

The Berwyn News



Published by the Berwyn District Civic Association, Inc.

(ISSN 10619-515X)

P.O. Box 535, College Park, MD 20740

Volume 14, Issue 2

www.myberwyn.org

February 2006

Thank You!

To Berwyn News Editor, Jacquie O'Keefe

Jacquie O'Keefe has edited many, many editions of the Berwyn News with great skill for the benefit of all neighbors in Berwyn. Jacquie is moving to North Carolina after living in Berwyn for more than 20 years. Thank you, Jacquie, for all you have done for Berwyn – we will miss you!!

We welcome Bob Baca as the new editor of the Berwyn News. As he learns the ropes in this position, he is interested in your comments on the newsletter. Please write to him at cookwithbob@hotmail.com.

Thank You!

To all of those who sent in their BDCA dues! Your support will help us keep publishing the Berwyn News, and organizing community events, like the upcoming Pot-Luck Dinner!

If you have not yet sent in your dues, there is still time. See the form on the back of this newsletter and send your dues today.

Special Appeal for Playground Donations

The Berwyn District Civic Association is collecting donations for improvements of the Neighborhood Playground. Please send your donation of \$5 - \$25 today to help keep our park a special place in Berwyn! See the form on back of Berwyn News to send in your donation, or bring it to the next BDCA Meeting.



Berwyn District Civic Association Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2006

THIRD THURSDAY, 8-10 pm, FEALY HALL

AGENDA

WHAT EVERY HOUSEHOLD NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT PREPARING FOR DISASTERS

Speakers: **Alita Corbett and Al Richardson**, consultants with the Prince George's County Office of Emergency Management

UPDATE ON PLANS FOR THE BERWYN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND

Speakers: **Eileen Nivera and Chris Calvin**, Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning

1. Introductions, Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes from Nov. 17 BDCA Meeting (*posted at www.myberwyn.org*)
3. Disaster Preparedness
4. Berwyn Neighborhood Playground Update and Discussion
5. BDCA Board and Committee Reports
 - a. Treasurer Report
 - b. Committee Updates
 - c. Neighborhood Preservation Coalition
 - d. Civic Association Updates
6. Reports from City Council Representatives
7. New Business
8. Adjournment

SAVE THE DATE!

Berwyn Neighborhood Pot-Luck Social
March 25, 2006
6pm - 8pm

Details to be announced...

Dear Berwyn Residents,

Hurricane Katrina was a horrible reminder about how important it is to be prepared for major disasters. Disasters such as a hurricane, terrorist attack, or chemical spill can happen in any place at any time. What does each household need to know to be prepared for a disaster? What should we do collectively as a neighborhood to ensure that all of us are able to get help if we need it – whether we have a car or not, whether we are able-bodied or not, whether we are financially secure or not. What would you do if disaster struck at home, at work, or in your car? These questions and more will be the subject of the next BDCA Meeting on Thursday, February 16. Bring your questions and suggestions to discuss with the County representatives.

PLAYGROUND: We need your help in showing support for the renovation of the Berwyn Neighborhood Playground. BDCA is applying for a \$3,000 grant from the City to augment the funding that will come from Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC). Public officials tell us we are more likely to receive approval for our grant if we can show the community is committed to the project. **We would like to raise \$500 by February 23, 2006, and you can help.** If just 20 families donate \$25 each, we will make our goal! Please use the form on the back of the Berwyn News to send in your donation, or bring it with you to the February 16 meeting.

PAINT BRACH PARKWAY CROSSING LIGHT: The BDCA has requested a traffic signal at the intersection of the Trolley Trail and Paint Branch Parkway. The County Department of Public Works has indicated that they will **reject** our request because they don't want more traffic signals on that road. We plan to appeal this decision and reach out to our elected officials to stress that we need to ensure the safety of pedestrians who choose to use their own power for transportation. Walkers, joggers, baby strollers, and bikers are just as important as cars!!

