



Mount Vernon Belvedere Clarion

November 2007

Volume 22, Number 11

The next general membership meeting will take place on November 20, 2007, beginning at 7:30pm, at the Belvedere Condominiums, lobby level.

Our guest speakers will be Mr. Jeff Kayce, project manager of the Buzzuto Development Company, along with Toby Bozzuto will be presenting an overview of the planned Bolton Yards development initiative. This exciting development will be taking place on one of the very view large parcels of undeveloped land remaining in Mt. Vernon, located just north of Mt. Royal Avenue, behind the University of Baltimore. Hand-outs with plans & conceptual renderings will be available.

Last General Meeting Report

An overview was presented of the plans being pursued by the MVBA and Friends of Mount Vernon Place to establish a conservancy partnership to fully restore the Mount Vernon Place parks by the 2015 bicentennial of the dedication of the Washington Monument. The large backlog of untended maintenance and needed improvements has left the parks with an estimated \$ 8 million in work to bring them up to date. The parks are a National Historic Landmark District which is the highest designation in the U.S. for historic properties. It is one of only three such districts in Maryland, and of only a couple dozen in the country.

The MVBA and Friends of Mount Vernon Place have been meeting with other major neighborhood stakeholders and lobbying city officials to win support for this concept for more than six months. The conservancy has been met with overwhelming support and approval. Following a meeting with city department heads, the mayor's office will be working with us to attract a board and staff to oversee this major endeavor. Everyone involved in this effort, and all of those supporting it, see the potential for the parks to be an economic development tool for both the city and the community, attracting more tourists and visitors, residents and businesses to Mount Vernon – and to the city. We will continue to keep our members informed as this moves forward and we thank our former president Jack Danna, who is now residing in New York, for his ongoing work on this project.

As we've all seen in the press, the state legislature is hotly debating taxes and slot machines. Two of our state legislators addressed these topics at the October MVBA General Meeting meeting, Rep. Keith Haynes and Rep. Shawn Tarrant. Rep. Tarrant expressed his support for allowing slot machines if they were not located in the city, but with the city still receiving revenue from the slot operations to deal with major city issues such as education and affordable housing that are not as burdensome for other jurisdictions. They asked MVBA members to express their opinions on this and other issues now on the table in Annapolis: Keith Haynes (410-841-3801 keith.haynes@house.state.md.us) Shawn Tarrant (410-841-3545 shawn.tarrant@house.state.md.us).



SUBSCRIBE!

If you are getting this newsletter in the mail, you are probably missing out on important email newscasts, neighborhood alerts and early electronic delivery of this newsletter itself. Help save a tree and convert to email delivery by sending an email to membership@mbva.org with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line and your full name in the body. Non-members can join the association and sign up for email communications at www.mvba.org.

Rep. Haines, as a member of the appropriations committee, also offered to assist in locating state funding for the Mount Vernon Place conservancy project.

Catherine's Hearth

After September's presentation to the MVBA general meeting by the director of the new Catherine's Hearth day center for homeless families, which will be located in a property in the 100 block of E. Madison Street, Laura Giantris, chair of the Mount Vernon Children's Park, met with the director to discuss their programs and how they might impact the new children's playground. Laura reports that she was reassured that the programs clients would be well supervised and that the use of the park would be appropriate and not overwhelming. Laura will continue to keep in touch with the program leadership should any issues arise.

Liquor Issues

To be discussed is the matter of a proposed liquor license for package goods operations at the market at 815 Saint Paul Street. The association has taken a preliminary position of opposition to the license based in large part on the requests of nearby neighbors who feel the area already has too many such establishments. We will take a formal vote of the membership of the Association at the November General Meeting as well as discuss other important liquor and club issues impacting the community. The Liquor Board hearing is scheduled for December 6, City Hall, Room 215, at 3pm. A strong community turnout is essential.

Also on December 6 at the liquor board, an application for live entertainment and outdoor seating at El Patron, located on the corner of Charles and Madison Street will be heard.

