



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 March 2009

April is Leadership Month

RHIC is offering a set of activities as "Leadership Month" in April that will include three Leadership Conferences, a series of health related activities, and a kick off ceremony. The Leadership Month will kick off with a marching band and a ceremony that would include a press conference with various speakers. The health series will include three morning walks per week around the Druid Hill Park Reservoir, and after each walk there will be an activity, such as tai chi, yoga, and low impact aerobics.

Each of the three Leadership Conferences will take place on a Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at St. Martin's Church of Christ located at 2118 Madison Avenue. The first conference will be held on 4 April and will be a Community Leadership Conference featuring a workshop on organizing designed to instruct community associations in increasing its capacity to organize and complete projects in their communities. The workshop will be conducted by Betty Robinson, a renowned Baltimore organizer. The second conference will take place on 18 April and will focus on faith based institutions and their congregations. Entitled "A Call to Service," the conference will feature four sessions, two in the morning and two in the evening, and is designed to increase faith based institution's contributions to the neighborhoods in which they are located. The session topics currently include "Developing/Organizing Social Direct Service Programs," "Community Development Activities to Transform Communities," "Partnering with Community Associations," and "Getting Your Community Involvement Ideas Funded."

Each conference will include lunch and dinner.

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

Housing

New Healthy Neighborhoods Website

Healthy Neighborhoods, Inc. (HNI) totally revamped their website. With more pull down menus, virtual tours of all the HNI neighborhoods, interactive tools, an online loan pre-application, new program guidelines and neighborhood descriptions, the site not only has a new look, but a vast range of resources. Check it out: <http://www.healthyneighborhoods.org/>

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



Reservoir Hill is a Healthy Neighborhoods community

Whitelock Corridor Update

At the March Community Meeting, the architectural and marketing consultants working on the new plan for the revitalization of Whitelock Street presented the design that emerged from a five-month process consisting of more than 10 small group sessions plus public community meetings. The new design will be available on the RHIC website when an electronic version is provided by Parameter, Inc. Watch for it at www.reservoirhill.net Over the next month, RHIC will begin discussing the plan with city elected officials, and Housing & Community Development personnel. The goal is to have a new Request for Proposal released later this year that is based on this community-generated plan.

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

Healthy Neighborhoods Loan Rate at 3.65% - Lowest Rate Yet!

The current rate for the Healthy Neighborhoods Acquisition/Rehab and Refinance and Rehab loan is 4.27 percent. Reservoir Hill homeowners interested in completing \$ 5K to 40K in home repairs should take advantage of an all time low rate of 2.25 percent.

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

Callow Avenue Update

HRS Homes received development rights from the City of Baltimore in October 2005 to redevelop 16 houses on the 2200 and 2300 blocks of Callow Avenue. Eight houses on the 2200 block have been completed, and two (2212 and 2217) have received Use & Occupancy permits and are being offered for sale at \$280,000 each. Boards have been removed from 2212 and 2217.

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

Linden Avenue Renovation Update

Since receiving development rights to eight houses on the 2200 block of Linden Avenue, a set of urban homesteaders has been renovating the houses as Linden Tree, LLC. Five of the eight houses are completed and occupied. One more is occupied and nearly completed. One is significantly close to completion, and the one house still needs a buyer. Recently, Community Legacy funds in the form of loans have been awarded to (a) facilitate the completion of two of the eight houses, and (b) stabilize the house that is currently without an owner.

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

Homebuyer Tax Relief

The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 includes a number of provisions that will help prevent foreclosures, reinvigorate the housing market and strengthen the nation's economy. These provisions include a \$7,500.00 tax credit and property tax relief for some homeowners.

Opportunity of a Lifetime for First-Time Buyers

For aspiring home owners who find their goal stubbornly elusive, newly enacted legislation providing a tax credit of as much as \$7,500 for first-time home buyers might just be the opportunity of a lifetime. Time is of the essence for buyers who want to take advantage of this outstanding opportunity. Only homes purchased on or after 9 April 2008 and before 1 July 2009 are eligible.

