

The Berwyn News



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my.berwyn.org

January 2006

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Together, we make Berwyn a great place to live!

IN THIS ISSUE:	PAGE
BDCA Meeting Agenda & Local News	1
President's Corner	2
Council Musings	3
Councilman's Views and Comments	4
Neighborhood Homes	5
Berwyn News Deadline and Ads	6
Community Advertisements	7-8
Advertisements throughout issue as well	



Berwyn District Civic Association Meeting

Thursday, January 19, 2006
THIRD THURSDAY

**COMMUNITY FORUM: EDUCATION, SAFETY AND
YOUR CONCERNS ON LIFE IN BERWYN**

AGENDA

1. Introductions, Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes from November 17
BDCA Meeting
*Minutes are posted at www.myberwyn.org
and will be provided at the meeting.
Minutes include details on the forum on
public safety with Prince George's County
Police Officers.*
3. Public Education in College Park: Dialogue
on Recent Developments
1
4. Neighborhood Watch – Bolstering Our
Efforts to Keep Berwyn Safe
5. 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

Education is an issue very important to all of us, whether we have school-aged children or not. If you do have young children, options for public education in our area have often been subjects of stress and worry. If you do not have young children, the quality of education in our area affects who your neighbors are, your property value and the nature of the community.

Public education in Prince George's County elicits sometimes painful reminders that our system is in serious need of leadership (literally) while at the same time we have enormous potential.

Prince George's County devotes greater resources to education than most counties in the nation. Prince George's is #12 in the nation in per-pupil expenditures (\$6,718 per pupil), among the nation's 60 largest school systems. Sometimes I believe we operate with a "poverty mentality" partly because we are in a region of big-spenders, so comparatively we feel we don't have enough resources. District of Columbia (believe it or not) is #2 in the nation on per-pupil expenditure among the largest school systems. Montgomery County is #3. Baltimore City is #9 and Baltimore County is #10. (Source: National Center for Education Statistics).

But, I think the larger reason we do not live up to our potential is we are blinded by ongoing racism in our society. There is no easy answer to racism, but I have learned, that I, as a white person, need to focus on white racism and finding ways to achieve social justice. This means not focusing on the lives and actions of people of color as my point of reference in issues of race that affect our county and our schools. My focus is on my actions as a white person and how I can promote a reduction of the impact of white racism on our schools. Part of my commitment is, from time to time, naming this "elephant in the room" so we can deal with it.

In College Park, we have unique reasons for having educational challenges. One of the most significant issues is the high proportion of student rentals in our communities, making it difficult to achieve a critical mass of families to foster community schools. There is a widespread perception, based partly on data and partly on anecdotal information that Prince George's Public Schools are so poor that one's best hope is to keep their children away from the public schools altogether. I have found through our personal experience with the public education system that while there is a lot of room for improvement, our public schools have a great deal to offer.

Paint Branch Elementary is a great school, but it is now under-enrolled. I have heard directly from parents that they are afraid to send their children there, and people often seem a bit surprised when I tell them that our daughter attends and is doing quite well. She has also benefited from small class sizes.

However, it is not good for a school to be under-enrolled over the long term, and it is difficult to form a cohesive parent community around Paint Branch when the student population does not live close to the school.

One recent suggestion that is gaining some traction is for Paint Branch Elementary to become a K-8 school. There is some educational evidence that K-8 is a better model for students and reduces adjustment problems at the middle-school level.

We will discuss this idea, and also recent developments around whether North County needs a new high school (in light of recent decision to put a new high school in Bowie). Join us for a lively discussion and share your concerns and suggestions about how we can improve public education in our community.

Neighborhood Watch: We will also devote time at the BDCA meeting to following up on the Neighborhood Watch discussions. We need to strengthen our system of block captains and be ever more vigilant as a community to keep us safe.

Read the minutes of the last BDCA meeting to see what the police had to say about response times and auto theft in our area (minutes available at www.myberwyn.org).

What's On Your Mind? Do you have ideas of how we can improve as a community such as a club or beautification project? Any complaints you would like to raise? We will devote time to an open forum with your ideas and concerns.

Finally, many thanks to everyone who helped out for the *Holiday Party* – we had a great turnout with a house-full of kids and parents, music, refreshments, terrific Santa with gifts and more! Thank you for making Berwyn a great place to live.

Warm wishes,
Heather

BDCA 2005-2006 Officers	
President	Heather Iliff
Vice Presidents	Tim Aldridge Chuck Ireton
Corresponding Secretary	Mark Shute
Recording Secretaries	Andrea Carpentieri Sue Hester
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Board of Directors	Jerry Anzulovic Chris Moss Harry Pitt Tim Triplett
Neighborhood Watch Director	Janeen Miller & Mark Seaton
Berwyn News Editor	Jacqueline O'Keefe

Damn, I just got my gas (fuel) bill and the gas company has figured out a new budget for me. They feel that I can live with a \$90.00 a month increase. I hope the price doesn't go up any more. I am already wearing two coats inside the house.