PAWN SHOP IN BERWYN? A pawn shop owner is requesting a special exception zoning to allow a pawn shop on Greenbelt Road where the current Signs shop is. Prince George's County Police support their request – they say *only* 1% of items brought into pawn shops are recovered as stolen items, and pawn shops are an important way for them to fight crime. The pawn shop owner is known to be very upstanding and the industry is highly regulated. Despite the assurances from the

police and the owner's representatives, **I am very much against the opening of a pawn shop on the edge of our neighborhood.** The interest rate they charge for pawning an item is 20% or more per month. The proponents argue that these kinds of small loans offer an important service to the community. It sounds to me more like predatory lending than any kind of needed service. We will invite the owner's representatives and police to address the entire BDCA membership at next month's March 16 BDCA Meeting. There will be a vote of the full membership as to whether the BDCA will stand in opposition to their application. Note that it seems the majority of the BDCA board is in favor of the pawn shop (or not standing in opposition), so if you feel differently, as I do, please talk with your BDCA board members and attend the Thursday, March 16 meeting 8pm-10pm.

I hope to see you on February 16, 2006 for our next BDCA meeting on Disaster Preparedness and for an update on the Playground!

Best,
Heather

BDCA 2005-2006 Officers

President	<i>Heather Iliff</i>
Vice Presidents	<i>Tim Aldridge & Chuck Ireton</i>
Corresponding Secretary	<i>Mark Shute</i>
Recording Secretaries	<i>Andrea Carpentier & Sue Hester</i>
Treasurer	<i>Al Cutino</i>
Board of Directors	<i>Jerry Anzulovic, Chris Moss, Harry Pitt, & Tim Triplett</i>
Neighborhood Watch Directors	<i>Janeen Miller & Mark Seaton</i>
Berwyn News Editor	<i>Bob Baca</i>

Berwyn now has an online MESSAGE BOARD!

Post your questions, items for sale, announcements, and more at www.myberwyn.org Click "BDCA Message Board" at the top-center of the page and post your message.

What a month. The weather resembles spring and our city is in the news and on television. Another tragic death of a UM student in off-campus housing has gripped the community. My prayers and condolences go out to the families. The landlords of these and other properties are on notice from officials that this cannot continue. College Park is the only jurisdiction in the area that enforces national fire codes. That being the case, our staff and city council are being taken to task. We cite the violations, the landlord appeals the citation, somebody dies, and we – the city – are to blame?? The landlord along with the tenant bears some responsibility in this picture. Providing a safe living unit and responsible behavior go hand-in-hand. I think we, and the city staff, are doing a fine job in carrying out our side of the equation – now it's time for the landlords to join with the tenant and complete the circle.

You and I should have an escape plan in case of an emergency in our homes. The simple advice, get out and survive. Practice your plan and meet outside in a designated place, then call for assistance. Live responsibly...keep trash and junk from accumulating, use fire and candles safely, and keep all exits clear and operable. Use common sense and practice all those things that you've heard all of your life.

The General Assembly is meeting in Annapolis. Keep your hands on your wallet and purse. There are many proposals and we are the source of the funding. They never ask us if we can afford it. They only say they can't, so they go to the only source they know about – us. They can't make more widgets 'cause that ain't their business. I often wonder if I (we) need all of these ideas or programs. Especially if I had a choice to fund them or not.

I've been assured by the city staff that they have finally got the driveway at Holy Redeemer right. Have you seen the speed limit signs? Thanks to the good clean federal money, you now know how fast you are driving on Berwyn streets.

The city has picked the pockets of the developers of the Greenbelt Station/Smith property and now that we are flush with these monies, a lot of ducks have to get in line before 'the check is in the mail' (when we get 'em, the council will 'debate' how to spend 'em, but some groups are already lining up).

