

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Tasha Prados
240-777-7970

Councilmember Valerie Ervin Requests M-NCPPC Maintain Option of Having Sligo Creek Golf Course Continue Operations

ROCKVILLE, Md., July 31, 2009—Montgomery County District 5 Councilmember Valerie Ervin, whose district includes Kensington, parts of Silver Spring, encompasses Takoma Park and Wheaton, this week wrote to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) requesting that the planning commission maintain an option that would evaluate the resources necessary to keep Sligo Creek Golf Course in Silver Spring in operation.

On July 16, the planning board unanimously decided to remove the option of maintaining Sligo Creek Golf Course as a golf course from the re-use study being conducted by the Department of Parks. The nine-hole course, with limited ability to expand, has a loyal following particularly among senior citizens and beginners. However, M-NCPPC and the Montgomery County Revenue Authority have struggled to find a way to operate the course in a manner that would be close to a break-even point financially. There have been a number of suggestions on what to do with the property, if it does not continue as a golf course.

“While I applaud the board’s efforts to fulfill its objectives of satisfying recreation needs while maintaining open green space, as the Councilmember for this district, I believe it is critical that the board include the option for golf,” Councilmember Ervin wrote to Planning Board Chair Royce Hanson. “The Council needs an independent evaluation of what is needed to keep the course open over the short- and long-term.”

In addition, Councilmember Ervin wrote to six members of the Montgomery County delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, who have expressed support for maintaining the course, for help in securing state funding to continue golf at Sligo Creek.

The golf course has been operated since 2006 by the Montgomery County Revenue Authority under a lease agreement. The Revenue Authority presented a business plan that proposed adding a lighted driving range and a miniature golf course to the Sligo Creek property in an attempt to increase revenues. However, after evaluating community concerns and conducting an independent financial analysis, the Revenue Authority then told the Montgomery County Government that it would withdraw from the lease agreement. The golf course is scheduled to close on Oct. 1.

“I understand that the board is legally bound by the lease agreement between the Montgomery County Revenue Authority and M-NCPPC, and thus chose only to evaluate the nature preserve and the ‘fun for all’ recreational park options,” wrote Councilmember Ervin. “However, I urge the board to include the option of maintaining Sligo Creek Golf Course as a golf course in the re-use study.”

Sligo Creek Golf Course is the only public golf course in Montgomery County located inside the Beltway. It has been a part of the down-county community for decades.

“The impending closure of this course has ignited a flood of community concerns about the need to keep Sligo Creek Golf Course as a golf course,” said Councilmember Ervin. “I am listening to my constituents, and as a policy maker, it is my responsibility to make sure that the Council has independent data upon which to base its decision.”

###



Friends of Valerie Ervin
P.O. Box 7338
Silver Spring, MD 20907
301-466-3988 phone
www.ValerieErvin.com