

Parkwood

Residents Association - Winter 2014 Newsletter

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 25th, at Kensington Parkwood Elementary School, at 7:30 pm

Letter from the President

A couple of months after our last PRA meeting I received an anonymous letter from a Parkwood resident. I think. The writer asked why we were so focused on issues outside of the community and urged the PRA to do more to look out for Parkwood. This letter followed an executive committee decision to ask PRA members to endorse a petition that would have requested the Montgomery County Council to divest its holdings in fossil fuel companies. This effort is being driven by groups aligned with 350.org, a non-profit that seeks to raise awareness that the CO2 atmospheric concentration has surpassed a critical limit of 400 ppm and continues to rise.

Over the last 6 years, the PRA has indeed been focused on the community, but the continued welfare of this neighborhood demands engagement on a host of issues that extend beyond Parkwood's borders. But PRA has certainly focused on Parkwood:

- It maintains the list serve and web site that allows residents, regardless of PRA membership status, to communicate with neighbors and find timely and relevant information.
- Represented PRA to the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to change traffic light timing to minimize time sitting in traffic queues exiting Parkwood.
- Petitioned Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission to replace street light bulbs along Beach Drive and to adjust their timing for night lighting.
- Negotiated with MC DOT and PEPCO to facilitate stump grinding. Initial meetings resulted in the formation of the PRA Tree Committee that worked to expedite planting of more than 80 trees in Parkwood.
- Worked with local and state authorities to ensure that natural disasters (e.g. derecho) were dealt with in a timely manner.
- Works with county police on local crime reduction efforts. Informs residents of preventive actions to avoid being victimized.

- Designed and installed marquees at the major entrances to Parkwood to identify the community for visitors and first responders.
- Installed and maintains 6 garden areas (including the park bench at Wildwood). Maintenance is accomplished with just a small number of volunteers.
- Worked with MCDOT to improve street lighting.
- Attends coalition, federation, and County Council meetings. Works with allied communities to improve pedestrian safety.

Perhaps the letter writer was looking for the executive committee to become less activist in its approach to local issues, but Parkwood doesn't reside in a vacuum. Land use and development affect all of us. The neighborhood coalitions that formed in response to mega-developments (White Flint) and massive relocations (Walter Reed) focus on making sure that the rules get followed and taxpayers don't wind up footing the bill for projects that should be paid for by those standing to benefit. Members of these coalitions were able to stand before County Executive Ike Leggett, Lt. Governor Anthony Brown, and Navy admirals and ask them to move Bethesda Naval's fence line to provide another traffic lane on Wisconsin Ave to accommodate traffic accompanying the BRAC relocation. Benefitting from the efforts of these coalitions also means that PRA stands by the allies that have stood with PRA.

A great environmental fight being waged outside of Parkwood involves Ten Mile Creek. Clarksburg developers are asking for the right to develop the maximum allowable acreage although current stream quality studies show it's already being damaged. Ten Mile Creek serves as the water source for the back-up reservoir that serves the entire DC-metro region in the event of a drought. While Parkwood has taken no official position on the issue, I'm sure many members of the community support the efforts of the Ten Mile Creek Coalition. A great example of what

unwise development does to a stream can be viewed on the boundary of our own neighborhood. Rock Creek is being torn apart by the massive volumes of water that have been introduced to the watershed upstream. A cautionary tale of sorts for Ten Mile Creek.

The future of this community is about the children that live in this region. Whether or not they remain in this area, the adults have a charge to ensure that the place remains livable, in my opinion, for future generations. The county has now surpassed 1 million residents and Parkwood sits between two of Montgomery's most massive traffic corridors. The thousands of cars idling each morning and evening on these roadways and the Beltway do nothing for the quality of life in Parkwood. Exclusive focus on internal Parkwood issues, in light of the challenges that we face, would be unwise and leave us uninformed.

I have now been the volunteer president for the PRA for six years. In that time, the PRA has focused on the community and on the greater issues that surround us. It's been an educational experience and one that has brought me and our neighborhood into contact with decision makers throughout the county and state. I will tender my resignation at the next PRA meeting. I trust that someone with a vision for the future volunteers to fill this job. The president is supported by a number of intelligent and hard-working people that make the services that the PRA delivers for ALL Parkwood residents possible. We are now a thriving residents association recognized throughout the county. The term for president is two years that moves by quickly. The executive committee stands ready to assist the new president and I will help the individual get acclimated to the job.

Please help the PRA remain vibrant and a service to the community.

Bailey Condrey

Tree Committee Update

Erin Haney

Approximately 100 trees will be planted through the coordinated effort of the PRA Tree Committee and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). Tree plantings started in December 2013 and will continue through the spring. The Tree Committee is working toward solutions to cover costs for grinding stumps in the right-of-way that the County currently will not cover.