First-Time Home Buyer Tax Credit at a Glance

- The tax credit is available for first-time home buyers only. Maximum credit amount is \$7,500.
- The credit is available for homes purchased on or after April 9, 2008 and before July 1, 2009.
- Single taxpayers with incomes up to \$75,000 and married couples with incomes up to \$150,000 qualify for the full tax credit.

The tax credit works like an interest-free loan and must be repaid over a 15-year period

Property Taxes

The legislation will provide temporary tax relief for home owners who do not itemize their deductions. For tax year 2008, taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions but pay property taxes will receive a \$500 additional standard deduction (\$1,000 for married couples). This provision will particularly benefit home owners who have paid off their mortgages. Use the links below to learn more about the tax credit. <http://www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com/>

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

American Dream Downpayment

Baltimore City has announced funding for BALTIMORE CITY "ADDI" a homebuyer assistance grant being made available for Baltimore city residents to help reduce the upfront money obstacle that prevents many would be first time homebuyers from buying. The maximum \$10,000 grants have homebuyer education requirements and can be used with other buyer assistance programs.

Project Contact: Baltimore City - Office of Homeownership, (410) 396-3124

"Hope for Homeowners" Program to Help Struggling Families Keep Their Homes

The *HOPE for Homeowners* program will refinance mortgages for borrowers who are having difficulty making their payments, but can afford a new loan insured by HUD's Federal Housing Administration (FHA). The program is available only to owner occupants and will offer 30-year fixed rate mortgages. The *HOPE for Homeowners* program began 1 October 2008 and ends 30 September 2011. For more information, go online to: <http://www.hud.gov/hopeforhomeowners/>

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

Greening Reservoir Hill

Pride in Reservoir Hill is Picking Up! Public Question Posted on RHIC Website

RHIC wants to know what the residents of Reservoir Hill think of establishing more public trash receptacles in strategic places in Reservoir Hill. A blog has been set up on the RHIC website that will allow interested people to comment on the question. Check out Views From the Hill or the Public Question link on the home page at <http://rhicviews.blogspot.com/2009/03/should-reservoir-hill-have-additional.html>

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

Community Gardens

The 28th of March is the volunteer day for Community Garden Clean up: Anyone is welcome to come help out to start the gardening season at the Whitelock Community Garden! Meet at the Garden on Whitelock Street near Brookfield Avenue at 10:00 am. We will work until 12:00 pm. We will send some people to the Lennox Street Community Garden as well. We will be weeding and pruning back the old vines to make these gardens sparkle. Bring gloves and any hand tools you may have to use. RHIC will also provide some. If interested in a plot for the season you can sign up right there for one. If you would like a plot in a garden this season, but cannot make it to the March 28th volunteer day, please contact Christiana and she will direct you to garden managers.

If you have a child who would like to learn about gardening there is a new youth program starting at the Whitelock garden called the Soul School to teach kids about organic gardening for free. The food will then be donated to the John Eager Howard Recreation Center. If interested contact Christiana.

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

Pride in Reservoir Hill is Picking Up! Mayor's Spring Clean Sweep Coming

On 18 April, Reservoir Hill will be participating in the Mayor's Spring Clean Sweep. City departments have pledged extra support this year. RHIC encourages all Member Organizations to conduct a clean-up on their blocks. As every year, RHIC will provide tools for any Member Organization conducting a clean up. Please contact the RHIC office by 15 April to reserve the tools you want.

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

The Whitelock Community Garden

The Community Garden at Whitelock Street and Brookfield Avenue is looking for new members. We have several plots available for Spring 2009. Our fee is \$10 a plot and there is water available on site. We will be having a cleanup of the garden to prepare for the season on 28 March 28 between 10am and 1pm. Come by and pick out your plot or contact Rebecca Feldberg for more information.

Project Contact: Rebecca Feldberg, (410) 383-3484, rebecca.feldberg@gmail.com

Order Recycling Bins through RHIC – But, remember, you can make your own, too!

