

Reservoir Hill Resident's Handbook

For an informed and engaged citizenry



2001 Park Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21217
410.225.7547
www.reservoirhill.net

Reservoir Hill Improvement Council (RHIC) unites residents and organizations as a vehicle by which to define and solve problems common to the Reservoir Hill community. The Council is an umbrella organization of more than 20 member groups, including block clubs, religious institutions, and other community groups. The Council is guided by the philosophy that organized people and economic development lead to community empowerment achieved as a result of networking, combining talents and resources, and wielding the power of an educated and united citizenry.

Reservoir Hill Resident's Handbook

One of RHIC's primary goals is to develop the skills of residents to address family and community needs. An active, organized, and educated citizenry is crucial to making Reservoir Hill a safer, cleaner, and more beautiful place to live. We hope this handbook will help residents and member organizations understand the principles and process of organizing and taking action on various community issues.

RHIC Member Organizations

Each group plays a vital role in the community. Block clubs generally work towards improving a specific geographic area where their members live. Other member groups such as Kids on the Hill work on behalf of specific populations, such as low-income youth. When thinking about improving your area, drawing upon the skills and resources of various member organizations will strengthen your effort. RHIC can help residents connect with member organizations to solve problems. RHIC member organizations include:

Beth Am Synagogue	Lakeside Neighborhood Coalition
Bolton-Park Neighbors, Inc.	Lakeview Neighbors Association
Brookfield, Newington, Callow	Lakeview Towers Tenants Association
900 Brooks Lane Block Club	Linden Avenue Block Club
Change & Growth Enrichment Program	Next Level After School Program
Corpus Christi Church	Newington Avenue Neighbors Assoc.
Druid Community Association	Reservoir Hill H.O.P.E.
Families of 2200 Brookfield Avenue	Reservoir Hill Mutual Homes
Historic Mt. Royal Terrace Association	SAC Academic Childcare
John Eager Howard Recreation Center	St. Francis Neighborhood Center
Kids on the Hill	Upper Eutaw-Madison Neighborhood Association

Community Organizing & Action

RHIC works with residents to organize and develop effective strategies to address community issues. Although some problems may be solved by making a simple phone call or talking to neighbors, other issues require collective and unified resident action. As you read through this handbook and work to improve your community, keep these organizing principles in mind to achieve the best outcome possible.

Principles

When organizing with your neighbors:

- ◆ Be inclusive: Use diversity as it is a strength.
- ◆ Build relationships across race and class lines.
- ◆ Listen: Do not disregard anyone's belief, opinion, concern, etc.
- ◆ Think critically: Look at the big picture and root causes of issues
- ◆ Educate yourselves: Research and understand the issues, and be knowledgeable about what has been done
- ◆ Be Patient: Organizing is a long-term process
- ◆ Choose feasible and winnable projects
- ◆ Turn individual self-interests into community self-interests
- ◆ Plan Effectively: Projects/activities take time, resources, and resident involvement
- ◆ Publicize: reach out to as many people possible to spread awareness and gain support

Broadening Your Action

Taking action to improve your block and Reservoir Hill is essential. However, Reservoir Hill's problems are prevalent in many neighborhoods and RHIC encourages residents and groups to be part of other city-wide and regional initiatives. Changing policy and passing legislation can help alleviate some of the problems that affect our neighborhood by addressing the root causes of these broad issues in the City. In 2006 and 2007, Reservoir Hill has had active residents who are part of these initiatives:

- *Inclusionary Housing Task Force*
- *Public Safety & Police Policy*
- *Partnership for Open Space*
- *Rental Housing Coalition*
- *Transportation Advisory Board*

Residents working on initiatives keep RHIC informed and engaged. Unified community action involves attending hearings, organizing letter writing campaigns, and meeting with our elected officials. This type of action with other city groups is crucial to the improvement of Reservoir Hill and our city.