For residents with new trees planted in the right-of-way in front of their house, the following are care instructions to ensure the health of the new tree:

Winter watering:

Young trees need adequate soil moisture through their first 2-3 winters. Do not use irrigation bags in winter. Water the new tree in the fall and winter when the weather is relatively warm, and during extended dry periods. Use a hose on a slow trickle for ~15 minutes once every ~10 days. Don't overwater, which will drown the tree. If in doubt: poke a long screwdriver into the root ball and surrounding soil. If it is moist down as far as you can poke wait on the watering. Slow, regular, and deep watering is best. Don't fertilize.

Mulch:

The trees have been mulched. Mulch accomplishes two key things: 1) insulates against temperature extremes; and 2) slows water loss from soil. Next year, in late fall to early winter, place a 2- to 3-inch-thick layer of organic mulch that extends just beyond the tree's drip-line. Never pile mulch up against the base of the trunk as these "mulch volcanoes" will hold moisture against the bark, and cause serious damage. Weed whackers/string trimmers cause serious wounds that trees never recover from, cutting off all circulation to the upper parts of the tree above the wound. This stunts the tree and often causes an early death.

No salt:

Avoid using salt-based ice melt near trees.

Staking:

The trees are staked: remove the stakes in a year.

Protecting from other damage:

Until young tree trunks develop hard, ridged bark, they're prized by rabbits, voles and deer. If damage occurs more than halfway around the trunk, you may lose the tree. Protect young trunks with paper tape, which should be applied late November, and removed at the end of March.

Montgomery County Civic Federation

Lara Akinbami

The Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF) is a not-for-profit, county-wide umbrella group designed to promote cooperation, education and effectiveness of civic and community associations in Montgomery County (montgomerycivic.org). The MCCF membership consists of neighborhood, homeowner and condominium associations, which appoint voting delegates to the Federation. PRA has paid membership dues, but has no consistent volunteer to attend monthly meetings (2nd Monday evening of each month in the County Council Building in Rockville).

The MCCF is a valuable resource for helping Parkwood residents stay informed—MCCF does the homework and usually the legwork as well. You can read the latest newsletter here: <http://montgomerycivic.org/newsletters.html>. It would be ideal if PRA could get the full benefit of its membership dues by having a regular representative at meetings. There is no need to be an expert on any topic, but just to be the eyes and ears of PRA one night per month. Please contact Lara Akinbami if you are willing to volunteer (tojohnlara@hotmail.com)

Street Lighting Investment Act

Lara Akinbami

Did you know that Montgomery County leases street lights from Pepco? State and local officials believe this has led to uncompetitive pricing of the lease (\$60 million annually, or \$400 per bulb), and the inability to switch to modern, effective, and energy efficient lighting.

Delegate Al Carr recently introduced The Municipal Street Lighting Investment Act (HB 729). This bill would have clarified the process for local governments to purchase existing street lights at fair market value, and to thereby assume responsibility for maintaining and upgrading this equipment. Although the bill had the support of all of the District 18 legislators, County Executive Ike Leggett and several Mayors, it was defeated in the Economic Matters Committee, but can be reintroduced next year. Read the proposed legislation here: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2014RS/bills/hb/hb0729F.pdf>

Spring springing

Kira Lueders

Brookside is offering workshops to help gardeners welcome spring. Registration is required for courses through the Park Pass system for Montgomery Parks (www.parkpass.org). Find each course using the course numbers listed below:
Local Gardening 101: Getting the Garden Ready for Spring, Thurs, March 27, 2:00-3:30pm. Fee \$18 (course #272549)
Local Gardening 201: Tackling Common Challenges Thurs, April 3, 2:00-3:00pm. Fee: \$18 (course #272550)
Rain Garden Workshop, Thurs, April 3, 4:00-7:00pm or Fri, April 4, 10:00am - 1:00pm. Fee \$15 (course #272199 or #272249)
Make and Take Rain Barrels, Fri, April 25, 10:00am-1:00pm or Sat, April 26, 10:00am-1:00pm. Fee \$15 (course #272299 or #272249)
Hanging Baskets, Wed, May 7, 10:00-11:30am or Fri, May 9th 10:00-11:30am. Fee \$55 (course #272399 or #272400).
Brookside Gardens tour of the extraordinary private gardens of Montgomery County on Sat, May 17 10:00am-4:00pm. Fee \$20 (course #272152).

Summertime closure of Cedar Lane

Lara Akinbami

Cedar Lane will be closed at Route 355 this summer from the 1st week of June through August. The State Highway Administration will make a number of changes at this intersection as part of the overall plan to accommodate traffic associated with Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. A dedicated turn lane on Cedar Lane east of Route 355 will be created, and the culvert for the creek that runs underneath the roadway will be realigned. The road closure will correspond with the Montgomery County Public Schools summer recess.

