

The First Annual State of the Parkwood Residents Association

December 2025

It was a good year for Parkwood.

We were engaged. We helped each other. We worked with our neighbors in other associations. We tended our gardens, and we put up a Maypole. We put up with the WSSC. We had fun even though our picnic got rained out. And Paul Snyder, our centenarian celebrated his 104th birthday.



Engagement

- Our Beach Drive committee labored for a year and a half collecting data, surveying residents, writing papers, and working with staff to convince the Park and Planning Commission to reopen Beach Drive to cars on Fridays. During that time over 400 residents responded to four different surveys, the vast majority expressing their desire to open the road. We were successful even as we re-affirmed our commitment to keeping Beach closed on weekends. Our section of Beach Drive is now the only section of the road in Montgomery County closed to cars on Saturday and Sunday, and we will work to keep it that way.
- Our Housing Committee worked jointly with representatives from the Kensington Estates Civic Association [KECA] and Byforde/Rock Creek Highlands [BRCH] for 18 months, studying the various proposals from Parks and Planning and from the County Council to increase the region's supply of affordable housing. The joint committee kept residents informed on the content and status of the various zoning text amendments and legislative drafts so that they could express their opinions to our council members.
- We met on site with MCDOT to discuss their plan to eliminate the right turn lane on Grosvenor Lane at MD 355. While agreeing with the need to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists at this busy location, we expressed our concern about the potential increase in congestion at an already failed intersection.
- The efforts of residents writing to our state representatives, combined with the work of our Beach Drive committee to get MDOT to issue a work order, resulted in cross-hatching being added at key intersections on Knowles Ave to help reduce [at least somewhat] the amount of congestion on this heavily traveled road.
- After surveying its members, the Parkwood Residents Association [PRA] wrote to the Board of Education and the Montgomery County Public Schools administration to support the position of the PTA of the Kensington Parkwood Elementary School [KPES], urging the Board to keep KPES students together during their educational journey through their currently designated middle and high schools.
- As noted in these examples, the PRA reached out and joined forces with neighboring associations on an issue-by-issue basis on such concerns as housing, road closings, and safety.

Gardens and other Good Things

- Our Beautification Committee worked many hours to improve and maintain our five community gardens: The Wildwood and the Saul Road medians; the entrance to Parkwood at Franklin Street and Beach Drive; the Parkwood Terrace Triangle; and the entrance at Cedar Lane and Beach Drive. The committee members also planted more daffodils at several places including the Roxbury median; the entrance to Rock Creek Path at Wildwood Road and Parkwood Drive; and the Saul Road island. The [committee's report of their extraordinary efforts this year is here](#) in *PRA News*.
- Six volunteers maintained dog waste bag dispensers at eight different locations in Parkwood. See the [map here](#) for gardens and bag dispensers.
- Resident Lara Akinbami published [an informative guide](#) on how to add or replace and maintain trees in your yard and in the County right-of-way.
- Mary Ellen Savarese, our Parkwood volunteer librarian, maintained three little libraries – one for adults and one for kids at the Wildwood Road garden, and one at the Parkwood Terrace Triangle- all of which were built or renovated by Rick Sniffin.



Stepping Up

- Bill Zwack agreed to be the Parkwood Liaison to the WSSC water main replacement project which began in 2025 and will continue into 2026. Bill has done a superb job keeping residents informed about the project. He has also let the WSSC manager know when there were problems and getting them taken care of quickly.
- Gerald Sharp provided residents with essential information on the ins and outs of going solar. He referred 23 residents of Parkwood and Kensington Estates to Lumina Solar, resulting in 7 installations with the company paying the PRA from \$500 to \$1000 per installation. The PRA returned \$4800 back to the residents using Lumina Solar, and our respective resident associations received \$700, with one more installation still to be completed. PRA's information on solar panels also led to a number of people installing solar panels using different companies.
- At the request of the PRA President, several members joined a special Advisory Committee to make suggestions to the Executive Committee regarding meeting topics and other activities the PRA might undertake for the benefit of the community.
- Christopher Cross agreed to serve as the chair of the Beach Drive Committee, which is now also tracking the developments at the 355/Grosvenor intersection.

- Joe Harkins agreed to serve as the PRA Civic Liaison, reaching out to other associations on issues of mutual concern. Joe also received the Montgomery County Civic Federation's Star Cup, awarded to the Federation delegate or committee performing the most outstanding public service on behalf of Montgomery County. Joe was a major contributor to getting the Federation bylaws updated.
- Michael Barber and Tracy Yaklyvich continued to serve as liaisons with a number of food truck vendors, ensuring that Parkwood and Kensington Estates residents had easy access to these convenient good food sources for as long as weather permitted.



