Chuck Stump

Employment: Chief Information Officer for Fortigent, a financial services firm in Rockville

Education: MBA from University of Phoenix

My wife, Andrea, and I moved to town about thirteen years ago; however, we were first introduced to Poolesville several years before that, and we fell in love with the area and the town. We saved for several years in order to move here.

The initial reason we fell in love with the town was the quiet rural nature of the area. Once we moved to town, we quickly discovered the real secret of Poolesville: the small-town character and sense of community.

I see three major components to that small-town character: residents, government, and business. All three need to work in harmony in order to get that small-town character to work.

The major issues that I see facing the town in the next several years deal with the business community and with the communications.

The town government needs to do more in order to get information out to the citizens and businesses. Not to say that the town is doing nothing in this area. The town has continued to improve in the area of communications over the years, but there is still significant room for improvement. At the same time, the citizens and businesses need to get more involved with town government. There are plenty of examples of public hearings, working sessions, focus groups, and other meetings where attendance is minimal bordering on non-existent. I feel that effective communication is a two-way street that requires more work from all involved parties.

With regards to the business community, there has been quite a bit of discussion at the commissioner-level, the planning commission, CEDC, etc. about the health of the business community. Closely related to that is the current state of the central business district and parts of the commercial area in town. There is growing concern that businesses in town are struggling and that some may fail. Even worse, a few critical failures could lead to a downward spiral that causes more and more business to fail. If that happens, we could lose one of those three key components that make Poolesville a small town and end up as just another bedroom community for D.C.

I believe that the town government needs to find new and creative ways to address these problems.  Please visit my web site at www.cwsii.com or my page on Facebook for more information.