The SHA will also make major changes to the intersection at Jones Branch Road and Route 355 and construct a pedestrian tunnel under Route 355 from the Medical Center Metro to the Walter Reed facility. Stay tuned for more information on future road closures.

The SHA and MCDOT are still in discussion about a construction of a traffic signal on Cedar Lane at Elmhurst Parkway/Stone Ridge School.

PRA Spring Elections

ALL TERMS ARE FOR TWO YEARS

Please consider running for PRA Executive Committee positions. **Elections for PRA President will be held at the next meeting.** Below are the positions as outlined in the PRA Bylaws with additional input from current officers.

PRESIDENT BYLAWS: The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Association, and shall have general charge of the business of the Association and general supervision over its other officers and agents. The President shall see that all resolutions of the Executive Committee are carried out. The President shall preside over Association Meetings and meetings of the Executive Committee, and shall assure the availability of a meeting location for all Association Meetings and meetings of the Executive Committee. The President is responsible for notifying members of Association Meetings, and Executive Committee members of Executive Committee meetings, but may delegate the effort. The President shall sign official correspondence as directed by the membership or the Executive Committee. The President may take immediate action in exigent circumstances, when time does not permit consultation with the Executive Committee.

PRESIDENT: As able, attends public hearings, county council meetings, and meets with county officials and local, state and federal politicians on relevant issues. Schedules regular PRA meetings through the County's Community Use of Public Facilities Office. Coordinates with the vice president to publish and distribute a regular newsletter that is hand-delivered to Parkwood homes. Establishes a liaison relationship as necessary with various county entities. Works with the web master and listserve moderator. Coordinates drafting the PRA budget.

VICE- PRESIDENT BYLAWS: The Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's disability, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President, and shall generally assist the President and perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or the Executive Committee. The Vice President shall assemble and publish a newsletter, as directed by the Executive Committee.

VICE PRESIDENT: Coordinates with other officers in the writing, printing and distribution of a regular newsletter. Responsible for the newsletter content, its printing and its delivery to the newsletter distribution chair. Helps in drafting the budget.

TREASURER BYLAWS: The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of the Association funds and other valuable effects, shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements, and shall deposit all monies and other valuable effects in the name of the Association in such depositories as may be designated by the Executive Committee. Details are elaborated in Article IX, Funding. The Treasurer shall file all reports required by the IRS and the State of Maryland to maintain the status of the Association as a nonprofit corporation.

TREASURER: Oversees the checking and interest-bearing accounts of the PRA and reports regularly on their status. Reimburses officers for expenses and pays for costs incurred in running the Association. Works with other officers to coordinate the annual PRA membership drive. Ensures that dues and beautification contributions are received from the membership chair, deposited and tracked appropriately. Helps with drafting the budget. Files annual PRA federal and state of Maryland tax forms.

SECRETARY BYLAWS: The Secretary shall give all notices in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws and as required by law. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee. Minutes shall include, as a minimum, the exact text of all motions, and the vote count or a statement of general consent, and a statement that a quorum was present. If the Secretary is unable to attend a meeting, he/she is responsible for arranging a substitute. The Secretary shall send copies of the minutes of all meetings to the Executive Committee, and in particular the webmaster (as defined in Article VI, Section 1), as soon as practicable but no later than one month after each meeting. The Secretary shall also see that the books, reports, statements, and all other documents required by law are properly kept and filed. The Secretary shall perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President or the Executive Committee.

SECRETARY: Records the minutes of regular PRA meetings and shares a transcribed copy with PRA officers for editing. Incorporates final comments for approval by the PRA membership at subsequent meetings. A final record is delivered to the web master for posting on the PRA web site. Helps in drafting the PRA budget.

BEAUTIFICATION CHAIR: Works with donated funds and dues to coordinate beautification projects ratified by the community. Works with Park and Planning officials, volunteers and paid labor to beautify the common areas of the neighborhood, including overseeing the planting of gardens, mulching of trees and maintenance. Helps in drafting the budget.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Works with the treasurer to transfer PRA dues and donations into the appropriate accounts. Maintains database of PRA members. Helps to coordinate the annual membership drive.

WEBMASTER: Oversees the PRA web site at www.parkwoodresidents.org. Works with other officers to ensure that information is prominent on the site. Ensures that the web site works effectively and archives older content.

LIST SERVE MODERATOR: Ensures parkwoodresidents@yahoo.com list serve works effectively and moderates the content when necessary.

BLOCK CAPTAIN: Oversees distribution of the PRA newsletter to the group of volunteers that deliver it to over 900 homes in the neighborhood. This is done one to two weeks in advance of the next scheduled PRA meeting. Also helps to coordinate the annual membership drive.