Your city council finally picked a site for a new city hall, the old College Park Elementary School site, the Friends School on Calvert Road. This selection by a 7 to 1 vote now sets the ball rolling for the redevelopment of the current site and ultimately a

parking garage for downtown development. The construction of additional parking is what started this whole thing. With Prince George's County allowing the construction of new businesses without any parking, we were/are faced with the problem of 'where are they going to park?' Since there is no vacant land in downtown, the only solution is a parking garage. Hopefully there won't be any more roadblocks – our indecision has cost the city a lot of money. Anything that slows down the process will continue to add to the ultimate cost.

What is a T.I.F. tax? Tax Increment Financing. This program withholds increases in real estate tax from the general fund and only allows spending in a special district for specific enumerated things. This is supposed to be good for us and development. I think the jury is still out on that question. I will listen and ask questions.

Zoning is still an item to watch in our neighborhood. Is the placement of a pawn shop in keeping with the finest and best use for property in our neighborhood? I've got mixed feelings and find it hard to classify this as 'upscale'. Yes, I realize that the building is empty and there are others in the area, but if I want to use the services provided by this industry, I don't have to go far. Yes, I know that they are regulated. Why is that? Do the regulators know something that they aren't telling? Maybe the reputation that pawn shops have is deserved; looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a duck...

Do you know how to use the internet safely? Would you like a presentation about internet safety? Come on down to the civic association meeting and tell us about it. See you on Thursday at Fealy Hall at 8 pm.

May God continue to bless America.
– Jack



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Greetings neighbors. On January 31st, the City Council voted (7-1) to make the Calvert Road school site the preferred site for a new City Hall. We can now proceed with a development agreement that would allow for the construction of a downtown parking garage, a mixed use development on the existing City Hall site, and a new City Hall. Obviously, a final decision to proceed would have to be made by the City Council at a later date. That decision may also include a temporary relocation of City Hall, too. It is unfortunate that that a more central location for City Hall could not be negotiated.

On Saturday, January 21 at City Hall, a team of Smart Growth consultants engaged residents and some others, too, in discussing a variety of issues related to the redevelopment of the Route 1 corridor. A lot of interest was shown in the discussion, as the room was full of people to hear the opinion of the experts and engage in a discussion of the issues. A written report of the event along with their recommendations will be forthcoming next month. Thanks to all those who attended for making the event a success.

I don't have much new to report on development plans. The approval for redevelopment of the College Park Motel (next to Exxon) has been held up because of storm water management issues. I understand that those issues have been resolved, so we should be hearing more about the project this spring. In downtown College Park, Lupo's Italian Chophouse has closed. It appears that the restaurant will reopen under a different name with another owner who is from the City.

Traffic/parking issues remain in the vicinity of 48th and Pontiac. As of February, the 4700 block of Pontiac is for permit parking only. It looks like we will be looking at the issue of traffic and parking beyond Pontiac in the near future. If you live in the impacted area please give me a call or an email with your thoughts.

In real estate news, home sales data for 2005 are now available. In 2005, 31 single family homes and 6 townhouses sold in Berwyn. The median sales price was \$337,500 for a house and \$264,000 for a townhouse. Because prices rose strongly throughout the first 9 months of the year, the median price lags behind the current market. For example 5 of the 6 sales in Berwyn at prices in excess of \$400,000 occurred in the second half of the year.

I hope to see you at the Berwyn District Civic Association's Thursday evening meeting at Fealy Hall. Please use the form in this newsletter to join or renew your membership in the BDCA. Our costs for printing, our post office box, and sponsoring neighborhood events are about \$3,000 a year. The BDCA's membership dues are a major source of the funds that are used to print this newsletter and sponsor events.

21st District Delegates

Your legislators serving you.
Call anytime - 301-858-3114

Delegate Pauline Menes
Delegate Brian Moe
Delegate Barbara Frush

210 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

E-mail:

Pauline_Menes@house.state.md.us
Barbara_Frush@house.state.md.us
Brian_Moe@house.state.md.us

Authority Duncan H. Munro, Treasurer

Your newsletter has a new editor!

