



The Berwyn News

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2004/2005 Officers & Directors

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Berwyn District

Civic Association Meeting
May 19, 2005, Third Thursday
8 P.M. – 10 P.M.
 (49th Avenue and Berwyn Road)

AGENDA

1. Roll Call for Officers
2. Minutes from last meeting
3. Presentation – Northgate High Rise Condominium complex.
4. Discussion – New College Park Fence Ordinance
5. Next Event – Neighborhood night out
6. Treasurer Update
7. Committee Updates
8. Civic Association Updates
9. College Park Reports from our Council Representatives
10. New Business
11. Adjournment

Greetings Neighbors,

The April Berwyn District Civic Association (BDCA) meeting started with a vote to choose a BDCA website domain name. The winner was www.myberwyn.org, which will soon become the permanent web site of the BDCA. Congratulation goes out to the Iliff family for submitting this entry and they will be rewarded with a complimentary lunch buffet at our neighborhood Seven Seas restaurant. At this meeting Harry Pitt, Tim Aldridge, and Amy Kappel Noggle were nominated to serve on this year's nomination committee. We will elect next years BDCA officers in our June meeting. Also at this meeting the BDCA announced that they took the position to not stand in opposition to the abandonment of the alleyway behind the College Park Motel in order to move along the redevelopment of the College Park Motel. By not standing in opposition, we hope that the current eyesore will soon be replaced with an upscale hotel. The BDCA did stipulate that we do not want the new hotel to have an exit or entrance from Pontiac Street, thus all traffic should enter and exist onto route 1. Finally at last month's meeting, longtime Berwyn resident Jim Rosapepe and member of the University of Maryland's board of regents gave a report about the work being done by the College Park City-University Partnership. (CPCUP). I will soon be adding some of the information from the CPCUP projects to our website, for now you can follow what was discussed by reading the minutes from last month's meeting which is posted on our website.

While at first it didn't appear that the weather was going to cooperate for our

annual Berwyn cleanup day event, but the rains ultimately held off and the sun came out. So, our spring cleanup day organized by Bob Catlin was a great success and I want to thank everyone who helped out.

At our May BDCA board meeting we heard a site plan presented by Mark Vogel and Jennifer Everly for the development of an upscale condominium complex on route 1 next to the Burger King and Taco Bell on Route 1. They will be presenting an update of this project at our Thursday May 19, BDCA meeting. At this meeting we will also discuss having a neighborhood night out this summer that is more community based, rather than part of the larger College Park event. The Board agreed that this should be more of a Berwyn neighborhood event and therefore the BDCA will organize a neighborhood night out event on Tuesday August 2.

This month's BDCA meeting should be quite informative, starting with a project presentation that will certainly have an impact on the route 1 corridor. Also we will discuss and possibly vote to take a position on the new proposed College Park Ordinance that would place certain restrictions on the construction of front yard fences on residential properties. Finally, we will also ask for suggestions on how to organize and hold a neighbor night out this summer. Attendance at the BDCA meetings this year has been great and I again I hope to see many of you at this month's meeting.



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By the time you read this you should have heard that we picked a new city manager – As it stands, you won't be surprised.

The 'silly council' voted in a tie with the mayor voting in the affirmative to break the tie and chose the Branchville Fire Department site on Greenbelt Road for a new city hall. Now the negotiations will get underway. The fire department has a 99 year lease with Prince Georges County for the site. Now everybody will have a hand in OUR decision.

That's what the mayor likes. I hope we and the future tax payers of College Park can afford it. You should know my position for the location of a new city hall by now.

The budget for the next fiscal year is just about ready for prime time. There are some interesting things in it. Childcare for the mayor and council members, so they can attend meetings – Nextel phones for the council and a blackberry (?) for the mayor. A tax increase for the homestead tax adjustment enacted by the 'silly council' during the last year. There is at this writing no proposed increase in expired meter parking fines. We are about the lowest in the area, but the businesses cry big tears and the 'silly council' goes for it. If you get a ticket in Bethesda it costs you \$35.00, College Park is about half that. What's wrong with this picture?

Are you ready for a local ordinance on fences – especially in the front yard...the council is considering one. Come on down to the BDCA meeting on Thursday, We will have some more information for you.

The house fire in old town has been classified as "ARSON". The newspapers are asking what is College Park going to do about it? We can't legislate against stupid. The city inspects all rentals once a year. From then on, it is up to the occupants and the landlord to protect themselves and the property. Yep, fire drills and knowing where you are at all times. It is always good to know how to get out of someplace in case of an emergency. Two ways is best especially if one is blocked. Cleanliness and order are essentials of good housekeeping. A place for everything and everything in its place. Smoke detectors working, doors not blocked. No excess trash or stuff around to interfere with your quick and safe exit. It is better that you be standing around naked, than

brought out feet first. CALL 911 and Call again if you are not sure anyone has called. Those that respond are professionals and are equipped to handle the situation.

Every developer on route #1 wants a traffic light for his project. The state of Maryland is sitting on its hands and the development is going faster than the roadway improvements and any ideas or plans that were previously held are slowly being eaten away by the developers and SHA sits on its hands. I may not live long enough to see this roadway improved.