Order a recycling bin from RHIC. \$5 for 18-gallon bin, \$12 for 25-gallon bin. If you cannot afford the bin but are interested in recycling, please call anyway. You can also recycle without a City bin just by writing "Recycling" in big letters on any trash can, cardboard box, or other container. Recycling pick up is the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. To find out if your pick up is in the front or back of your house please call 311 and ask for the recycling department.

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

One PLUS ONE Proposal – Coordinating & Diversifying Sanitation Services

The Baltimore City Department of Public Works – Bureau of Solid Waste is proposing a city-wide change *from* the current mixed-refuse pick-up twice a week and recycling pick up only twice a month *to* one mixed refuse pick up and one recycling pick up per week per address. With legislative approval this will begin on 1 July 2009.

Under the new system, trash and recycling will be picked up at the same location to reduce the confusion. Pick up days will shift to Tuesday through Friday. This will become a four-day/10-hour-day work week which will relieve citizens from the Monday holiday problem and allow for a Saturday make-up collection for those impacted by a holiday later in the week. The crews will now begin collection at 6:00 am, which the City expects will get them off roadways during rush hour – reducing accidents, improving crew safety, and increasing route efficiency.

In addition to providing once a week trash pick-up and once-a-week recycling pick-up, as one operation on one route, crews that provide current recycling pick up will become a full-time street and alley cleaning operation, and will be able to respond quicker to citizens requests.

Households will be asked to limit their trash collection to 64 gallons once a week with recycling being unlimited. With the new acceptable materials to be recycled, less will belong in the trash can anymore (only plastic bags, wrappings and food). If you compost your food or use a garbage disposal in your sink then that reduces the trash materials even more.

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

Tree Canopy Project Update – Toward 150 New Trees in 2009!

The Green Team and RHIC gathered signatures across the Reservoir Hill community from residents living near an existing empty tree well that could house a new tree, and who were willing to maintain a tree in front of their house. In February, RHIC submitted 61 tree requests to the City Forestry Department. You will see contractors expanding the tree wells across the neighborhood on 13 different streets in Reservoir Hill this spring. Also, the Forestry Department will be grinding old stumps so we can replace them with new trees. Starting in April, RHIC will begin the process of filling the tree wells in with new soil and planting new trees. Since we are lucky to have a big focus placed on us by the city this year we will contribute by helping the city to plant these trees. RHIC will let you know when we need volunteers to help with filling in the tree wells and planting the trees. This can only happen with your help! By this summer we will have a much greener community! Thank you all for those of you helping this process along. To get involved and stay more thoroughly updated on the Reservoir Hill Tree Canopy Plan progress contact Christiana.

Keep two very important dates on your calendar:

22 April: On Earth Day RHIC and Jones Falls Watershed Association will be planting trees with John Eager Howard Elementary School and we need as many adult volunteers as possible. We hope that the adults will pair up and partner with two kids to plant at least one tree that day in the tree wells near the school and on the school grounds. We will start the day off with a presentation about benefits of trees and a quick training. We need strong volunteers who have Wednesday the 22nd free and want to do something green for the community that day.

3 May we will be planting trees for Green Fair and we need volunteers for this to get trained ahead of time to lead a tree planting. If interested in learning how to plant and maintain a tree, contact Christiana.

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

Turn Your Backyard into a Certified Wildlife Habitat

Tired of all the concrete in your backyard? Do you want to contribute to a more sustainable environment? You can do that in your own back yard. Become a Certified Wildlife Habitat. Plant native plants to absorb storm water and attract wild birds. By making a few changes you can make your yard more functional and contribute to the greening of Baltimore. Contact Rebecca Feldberg for more information.

Project Contact: Rebecca Feldberg, (410) 383-3484, rebecca.feldberg@gmail.com

RHIC Tool Shed

Available tools include: hoes, rakes, metal rakes, brooms, shovels, pick axes, trowels, cultivators. Large lawn & leaf bags are also available. Residents may check out tools for no more than two weeks at a time. The tools can be signed out and picked up at the RHIC office on the "Hill" at 2001 Park Avenue from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. It's best to call ahead. You will be responsible for returning the tools to the office in good condition when you are finished so other people can use them too. Best wishes on all your projects.