And he would like your suggestions on what you would like to see in upcoming issues of the "Berwyn News." Send your comments and suggestions to Bob Baca at cookwithbob@hotmail.com.



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Neighborhood Homes

Information Provided by
Jerry Anzulovic
of Bright and Associates

Properties sold or Rented (Berwyn 5, Branchville 2)

- 8304 Potomac Avenue**, \$370,000, (\$365,000), Gasim Ali, Absentee owner, 6000 Riverdale Road Riverdale Park, MD 20737, 301-927-6910 or 301-277-4430, DOM 144, SS \$.00, 1104 sf, SA Lynne Tudor (lynn.tudor@longandfoster.com) SB Long & Foster Real Estate, Silver Spring, MD 301-650-4400.
- 8322 Potomac Avenue**, \$403,900, (\$399,900), Somil Desai & Varun Kohli, Absentee owners, 5008 Geronimo Street, College Park, MD, 20740, DOM 134, SS \$4,000, 1020 sf, SA Richard D'Souza (richardcdsouza@yahoo.com) SB A-K Real Estate Inc. Rockville, MD, 301-294-4681.
- 5106 Roanoke Place**, \$314,900, (\$339,900), Rolando Crespín, Absentee owner, 4536 Hazelwood Avenue, Baltimore, MD, 21206, 410-485-8565, DOM 90, SS \$4,000, 1194 sf, SA Silvia Serrano (silviaserrano@mrisc.com) SB Home-Pro Realty, Inc., Springfield, VA, 703-941-9103.
- 5110 & 5114 Roanoke Place**, \$2,235,000, (\$?), Ernest & Helaine Moreno t/a The Roanoke Place LLC, Absentee owners, 63 Peregrine Xing, Savannah, GA, 31411, 912-598-3963, DOM?, SS \$?, 56,885 sf, SA?, SB?.
- 8901 48th Avenue**, \$314,990, (\$314,990), Jose Zavala & Ana Aguiler, Absentee owners. 4317 San Jose Drive, Fairfax, VA, 22030 & 6208 Bardon Avenue, Springfield, VA., 22152, DOM 106, SS \$.00 1152 sf, SA Harry McNeace (harry5533@hotmail.com) SB Union Plus Realty, Rockville, MD 301-309-8859.
- 8702 49th Avenue**, \$440,000, (\$439,500), Karyn Keating-Volke, et al, Absentee owners, 132 Church Rd. Arnold, MD, 21012, 410-974-4414, DOM 159, SS \$10,000. 1384 sf, SA Karyn Keating-Volke (Karynrealtor@mrisc.com) SB Prudential Carruthers REALTORS, Crofton, MD 410-721-3711.
- 9001 Baltimore Boulevard**, \$750,000, (\$?), Alvin Jenkins, Sr., Owner occupant, DOM ?, SS \$.00, 1200 sf (Improvements), 39,204 sf (Land), SA?, SB?

Properties under Contract (Berwyn 5, Branchville 1)

- 4711 Berwyn Road**, \$309,000, Ulysses Glee, Absentee owner since 08/05/1977
- 4713 Greenbelt Road**, \$350,000, Christine & Eric Michelson, Owner occupants since 10/06/1996
- 5004 Roanoke Place**, \$359,900, Glenn Gulden & Terrence O'Hara, Absentee owners since 01/17/1987
- 8513 48th Avenue**, \$359,900, Anthony Wilburn, Owner occupant since 04/07/1994
- 8705 48th Avenue**, \$470,000, Frank & Bonnie Doyle, Absentee owners since 04/11/1989
- 8907 48th Avenue**, \$339,900, Babu & Beena Varghese, Owner occupants since 03/28/2000

Properties for Sale or Rent (Berwyn 22, Branchville 1)

