

Greetings neighbors. There is once again news on a variety of issues. The City Council took action in October to limit City property taxes in 2005 and probably beyond. It was done by reducing property tax increases for owner occupied properties and by limiting the property assessment increase for 2005 to one percent for our tax purposes under the State's Homestead Tax law. The Homestead Tax law always restricted such increases for tax purposes to ten percent per year, but it allowed counties and cities to set lower limits. Prince Georges's County permits only a five percent maximum increase (tied to inflation - part of TRIM), though generally increases have been from one to three percent. This means that in 2005 your property tax increase which would result without any tax increase would be limited to three percent on your County Tax bill and one percent on your City Tax bill. These two entities account for about 70 percent of your tax bill (55% County, 15% City). The other 30 percent of your tax bill is free to increase by up to 10 percent under current tax rates.

A one percent increase is obviously low and we are unlikely to hold to that increase. However, any significant increase would have to be done in a more transparent way through an actual increase in the property tax rate. Even if an increase were required the Homestead Tax law works to place more of burden on non-exempt properties such as rental properties and businesses. We subsidize rental properties because they consume greater City services and pay less in tax (income and car) than do owner occupied properties. Consequently, in a somewhat indirect way, we are in effect taxing such properties a larger amount than they would pay if they were owner occupied.



The City Council is taking action on the Berwyn House Apartment proposed additional development. The developers have agreed to have 24-hour management on site, construct new units without balconies, and not build a small pool in front. These were some of the issues raised recently at the BDCA meeting where we reviewed their proposal.

Another development proposal has arisen, this time in Branchville. A company, Campfire PDF has purchased the parcels behind the bowling alley and the Pizza Hut and proposes condos (or apartments?) for the site, which lies between Branchville Road and University Blvd. I should know more about their proposal by the middle of the month.

The construction going on at Branchville Road is a City road project and is unrelated to the proposal.

We have resumed looking at additional sites for a new City Hall. Later this month, on Tuesday the 23rd at 7 pm, we will explore some additional sites in a public hearing for the relocation of City Hall that are located north of the downtown area. We would like to consider an alternative to tearing down City Hall and rebuilding it 100 feet away on land, which has commercial value far above what an alternate site elsewhere would have.

The coming BDCA meeting will be our last meeting of the year as next month we hold our annual Holiday party in lieu of our meeting. I hope to see you at the meeting.



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Greetings neighbors, the October bonfire was a great success thanks to the wonderful volunteer effort and the beautiful weather. We had a good turnout, live music and lots of excited children running around. Pictures from the bonfire will soon be posted on the Berwyn District Civic Association (BDCA) website. Our next community event will be the December holiday party. Information on this event as well as the date and time will be in next month's newsletter.

The minutes from the October BDCA meeting are available on the BDCA website. There were two presentations at the October meeting. First, the city of College Park presented the plans for improving the landscaping and sidewalks on Berwyn Road. The plans include attractive sidewalks with brick perimeter, raised pedestrian crosswalks, and decorative lampposts. The raised crosswalks will hopefully be an attractive addition that will also slow down the fast drivers on Berwyn road. The Civic Association recommended that the city choose a plan that would keep the parking (smaller landscaped area) available around Holy Redeemer and that they choose something more attractive than plain asphalt for the raised pedestrian crosswalks. In addition, the BDCA asked the city to include sidewalks in the areas on Berwyn Road where no sidewalks currently exist. The second presentation was an overview of how the city of College Park enforces the noise violations. Harry Pitt gave a wonderful overview of the process of filing a noise complaint. If you are having problems with noise, first try contacting the city noise officer who works on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 6:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m. His cell phone number is (301) 275-2466. If you cannot get a noise reading from the city you have the option of getting two people to write letters complaining about the same specific noise problem.

If you are concerned with the speeding and stop sign violations happening in our neighborhood you will not want to miss the 8 p.m. Thursday, November 18th BDCA meeting

held in Fealy Hall. The topic will be "Making our Streets Safer" an open discussion about

how to reduce the speeding and other driving violations that many residents have been witnessing in our neighborhood. Following the discussion will be the formation of an ad-hoc committee to plan a strategy that the BDCA can pursue in an effort to improve the safety of walking around our neighborhood. So if you have some thoughts on the placement of new speed humps, sending warnings to particular groups of drivers or individual drivers, new traffic signs, new traffic rules, or some other innovative plan, please join us on November 18 and give us your thoughts.