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

Recycling is Increasing in Baltimore

Since last year's implementation of single-stream recycling, Baltimore's recycling tonnage has increased 35%, and the trash tonnage has reduced. As we get our friends and neighbors to start recycling we will continue to see trash tonnage reduce. Once people take the step, they get that recycling is not hard, and make a habit of taking the extra couple of seconds of thought to separate recyclables from trash.

Reservoir Hill is in Zone 2, and recycling pick-up is every second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Information on acceptable items for recycling is available at the RHIC office. For a recycling calendar go to the RHIC website: http://www.reservoirhill.net/gfx/hp/2009_Reservoir_Hill_Sanitation.pdf

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

Become a Member of the Community Greening Resource Network (CGRN)

Join Baltimore's Greening Network--Become a member! CGRN supports Baltimore City community gardeners. Baltimore City has many community gardens, and the volunteers who manage these gardens often depend on unreliable sources of funding and donations. Many organizations work to support community greeners. CGRN seeks to coordinate these resources to create a comprehensive and consistent network. There will be four CGRN sites around the city and RHIC is one of them! At these sites, CGRN hosts for its members: (1) Four annual Give-away Days (providing seeds, compost, vegetable seedlings, bulbs, perennial flowers). (2) Tool Banks with hand tools to borrow. (3) Workshops held by gardeners and other Baltimore City greening organizations on gardening and access to community gardens. (4) A 20% discount on renting equipment. CGRN also provides to its members a "See Green" Newsletter (with calendar of events, articles and more), networking opportunities, and annual celebrations. CGRN is accepting applications for 2009! It is \$10 for a year for a Community Garden Membership, and \$5 for an individual membership. You can get an application and more info at the RHIC office, or contact Sarah Kroner at Parks & People Foundation at 410-448-5663 x 114, sarah.kroner@paraksandpeople.org. Link to application: http://www.parksandpeople.org/publications/Guides/CGRN_Brochure.pdf. CGRN is an initiative of Parks & People Foundation and Maryland Cooperative Extension, Community Greening Resource

Project Contact: Christiana Usenza, (410) 225-7547, cusenza@reservoirhill.net

Around the Community

Druid Hill Park Program Planning

RHIC staff recently met with personnel from Recreation and Parks to discuss spring and summer programming for activities that the Reservoir Hill Community would like to see at the park and would participate in. Activities could include a music series, kite festival, car show etc. If you have ideas please look for our survey which will go out by email or a physical copy can be obtained directly from the RHIC office. Also, if you have any suggestions you can call the RHIC office and speak with Darryl Smith.

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

Beth Am Synagogue Goes Green!

At its February Board meeting, Beth Am officially signed the Green Synagogue Covenant of Commitment with the Baltimore Jewish Environmental Network (BJEN), joining several other Baltimore congregations in doing so. The Covenant commits the synagogue (1) to appoint a representative whose responsibilities will be to serve as a liaison to BJEN, and to oversee the implementation of the Covenant and report back to the Synagogue's board on a periodic basis regarding its progress, (2) establish a structure to implement a measurable, meaningful goal and program for reducing its carbon footprint, (3) to conduct an energy audit of its facilities and operations, (4) to undertake an educational program to explore the intersection of Jewish values and environmentally sustainable practices, and (5) to implement at least one other project, program or task in compliance with the requirements of the "Greening Your Synagogue Packet." Those interested in BJEN can read more at the Baltimore Jewish Environmental Network (BJEN) site: <http://www.bjen.org/index.html>

Project Contact: Arthur Shulman, arthur.shulman@gmail.com

Pool Open at Douglas High

The newly renovated pool at Frederick Douglass High School, 2301 Gwynns Falls Parkway, is now open. The times are weekdays from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm and Saturdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Entrance is near the football field side of the building.