A developer will make a presentation for 200 condominiums on Route #1 this weeks meeting.

See you on Thursday and May God Continue to Bless America,

Jack

Berwyn Neighborhood Watch

Call or send an e-mail to Janeen Miller to report suspicious activity, crime and vandalism:

berwyn_neighborhood_watch@yahoo.com

Or janeenmiller@juno.com

Or 301-474-3123

To join the Neighborhood Watch e-mail alert group, send a message to the Yahoo! Groups account listed above.

**Report all crime and suspicious activity to the
Prince George's County Police:**

**Emergency (Police-Fire-Ambulance) 911
Non-Emergency 301-333-4000**

**City-Wide Neighborhood Watch Meeting
Wednesday, May 25, 2005**

7:30 p.m.

Davis Hall (9217 51st Avenue)

Representatives from the Neighborhood Watch program, Prince George's County Police, and City of College Park Contract Police will attend To discuss the fundamentals of the Neighborhood Watch program, and to address your specific crime concerns.

**For more information, please contact
Janeen Miller at 301-864-8877**

Greetings neighbors. College Park's FY2006 budget is to be adopted on May 24th. As of this writing the City's proposed budget still looks a lot like that which was proposed by the City Manager. The operating budget is now proposed to be about \$10.5 million (up from \$10.3 as introduced), which reflects operating revenues of \$10.1 million (up from \$10.0) and a use of almost \$0.4 million (up from \$0.3) of our \$3.0 million in reserves. The budget now reflects a 1.7 cent increase (up from 1.2 cent) in the real property tax (from 26.8 to 28.5 cents). As a result, property owners would be paying about 7.5 percent (up from 5.5 percent) more in City property taxes for FY06. This results from a one percent increase in assessments (for City tax purposes) and the 6.5 percent increase (up from 4.5 percent) in the real property tax rate discussed above. Since most homeowners are currently paying about \$350 to \$425 in real property tax to the City, the increase would amount to about an additional \$25 to \$30. My guess is that your total property tax bill will also increase by a slightly smaller percentage in FY06. Most homeowners are paying about \$2,500 to \$3,000 in total real property taxes, so the total property tax increase will be about \$135 to \$165 in your tax bill later this year.

The budget now recognizes about \$203,000 (up from \$132,000) for the hiring of contract police. The City Council now proposes that we increase the budget for contract police by about 50 percent from the FY05 funding level. The \$71,000 increase in the police budget explains the additional 0.5 cent increase in the proposed real property tax rate. We get about one hour of police coverage for every \$40 we spend, so the additional revenue will bring about 1,775 hours of more police in FY06, or about 34 hours a week.

The rent cap hearing went well. I have never seen the landlords so well behaved before, although many of you were still appalled at their attitudes. Thanks Berwyn for such a large showing of support at the public hearing on April 27th. We should have a

vote on the proposed program by Tuesday, May 24th.

We also had a vote on relocating City Hall on April 26th. Branchville emerged as the preferred site by a narrow margin. The vote was 4 in support and 4 opposed, with Mayor Brayman breaking the tie by voting in support. Now we can begin in earnest to negotiate an agreement with the Branchville Volunteer Fire Company for the relocation of City Hall to a site that is centrally located in the City. We should know in the next six weeks whether the negotiations will lead to an agreement. That agreement must then be ratified by the City Council and since there are no votes that can be lost from the original 4 or the Mayor who supported the move there over two other possible locations, the results are far from certain as to where a future City Hall would be located.

Despite very iffy weather on Saturday morning (April 23rd) the neighborhood clean up took place. While the weather held down the number of participants, about a dozen residents showed up and put in about two hours of clean up. The result was a large amount of trash and litter collected, primarily from the entrances to the neighborhood.

A lot of activity has taken place behind the Bowling Alley/Pizza Hut recently. The property owner, Campfire PDF, had the Branchville Volunteer Fire Company burn down the house it acquired at 48th Ave. and Branchville Rd. on April 23rd. In addition, Campfire PDF cleaned up its property that had been the scene of a lot of illegal dumping and it barricaded access points to the property to discourage future dumping. In addition, the final laying of asphalt on the rebuilt Branchville Road was completed.

I hope to see you Thursday the 19th at Fealy Hall to answer any questions you may have about the budget, rent caps, development or any other subject.

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition (NPC)

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition (NPC) celebrates its first anniversary this month!

The coalition has been working on several issues of importance to Berwyn and the surrounding communities. We remain concerned with the high number of homes being converted to student rentals. We believe that these conversions left unchecked are bad for permanent residents and students alike. That's why we are working to restore balance to the housing market and assist families and owner occupants in purchasing homes in our neighborhoods. The NPC is in the planning stages of a Homes Fair geared towards family/owner occupied buyers. This upcoming fair will be the kick-off for what will be a comprehensive marketing effort. The investor landlords are well organized--we need to be as well! There are many other issues before us. We would like to bring you up-to-date on a few of those issues.