In the back of last months newsletter was a form we hoped most Berwyn residents would fill out to help us update our neighborhood directory. If you have already completed and sent back your form, thank you. If you have not filled out the form, you can now fill the form out for your household online. I have added the online form to our BDCA website. So, please if you haven't completed the form, please save us the door-to-door follow-up work and complete the form online before the end of November. The current address for our website is shown at the end of this article. In addition, to serving this year as the BDCA president I am also doing most of the development of our web page. So, if you have any suggestions on how I might improve our website please feel free to contact of me either by phone, e-mail, or talk to me at one of our BDCA meeting.

Finally, forget about the election, enjoy the holidays, and I hope to see many of you at this month's meeting or next month's holiday party.

BDCA web site:

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/ttriplett13/berwyn>



This Councilman finally missed a meeting. After 18+ years of service and representing the voters of the district, in which I live, I was sick. I am still recovering from pneumonia. Thank you all for your concern and my wife, Kathy for putting up with this sick puppy.

While I was absent, Mr. Catlin convinced a majority of the council to lower the Home Stead Tax Credit for owner-occupiers from 10% to 1%. I still haven't figured out why I would want to give up 9% - One thing is sure - Future City Councils will have to look at this rate annually and decide, in their magnanimity how much of a credit to give the owner occupiers. This reduction is supposed to make it tougher on Absentee Landlords. It already does that, if the property owner is honest with the state of Maryland. If you get out your tax bill you will see that you already pay more to Park and Planning than you do to the City of College Park. To get anything from Park and Planning e have to beg and plead - then we are not even sure in what fiscal year we will receive it, if at all.

The proponents of the reduction would have me believe that we now live in CAMELOT and every thing that is wrong will be made right. Only time will tell. By the way, it is a matter of public record that my assessment didn't go up ten percent so the Perry's didn't get any advantage anyway.

On a recent drive to Emmittsburg, I saw a real estate sign offering singles row homes in the \$300's. Property values are going crazy! The new values will eliminate an entire spectrum of folks who can afford to live in our city. What a shame - No Cops, No Firemen, No Teachers, No nurses, The entire service sector at the University of Maryland and the support staff at the Federal Agencies that are sprouting up like red cops all around College Park. You can work here but you will

not be able to afford to live anywhere near Washington, D.C.

The council has directed the staff to no longer accept plastic bags with yard waste and grass clippings after an initial phase in, only paper bags will be accepted. If you have friends or relatives in Montgomery County this is the policy over there. College Park currently picks up over 20 thousand bags annually. We compost all of our organic yard waste. Plastic bags are a very costly and difficult item to dispose of. You will see and hear more as the time in 2005 approaches.

SNOW will come to College Park. You are urged to practice tag odd even approach when it snows. This will make it easier for our snow removal crews to do their work. City ordinance also require YOU to shovel the sidewalk in front of your house or business. A good faith effort will keep the code enforcement officers away from your door. It is much safer to walk on the sidewalk instead of in the street. LEAVES - Place them by the curb and NOT in the street. When the signs go up - move your car so the crews can get to the leaves with the leaf vacuum and suck 'em up and be on their way.



Sorry about last month's article, I had writers block. Enjoy the Holidays ahead and May God continue to Bless America!
See you Thursday,

Jack





Information Provided by
Jerry Anzulovic
of Bright and Associates

Properties Sold (Berwyn 5, Branchville 0)

8801 Baltimore Avenue, \$495,000, Jarian Investors, L.L.C., Absentee owners, 10817 Hillbrook Lane, Potomac, MD. 206386, Samig Jarian, Resident Agent and shareholder, Raffi & Hrair Jarian shareholders, SB (?), SA (?), SS (?), DOM (?).
4807 Greenbelt Road, \$183,500, William C. Jones, Absentee owner, 773 Harwood Road, Harwood, MD. 20776-9522, 301-261-4835 or 301-798-0719, SB(?), SA (?), SS (?) DOM (?).
5020 Quebec Street, \$170,000, (\$139,900), Tamara Sadowski, Absentee owner, 4904 Quebec Street, Berwyn, MD. 20740, Absentee owner, SB RE/MAX Sails, Inc., SA Tamara Sadowski, TAMI@MRIS.com, SS (\$.00), DOM 147.
4806 Tecumseh Street, \$250,000, (\$249,900), Omar M. Nason, Absentee owner, 6502 McCahill Drive, Laurel, Maryland, 20707-2728. SB Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc., Bethesda Office, SA Bradley Rozansky, brad@bradrozansky.com, SS (\$.00), DOM 73.
8709 49th Avenue, \$254,000, (\$?), Napoleon Lopez, Owner occupant, SB (?), SA (?), SS (?) DOM (?)