How to Address Common Neighborhood Concerns

311 and Access to City Services

Calling 311 is the first step to access non-emergency City services. A complete list of services is also available at www.baltimorecity.gov. Here are some common service requests:

Alley Cleaning	Sewer/Waterline Problems	Abandoned Vehicle
Sanitation Inspection	Street Repair	Housing Code Inspection high grass/weeds no trash can/lids unsafe, vacant
Trash/Recycling Pickup	Dead Tree/Stump Removal	
Rat Infestation/Abatement	New Tree Request	
Bulk Trash Pick-Up	Traffic Sign Missing/Request	Housing Building Inspection no permit containment of debris
Lot Mowing/Cleaning	Street Light Out	
City Park Maintenance	Animal Control	
Graffiti Removal	Sidewalk Repair <i>* Property owner must pay</i>	

Steps for Using 311

1. Collect all pertinent information before you report and be prepared to answer questions from service representative.
* accurate location/address, detailed description of the issue, people involved and address, license plate #s, etc.
2. Dial 311 or access 311 services at www.baltimorecity.gov
3. Report the issue(s) and provide detailed information to ensure the proper City service
Write down **Service Request Number** and details of the service, including the time frame, given by the service representative.

Following Up

You may wish to follow up on your service request, or take collective action.

Contact 311 again, give them the Service Request Number and report your concern with your previous request

If problem persists:

- Contact the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods (see page 9)
- Write a letter to your City Councilmember (see page 9)
- Organize neighbors to write similar letters (or sign a petition) to the Councilmember and relevant City Department (see page 9)

Sanitation in Reservoir Hill

Trash Collection Days: Monday and Thursday Morning

By law, trash must be: (1) securely bagged; (2) placed in a durable trash can with a lid; and (3) put in your designated spot for trash on Monday and/or Thursday morning before 6:30am. Trash cans should not be kept in the alleys on other days as they could get knocked over, or become a spot for dumping bags of trash.

Recycling Collection Days:

Paper: 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month

Bottles and Cans: 2nd and 4th Monday of the month

Standards of Cleanliness

Property owners are responsible for:

- Keeping their front lawns, sidewalks, and street area clean
- Keeping back yards and half of the alley behind their home clean
- Keeping grass and weeds trimmed
- Abating rat infestation (311 offers a free rat abatement service)

Bulk Trash Pick-up (Household Items)

Call 311 to schedule up to 3 bulk items at one time to be picked up on one of the City's bulk collection days. Find out the scheduled pick up, call at least 3 days in advance, and place your items on the list. Place bulk items in regular trash collection area and on the scheduled pick-up day only.

City Collection Yard

2840 Sisson Street; just across the 28th Street Bridge

Residents can dump or drop-off:

- ✦ Construction materials and any household trash
- ✦ Recycling: paper, bottles, cans, electronic devices

Hazardous Materials can be dumped at:

- ✦ 6100 Quarantine Road, (410.396.3773)
- ✦ Twice a year at Poly High School (usually April and October, call 311 for schedule)

Residents Can Organize Around Sanitation Issues!

- ✦ Target problem areas and strategize with neighbors, RHIC and local block clubs

Public Safety in Reservoir Hill

It is important for residents to be active in making Reservoir Hill safe. RHIC staff can help you connect with residents and strategize around making your block safer.

Always call 911 for Police, Ambulance, or Fire

Building a Safe Block

- Become a Blockwatcher: Get a block watch number from the Police to make 911 calls anonymously (see Police Community Relations)
- Report drug activity with pertinent details to 666-DRUG and/or 911
- Organize with residents and take action collectively on safety issues
 - Form a phone tree with your neighbors
 - Call them if you feel unsafe coming home at night
 - Collectively report illicit activity
- Form a relationship with the police
 - Contact District Commander or Community Relations
 - Ask the police to attend a block club meeting
 - Report ongoing activity
- Be persistent and follow-up!

Visibility

- Form relationships with your neighbors
- Turn on your outdoor porch light at night
- Make sure street lights are working (call 311 if a light is out)
- Join Reservoir Hill's Citizens on Patrol team (contact RHIC)
- Inventory your belongings and get Operation Crime Watch sticker from Community Relations

"Nuisance" Properties

The City has a method of shutting down a "nuisance" property (a property with ongoing problems with illicit activity). Contact the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods (410.396.4735) or the Central District Community Relation Council (410.727.5480) to take action on a property.

Reporting Abuse

For Child Protective Services call 410.361.2235

For Adult Protective Services call 443.423.6600

For help with Domestic Violence call 410-889-7884

Baltimore City Health Department: 410-396-4398

Housing Matters in Reservoir Hill

Building and Permits

What requires a building permit? Most everything.

