



View From the Hill

Reservoir Hill . . . A Community Blooming with Opportunity!

Reservoir Hill Improvement Council, 2001 Park Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21217; Tel: (410) 225-7547; Fax: (410) 225-7455; www.reservoirhill.net

Community Briefing November 2007

Saying Goodbye to Frank Patinella

When Frank came to RHIC as an intern who could have known what the years would bring. Now, six years later, Frank is moving on to become an Education Advocate for the American Civil Liberties Union's Education Reform Project. Frank has been the face and driving energy behind RHIC's Greening Reservoir Hill program, a program he made a model looked at by many other communities. Hundreds of people have become engaged in community work through Frank's tireless endeavors, and his mark is on every block in the community. His presence in the office and in the community will be missed, but we wish him much success in his new job. In fact, we'll be seeing him in the community in that new capacity as we will continue to work on education issues together. A happy hour with Frank is being held on Friday, 16 November from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at Zella's Pizzeria (owned by Reservoir Hill residents) at 1145 Hollins Street, Baltimore, MD 21223. (410) 685-6999.

Hiring New Community Organizer

RHIC is accepting resumes for the position of Community Organizer. We intend to hire for the position in December 2007. A job description is available upon request.

Project Contact: Richard Gwynallen, (410) 225-7547, rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net

New Board of Directors Members Assume Office

Four new members of the RHIC Board of Directors, elected at the Annual Meeting in October 2007, assume their responsibilities this month. They are Rodel Bailey-EI, Orin Hackett, Terrence Hancock, and Richard Pazornik. All of these gentlemen are Reservoir Hill residents and active in the community.

Project Contact: John Ruffin, (410) 225-7547, jruffin@reservoirhill.net

November Community Meeting – New Location – 13 November

The November Community Meeting will for this month only be held at a different location. We will gather on Tuesday, 13 November 2007, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at the John Eager Howard Recreation Center at 2100 Brookfield Avenue. Please join us for an Autumn Social, say farewell to our longtime community organizer, Frank Patinella, and take a tour of the newly renovated John Eager Howard Recreation Center. RHIC will provide beverages and light fare.

Project Contact: Richard Gwynallen, (410) 225-7547, rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net

Greening Reservoir Hill: Land Trust for Open Space –14 November

Do you know of any community gardens that are in particular peril of losing their land, or whose gardeners worry about this? Baltimore Green Space, the new land trust for community-managed open space, is having an outreach meeting on Wednesday, 14 November. If you know anybody who you think should come, please let them know about it. If you have any questions, please contact Miriam Avins.

Project Contact: Miriam Avins, (410) 235-8755, mavins@erols.com

Get Involved with the Red Line - Rapid Transit Transportation – 14 November

The Red Line is a prospective transit line in Baltimore City that will run across the whole City east to west. Currently the proposal has the line running from Woodlawn to Patterson Park through downtown. This transit system may be like the light rail, subway, or rapid transit bus. To ensure that your voice is heard on this important issue the MTA invites you to join one of the meetings on the Red Line Corridor Transit Study this November. All Open Houses are from 5:00 pm. to 8:00 pm, and are accessible by MTA Bus lines. All locations are also accessible to persons with disabilities. Please call (410) 767-3754 one week prior to the meeting to request special services. For more information, visit www.baltimoreregiontransitplan.com The meeting closest to Reservoir Hill is 14 November at Carter Memorial Church, 745 W. Fayette Street. The site is accessible by MTA Bus Lines 1 and 20.

Project Contact: MTA, (410) 767-3754, redline@mtamaryland.com

Algebra Project Community Forum – 25th Anniversary – 17 November

Commemorating the 25th anniversary of The Algebra Project, The Algebra Project and the Baltimore City Branch of the NAACP are holding a forum featuring a keynote address by Robert Moses, well known for his Mississippi organizing work in the 60s and for his math education work starting in the 80s. The topic is the state of public school education and organizing steps for Quality Education as a Constitutional Right. A panel discussion includes Dr. Andres Alonzo, Baltimore City Public School System CEO; Rev. Heber Brown, III; and Chelsea Carson, Vice President of Baltimore Algebra Project. The forum is on 17 November, 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm at City College Auditorium, 322 The Alameda.

