick Up	Planning Commission Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Trash pick up for 7/4	Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Town Hall closed 4th of July Watermelon Bash No trash pick up, pick up will be 7/3 No recycling pick-up 	 Recycling pick up from 7/4	Yard Waste Pick Up US Naval Academy "Electric Brigade"	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Yard Waste Pick Up	Mayor and Council Work Session: 7:00 p.m.	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting; 5:00 p.m.		Yard Waste Pick Up "Road House" band	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Community Yard Sale 

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Yard Waste Pick Up	Yard Waste Pick Up 	Mayor and Council Work Session: 7:00 p.m.	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.		Yard Waste Pick Up "Appaloosa" band	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Yard Waste Pick Up	Mayor and Council Business Meetings; 7:00 p.m.	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.		Yard Waste Pick Up "Eastern Tradition" band	 Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

29	30	31				
	Yard Waste Pick Up					

SPECIAL EVENTS

Ice Cream with the Easter Bunny

The Easter Bunny made one last stop to visit with the children at the Town Hall on Monday, April 9 before hopping home. The children enjoyed ice cream sundaes from Carvel of La Plata and decorated book marks, airplanes and made animal eggs. The Easter Bunny was on hand to visit with the children and take photos. A good time was had by all!



Celebrate La Plata

On Saturday, April 28, 2012 the community came out to Celebrate La Plata with a full day of community togetherness, fun, and remembrance, as we recognized the 10 year anniversary of the Tornado that devastated La Plata by celebrating "A Closer and Stronger Community".

The day was full of entertainment and activities for children of all ages at the Town Hall. Port Tobacco Players Encore Kids, GroovYoga, Island Music and Art Smart entertained the crowd in front of Town Hall. Art Smart Studio provided many hands-on activities geared toward Earth Day. Children lined up to get their face painted by McDonough Drama Club and enjoyed the moon bounces and wrecking ball rides on the lawn. Children had the chance to explore a variety of equipment including MedSTAR Transport helicopter, fire trucks, ambulance and much more! Several Southern Blue Crab Players stopped by to meet and greet the crowd and sign autographs. Throughout the day, the La Plata Police Department welcomed visitors to their open house and provided a tour of the station. Thank you to the many exhibitors and food vendors that were on hand for the event.

Mayor Hale, Delegate Sally Jameson and the Town Council showed off their dance moves and helped lead Archbishop Neale School's Twist world record attempt in front of Town Hall. The students were really twisting away!

The crowd enjoyed watching the beds race down La Grange Ave for the annual Bed Races. Special thank you to the teams that participated in the Bed Races - Chick-fil-A of La Plata, Sherry's Angels, La Plata Community Church, Prayer of Faith Ministries and Archbishop Neale School.

Thank you to all who made Celebrate La Plata a success. Our Town is truly closer and stronger because of the community support!



Community Yard Sale

The next community yard sale is scheduled for Saturday, July 14th from 8 am to 12 pm. Applications for the July sale are available at www.townofaplata.org under the Events page.

4th of July Watermelon Bash

The Watermelon Bash takes place on Wednesday, July 4 from 11 am to 2 pm on the grounds of the Town Hall. Join us for hot dogs, games, wet fun, and plenty of watermelon! Get more details at www.townofaplata.org.



Summer Concert Series

Join us for the Friday night Summer Concert Series at the La Plata Town Hall. The weekly concerts take place on the lawn at La Plata Town Hall at 305 Queen Anne Street. Concert goers are encouraged to bring blankets and lawn chairs for sitting. Coolers are allowed, but no alcohol, please. Concessions are available from the Town's food trailer located near the back of the parking lot; an ice cream truck is also stationed there for your enjoyment. A play area for children, the Kids' Zone, allows parents to enjoy the concert while keeping an eye on the little ones. For more information, contact La Plata Town Hall at (301) 934-8421, or check the full concert schedule at www.townofaplata.org.