- 4805 Berwyn Road**, \$399,900, Ross & Patricia McMullen, Owner occupant since 03/05/1997
- *5030 Berwyn Road**, \$475,000, (\$ 489,000), Gloria Pope, Absentee owner since 09/02/2004
- 4711 Branchville Road**, \$399,500, Surinder & Harmeet Bhatti, Owner occupants since 03/08/1999
- *4803 Osage Street**, \$465,000, (\$550,000), Silvia Adamo, Owner occupant since 01/05/1994
- 4822 Osage Street**, \$375,000, Jacqueline O'Keefe, Owner occupant since 06/03/1983
- 8312 Potomac Avenue**, \$399,000, Edelu Awoke & Hermias Halle, Absentee owners since 03/16/2005
- 8430 Potomac Avenue**, \$479,900, Mohammed Sikder, Absentee owner since 05/20/2005
- 5002 Roanoke Place**, \$400,000, Les Bernard, Absentee owner since 08/14/2002
- 4705 Tecumseh Street, 101-104**, \$214,900-\$277,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005
- 4705 Tecumseh Street, 201-204**, \$224,900-\$264,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005
- 4705 Tecumseh Street, 301-304**, \$224,900-\$269,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005
- 4709 Tecumseh Street, 205**, \$282,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005
- 4709 Tecumseh Street, 101**, \$259,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005
- 8410 48th Avenue**, \$295,000, Michelle Tam & Zo An Song, Absentee owners since 01/08/2002
- 8310 48th Avenue**, \$379,000, James Bowen, Absentee owner since 08/13/1999
- 8400 48th Avenue**, \$400,000, James Bowen, Absentee owner since 08/28/1998

DOM means day on the market from listing to filing of deed at courthouse, underline means a new listing, * means a change in offered price, LA means living area only (NOT the basement or lower level).

THE BERWYN NEWS ADVERTISING AGREEMENT 2006

AD SIZE (Circle all that are appropriate)

Eighth Page (Business Card) (3.75"W x 2.5"D)
Quarter Page (3.75"W x 5"D)
Half Page (Horizontal) (7.5"W x 5"D)
Half Page (Vertical) (3.75"W x 10"D)
Full Page (7.5"W x 10"D)

SINGLE ISSUE

\$25
\$35
\$50
\$50
\$75

10 ISSUES

\$200
\$275
\$350
\$350
\$500

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Mailing Address:

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Repeat the same ad as before (yes/no)? I have e-mailed my ad to the Editor at cookwithbob@hotmail.com by the production deadline.

My ad is enclosed with the amount: \$_____

Please make checks payable to "Berwyn District Civic Association, Inc.", and mail to Berwyn District Civic Association, PO Box 535, College Park, MD, 20740

For further information, please call Janeen Miller, Neighborhood Watch at 301-474-3123, or Heather Iliff, The Berwyn District Association President at 301-345-4433.

Thank you for supporting our community!!!

**BERWYN DISTRICT CIVIC ASSOCIATION
2006 Membership Dues**

Membership dues are \$10 per person or \$15 per family. - Membership dues are collected once a year. Paying your dues today will make you an active member for the remainder of this year!!!

Please Print Clearly!

Street Address: _____ Dues _____

Family Name _____ Special Playground Donation _____

Total Enclosed _____



Any individuals or businesses who contribute \$25 or more will be acknowledged on the BDCA forthcoming website sponsorship page. Those contributing \$50 or more will be listed as gold star contributors. If you want to contribute more but prefer not to be acknowledged then simply write in anonymous below. If you would like to include a link to your business or personal website then please provide a URL link below.

Name to be posted on website: _____

URL Link: _____

Send to: Berwyn District Civic Association Box 535, College Park, MD, 20740

THE NEXT ISSUE of the BERWYN NEWS will be distributed on the weekend of *March 11th-12th*. Deadline for articles is *March 6th*.

Send articles to Bob Baca at cookwithbob@hotmail.com