



# 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](http://www.reservoirhill.net)

## **Community Briefing February 2008**

### **Reservoir Hill Advocates Join ACLU in Annapolis – Keep the Aging Schools Program**

Reservoir Hill Improvement Council Community Organizer and John Eager Howard School parent, Darryl Smith, and Joyce Keating of Beth Am Synagogue's Social Action Committee, joined the ACLU's Education Reform Project in Annapolis to testify before the Health, Education and Human Resources Subcommittee of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee in favor of retaining the budget for the Aging Schools Program. The team included Frank Patinella and Bebe Verdery of the ACLU, and two members of the Maryland State PTA. The Aging Schools Program is an \$11 million fund of which Baltimore City gets \$3 million. The renovation of the John Eager Howard School indoor gym and painting of the school was funded through this program. Dozens of schools have benefited from the program's support of projects that cannot be funded through capital improvement funds because they are under the \$200,000 minimum for capital improvement projects. The average project funded through the Aging Schools Program is \$50,000 - \$60,000.

*Project Contact:* Rick Gwynallen; (410) 225-7547, [rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net](mailto:rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net)

### **Public Meeting to Stop School Funding Cuts – 13 February**

Baltimore City Schools lost \$18 million in the General Assembly's 2007 Special Session. Community action kept John Eager Howard open in our 2005-2006 campaign, and was an important voice for school funding in 2006 and 2007. We can be just as successful again in stopping school funding cuts and improving our schools. It's time to reinvigorate this fight. The public meeting will be held on Wednesday, 13 February 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm in the library of John Eager Howard School, 2011 Linden Avenue. We will be joined by activists from The Algebra Project, and by Frank Patinella and JaCina Stanton of the American Civil Liberties Union's Education Reform Project. Please come hear what we can do to help our children and our schools.

*Project Contact:* Rick Gwynallen; (410) 225-7547, [rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net](mailto:rgwynallen@reservoirhill.net)

### **Campaign for Adequate School Facilities – 13 February**

On 13 February, a hearing will be held to review the state's Public School Construction Program (PSCP) in the Senate and House, respectively. The American Civil Liberties Union's Education Reform Project is organizing support to stop cuts in school construction and renovation funding. Strong numbers are needed to show that we have an urgent need for adequate facilities. This hearing is absolutely crucial as the state provides over 90% of our public school construction funds, and it is the hearing where legislators often cut funds for school construction and renovation. On 13 February, the hearing will begin at 1:00 pm. People should expect to stay for a few hours. We will provide powerful testimonies about how our children and staff are unfairly subjected to the poor conditions of city schools. Travel as a group can be arranged if desired.

*Project Contact:* Frank Patinella, (410) 889-8550; [patinella@aclu-md.org](mailto:patinella@aclu-md.org)

### **Twentieth Century Strings at First Unitarian Church – 15 February**

On Friday, 15 February 2008, 8:00 pm, faculty and students of the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University and guest artists will present a program of twentieth century music for strings at the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, downtown at the corner of Charles and Franklin Streets. The concert is free and open to the public. For details: [www.firstunitarian.net/activities/events/index.asp](http://www.firstunitarian.net/activities/events/index.asp)

*Project Contact:* First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, (410) 685-2330

### **Reservoir Hill Unity Day – 16 February**

Come to the Reservoir Hill Unity Day Celebration, our annual Black History Month event. The celebration will be held at the John Eager Howard Recreation Center on 16 February 2008 from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. There will be food and entertainment including a puppet show and live music. Volunteers are needed for set up, decoration, clean up and serving food. If you are willing to volunteer, please contact Darryl Smith.