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

2009 Reservoir Hill Resource Fair Planning Committee

St. Francis Neighborhood Center takes great pleasure in announcing our 4th Annual Reservoir Hill Resource Fair! PLEASE JOIN THE PLANNING COMMITTEE AND HELP:

- Bring employment, academic, social service, and health vendors to the community
- Finalize logistics, such as date, time, and space for the fair
- Spread the word via radio, media, fliers, etc...
- Organize fun activities such as basketball tournaments, free food, music, and entertainment
- And much more!

Planning Committee meetings will be held once every other week and last one hour. All opinions and ideas are welcome and encouraged! Our first meeting is 6 April at 6:30pm at St. Francis Neighborhood Community Center. If you would like to participate, contact Sarah Tarighi. SFNC is located on 2405 Linden Ave, Baltimore, MD 21217. If you would like to join the committee, but can't make it on this date/time, please let the center know and we will keep you in the loop for upcoming meetings and meeting minutes.

Project Contact: Sarah Tarighi, (410) 669-2612, sarah.tarighi@stfranciscenter.org

Time to Plan the Garden & Home Tour Again!

It's that time of year again when Bolton Park Neighbors Inc. and Historic Mt. Royal Terrace Association of Reservoir Hill, start preparing for the Garden and Home Tour. The 15th Annual, 2009 tour will be on June 6th and 7th. This year's theme is "There's No Place Like Home!" The tour committee is looking for individual or corporate sponsors to promote the tour. This support would be either services that will be needed for the tour and, most importantly, cash support to defray the cost of the event allowing us to use more money towards neighborhood improvement. This year's tour will expand to include newly rehabbed homes along Linden Avenue. If you are interested in supporting the tour or helping with the planning, contact Dave Horn.

Project Contact: David Horn, (443) 600-1542, DWHornII@aol.com

Friends of Druid Hill Park Update

The Friends of Druid Hill Park website -- <http://www.druidhillpark.org/> -- now includes a brand new web calendar! We want all events occurring in Druid Hill Park to be on this calendar! If you have an event you can add, please send the following to abby.cocke@parksandpeople.org: Include the Name of the event, Date and time, Location/address, and a brief description, if appropriate, including where to go for more information. For more information on the Friends of Druid Hill Park, visit <http://DruidHillpark.org> or Call 410-383-0603. You can also visit us on My Space: <http://www.myspace.com/druidhillpark>

Project Contact: Anne Draddy, (443) 984-4058, friendsofdruidhillpark@gmail.com

Help St. Francis Center With its Youth Program – Volunteers Needed

St. Francis is starting a new program in the Spring of 2009 The Power Project. It is a youth development program that is comprised of three components: education (academic achievement), the arts (art, music, and dance), and mentoring. The program would run in the evenings Monday-Thursday. We are seeking volunteers to fill the following positions: • Tutors • Mentors • Chief Academic Instructor • Chief Art Instructor • Chief Dance Instructor • Chief Music Instructor • art, music, and dance aides. Volunteer training sessions are scheduled for 17 March, 5:30 – 8:00 pm (Dinner will be served) and 21 March, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm (Lunch will be served). If you are interested in volunteering, please make plans to attend one of these sessions. Please RSVP to, Sarah Tarighi.

Project Contact: Sarah Tarighi, (410) 669-2612, sarah.tarighi@stfranciscenter.org

Join Bookworms – Help Kids in our Neighborhood!

Broaden the horizon and smile of a child simply by reading to him or her once per month. Bookworms is a program offered by the Beth Am Social Action Committee and John Eager Howard Elementary. We're looking for a few great Reservoir Hill readers to join this exciting program. You provide your love of reading, a book of your choice, and one hour of your time per month. We provide 3-4 children eager to learn and a program chair grateful for your participation! To learn more about this exciting opportunity, contact Octavia Shulman.

Project Contact: Octavia Shulman, (410) 523-5641, Octavia.shulman@gmail.com.