- ✦ Construct, enlarge, alter, repair, rehabilitate, demolish or move any structure
- ✦ Erect, install, enlarge alter repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing system
- ✦ Change the use of any structure or land
- ✦ Perform grading and/or excavating

Its very easy to obtain a building permit. Pick up a permit application at Baltimore Housing's One Stop Shop at 417 East Fayette Street, Room 100, or download a copy from: www.baltimorehousing.org/index/permitapplication.pdf. Permit fees vary but all permits carry an initial application fee of \$25. FYI the busiest hours at the One Stop Shop fall between 11:30 AM and 2:30 PM.

Housing Code Violations

Common housing code violations include broken windows, unsecured vacant property, and construction without proper permits, unstable/unsafe housing structures, unsanitary outdoor conditions, high grass/weeds, and inoperable automobiles on the property.

Reporting Housing Code Violations

- Call 311 with details of violation (keep Service Request #)
- Follow-up with 311 or call the Housing Inspection office at 410.396.7746 to record action taken (i.e. citation given, violation resolved, timeline given to property owner to resolve issue, etc.)
- If problem isn't resolved within timeframe given, call 311 again
- Repeat process as necessary; Housing Inspector can take the owner to court if problem isn't resolved after repeated citations

Tenant Matters

RHIC organizes tenants to address a variety of matters related to problems with their facility and management, community concerns such as public safety, and city-wide issues that are pertinent to them.

Eviction Procedures (for more details: www.reservoirhill.net/)

- Landlords are strictly prohibited to dump eviction belongings in the public right of way. Call 911 if you see this happening.
- Landlords must give 14 days notice to their tenants before removing their personal belongings.
- Tenants cannot enter the building after a legal eviction is set.

Greening Reservoir Hill: Our Master Plan

Greening Reservoir Hill is an RHIC program that involves planting and beautifying vacant lots, parks, tree wells, and other open green space such as medians.

Reservoir Hill's Green Master Plan aims to:

- ✦ Increase and enhance social relationships between lines of race and class
- ✦ Increase resident leadership and participation in taking ownership and responsibility of their neighborhood
- ✦ Address public safety and sanitation issues
- ✦ Educate and increase environmental and health awareness

Some Examples of Greening Projects

- ✦ Tree well planting and beautification
- ✦ Vacant lot restoration
- ✦ Park enhancements
- ✦ Sidewalk planters and urns

Steps to Implement a Greening Project

Greening Projects take time, resources, maintenance, and organizing. Make sure you start planning early.

- ✦ Work collectively to choose a project
- ✦ Ensure resident commitment to both implementation and maintenance
- ✦ Make sure that the project is feasible and manageable
- ✦ Develop a comprehensive plan
 - Labor
 - Materials, equipment, and budget
 - Logistics of the day, including food for volunteers
 - Identify resources (under Greening on page 11)
- ✦ Implement project
- ✦ Maintain project



Contact Us!

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Visit Our Website at www.ReservoirHill.net

Important Contact Information

<p>Mayor Sheila Dixon City Hall, Room 250 100 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 Tel: (410) 396-3835 Fax: (410) 576-9425 mayor@baltimorecity.gov</p>	
<p>City Council President Stephanie Rawlings Blake 500 East Baltimore 2100 N. Holliday St. Baltimore, MD 21202 410.396.4832 srawlings@baltimorecitycouncil.com</p>	<p>Baltimore City Council Keiffer Jackson Mitchell Room 527, City Hall Baltimore, MD 21202 410.396.4735 (tel) 410.545.7464 (fax) kmitchell@baltimocercitycouncil.com</p>
<p>Central District Police Major John Bailey Room 516, City Hall Baltimore, MD 21202 410.396-.2410, 410.404.9111 Sergeant Charlie Hess Community Relations 410.727.5480 charles.hess@baltimorecitypolice.org</p>	<p>Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods Kristy Taylor 628 City Hall 100 North Holliday Street Baltimore, MD 21202 410.396.4735 (tel) 410.396.1632 (fax) kristy.taylor@baltimorecity.gov</p>

City Contact Information

Baltimore City Operator: 410-396-3100
*Direct access any City Department
Website for City services: <http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/services/>

Emergency 24 hours/7days

Ambulance/Fire/Police	911
Transit & Traffic Emergency	311
Water, Storm Drain & Sewer	311
Child Abuse/Neglect	410-361-2235
First Call for Help (referral)	410-685-0525
Gas & Electric	410-685-0123
Poison Control Center	410-528-7701
Domestic Violence Hotline	410-828-6390

