



Mount Vernon Belvedere Clarion

OCTOBER 2006

Volume 21, Number 10

MIDTOWN BENEFITS DISTRICT FALL MEETING—

The Midtown Community Benefits District Management Authority Invites all residents, property and business owners of Bolton Hill, Charles North, Madison Park and Mount Vernon-Belvedere to its annual Fall Town Hall Meeting & Elections

Wednesday, October 18, 2006, 7:00pm

Chase Court, 1112 Saint Paul Street

The Nominating Committee of the Midtown Community Benefits District has selected a slate of neighborhood “at-large” representatives to serve on the Midtown Board of Directors for 2007.

The Nominees are Michael Deets to represent Charles North, Shameeka Jelenewicz to represent Madison Park,, Steven Shen to represent Mount Vernon-Belvedere, and Julie Thorn to represent Bolton Hill.

Nominations may also be made from the floor at the Fall Town Hall Meeting. All nominees must reside in, own taxable property in, or represent a

taxable property owner in the neighborhood they seek to represent.

New Businesses

Mount Vernon is pleased to welcome more businesses to our community. Ancient Arts Acupuncture has opened at 1106 N. Charles Street above Brewer’s Art. Check out their Friday night happy hours at 6, 7 or 8 p.m. which include a simple acupuncture session and meditation. Space is limited. Call 410-710-7094. And Duck, Duck, Goose is a happy place at with whimsical and creative children’s clothing. There is no other kids clothing store like it anywhere else in Baltimore, and it is right here in Mount Vernon. And, for those still mourning the loss of Tampico, there is finally reason to cheer up with the arrival of Tijuana Cantina next to Grand Central at 1003 N. Charles. Stop in for great margaritas and Mexican specialties that have been called “beyond fantastic” by the Baltimore Examiner.

Thank You Regina

Many thanks to Regina Minniss for heading up our Book Fair Booth again this year. It takes a lot of time, effort and commitment to manage this effort, and no one does it better than Regina.

Tree Planting on the Way

The next general membership meeting will be on Tuesday, October 17, at the Belvedere Hotel, beginning promptly at 7:30pm.

Rebecca Feldberg, the city's chief arborist, has committed to major tree planting in Mount Vernon beginning at the end of October. All new trees will be professionally watered thanks to the generosity of MVBA members and their contributions to a planting and watering fund last year.

Big Fall for Cultural Events in Mount Vernon

By all accounts, there has never been so much happening in Mount Vernon – starting with **The Walters** opening its doors with NO AD-MISSION whatsoever! Check out these incredible showings:

Courbet and the Modern Landscape

October 15, 2006 – January 7, 2007

40 landscapes by Gustave Courbet as well as 12 vintage photographs in an exhibition organized by the Getty Museum where it was shown earlier this year.

Palace of Wonders: The New Galleries of Renaissance and Baroque Art

Celebrate the 100th anniversary of the museum's Palazzo Building with a reinstallment of 1,500 items from its world famous Renaissance and Baroque Collections.

The Peabody kicks into high gear with fantastic concerts almost every night of the week – classical guitar, piano, orchestra, singers – they have it all, plus an exciting and free Opera Potpourri: Scenes from Romantic Opera on October 30 at 7:30 p.m.

At the **Enoch Pratt Library** :

God's Politics: Why the Right Gets it Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It by Jim Wallis

Thursday, October 19 at 6:30 p.m.

The Girls Who Went Away: The Hidden History of Women Who Surrendered Children for Adoption before Rove v. Wade by Ann Fessler

Wednesday, October 25, 6:30 p.m.

M directed by Fritz Lang

Saturday, October 14 at 10:00 a.m.

Viewing of this 1931 film will be followed by a discussion.

Publishing Do's and Don'ts Presented by John Hoppenthaler

Saturday, October 21 at 2:00 p.m.

Expert advice for would-be authors.

Take a look at the **Engineer's Club** during their *Fall Open House Week*

Tuesday, October 24 – Friday, October 27

The Club is undergoing a remarkable renovation and welcoming new members to enjoy their outstanding dining and special events including wine dinners, pasta buffets, football nights, Sunday brunches, musical events, and special occasions including Thanksgiving Dinner and a Monument Lighting celebration and New Years Day Brunch. Call Melanie Pyne at 410-539-6914 or stop by the club for more details on membership.