Project Contact: Chelsea Carson, (410) 338-0679, chelseacarson88@gmail.com

BIKES 4 THE WORLD – 18 November

Give your old bike a new life! Beth Am Synagogue's Social Action Committee is sponsoring its second used bicycle collection on Sunday, 18 November from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, in front of the synagogue's 2501 Eutaw Place entrance. All donated bikes are shipped to willing partners overseas who have trained local people to refurbish the bicycles and make them available to those who need transportation to work, market, and school. A donation toward the cost of shipping is requested (suggested \$10 per bike). The entire donation, bicycle and cash, are tax deductible. Volunteers are needed to assist in removing pedals, turning handlebars, and loading the bicycles onto a van.

Project Contact: Janet Brown, (410) 243-3685, Jbrown3205@aol.com

St. Francis Neighborhood Center Community Hour – Traffic Issues – 26 November

This month's topic is Traffic Concerns and Speed Bumps. Come voice your opinion on the subject and what you think should be done about it. Please join the discussion. St. Francis Neighborhood Center hosts a safe place where Reservoir Hill residents can have open discussion on the challenges that they encounter. These monthly informal discussions take place every third Monday from 7pm- 8pm at the St. Francis Neighborhood Center, 2405 Linden Avenue (Corner of Linden Avenue & Whitelock Street). Residents take active roles in planning and leading community initiatives, topics and projects.

Project Contact: Sarah Taylor, (410) 669-2612, staylo@mac.com

Next Reservoir Hill Peace Patrol Walk – 26 November

The Reservoir Hill Citizens On Patrol team has become the Reservoir Hill Peace Patrol and will hold its next walk on 26 November commencing at 7:00 pm from St. Francis Neighborhood Center at 2405 Linden Avenue. Come hear about the changes in the team and why the new name, and join in your neighbors as they walk. Peace Patrol members are volunteers who patrol their communities. Residents do not take enforcement action; they only observe. Peace Patrol volunteers do not carry weapons and are encouraged to avoid confrontation.

Project Contact: Joe Lazazzera, (410) 669-4060, grlazazzera@verizon.net

Greening Reservoir Hill: Take a Look at 827-29 Whitelock!

RHIC has been working with resident Orin Hackett on restoring a vacant lot since July 2007. Instead of weeds and trash, you will see beautified lots at 827-29 Whitelock Street and 730 Newington Avenue. The lot on Whitelock Street has been a work in progress since July, and it is just about complete. It features a retaining wall with a couple dozen rosebushes and four decorative crape myrtle trees at the top of the hill. The back of the lot has been planted with euonymous shrubs that will grow about six feet tall. With continued care, the grass will be fully restored next year

Project Contact: Orin Hackett, (240) 441-5895, rinola.1@comcast.net

New Public Safety Work Group Proposes Pedestrian Lighting and Police Substation

A new Public Safety Work Group held its first meeting in October. Two proposals emerged, one for pedestrian lighting throughout Reservoir Hill, and one for a police substation. Fliers summarizing both proposals were distributed at the Annual meeting and are available on RHIC's website (www.reservoirhill.net). The link is on the home page entitled Public Safety Work Group Proposals for 2008. Resident feedback on both proposals is encouraged. Currently, residents are surveying blocks for lighting needs. If you would like to help, the survey form is available on the website through the link mentioned above.

Project Contact: Richard Gwynallen, (410) 225-7547, rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net

Resident's Handbook Available

RHIC's Resident's Handbook is available through the RHIC website (www.reservoirhill.net) or through the RHIC office. The handbook is filled with useful information on addressing common neighborhood questions or needs. Also, please contact the office if you would like multiple copies to distribute to your neighbors.