May 25	25th Hour Band
June 1	Four of a Kind Band
June 8	US Navy Band The Commodores
June 15	Port Tobacco Pickers
June 22	R&R Train
June 29	The Wise Guys
July 6	US Naval Academy Band Electric Brigade
July 13	Roadhouse
July 20	Appaloosa
July 27	Eastern Tradition
August 3	The Blarney Stones
August 10	Three Sixty Band
August 17	US Navy Band Country Current
August 24	Southern Maryland Concert Band
August 31	Cover Story
September 7	Eric Scott Band
September 14	Anthony "Swamp Dog" Clark
September 21	Lionel Ward and the New World Band
September 28	John Luskey Band

WEBSITE POLL



Visit the Town of La Plata's website at <http://www.townoflaplata.org> to participate in an online poll. Click on the 'Snap Poll' link on the left side of the web page to go to the poll and see the results to date. The current question is:

What is the condition of your street?

Excellent condition

Minor cracks and potholes

Moderate repair and patching required

In significant need of repair

April Website Poll Results

Below are the website 'Snap Poll' results from the last issue. The question and results are:

Since there is no established funding for storm water pipes and collection devices, the Town of La Plata should develop a funding source to maintain the storm water system.

Strongly Agree – 36%

Somewhat Agree – 28%

Neither Agree nor Disagree – 6%

Somewhat Disagree – 6%

Strongly Disagree – 19%

Don't Know – 6%

Since 2008 the Town has been working to develop a plan to comply with the new requirements of the State of Maryland's Storm Water Management Act of 2007. The Act put in place new requirements for storm water associated with new construction, and also established new requirements for existing storm

water infrastructure. Specifically, the Act made local governments responsible for the inspection and maintenance of all storm water infrastructure within their jurisdiction. Not only would the Town have to ensure proper maintenance of storm water pipes and structures on its property and under its roads, but for those on private property as well.

The first step to accomplishing this is to establish an inspection program. The Town has been working to inventory the entire storm water system since 2009. That information will be used to begin a required inspection of every facility every three years. That is planned to begin this year.

In order to ensure the maintenance, the Town could either compel individual property owners to properly maintain the pipes and structures on their property, or seek easements to allow the Town to accept responsibility for the maintenance. In the budget proposed for the Town Council's consideration this June, it is proposed that the Town seek easements on residential property, so the Town would be able to maintain that portion of the storm water system, in addition to the infrastructure on Town property.

The Town has calculated the entire value of the storm water infrastructure in Town at \$14,841,580. Of that amount, over 67% is located within the Town Right of Way, or Town owned property. After storm water leaves private property, whether commercial or residential, it then typically travels through municipal infrastructure that the entire community shares. 14% of the infrastructure

is located on private residential property, and 19% is located on commercial properties.

The FY 2012-2013 budget proposes that the Town maintain the portions of the system within its rights of way and on residential property provided an easement is obtained. To fund this, the budget calls for the Storm Water fee charged would increase from \$3.75 per quarter to \$12.50 per quarter for each Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). Each residential unit would be charged one ERU, and commercial properties would be charged based upon the amount of impervious surface on their property. While commercial properties have just 19% of the storm water system, they account for 61% of the Town's impervious surface, which determines the amount of storm water runoff.

More stringent requirements for storm water continue to be passed down from the Environmental Protection Agency to the State of Maryland and on to local governments. La Plata is required to maintain the storm water system with the ultimate goal of improving water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. Additional mandates are expected in which La Plata, and local governments across the State will be required to reduce the amount of nutrients in storm water by 25% by 2017. This is called the Watershed Improvement Plan, which will continue to add to the fiscal burden on this community.

JOE HARRISON



On April 17, 2012 Mayor Hale presented Joseph Harrison with a Proclamation for his 26 years of dedicated service to the betterment of the Town of La Plata. Mr. Harrison retired as the Farmers Market Master. The Town values the many years of dedicated service and commitment to the com-

munity provided by Joe Harrison, who worked tirelessly to beautify our Town as part of the Beautification Commission, and also volunteered for numerous special events. The Council of the Town of La Plata proclaimed Joseph A. Harrison, La Plata's Farmers Market Master Emeritus.