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215 East Chase Street

The Contemporary Museum is featuring an exciting exhibit *Girls' Night Out* until November 26, 2006. This show brings together the work of an international group of women artists whose works in photography and video reflect a new approach to issues of femininity and identity...

The BSO has exciting programs almost every night of the week in October from Beethoven, Brahms and Barber to Soulful Symphony's Song in a Strange Land. Look for Mozart's *Requiem* November 2, 3 and 4th.

He ignited a fire in her heart. Then he torched everything else. **The Washington Opera** presents the *Siege of Corinth* for four shows: October 14, 18, 20 and 22.

Center Stage is getting incredible reviews for its production of Chekov's *The Three Sisters* through October 29. Tickets start at just \$ 10!

And at the **Maryland Historical Society**, experience *The Story Behind the History* on Friday, October 13 with a look at Civil War photographs with Guest Curator Ross Kelbaugh. Hear the stories behind the iconic images on display in the *Maryland in the Civil War* photography exhibition that closes October 14.

Heritage and Museum Yard Sale:

Baltimore's first ever chance to see what treasures are unearthed when Baltimore's history museums clean out their attics! Join the 45+ member museums of the Greater Baltimore History Alliance for a chance to view and purchase exhibit panels and graphics, artifact reproductions, books, gift shop items, posters, office equipment, holiday decorations and much more at great prices! Participating museums will include the Babe Ruth Birthplace, Sports Legends at Camden Yards, the B&O Railroad Museum and the Baltimore Museum of Industry. The Yard Sale will be held at the Baltimore Museum of Industry, 1415 Key Highway, in the Waterfront Pavilion on Saturday, October 28th from 8am-2pm.

Free parking available. For more information please call 443-984-2369. All proceeds will benefit the education and outreach programs of the History Alliance, for more information on the Alliance log on to www.baltimoremuseums.org.

At the September general membership meeting—

Baltimore City Police Sargeant Hess noted that there was one robbery recently of a parking lot attendant and two thefts from auto. He also noted that there is an initiative in place to address prostitution on Charles and Calvert Streets which has resulted in 14 arrests. Finally, the next Community Relations meeting will be on Sept 27. The meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at MICA at 1300 Mt. Royal Avenue in Rm 110.

Vice President Paul Warren remarked that the Rochambeau is in the demolition process and that efforts to prevent demolition were un-successful. MVBA took a position against this demolition. George Liebmann, member and attorney, volunteered his expertise to thwart the demolition, but was also unsuccessful. Paul publicly thanked Mr. Liebmann for his efforts.

Regarding the children's playground, efforts to negotiate a settlement with the contractor has finally been successful. There is one minor repair remaining to be accomplished. Following formal release of liens, the City will then take over the playground and then the playground can open, which could be as early as October.

Finally, the City will be planting 100 trees in Mt. Vernon this fall. As watering the new trees is always a problem, MVBA has money remaining in its dedicated tree well account that will be used to hire a contractor to water the trees as needed.

Guest speaker Dominic Wiker provided an update to the 1209 Charles Street project. Presently, the contractors are in the process of stabilizing the old Danny's Restaurant, which suffered significant damage due to the leaking roof. He also notes that the new construction is well underway, with foundations already laid and structure being built.

Dominic noted that occupancy of the retail section should occur in August or September of 2007 with the residential occupancy taking place in October 2007. There has been good interest in the retail portion of the project and he notes that Ty Landing will stay as a tenant and that possibly two other restaurants may be created.

Designed by Design Collective Inc., the total project will create 103 residential units, 140 parking spaces, and approximately 17,000 sq ft of retail space, although the retail space will probably average around 2000 sq ft per unit. Dominic explained that the current purchasers of the residential space are typically individuals whose age is approximately 40-55 and currently living outside of the City, typically in the Maryland suburbs. All individuals that have purchased so far, have subscriptions to either the Lyric, the Meyerhoff. All of the foregoing seems to suggest that "empty nesters" are moving to the city and to 1209 in particular.