Around the City and State

City Commits to Increased Resources and Support for Reservoir Hill

RHIC staff worked with Healthy Neighborhoods to make a presentation before the Mayor's Development Cabinet to encourage increased services and support from various city departments for Reservoir Hill. This led to a commitment on the part of the mayor to effect increases in services, a process to be supervised by Deputy Mayor Andrew Frank over the next several months

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

Thank You for Supporting RHIC's Action Alerts

As of publication, 51 people have reported to RHIC that they have written letters or made calls to elected officials in response to RHIC's early March action alerts supporting efforts in the General Assembly to reduce lead dust hazards and restore cuts to education funds. Your voice is the most important factor in campaigns to secure the resources and attention that our community needs. To read more about these actions see the action alerts links on the RHIC website home page at www.reservoirhill.net Again, thank you for your support.

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

RHIC Coordination with City Departments

RHIC works with numerous city departments every month. To give readers an idea about what interactions between the city and RHIC occur, we will try to give brief updates in each monthly Briefing. During the past month: RHIC staff has communicated with Cleaner Greener Baltimore to create a list of Reservoir Hill needs that will be addressed in Spring 2009. Requests for tree planting and stump grinding has been submitted to the Department Forestry. The Department of Forestry is also working with staff to identify the most useful reports to be generated from the data collected through RHIC's i-Tree project. The Department of Planning produced a map of North Avenue properties for RHIC, and has been working with staff in regards to expanding tree wells. RHIC staff held a second meeting with Department of Recreation & Parks about increasing pedestrian access to Druid Hill Park and better coordination between RHIC and the department over park programming and recreation center programming.

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

Recovery Act Funds for Housing & Community Development

Maryland is expected to get over \$208 million from the Recovery Act through the Department of Housing & Community Development. The following are funds expected by the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development. We have not yet been informed as to how much is expected to be received by Baltimore.

\$22,407,537	Emergency Shelter Grant
\$31,701,696	HOME
\$83,000,000	Weatherization Assistance
\$12,600,000	Community Services
\$14,649,580	Community Development Block Grant
\$43,852,641	Energy and Green Retrofits

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

Impact of Stimulus Package on Baltimore City Education

The federal stimulus package will have a strong impact on school systems throughout Maryland. Baltimore City Schools will have \$30 million of education aid restored via the stimulus package, bringing City Schools roughly the same amount of state aid as the current year (FY09). In addition, City Schools anticipate receiving federal stimulus aid through major federal education programs over the next two years:

\$64.1 million in Title I
\$27.9 million in IDEA (for students with disabilities)
\$1.5 million in Education Technology

For FY10, school systems statewide will receive \$196 million in federal aid in these categories; City Schools will receive about \$54 million of this funding in the first year. The IDEA and Title I funds come with certain restrictions and must be spent according to federal guidelines. Other federal funding-- for school improvement programs, teacher incentives, and certain competitive grants -- will be available, but the exact amount to City Schools is still to be determined.

Project Contact: Frank Patinella, (410) 889-8555, patinella@aclu-md.org

Recovery Act Funds for Environmental Programs

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the following outline of funds it will administer from the Administration's stimulus plan along with the introduction: "EPA's portion of the plan will create good, sustainable jobs that help produce cleaner drinking water, purer air, environmentally friendly urban and rural re-development, and reduced greenhouse gases." The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 specifically includes \$7.22 billion for projects and programs administered by EPA. These programs will protect and promote both green jobs and a healthier environment. These environmental areas include:

Clean Water State Revolving Fund and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: \$4 billion for assistance to help communities with water quality and wastewater infrastructure needs and \$2 billion for drinking water infrastructure needs. A portion of the funding will be targeted toward green infrastructure, water and energy efficiency, and environmentally innovative projects.

Brownfields: \$100 million for competitive grants to evaluate and clean up former industrial and commercial sites.

Diesel Emissions Reduction: \$300 million for grants and loans to help regional, state and local governments, tribal agencies, and non-profit organizations with projects that reduce diesel emissions.

Superfund Hazardous Waste Cleanup: \$600 million for the cleanup of hazardous sites.

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks: \$200 million for cleanup of petroleum leaks from underground storage tanks.