SIGN CONTROL

The following is an excerpt from *Better Models for Development in Maryland, Ideas for Creating More Livable and Prosperous Communities*, The Conservation Fund, October 2004, providing the need and importance of sign control:

“Sign control is one of the most important and powerful actions a community can take to make an immediate visible improvement in its physical environment. This is because almost nothing will destroy the distinctive character of a community or region faster than uncontrolled signs and billboards. This doesn't mean we don't need signs and needed information. As a planned architectural feature a business sign can be colorful, decora-

tive, even distinguished

So why do Maryland communities need to control signs? The answer is obvious: too often signs are oversized, poorly planned, badly located and altogether too numerous. What's more, sign clutter is ugly, costly and ineffective. And it degrades one of Maryland's greatest economic assets – its scenic landscape.

Drive down a street cluttered with signs in often an unpleasant experience, not just because it is ugly but because it is fatiguing. Sign clutter overloads drivers with more information than possible to manage. It requires great effort by the driver to either to read it all or block it all out, while attempting to drive safely. A good sign code is pro-

business, since an attractive business district will attract more customers than an ugly one. Moreover, when signs are controlled, businesses will do a better job of selling at less cost because when clutter is reduced, consumers actually have an easier time finding what they are looking for.

Sign control is especially important to the health of Maryland's tourist related communities. This is because the more Maryland communities come to look like every place in America, the less reason there is to visit. On the other hand, the more Maryland communities do to enhance their unique assets – including their visual character – the more people will want to visit.”

TOWN INSTALLS NEW ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARDS

Recently you may have noticed that the Town Gateway signs on Route 301 have received a facelift and new electronic message boards. The message boards will serve to notify the community about upcoming Town sponsored events and notices. Community notification has been

one of a number of Council priorities. The funds to make this Council priority a reality were contributed as part of the Annexation Agreement with Rosewick Limited Partnership in June of 2006.

The Mayor and Council asked the Beautification Commission to review options

for locations and designs to provide the highest benefit to the entire community. During this review the Commission considered many possible options and made a recommendation to the Council to update the existing Route 301 signs to the design you see today.

MAKING LA PLATA MORE EFFICIENT

With resources strained by challenges in the economy, it is vital that the Town explore ways to make its operations more efficient to save money, time, and add value to the services provided. Town staff is charged with finding new ways to improve services, and the Town regularly invests in technology or implements process changes to drive efficiencies.

Planning Website

Frequent visitors to the Town of La Plata website may have noticed recent changes to the Planning tab. The improvements include an updated Town Zoning Map and new Customer Assistance Guides.

The two new guides include ‘When do I need a Building Permit?’ and ‘How to draw a Site Plan for Additions and Redevelopment’.

The site also contains Development Permits ready to be downloaded. These include a Grading Permit, Building Permit, Application for Utilities Service, Certificate of Occupancy and Compliance, and a Plumbing Permit.

The Town uses its website to make information available to residents and customers when it is convenient for them. By providing information on the website, calls for questions about routine Planning

activities can be reduced, freeing staff time for other tasks. Making forms available for download reduces trips to Town Hall for customers, and reduces correspondence for out of town applicants.

To access the Planning and Community Development services on the Town's website simply go to <http://www.townoflaplata.org> and select the Planning tab on the left side of the screen. For further information, you may also contact La Plata's Director of Planning and Community Development, David Jenkins, at djenkins@townoflaplata.org or (301) 934-8421.

Commercial Building Permits issued 3/1-4/30

Island Music – 403 Charles Street

Davi Nails (inside Wal-Mart) – 40 Drury Drive

Holiday Inn – 6860 Crain Highway

Hunan Star (expansion) – 6277 Crain Highway

Hue Hair Color Salon – 105 Drury Drive, Unit E

Little Caesars – 28 Shining Willow Way

The Mentor Network – 200 Kent Avenue

Commercial Use & Occupancy Permits issued 3/1-4/30

Three Brothers – 13 Shining Willow Way

Island Music – 403 Charles Street

Davi Nails (inside Wal-Mart) – 40 Drury Drive

TOWN OF LA PLATA

305 Queen Anne Street
P. O. Box 2268
La Plata, Maryland 20646-2268

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Town Notes is a publication of the Town of La Plata.

Adult Mosquito Control

The Town of La Plata contracts with the Maryland Department of Agriculture to provide 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 its policy.

Tips to Rid La Plata 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.
- ◆ 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 the Mosquito Control Office at cantwema@mda.state.md.us or (410) 841-5870.
- ◆ Get more information from http://www.mda.state.md.us/plants-pests/mosquito_control/index.php