The next guests were a young lawyer and dentist that have purchased the former Gampy's Restaurant building and the building at 4 West Read Street. Designed by CL Design Studios, the preliminary plans call for approximately 12 rental units and maintaining retail on the first floor, primarily a restaurant operation. Approximately seven units would be 2 bedroom, ranging in size from 800 to 1200 sq ft; two 3 bedroom units in the 1300 to 1600 sq ft range; two 1 bedroom units in the 800 sq ft range, and one studio apartment in the 500 sq ft range. They hope to complete the project in late 2007. Their plans were preliminary and must be reviewed by the MVBA Architectural Review Committee. They are also seeking tax credits for the project.

Bob Niles, Executive Director of the Mt. Vernon Cultural District, spoke briefly about upcoming events in Mt. Vernon, noting that in the past week, many of the institutions have begun their new season. Among those are Center Stage, Peabody Conservatory which celebrates their 150th year, Walters Art Museum, that will be open on Friday evenings until 8pm, the Contemporary Art Museum that opens with "Girls Night Out", and the Maryland Historic Society, which will be free on the weekends in November and December. Bob also notes that the Walters will be open for "wide open weekend" on October 6, where the museum will be open until midnight. There will be various activities scheduled, that includes the showing of "Rocky Horror Pic-

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

The ARC reviewed several projects at its September meeting. The focus on 824 Park Avenue were changes to the rear and north side of the building. The committee raised questions with respect to the geometry and composition of the proposed window system in the rear elevation. The proposed plans calls for installation of windows on the side elevation, of which currently none exist. There was a question of whether fire shutters would be required. Other than these two issues, the general design was deemed satisfactory.

818 and 820 Park Avenue return with some minor changes to their design. It was also noted that some portions of the architectural plans were lacking sufficient detail. The committee asked for clearer design on the drawings as well as color and material preferences. However, the bigger issue is the requested sub-division of the properties, which was denied by the MVBA Zoning Committee.

The most significant review was of the proposed re-development of the former Gampy's restaurant building and includes 4 West Read Street. The plans were presented to the general membership at last month's meeting. The building will contain 12 high-end rental apartments whose rental price ranges from \$1,500 to \$1,800 per month. A renovated store front is proposed for the former Gampy's and an appropriate historic design will be researched that will be in keeping with Spirits of Mt. Vernon, located next door. A storage area in the rear of Gampy's will be demolished to make way for a 4 story addition. The storage area was not historic. The committee approved the design concept and requested a complete list of colors and sample materials to be used.

Finally, there was discussion on repairs and additions to the brick fencing at 106 East Chase Street. The committee requested a proper design or rendering of the proposed work, noted that the wall cannot be higher than 72", and new ironwork cannot be taller than the existing support posts. A new cast stone cap for the wall is to be created and continue the natural design of the existing brick wall.

The Fight to Save the Rochambeau

Sadly, we lost the fight to save the Rochambeau building. When we stood up to save this important historic structure in the heart of Charles Street, we knew it was going to be difficult to save it. General consensus was that a building like the Rochambeau could not go down without a fight and that buildings like the Rochambeau are important to the historic fabric of Mount Vernon. We have received calls and notes of support and thanks from all across the city for our efforts on this issue and the MVBA wishes to thank again the extraordinary George Liebmann, Mount Vernon resident, MVBA



member and attorney without equal, who argued eloquently to save the building. Despite the Archdiocese's claims that a prayer garden for the public and the clients of My Sister's Place and Our Daily Bread is to be built on the lot where the Rochambeau stood, we believe this is only a temporary use for the site in order to support the archdioceses' religious-use claim which was necessary for the demolition. Plans have already been drawn up for underground parking and a visitor's center at that location, but which also include the location of the current parking garage. Standby for more demolition on that block if the archdioceses can raise the millions necessary to buy-out the city bond on the heavily used parking garage.


Residential Permit Parking Permits

Our 10th annual permit pickup sessions were very successful this year, especially the first session where there was an unexpected line all evening. Approximately 230 permits were picked up by neighborhood residents!