WELCOMING COMMITTEE CHAIR: Maintains a welcome packet and delivers it to new residents when notified when new neighbors arrive.

PRA Meeting Agenda

- Old Business
- Treasurer's Reports
- Tree Planting Update
- Deer Population Discussion
- PRA Legislative Position
- PRA Elections
- New Business
- Adjourn

2013 Treasurer's Report

Gerald Sharp, PRA Treasurer

Once again, the PRA Treasury balance of \$14,827.34 is a record high, with 2013 income exceeding expenses by \$2531.55. However, this difference is primarily due to PRA landscaping work in 2013 being done by volunteers on the PRA Beautification Committee as in past years; the PRA cannot depend on the kindness of these volunteers forever, and we may have to pay some landscaping costs to maintain PRA gardens in the future. Membership dues paid in 2013 were \$2760, a decrease from the \$3120 paid in 2012. Donations to the Beautification Committee totaled

\$2749, slightly lower than the \$2793 collected in 2012. PRA expenses were \$2977.45 in 2013, a decrease of \$806.98 from the \$3784.43 we spent the prior year. This decrease was due to lower newsletter costs from not mailing any issues in 2013 and from a decrease in beautification costs from 2012. Costs of providing Doggy Potty bags for the four receptacles we maintain in Parkwood were \$582 in 2013, an increase from \$490 in 2012. These bags continue to be popular with our dog-walking residents. At the next PRA meeting we will discuss what projects we want to plan for 2014. More Doggy Potty bag receptacles? Possibly a neighborhood block party? New gardens? Please come to the meeting to share your ideas.

Receipts 2011-2013

| Month | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Dues | Beaut. Don | Dues | Beaut. Don | Dues | Beaut. Don |
| Jan | 1540 | 1188 | 1670 | 1371 | | |
| Feb | 290 | 220 | 440 | 432 | | |
| Mar | 310 | 247 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Apr | 200 | 285 | 570 | 510 | | |
| May | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 2650 | 2639 |
| Jun | 0 | 0 | 50 | 20 | 20 | 55 |
| Jul | 0 | 0 | 10 | 30 | | |
| Aug | 190 | 255 | 10 | 0 | | |
| Sep | 0 | 0 | 360 | 400 | | |
| Oct | 50 | 50 | 10 | 0 | 10 | |
| Nov | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Dec | 250 | 260 | 0 | 0 | 80 | 55 |
| Sub-total | 2,830 | 2,505 | 3120 | 2793 | 2760 | 2749 |
| Total | 5335 | 2,505 | 5913 | 2793 | 2760 | 2749 |

Budgeted Amounts and Actual Expenses, 2012-2013

| | 2012 Actual \$ | 2013 Budgeted \$ | 2013 Actual \$ |
|--|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Administration / Other expenses | | | |
| Welcome packets for new Parkwood residents | 28.45 | | 0 |
| Membership expenses for 2013 (magnetic cards, envelopes, etc.) | 0 | | 90.89 |
| Membership expenses (envelopes, postage, stapler for envelopes etc.) | 150.43 | | |
| Paypal fees | | | 8.38 |
| Bank charges, check printing charges | 23.22 | | 92.96 |
| Montgomery Cty Civic Federation membership fee | 70.00 | | 50.00 |
| Website domain fee | 34.95 | | 34.95 |
| Misc. | 47.56 | | 0 |
| Admin, other Total | 354.61 | 1300 | 277.18 |
| Newsletter | | | |
| January newsletter | 222.60 | | 331.89 |
| March newsletter | 580.88 | | 285.59 |
| Sept. newsletter | 360.40 | | 330.00 |
| envelopes | 8.26 | | 19.91 |
| Newsletter total | 1172.14 | 1600 | 967.39 |
| Beautification | | | |
| Plants, mulch, fertilizer & decorations | 962.83 | | 1042.88 |
| Labor | 430.00 | | 0 |
| Meeting announcement signs (3) to hang under Entrance Signs | 266.85 | | 0 |
| Doggy Potty bag refills | 490.00 | | 582.00 |
| Beautification Total | 2149.68 | 3120 | 1624.88 |
| Meeting Room Rental | | | |
| Winter meeting | 36.00 | | 36.00 |
| Spring meeting | 36.00 | | 36.00 |
| Fall meeting | 36.00 | | 36.00 |
| Meeting Room Total | 108.00 | 150 | 108.00 |
| Total Estimated and Actual Expenses | \$3784.43 | \$6170 | 2977.45 |

PRA Newsletter online

Access live web links in this newsletter online at www.parkwoodresidents.org and click on "Docs" along the left hand side.