Anyway, I wish you all a happy new year and hope you enjoyed the holidays – now it's back to the old grind.

The negotiations with Branchville Fire Co. are over concerning locating a city hall on the old elementary property. I understand that the volunteer fire company has a 99 year lease on the site. We have also received word from our primary developer that they are pulling out of the picture to develop a new city hall and parking facility in downtown. So you can see that any progress we thought we had made has been erased. Now it is time to start over with developer #2 and another site selection for city hall. The time table now figures out to be after the next city election, sometime before you will be able to park a car in our city parking deck (Didn't we just have an election? Yep, two plus years from now maybe...)

Talking about raising prices... We have been told by the city manager, to expect an increase in city property taxes with the FY '07 budget. Now even the state governor has suggested that the state property tax be reduced – no it will not offset the city increase – and it all depends on the general assembly in Annapolis. They like tax, tax, tax and spend, spend, spend. So we will just have to wait it out and watch the posturing that the delegates and senators in Annapolis.

Our court case about the property on Berwyn Road at the "trolley trail" or Rhode Island Avenue is now in the judges hands. We await his ruling.

Some Development goes on, others get killed – we now have a new patron saint that we must bow to. He is the chairman of the Prince George's County Council. He wants to be involved in everything that College Park does with respect to development. It appears to me that we might as well close up our planning department, send our professionals on their way and ask Tom... what do you want? You have to understand that this is my opinion and with the widespread readership that this 'BLOG' gets, I expect I'll be hearing from somebody.

You should take a ride with Jerry and I on a Sunday morning and see how the other half live. The condition of some of the fraternities in the old town neighborhood is appalling. I don't think brooms

and rakes and litter pick up is known about. These Frat houses don't even look good on family weekends.

But, we are going to get lights and blue phones and there is even talk about more cameras watching. Ah, life in a college town.

College Park's new director of public works is alive and well. He is feeling his way through our system and briefed the council on some future plans to make 'picking up trash' more efficient. Do you know what 'single stream recycling' is? We are investigating it for our fair city. It is hoped that this program will increase participation in our recycling program, maybe by our seasonal residents.

I extend my thanks and appreciation to all of you who volunteer to serve on city boards and committees. You do this unselfishly and on your time. Thank you for making College Park a nicer place to call home and raise a family.

Leaf pickup is over, now you have to bag 'em, paper of course and the public work crews will pick 'em up. If your car was in the way when the leaf vac came through, now is the time to sweep up that gutter in front of and along side of your house. Remember if you live on a dirty street, you don't have anyone to blame but yourself.

I will see you at our association meeting and answer any questions that you may have.

May God continue to bless America,

Jack



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Greetings neighbors. On Saturday, January 21 at City Hall, a team of Smart Growth consultants who have worked across the US, will offer College Park advice on a variety of issues [economic development (9-10:30); land use, design and zoning (10:30-12); and transportation (1-2:30). The program will begin at 8:30 am and conclude at 5 pm. Lunch will be provided. A variety of issues will be discussed by the Mayor and Council and others (that means you). The consultants will facilitate the discussion and offer advice toward the end of the day. The consultants have been busy studying College Park over the last few weeks so I expect their advice on Saturday to be well thought out. The City invites you to attend for the day or for a topic which interests you.

Phase 1 work is nearing completion in the Berwyn Road commercial strip. The project will be completed in the spring. On Route 1, the County Executive has rejected tax increment finance (TIF) funding for Mark Vogel's condominium project (next to Taco Bell). I don't expect the project to proceed unless the funding is approved. It is possible that Jack Johnson may eventually approve us, a TIF for the project. In other development a detailed site plan has been filed by Collegiate Hall Properties for 215 student housing units at a location on the west side of Route 1 across from the post office. The student housing would be fronted by retail. The project would be tied into the Paint Branch Trail at the rear. While the parcel is large (23 acres), most of the land would not be developed.

The University has also announced plans to construct more student housing on campus. Proposed are two projects. One project would build 500 beds of undergraduate housing and the second project would provide graduate student housing.

In December the County School system proposed elementary school boundary changes which would have significantly impacted Paint Branch and University Park elementary schools, among many others. The changes were in the case of University Park especially, not well received. Consequently, it appears that these changes will not go forward. As a result it appears that Paint Branch will continue to operate well under capacity, an anomaly in the County. It has been proposed, though not by the County, that Paint Branch becomes a school for grades K-8. There are a few such schools in the County. Such a school would solve a variety of problems. Stay tuned for more school system developments.

You may have notice a variety of significant home improvement projects taking place in the neighborhood. Often these projects involve a need to have a public hearing to request one or more variances from the County's Zoning Ordinance. In the City we have an Advisory Planning Commission (composed of City residents) who meet at least once a month to hear variance applications and make recommendations on granting such variances to the Mayor and Council. We rarely go against their recommendations.