First, the property at 49th and Berwyn road owned by Mr. Ridgeway continues to be a priority. Mr. Ridgeway has been under a court order to bring his property into compliance for over two months and does not appear to take the matter seriously. However, this time the court has granted the City of College Park the authority to abate the violations. This means that we should see the city take steps soon to have the building repaired and apply the cost of repairs to the owners tax bill. The NPC has been tracking this case since last summer and is happy to report that time will soon run out on Mr. Ridgeway's decades long game of cat and mouse.

Also, we continue to monitor and challenge the organized landlord group called the Prince Georges Property Association. This group is comprised mostly of out of town landlords whose tactics include suing the city over every attempt to regulate the rental industry.

NPC members have testified before the College Park Mayor and council on several matters including over crowded student housing, rent control, parking,

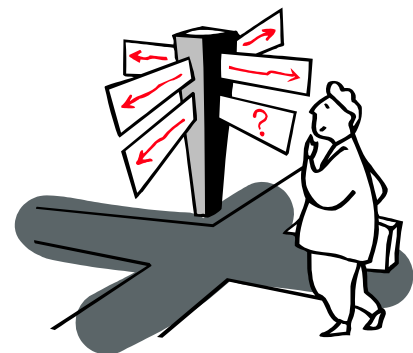
noise and litter. This February, NPC representatives appeared before the County Planning Board in Upper Marlboro to protest one landlord's attempt to house as many as fifteen students on one property. The planning board ordered the property owner to completely and permanently disable a garage that had been converted into living quarters, and applied restrictions on the number of tenants allowed in the house itself.

These are just a few of the issues we're working on; please join us on May 21, 2005 at our next general meeting at 8:00am, Fealy Hall?

Our very special guest will be Mr. Jim Rosapepe, long time Berwyn resident and current University of Maryland Regent. Mr. Rosapepe will be discussing the university/city partnership and their efforts with development along the Route 1 corridor. The NPC is honored to have Mr. Rosapepe speak to our group. Don't miss this opportunity to meet Mr. Rosapepe and share your questions and concerns with him.

Sincerely,

Harry Pitt
Kevin Young



THE BDCA HOME WEB WILL SOON BE
MOVING TO ITS NEW PERMANENT
ADDRESS:

WWW.MYBERWYN.ORG



Information Provided by
Jerry Anzulovic
of Bright and Associates

Properties Sold (Berwyn 1, Branchville 0)

4718 Ruatan Street, \$279,900, (\$289,900), Jarred W. & Sue L. Hester, Owner occupants, SB, RE/MAX Allegiance, 301-490-5400, SA Jeff Scarcia, 301-982-0661, DOM 225, SS, \$.00.

Properties under Contract (Berwyn 10, Branchville 0)

4711 Berwyn Road, \$309,000, Ulysses Glee, Absentee owner since 8/5/1977.
5024 Berwyn Road, \$370,000, Vernan L. Hoover, Absentee owner since 9/27/1982
5108 Berwyn Road, \$399,900, Lundy S. & Rose A. Taylor, Owner occupants since 2/21/1985.
4904 Osage Street, \$325,000, Albert A. & Margaret A. Gam, Owner occupants since 4/12/1971.
8313 Potomac Avenue, \$349,000, Seyed M. Abediyeh, Absentee owner since 4/28/1994.
5005 Quebec Street, \$299,000, Albano B. & Rose Cutino, Owner occupants since 1960.
8803 Rhode Island Avenue, \$349,000, Boris & Nelly Zusin, Absentee owners since 8/20/2002.
8615 Rhode Island Avenue, \$244,900, Courtney S. Daforth, Owner occupant since 9/4/2001.
4700 & 4702 Tecumseh Street, Unimproved acreage, \$110,000, Gerald A. & Shirley J. Behrens, Owners since 5/25/1982.
8609 50th Place, \$215,500, Dawn K. Nichols, Absentee owner since 7/26/2002

Properties for Sale (Berwyn 8, Branchville 0)

4713 Greenbelt Road, \$350,000, Christine J. & Eric Michelson, Owner occupants since 10/06/1996. 8413 Potomac Avenue, \$364,990, Quinnie & Cindi B. Stephens, Owner occupants since 8/1/1995.
8430 Potomac Avenue, \$349,900, Steven B. Gross, Absentee owner since 2/1/2002.
8516 Potomac Avenue, \$298,200, Michael A.K. Potter, Owner occupant since 5/5/1998.
5010 Roanoke Place, \$350,000, Steven D. & Doroteia M. Knighton, Owner occupants since 3/28/2000
8410 48th Avenue, \$295,000, Michelle Tam & Zo An Song, Absentee owners since 1/8/2002.
8404 48th Avenue, \$2,500 a month rent, James L. Bowen, Trustee, Absentee owner since 7/10/2000.
8707 48th Place, \$329,000, Mohammed R. & Hosne A. Ali, Absentee owners since 5/10/1979.

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

**THE NEXT ISSUE of the BERWYN NEWS will be distributed on
the weekend of June 11th.
Deadline for ads and copy – June 6th.**



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