*Project Contact:* Darryl Smith, (410) 225-7547, [dsmith@reservoirhill.net](mailto:dsmith@reservoirhill.net)

### **St. Francis Neighborhood Center Community Hour –18 February**

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](mailto:staylo@mac.com)

### **40<sup>th</sup> District Night in Annapolis – 3 March – RSVP by 22 February**

The representatives of the 40<sup>th</sup> District invite all 40<sup>th</sup> District residents to attend the Second Annual Night in Annapolis. Senator Catherine E. Pugh, Delegate Frank M. Conaway, Jr., Delegate Barbara A. Robinson, and Delegate Shawn Z. Tarrant will speak with participants. The event is scheduled for 3 March 2008, 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m. at the President's Conference Center West II, Miller Senate Office Building, 11 Bladen Street in Annapolis. Buses will be leaving at 5:00 p.m. from Mondawmin Mall, near the MTA Bus Station, 2401 W. Liberty Heights Avenue, and The Stieff Silver Building at 800 Wyman Park Drive. RSVP is required! Please RSVP to Senator Catherine Pugh's office by 22 February. Please bring a picture ID for admittance.

*Project Contact:* Senator Catherine Pugh's office; (410) 841-3656

### **Next Reservoir Hill Peace Patrol Walk – 25 February**

The Reservoir Hill Peace Patrol will hold its next walk on 25 February 2008 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](mailto:grlazazzera@verizon.net)

### **Spring Clean Up – 19 April**

RHIC is beginning to organize for this year's Mayor's Spring Clean Up. The clean up is scheduled for 19 April 2008. We are trying to make sure that the entire community is covered. In recent years each block club has assumed responsibility for their area, and we are asking each organization to step up to the plate again. Please begin to line up your volunteers. RHIC will coordinate with the Mayor's office to ensure that everyone gets the tools and bags that they need for the clean up. As you gather your volunteers, please contact me to let me know what area you will cover and what tools you will need. RHIC plans to host a cook out after the clean up for those clubs that participate in the clean up.

*Project Contact:* Darryl Smith, (410) 225-7547, [dsmith@reservoirhill.net](mailto:dsmith@reservoirhill.net)

### **4 ½% Loans for Remodeling Your Home! Lowest Rate in 4 Years**

Get a low-interest Healthy Neighborhoods 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](mailto:ccleary@reservoirhill.net)

## Help Stock John Eager Howard Recreation Center

John Eager Howard Recreation Center underwent an extensive and wonderful renovation over the last year. The building offers a much improved environment for our young people and for community uses. The staff at the recreation center is creating some very important programs. However, the renovation funds did not include stocking the center with much of what it needs to make the programs fully functional. Their computers are old. Their new kitchen doesn't have enough pots. They lack athletic supplies. The recreation center can use your help in acquiring a number of items or with financial donations to help with the acquisition of the items. If you can help, please contact Center Director Carolyn Newton. If you wish to make a financial donation, the city requires donations come in the form of a money order made out to Director of Finance. The following is a list of needs:

- Ping Pong table
- Bumper pool table
- Board games - Sorry, Monopoly, Connect 4, Battle Ship, etc
- P.E. equipment - jump rope, hula hoops, etc
- Cooking Pots
- Toaster
- Can Opener
- Juice Maker
- Basketballs
- Whistles (athletic)
- Folding Chairs
- Folding Tables
- Camcorder
- DVD/VCR player
- CD/Radio/ cassette player
- Sound System
- Pool Table
- Pool cues (sticks)
- Computers

*Project Contact:* Carolyn Newton, (410) 396-7849

## 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](mailto:Thelma.Winn@baltimorecity.gov)

## Mindfulness Meditation at First Unitarian Church

Mindfulness Meditation at First Unitarian Church (Charles and Franklin Streets) is free and open to all - beginning and experienced meditators. Each session includes meditation, tea, and a discussion of meditation practices as they condition our experiences. Ongoing: second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, 7:30 pm.

*Project Contact:* Michael Preston, (410) 847-9639, [seepres@comcast.net](mailto:seepres@comcast.net) or [office@FirstUnitarian.net](mailto:office@FirstUnitarian.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](mailto: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.*