City Agencies and Departments

Board of Elections	410-396-5550
Civilian Review Board	410-361-9067
Commission on Aging/Retirement	410-396-4933
Community Relations Commission	410-396-3141
Comptroller's Office	410-396-4755
Enoch Pratt Free Library	410-396-5430
Employment Development	410-396-3009
Environmental Review Board	410-396-6909
Health Department	410-396-4398
Housing Department	410-396-3232
Law Department	410-396-3297
Legislative Reference	410-396-4731
Office of Promotion and the Arts	410-752-8632
Planning	410-396-4329
Recreation and Parks	410-396-7900
Public Schools	410-396-8700
Public Works	410-396-3310
Social Services	410-361-4600
Transportation	410-396-6802
Voter Registration	410-396-5553

Benefits

Family Services	410-361-2235
Food Stamps and Income Maintenance	410-361-4600
Medical Assistance (Medicaid)	410-361-4600
Social Security and Medicare	800-772-1213
Veterans	800-827-1000

Employment

City Civil Service Application	410-396-3860
Senior Employment Program	410-767-1100
Office of Employment Development	410-396-3009
State Employment/Unemployment Claims	410-767-3246

Addictions

Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems	410-637-1900
Alcoholism	410-396-0222
Drug Abuse	410-366-1717

Animals

Animal Licenses	410-361-9690
Adoption, Shelters, Complaints	410-396-4688
Bites	410-396-4428

Courts/Legal Services

Better Business Bureau	410-347-3990
Community Law Center	410-366-0922
Family Law Hotline	800-845-8550
MD Volunteer Lawyer Service	410-539-6800
Lawyer Referral	410-539-3112
Legal Services to the Elderly	410-396-1322
Notary Public	410-947-5520
Civil District Court	410-878-8900
Parole & Probation	410-764-4274
Public Defender	410-333-4900
Rent and Traffic Court	410-878-8500
State Attorney's Office	410-396-1897
State Consumer Protection Division	410-528-8668
Victim/Witness Assistance	410-396-1897

Education

Baltimore City Public Schools	410-396-8700
Baltimore Education Network	410-576-2361
Cross City Campaign	410-524-3250
John Eager Howard School—Reservoir Hill	410-225-0035
Maryland Department of Education	410-767-0100
Parent and Community Advisory Board	410-396-3138

Food Assistance

Corpus Christi Community Center—Reservoir Hill	410-523-4161
Our Daily Bread	410-659-4000

Greening Resources

Parks and People Foundation	410-448-5663
TKF Foundation	410-268-1376
Baltimore Community Foundation	410-332-4171
Civic Works	410-366-8533
Chesapeake Bay Trust	410-974-2941
Tree-Mendous	410-260-8510
MD Cooperative Extension (Urban Agriculture)	410-856-1850

Health

Lead Inspection	410-396-8576
Mental Health	410-891-2647

Housing/Shelter

Complaints (inspection)	311
Landlord/Tenant Relations	410-243-6007
Permits (elec., plumb., const.)	410-396-3360
Rat Eradication	410-545-1916
Zoning Enforcement	410-396-4126
Homeless Services	410-396-3757
Winterization	443-984-1066

Public Works

Bulk Trash	311
Leaves, Graffiti, Street Cleaning	311
Recycling	311
Potholes, Sidewalks, Curbs	311
Snow Removal	311
Street Lights	410-396-5965

Senior Citizens

Guardianship	410-396-4932
Housing for Seniors	410-396-3241
Legal Services for the Elderly	410-396-1322
Nursing Home Complaints	410-396-3144
Senior Companion	410-396-5247
Senior Citizen Abuse	410-361-5000
Senior Employment Program	410-767-1100
Taxi Vouchers	410-396-5247

Tax and Billing Information

Assessments	410-767-8250
Income Taxes, Federal	800-962-2590
Income Taxes, State	410-767-1995
Property Tax Bill	410-396-3987
Tax Credits	410-767-5910
Water Bill	410-396-5398

Youth

Baltimore Healthcare Access	410-649-0521
Baltimore Rising	410-396-4274
Change & Growth—Reservoir Hill Program	410-971-7027
Free Immunizations	410-396-4454
Head Start - Reservoir Hill Program	410-225-0035
Health Services	410-396-0353
John Eager Howard Recreation Center—Reservoir Hill	410-396-7849
Kids on the Hill—Reservoir Hill Program	410-383-7200
Next Level Boxing Program—Reservoir Hill Program	443-506-7902
Youth Jobs	410-396-6722