All funding will be monitored by EPA's Inspector General, which will receive \$20 million for oversight and review. Announcements of grants will be posted on the Web to ensure transparency. The state-by-state distributions for clean water and drinking water state revolving funds are also available on the Web: <http://www.epa.gov/recovery/>

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

Resources

Baltimore Sustainability Plan Available

The Baltimore Sustainability Plan, revised 4 February 2009, is available online:

http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/planning/sustainability/downloads/0209/020409_Baltimore_Sustainability_Plan.pdf

The plan was the result of an extensive process of public discussion, and is being looked at as the road map for public policy development aimed at integrating social, economic, and environmental needs in Baltimore. City residents should be familiar with the document.

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

Healthy Neighborhoods Loans - Remodel Your Home at the 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

Looking for Carpenters, Electricians, Painters, etc.?

The Mount Royal Improvement Association maintains a very good directory of contractors and other workers recommended by Bolton Hill residents. You can view the directory at

http://www.boltonhill.org/resources/r_hird_listings.html

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

Community Law Center Workshops

The Community Law Center offers a range of workshops that assist neighborhood associations to form and to enact effective projects. For more information visit the CLC website at

http://www.communitylaw.org/Upcoming%20workshops%20and%20events.htm#Battling_Bad_Bars_in_Your_Community

Project Contact: Kelly Pheiffer; (410) 366-0922

New Free Not-for-Profit Financial Counseling Hotline – (877) 254-1097

Baltimore CASH and Maryland CASH (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) Campaigns and Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Maryland and Delaware, Inc. (CCCS) operate a free, not-for-profit, financial counseling hotline. It is the only free, not-for-profit statewide service provided by certified, nonprofit financial counselors that is available to anyone regardless of financial status. People are urged to call the financial advice Hotline *before* they run into trouble but regardless of one's circumstances, the Hotline's certified counselors will provide help and guidance. Whether one seeks budgeting direction or debt management, if someone is in crisis or just looking for guidance, the counselors will help consumers determine the level of service required and what they need to manage their finances. Follow-up meetings may also be arranged with trained counselors at various CCCS locations statewide. CCCS is independently accredited by the Council on Accreditation and all of its counselors and all been certified after rigorous testing through the NFCC.

Project Contact: Consumer Credit Counseling Service, 1 (800) 642-2227, www.cccs-inc.org

Calendar of Events

Greening Reservoir Hill in 2009 Calendar of Events

- 3/12 CGRN: "Transforming Blighted Community Spaces" presented by Community Greens at St. Francis 6:30 pm
- 3/28 Whitelock Community Garden-- Clean up Volunteer day 12-3pm*
- 4/18 Gardening Design Workshop at the Sculpture Garden on Madison Avenue taught by Erin Reilly 9-12 volunteer work day, 12-1pm workshop

- 4/22 Earth Day Tree Planting at John Eager Howard School with RHIC and Jones Falls Watershed, We Need volunteers*
- 5/3 Green Fair 10-2, We need people to help plant trees. Also, if you have a project idea that you want volunteers for that day, let us know.
- 6/27 Lennox Street Garden --Volunteer Clean Up day 10-12 pm*

* we need volunteers!

March Community Greening Resource Network (CGRN) Greening Events in Reservoir Hill and surrounding areas:

*** Thursday, 12 March TRANSFORMING BLIGHTED URBAN SPACES – with Ben Nathanson of Community Greens; at St Francis Neighborhood Center, 2405 Linden Ave, 6:30pm.** Third in this series, Ben Nathanson expertly provides tips and answers questions about how to transform your neighborhood and create beautiful, useable spaces.

Saturday, 14 March CGRN GIVE-AWAY DAY – Parks and People Foundation; 10-1 for CGRN members. Come and pick up your seeds and plants for spring planting! This seed and plant give-away day is a combination of the Master Gardener seed give-away, which is open to the public, and the CGRN garden material distribution, which is only open to CGRN gardens. CGRN members, check your mail for more specific information.