The owner of 8708 48th Place, Claudio Filipone, was recently granted a variance (from the rear yard setback – to permit 9 feet rather than 20 feet) to allow for the construction of two-story, two-car garage off of Tecumseh Street.

I hope to see you at the BDCA's Thursday evening meeting at Fealy Hall.

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Neighborhood Homes

Information Provided by
Jerry Anzulovic
of Bright and Associates

Properties sold or Rented (Berwyn 5, Branchville 0)

4806 Berwyn Road, \$465,000, (\$469,000), Charles R.Center, Owner occupant, 1,488 sf., DOM 108, SS \$.00, SA Ann Richardson annr@remax.net SB RE/MAX Professionals, Bowie, Md. 301-352-4100.

8501 Potomac Avenue, \$339,900, Christine A. Winderline, Owner occupant, 1,176 sf, DOM 71, SS \$7,500, SA Scott Simmons, scottsimmons@mris.com SB Long & Foster Real Estate, Burtonsville, Md. 301-384-8700.

8505 Rhode Island Avenue, \$288,000, (\$?), Harmony Homes LLC or Elizabeth K. Vrenios, 6313 Valley Road, Bethesda, Md., 20817-3211, 301-365-3368 or Linda S. Ellinwood, 1125 Stephalee Lane, Rockville, Md., 20850-3655, 301-770-5866, Absentee owners, 792 sf, DOM (?) SS (\$?), SA (?), SB (?).

8519 Rhode Island Avenue, \$310,000, (\$309,900), Patrick Hyousee, Owner occupant, 1,300 sf, DOM 69 SS \$.00, SA Andy MacPherson Andy@andymac.com SB W F. Chesley Real Estate, Crofton, Md. 301-261-6700.

5002 Seminole Street, \$370,000, (\$387,000), Jose A. M. Vasquez et al, Owner occupants (?), DOM 49, SS \$.00, SA Marie LaBorde mlaborde@yahoo.com SB Prudential Carruthers REALTORS, Silver Spring, Md., 301-879-2600.

Properties under Contract (Berwyn 9, Branchville 1)

4711 Berwyn Road, \$309,000, Ulysses Glee, Absentee owner since 8/5/1977.

4713 Greenbelt Road, \$350,000, Christine J. & Eric Michelson, Owner occupants since 10/06/1996.

8304 Potomac Avenue, 365,000, Donald P. Kirsch, Absentee owner since 10/27/1992.

8322 Potomac Avenue, \$399,900, James Futrell, Owner occupant since 8/16/2004.

5004 Roanoke Place, \$359,900, Glenn J. Gulden & Terrence A. O'Hara, Absentee owners since 1/17/1987

8513 48th Avenue, \$359,900, Anthony K. Wilburn, Owner occupant since 4/7/1994.

8702 49th Avenue, \$439,500, Ross E. Eichberg, Absentee owner since 8/25/2004

8705 48th Avenue, \$470,000, Frank J. & Bonnie Doyle, Absentee owners since 4/11/1989.

8901 48th Avenue, \$314,990, Mary E. Raymond, Owner occupant since 4/25/1972.

8907 48th Avenue, \$339,900, Babu & Beena B. Varghese, Owner occupants since 3/28/2000.

Properties for Sale or Rent (Berwyn 22, Branchville 0)

*5030 Berwyn Road, \$475,000, (\$ 489,000), Gloria Pope, Absentee owner since 9/2/2004.

*4803 Osage Street, \$495,000, (\$550,000), Silvia Adamo, Owner occupant since 1/5/1994.

8430 Potomac Avenue, \$479,900, Mohammed Sikder, Absentee owner since 5/20/2005.

5001 Roanoke Place, \$400,000, Les Bernard, Absentee owner since 8/14/2002.

5106 Roanoke Place, \$339,900, James & Kimberly Durkin, Absentee owners since 8/29/2003.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 101, \$259,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 102, \$277,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 103, \$214,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 104, \$239,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 201, \$259,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 202, \$264,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 203, \$224,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 204, \$229,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 301, \$269,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 302, \$264,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 303, \$224,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4705 Tecumseh Street, 304, \$229,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

4709 Tecumseh Street, 205, \$282,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/1005.

4709 Tecumseh Street, 101, \$259,900, Stephen S. Tennant, Absentee owner since 6/17/2005.

8410 48th Avenue, \$295,000, Michelle Tam & Zo An Song, Absentee owners since 1/8/2002.

8310 48th Avenue, \$379,000, James L. Bowen, Absentee owner since 8/13/1999.

8400 48th Avenue, \$400,000, James L. Bowen, Absentee owner since 8/28/1998.

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.

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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!!!

THOMAS R. HENDERSHOT

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCILMAN, 3RD DISTRICT

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By Authority: Carol B. White, Treasurer

THE NEXT ISSUE of the BERWYN NEWS will be distributed on
the weekend of *February 11th-12th*. Deadline Monday before on February 6th.

Send to Jacqueline O'Keefe at jacquie@umd.edu



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