Our thanks to Peabody Court Hotel who provided space in the main lobby and to Peter Merles and the Midtown Benefits District office for also providing space for permit pickups.

A special thanks to Regina Minniss for her assistance during the pick-up sessions.

THE WALTERS PRESENTS ILLUMINATED MEDIEVAL MISSALS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN *FOR THIS IS MY BODY: THE MEDIEVAL MISSAL*—The Walters will display a superb collection of illuminated medieval manuscripts and early printed missals as a group for the first time in the exhibition, *For This Is My Body: The Medieval Missal*, on view Nov. 4, 2006–Jan. 28, 2007. A missal is a type of liturgical book a priest uses for the celebration of the Mass. The exhibition is timed to coincide with the reopening of Baltimore's historic Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption.



STAINED GLASS

Stained glass artisan Charles Blackburn of Bolton Hill is now accepting commissions. His stained glass works have been seen on the MD House & Gardens Pilgrimage and on the cover of *Victorian Homes Magazine*. Windows, transoms, side lights, pocket doors, free standing panels. Traditional and contemporary. Call (410) 523-8665

BLUE LIGHT CAMERAS IN MT. VERNON?

A recent rash of incidents in Mt. Vernon have led to the installation of a blue light camera at the corner of Charles and Eager and a planned second installation at Charles and Chase Streets. The blue lights have been disconnected, but signs on the street light poles have been mounted indicating that the area is under surveillance.

One incident involved a late night robbery at Grand Central Pub where there was a reported injury. There have been two incidents in Mt. Vernon Square last weekend where a visitor to the area was hit over the head and robbed of her purse and a second visitor was stung with a stun gun during the same event.

During this past week, the police department arrested two juveniles working together who have allegedly been linked to about 5 incidents in the area.

MVBA ANNUAL ELECTION

This year, all of MVBA's officers and two board member seats terms expire. Several board officers have indicated that they will seek re-election to their existing positions. MVBA appointed a nominating committee in July to seek out interested and qualified individuals to create a slate of candidates who would be nominated for vacant positions. At the upcoming general membership meeting, a call for nominations from the floor will be made. Candidates must be members in good standing and can only be nominated by another member in good standing.

The following individuals have been nominated by the nominating committee for the following positions:

President—	Jack Dana
Vice President—	Paul Warren
Treasure—	Brian Coleman
Secretary—	Phillipa Strydom
Corresponding Secretary—	Lisa Heckman
Board Members—	Sandy Lawler Steve Johnson

Brief biographic information has been made available for Brian Coleman. The remainder will be published in the November newsletter.

Brian Coleman is from Pittsburgh and started his career as a financial auditor with Arthur Andersen. After receiving his CPA, he relocated to Washington, DC and worked in finance for US Airways and E*trade before moving to New York to pursue an MBA at Columbia University in real estate finance and entrepreneurship. Brian recently relocated to Baltimore in order to start a small real estate development company. He was looking for a place to settle down, and was charmed by Baltimore and its neighborhoods' potential. Brian loves the energy of Mount Vernon; the festivals, outdoor concerts and cultural events make this a great place to call home. Brian is also involved with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and the Baltimore Heritage Foundation.

Our thanks to Petula Nash for chairing the Nominating Committee.



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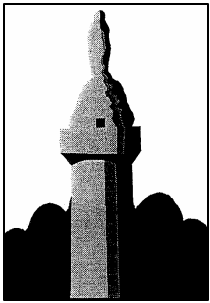
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ENDOWMENT FUND

Thanks to those listed below who have generously contributed to MVBA's Endowment Fund known as the John Eager Howard Society. The fund is intended to provide financial resources for the Association in the future through the use of the interest earned on the fund. The principal of the fund cannot be accessed by the Association. If you would like to join, contact any Board member of the Association. Membership includes lifetime membership in MVBA.

Endowment Fund Contributors

Agora Publishing, Beth Ketzner
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Mt. Vernon ~ Belvedere Clarion

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

To contact members by phone, call MVBA's main number 410-528-1919 and select the desired extension from the menu.

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Historic Mt. Vernon/Belvedere

The next general membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17, 2006, at the Belvedere Hotel, lobby level, starting promptly at 7:30pm