*** Saturday, 21 March GROW LETTUCE IN A TABLE: Salad Table Construction Workshop – with Chrissa Carlson of Cooperative Extension; at Cardinal Shehan School, 5407 Lock Raven Blvd, 10-12pm.** Learn about this school garden and then help build salad tables and trays for Baltimore City senior centers. You might even be able to build a salad tray to take home. Materials provided.

Wednesday, 25 March ADOPT-A-STREAM – with Ashley Traut of Herring Run Watershed Association; at Herring Run Watershed Center, 3545 Belair, 6-7pm. Learn about the challenges faced by the watershed and how we can help City and County agencies protect and improve our local streams through regular monitoring.

Saturday, 28 March CGRN VOLUNTEER DAY – at Whitelock Garden, 900 Whitelock Street, 10-12pm. Come join us for a work day in one of our member gardens! Volunteer Days are open to every one of all ages. All tools and materials provided. Contact Sarah at (410) 448-5663x114 if your garden would like to host a volunteer work day!

* These workshops are free for CGRN members and \$4 for non-members. RSVP for these workshops by contacting Sarah at (410) 448-5663 or sarah.krones@parksandpeople.org.

General Calendar of Events

Friends of Druid Hill Park General Meeting, 11 March

The Friends of Druid Hill Park will hold their March General Meeting on Wednesday 11 March at 7:00 pm at the Stieff Silver Building, in the Parks & People Foundation Board Room (entrance is in the back of the building, 800 Wyman Park Drive, Suite 01, Baltimore, MD 21211. For more information on the Friends of Druid Hill Park or the Druid Hill Park Calendar visit: <http://DruidHillpark.org>

Project Contact: Anne Draddy, (443) 984-4058, friendsofdruidhillpark@gmail.com

Druid Hill Park Workday – 14 March

Join the [Friends of Druid Hill Park and the Jones Falls Watershed Association](#) as we remove invasive vines from along the new Jones Falls Trail. The workday is on Saturday, 14 March from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Meet at the trail head at the northern border of the park, where Parkdale Avenue dead ends into the trail near the switchback, behind the new Clipper Mill Development. For more info or to RSVP, contact Mike or Jenny.

Project Contact: Mike, (410)897-7460; Jenny (410) 366-3036

2009 Season at The Maryland Zoo Starts! – 14 March

The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore located in Druid Hill Park (1876 Mansion House Drive, Druid Hill Park, Baltimore, Maryland 21217) opens for the 2009 Season on Saturday 14 March from 10:00 am - 4:30 pm. For more information on The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore go to <http://www.marylandzoo.org/>

Project Contact: The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, (410) 396-7102

Chamber Music at First Unitarian Church (last of the series) – 3 April

Peabody Director of Chamber Music, Michael Kannen, brings faculty and top students for a unique faculty/student collaboration, playing masterworks from the chamber music literature on 3 April. The show starts at 8:00 pm. The program will include Mozart's brilliant Flute Quartet in D major, brass music by Eric Ewazen performed by an up-and-coming student group, the Brass Roots Quintet, and the sublime and thrilling Sextet in G major by Johannes Brahms, one of the most beloved string pieces in the chamber music repertoire. The concert takes place in the sanctuary of First Unitarian Church of Baltimore at Franklin and Charles Streets. The concert is free and open to the public. Contributions will benefit the Historic Niemann Organ Restoration Fund. For more information: <http://www.firstunitarian.net/calendar.asp>,

Project Contact: 410-685-2330 or office@firstunitarian.net

Next Homebuyer Workshop – 22 April

The next homebuyer workshop is scheduled for 22 April from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm at St. Francis Community Center, 2405 Linden Avenue. The workshops provide a broad overview of each step of the home buying process, including budgeting and affordability, working with realtors, purchase and sale agreements, credit and credit reports, mortgages and the mortgage process, home inspections, settlement and closing costs, and post purchase counseling. The workshops are free, but pre-registration is required.

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

What do you think of the Community Briefing format and content? Let us know if it can serve you better and how.

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

RHIC unites, empowers, and mobilizes residents and organizations as a vehicle by which to define and take action on issues 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.

Reservoir Hill is a



Community