Project Contact: Richard Gwynallen, (410) 225-7547, rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net

Bill Cole to be Sworn in as New 11th District City Councilman – 6 December

Otterbein resident William Cole will be sworn in as the City Council Member representing the 11th District on 6 December 2007. Betsy Ziegler, who works on constituent services for current Councilman Mitchell will continue to do so under Bill Cole.

Project Contact: Bill Cole, bill@williamcole.net

Greening Reservoir Hill: Historic Mt. Royal Terrace Receives Greening Grant

The park on Mt. Royal Terrace will be getting a significant face lift over the next year. Partnership for Parks awarded Historic Mt. Royal Terrace a \$4,133 grant. Volunteers will be planting bulbs, installing ground cover, and improving the soil over an 80,000 square foot area.

Project Contact: Paul Hartzell, (410) 383-1025

Greening Reservoir Hill: Partnership for Parks Grant for Newington Avenue

A \$600 Partnership for Parks grant is helping to create a beautiful alley garden on Newington Avenue. The lot at 730 Newington Avenue was planted with eight crape myrtle trees two years ago but Gerry Okwesa has replaced half of them with beautiful perennial shrubs. She has also worked with the kids on her block to form a garden club. Forming relationships with young people is a great way to recruit extra help and to make sure that the green space is protected.

Project Contact: Gerry Okwesa, (202) 739-1466, gokwesa@verizon.net

Accessible Homes for Seniors

Help is available for seniors who wish to remain in their homes. The State of Maryland is offering zero percent interest, deferred loans for senior homeowners. The program is specifically designed to improve the accessibility of the home – for everything from wheelchair ramps to grab bars in the bathroom. Contact the Baltimore Commission on Aging and Retirement Education (CARE) for more information, or to apply, contact Thelma Winn. Learn more at: <http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/Website/programs/ahsp/ahsp.aspx>.

Project Contact: Thelma Winn, (410) 396-2273, Thelma.Winn@baltimorecity.gov

Baltimore City Leaf Collection

The Department of Public Works (DPW) will collect bagged leaves on your second trash collection day of the week (Thursday). These collections will continue through January 26, 2008. Residents are reminded to: (1) Place leaves in clear or labeled bags. (2) When cleaning up leaves, please do not blow leaves or place bagged leaves in the gutter or public right-of-way. (3) There will be no vacuuming or street sweeping of leaves by DPW.

Project Contact: Kurt L. Kocher, (410) 545-6541, Kurt.Kocher@Baltimorecity.gov

Healthy Neighborhoods – Low-Interest Loans for Remodeling Your Home

Get a low-interest loan to remodel your home! Free architectural advice and low-interest rehab loans are available through Healthy Neighborhoods. Other exceptional loan features are an ability to borrow more than the after-rehab value of the home, as well as no mortgage insurance requirement. Contact Carl Cleary to learn more, or to take the first step in applying for a Healthy Neighborhoods loan.

Project Contact: Carl Cleary, (410) 225-7547, ccleary@reservoirhill.net

Use This Link to Make a Donation to RHIC Online! Thank You!

<http://www.reservoirhill.net/donate.htm>

Any questions relative to the policies or programs of RHIC should be directed to Executive Director John Henry Ruffin at 410.225.7547, or by email to jruffin@reservoirhill.net.

Mission

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.

Goal

To revitalize the physical and human infrastructure of Reservoir Hill without resulting in full-scale gentrification and significant displacement, including rehabilitation of deteriorating buildings; alleviating poverty and its attendant problems, including, sanitation, public safety, education, low homeownership, and unemployment; and making the organized, informed voice of residents influential and effective.

Strategy

As an umbrella organization, the foundation of RHIC's approach is to aggregate the power of local associations and institutions through a community-wide infrastructure for educating residents, training leaders, promoting mutual support among community associations, developing common perspectives and strategy, and implementing collective projects and campaigns. The underlying principles of this strategic approach are that organized people and economic development lead to community empowerment; empowerment achieved as a result of networking, combining talents and resources, and wielding the power of an educated, united citizenry in a program grounded in economic and social equity.