



## SUMMER 2016 | VOLUME 7, NO. 3

### EXPANSION UPDATE

In April, 2015, the City of Takoma Park issued a resolution selecting Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) to develop the municipal lot adjacent to the Co-op. The Council showed their commitment to the future of the Co-op by including a section stating: "The City Council recognizes the important role that the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op will play as the anchor tenant in the location and NDC has indicated it will work to assure the Coop's continuity of operations during construction." The resolution goes on to state that the Council seeks, "early resolution between NDC and the Co-op regarding the Co-op's long-term role as an anchor tenant in an expanded structure at the Junction." Ever since then, we have worked with NDC in an ongoing, continuous effort to obtain satisfactory solutions for the continuity of our business during construction and for certain operational aspects thereafter. As of today, however, we've been unable to

resolve with NDC certain critical aspects of our operations during and after completion of the Junction's development. Nonetheless, we will continue our diligent efforts to achieve mutually acceptable solutions.

The City is in the process of negotiating a Land Development Agreement (LDA) with NDC. According to the City's website, an LDA "outlines expectations for how a project will be developed and what the project will ultimately entail. A development agreement provides the City with an opportunity to look at the longer-term horizon and make sure the development fits in with planning efforts and local policies. It also provides the developer with a level of certainty about what it can build and what mitigation measures will be required by the City, if agreement is reached."

The Council has tentatively scheduled events that will impact the future of the Co-op. Please plan to attend these events or view them online.

### UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST:

- **July 13: Council Meeting** – Staff presentation outlining elements of the development agreement and ground lease with NDC
- **July 14 or 18: Open House** – This event will provide the community with an opportunity to learn more about the agreements as well as the anticipated development process. More details will be provided closer to the event.
- **July 20: Council Meeting** – This will provide the public an opportunity to comment on the development agreement and the ground lease
- **July 27: Council Meeting** – Resolution authorizing execution of the development agreement and related documents

Please contact Expansion Project Manager Marilyn Berger ([mberger@tpss.coop](mailto:mberger@tpss.coop)) with questions or concerns.



### MEET OUR NEW MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Aaron McKeel joined our staff just two months ago, but he has already made quite an impact. After receiving a Bachelor's of Science in Developmental Design in Architecture from the University of Michigan, Aaron is pursuing an MBA at Howard. After graduation, he plans to continue his career in the food industry in positions where he can continue to give back to the community. He has been working professionally within the food industry for about seven years and was attracted to the Co-op because it brings community and collaboration. According to him, "As soon as we as humans put walls up, we are no longer living, we are merely surviving. If

we decide to hold true to our vernacular design, we will see value in the cooperative principles and begin to build lifelong relationships with our businesses and neighbors." Aaron is passionate about the needs of the TPSS communities and the goals of the Co-op and its members. He plans to continue the **Pay it Forward** program, making it more accessible to those in need. He will also be taking an active role in the community, encouraging healthful living practices and sharing the TPSS mission with those who show interest.

The mission of TPSS Co-op is to promote healthful living by offering wholesome foods, high quality products, and community resources in a clean, friendly, cooperative grocery store... that you can own!

### TAKOMA PARK SILVER SPRING CO-OP

201 Ethan Allen Avenue  
Takoma Park MD 20912  
p. 301-891-2667  
f. 301-891-2695  
[www.TPSS.coop](http://www.TPSS.coop)

Open Daily 8 am – 10 pm

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Expansion Update
- Outreach from Aaron
- Letter from our Board
- Customer Feedback

## FROM THE BOARD: OUR SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING - By Melissa Schweisguth

TPSS held our semi-annual member meeting on June 5, with a focus on celebrating the Co-op's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was an informative, fun and inspiring event where we reflected on past accomplishments, reveled in how far we've come, and looked forward to future growth and evolution.

Member-owners filled the firehouse to near standing-room only capacity, signifying strong engagement in our cooperatively owned community institution. We began with lunch featuring TPSS vendors Bete Ethiopian Cuisine and Everlasting Life and a special Happy Anniversary cake (complete with candles, of course). Member-owners, board and staff mingled and perused a historical display. Thanks to GM Abdi Guled, Board representatives and staff sported green t-shirts emblazoned with the TPSS Logo and 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, making the celebratory nature of the meeting and our staff and Board highly visible to member-owners.