Helping Out

- Our PRA listserv was active and lively as always. Neighbors shared helpful and timely information in response to hundreds of requests such as where to find a plumber in the middle of the night or what company could help with water in the basement or assistance finding a lost dog and even a parrot. Early risers gave “heads ups” on morning traffic problems and residents posted warnings about other situations that warranted attention, such as unlicensed vendors knocking on doors. And after doing a fall or spring cleanup, many offered their “no-longer-needed” treasures free at the curb rather than sending them to the landfill.
- Residents always responded to listserv requests for things for people in need such as shoes and coats, holiday gifts for kids, and food. No call ever went unanswered.

Sharing Information

As much as we enjoy talking to each other in-person, we have made good use of technology to stay in touch.

- The PRA listserv has over 1,200 members. Although the system does not count each posting, there were well over 2,800 separate message threads this year.
- [PRA News](#), a blog that replaced the former printed newsletter, had over 50 articles published in the last year-and-a-half since it began in 2024, covering a wide range of topics of interest to residents, such as proposed rezoning proposals, the Labor Day Parade and Art Show, and solar energy.
- The [PRA website](#) is our general information source about Parkwood. It includes notices and minutes of our meetings, a map of our neighborhood, historical documents, lists of officers, info about the water main project, etc. The website has had 3764 visitors and 6744 page views so far this year.

- Facebook- The Parkwood Residents Association (Maryland, USA) Facebook page has 233 members, and is AI enabled. The neighborhood yard sale was organized on the page.

PRA Meetings

- Winter 2025: Topics included 1) the proposed 2025 PRA budget 2) the latest housing proposals introduced by Councilmembers Friedson and Fani-Gonzalez 3) the possibilities for installing a mobile speed calming device that tells drivers how fast they are going 4) efforts to petition the Planning Board to re-open Beach Drive to traffic on Fridays and 5) a recommendation of our PRA Advisory Committee to coordinate tree planting with the County in order to restore some of our lost tree canopy. Presenters were all Parkwood Residents.
- Fall 2025: Topics included stormwater management presented by Montgomery County staff and a discussion of residents' safety concerns. Both of these topics will be visited again at future meetings.
- Because 2026 will be an election year, PRA hosted the first of a series of sessions with each the three candidates individually for the office of County Executive. By inviting the candidates to the sessions by themselves rather than as a group, we are able to focus on how each candidate would address the issues of most importance to Parkwood residents. The first session was with candidate Will Jawando.

Keeping Safe[r]

- Our Safety Committee continued to post important advice about how to keep property safe [especially cars], avoid scams, and look out for each other.
- A little known but vital effort by the PRA Listserv Managers has been to keep potential scammers off our listserv. This has become a serious problem lately, and Susie Stritar deserves special recognition for the many hours she has devoted to this critical work to keep Parkwood safe.

Membership

- Thanks to the hard work of the Membership Chair, Susie Stritar, the Parkwood Residents Association has one of the largest percentages of registered members among all associations in the County. It also has a healthy balance sheet thanks to thoughtful, membership-approved spending and to the generous additional donations by members to the Beautification fund. This means we have been able to keep annual dues at \$10 per household for over 20 years.



**OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, OTHER
CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS**

Officers

President	Kira Lueders	[Beach Dr cont'd]
Vice President	Jeff Griffith	Carol Placek
Secretary	Mary Ellen Savarese	David Beck
Treasurer	Gerald Sharp	Kelly Decerbo Jan Rothman

Committee Chairs and Members

Beautification	Kira Lueders, Chair Clare Murphy Gerald Sharp Jan Rothman Paula Flicker Lara Akinbami	Housing	Jeff Griffith, Co-Chair Joe Harkins, Co-Chair Christopher Cross Kira Lueders Clare Murphy Gerald Sharp Joan McDermott, KECA
Civic Liaison	Joe Harkins, Chair		Kirill Pivovarov, KECA
Listserv	Rob Shroff Susie Stritar		Jennifer Semel, KECA Mike Heyl, BRCH Paul Besozzi, BRCH Eileen Sarsfield, BRCH
Membership	Susie Stritar, Chair Gerald Sharp		
Safety	Gabrielle Prandoni	Other Executive Committee Members and other Contributing Members	Assistant Treasurer Paula Flicker
Webmaster	Rob Shroff	WSSC Liaison	Bill Zwack
Welcoming	Gabrielle Prandoni	MCCF Delegates	Joe Harkins Kira Lueders Jeff Griffith Amy Waychoff

Special Committee Chairs/Members

Advisory	Barbara Coufal, Chair Michael Barber Wendy Nevett Bazil Allison Gallaway Nate Ivey	PRA News Editor	Jeff Griffith
		L'il Library Builder	Rick Sniffin
Beach Drive	Christopher Cross, Chair Jeff Griffith Joe Harkins Kira Lueders Paul Clark Joan McDermott, KECA	Past President	Bailey Condrey
		Volunteers Maintaining Dog Waste Bag Dispensers	Kathy Card Gail Dalferes Condrey Debbie Blumenthal Qing Yao
	<i>With contributions from:</i> Scott Stuckey Smita Varia Zachary Youth		Kira Lueders Gerald Sharp