Properties under Contract (Berwyn 17, Branchville 1)

4711 Berwyn Road, \$309,000, Ulysses Glee, Absentee owner since 8/5/1977.
5012 Berwyn Road, \$205,000, Claude Edwards, Owner occupant since
5028 Berwyn Road, \$225,000, Gloria Pope, Absentee owner since 2003.
4713 Branchville Road, \$249,900, Rasheed A. Mustafa, Owner occupant since 3/14/2000.
4808 Osage Street, \$249,900, Kris A. Magnuson, Owner occupant since 10/9/2003.
8308 Potomac Avenue, \$287,000, George D. & George D. Jr. Vincent, Owner occupants (?) since 10/1/93.
8436 Potomac Avenue, \$309,990, Mary B. Embody, Owner occupant since 6/12/1997.
8519 Potomac Avenue, \$255,000, Frances O. Barrett, Absentee owner since 3/29/2001.
8521 Potomac Avenue, \$255,000, Frances O. Barrett, Absentee owner since 3/29/2001.
5005 Quebec Street, \$299,000, Albano B. & Rose Cutino, Owner occupants since 1960.
5016 Roanoke Place, \$265,000, Andrew C. Wenzinger, Owner occupant since 4/11/1991.
4718 Ruatan Street, \$289,900, Galen P. & Christine Dively, Absentee owners since 11/06/1995.
4819 Ruatan Street, \$390,000, Raymond J. & Anastasia M. Trudell, Absentee owners since 2003.
4700 & 4702 Tecumseh Street, Unimproved acreage, \$110,000, Gerald A. & Shirley J. Behrens, Owners since 5/25/1982.
8701 48th Avenue, \$299,000, Tom G. & Frances G. Simon, Had been owner occupied since 11/02/1956.
8603 49th Avenue, \$259,900, John F. & Elizabeth Hendricks, Owner occupants since 1940.
8702 49th Avenue, \$310,000, Michael D. Holder, Owner occupant since 1/5/1983.
8609 50th Place, \$215,500, Dawn K. Nichols, Absentee owner since 7/26/2002

Properties for Sale (Berwyn 7, Branchville 0)

4904 Osage Street, \$325,000, Albert A. & Margaret A. Gam, Owner occupants since 4/12/1971.
8312 Potomac Avenue, \$349,000, Clifford & Dawn A. Howard, Owner occupants since 6/13/2002.
8413 Potomac Avenue, \$364,990, Quinnie & Cindi B. Stephens, Owner occupants since 8/1/1995.
8408 48th Avenue, \$295,000, Michelle Tam & Zo Ann Song, Absentee owners since 1/8/2002.
8410 48th Avenue, \$295,000, Michelle Tam & Zo An Song, Absentee owners since 1/8/2002.
8500 49th Avenue, \$329,000, Zo Ann Song, Absentee owner since 8/27/2001.
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



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**“Always at
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The next issue of the Berwyn News will be distributed on the weekend of December 11th.
Deadline for ads and copy – December 6th.

Holiday Party



held in Fealy Hall on

December 18th (we have a reserved the room all day)

- so save the date -

Details will be included in December's Berwyn Newsletter.

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:

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Barbara_Frush@house.state.md.us
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Authority Duncan H. Munro, Treasurer

THOMAS R. HENDERSHOT

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By Authority: Carol B. White, Treasurer



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Community Life Fellowship Assembly of God



Community Activities

meeting at

College Park Church of God, 8800 48th Avenue

Community Clothing Drive - Saturday, November 20, 2004, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Coming in 2005

Got a nicotine habit? Want to keep that New Year's Resolution? Help is coming this January!

More Free Guitar Lessons

Getting a Guitar for Christmas? We'll teach you how to play. Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. -7:15 p.m.

Marriage Workshop (6-weeks). Can't figure him out? Can't figure her out? We can help.

Communication in your Marriage - Fridays Nights Beginning January 14

- Recognizing and understanding the barriers to good communication
- Learning ways to make your relationship a priority
- Discovering practical steps for resolving conflict

Diabetes Awareness - January 19, 7:30 p.m.

- Learn the signs of diabetes
- Discover what you can do to reduce the risk of this life threatening disease
- Receive a free diabetes test

Coming this Spring

Dental Health Awareness - Learn about Gum Disease, Insurance Issues, and more.

Capitol Area Association of Diabetes Educators - Healthy Eating Habits

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