To kick off the meeting, Board President Rachel Hardwick welcomed attendees. Takoma Park Mayor Kate Stewart read the City's resolution on the importance of our immigrant population and commented on the global origins of our staff. Abdi pointed out a display featuring the flags of 20 countries where TPSS's 42 staff hail from, and announced a prize of Co-op products for the person who identified the most flags.

An update of the Co-op's strong financial position was followed by a presentation of our history. County Councilor Marc Elrich reflected on the early days and commended TPSS for its growth and community engagement. Member-owner #1, Andy Andryshek, treated attendees to an engaging recap of how TPSS came to be, the challenges it faced in its development and start up, and its growth. Bringing things up to the present, Abdi gave a store update, including new products — especially from local vendors — and

introduced the new Outreach Coordinator, Aaron McKeel. Project Manager Marilyn Berger reported on the municipal lot development.

Member-owners shared comments and questions on many topics such as GMOs and support for local organic produce. Abdi encouraged member-owners to share questions at any time via email, the website and the in-store suggestion box. Be sure to check the store bulletin board, newsletter, and website for responses to questions on a regular basis.

We rounded out the event with an activity where members shared reasons they joined TPSS, their favorite co-op principles, and their vision for the future. Attendees cited community engagement, member benefits, and healthful natural and organic foods as top reasons to join. Community and Democratic Participation emerged as key principles. Regarding the future, member-owners identified continued growth and increased support for local vendors as focus areas.

To close the meeting, we gathered in a circle and shared a word or phrase that the meeting evoked. Sentiments included *community, inspired, good energy, gratitude, growth, and good food*. Thanks to all who attended, to staff for extensive help with organization and set up, to vendors who helped serve the meal, and to Takoma Park Fire and Rescue for the great venue. We enjoyed the opportunity to engage with member-owners to celebrate our accomplishments and chart our next steps together. Let this be just one step in continued two-way communication and collaboration in moving TPSS forward, meeting our mission and ends in new ways; and serving member-owners, our community and stakeholders better every day.

## TAKOMA PARK SILVER SPRING CO-OP

### MANAGEMENT

**General Manager**  
Abdi Guled  
gm@tpss.coop

**Store Manager**  
Hussein Choteka  
hchoteka@tpss.coop

**Director of Administration**  
Marilyn Berger  
mberger@tpss.coop

**Grocery Manager**  
grocery@tpss.coop

**Finance Manager**  
Yodit Gebremeskel  
finance@tpss.coop

### BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES

**President** Rachel Hardwick  
**Vice President** Robert Anderson  
**Secretary** LuLu Fulda  
**Treasurer** Adam Frank

**Board Members**  
Emily Townsend  
Katie Parker  
Melissa Schweisguth  
David Zuckerman  
Patrick Brown

E-mail: board@tpss.coop

## WE VALUE YOUR SUGGESTIONS

Your ideas are important to us. We will be posting customer suggestions and our responses on a regular basis. Below are customer suggestions received since our March newsletter and the Co-op's responses. Please continue to share your input with us!

Customer Suggestion	Co-op Response
Has the Co-op checked the contents of sunscreen we sell? ...research showing that sunscreen is harming coral reefs	We have verified that none of our sunscreens contain oxybenzone, the chemical cited in the article
Carry bamboo toilet paper	We have ordered it and will be stocking it on a trial basis.
Carry unsweetened cocoa in bulk	It is in now in stock.
Remind produce workers to wear gloves when handling cut fruit	All produce workers have been reminded to follow all health code procedures.
Move poker chip jars so shoppers do not block exit while selecting a charity	Jars have been moved to the customer service desk and with clear, visible signage
Put a water bowl outside for dogs	Done immediately and available to all visiting pets
Provide pen at suggestion box	A pen is tied to the box.
Improve bike rack	We are looking into it
Carry tomato paste in tubes	Will be available in a few weeks.
Carry nut-free granola	Now available in bulk department
Carry vegetable oil	Looking into whether or not we can find a good quality oil
Put space for date on suggestion form	Forms are being revised