Business Roundtable

The MVBA Board hosted more than 50 business, cultural and non-profit leaders at the 2007 Business Roundtable meeting on October 23 at the Engineers Club. The capacity crowd received an exclusive briefing on the status of residential, commercial and community developments as well as several of MVBA's priorities for 2008 including bringing two new structured parking facilities to the neighborhood and the establishment of a full-fledged conservancy for the Mount Vernon Place Parks, making the parks a major attraction for the city and the community. The Roundtable attendees noted concern over issues such as parking, trash, and the homeless. Many attendees requested more meetings for the Mount Vernon business community. MVBA thanks all of those who attended and participated and the Engineers Club

which proved their beautifully restored drawing room and refreshments for the meeting.

Parking

Following a request by MVBA, the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) and the Parking Authority held a meeting of various stakeholders on October 26 to discuss the need for new structured parking (garages) to offset the looming parking crisis in Mount Vernon. Both organizations were resolved to moving forward to address this issue and will be exploring various options in the coming weeks and months.

Preservation: MVBA Testimony at October 24 CHAP Hearing

CHAP – MVBA testified at the recent City Council Hearing on the Effectiveness of CHAP since the 2004 move to Planning. Most of our testimony centered on the insufficient community involvement, Mount Vernon Design Guidelines and the natural conflicts of interest that helped to facilitate the demolition of the Mercy Buildings, demolition of the buildings in the 600 block of Howard Street and related matters. Included was a timeline indicating that the Planning Department and the CHAP Chair knew well in advance about the plan to allow the demolition of the Mercy buildings yet failed to use Special Listing provisions to stop it. Our testimony is available at http://www.mvba.org/docs/hearing070314_chap.html.

IN BRIEF

Holiday Party: Invitations will be mailed shortly with details on this December event. Last year was a "sell-out" crowd, so please be sure to RSVP early.

Bolton Yards Plan: The huge development planned at the University of Baltimore property next to the Lyric will be briefed to the community on November 26, 6:30 pm at the UB Student Center at Maryland and Mount Royal.

Thanks to Eddies market for promoting the MVBA General Meeting this month and the new trash schedule – think globally – shop locally!

Special thanks to our great property owners who have recently invested millions in their historic facades including the Mount Vernon Club, 700 Washington Place, The School for the Arts, and thanks to Monumental Life where a good power-wash went a long way! The rest of us should be feeling a little peer-pressure (we know who we are).

New Business Members

Our business membership continues to grow at a very fast pace. We welcome these businesses that have joined the MVBA in the past month: venture capital firm New Enterprise Associates (NEA) on Saint Paul Street, law firm Leviness Tolzman and Hamilton which just moved to bigger offices on Calvert Street, SunTrust Bank also in brand new offices at 1209 N. Charles, superstar restaurant Thai Landing also in the 1200 block of North Charles, Aunt Rebecca's B&B at 106 E. Preston Street, True Balance Studio personal training and dance center at 1021 Cathedral Street, the impressive Meredith Gallery at 805 N. Charles, Gian Marco Menswear (simply the best menswear store in the city as confirmed by all of its "Best of" awards), Akbar Restaurant (great lunch and weekend buffets!), the beautiful and historic Mount Vernon Club, the Catholic Review on Park Avenue, the law firm of Seigel, Tully and Furrer also on Park Avenue, the Contemporary Museum at Centre and Park, Dulkerian's Persian Rug Company at 919 N. Calvert (don't buy a rug anywhere else – Jim Dulkerian is the dean of oriental rugs and a great supporter of the community), the impressive Meredith Gallery on Charles Street and the always funky, always interesting and always affordable Beatnik Barbershop at 241 W. Read Street.

We give a special thanks this month to new member the Maryland Bible Society which not only joined for the first time, but donated \$ 350 as a contributing member to support the work of the MVBA. This organization has been in Mount Vernon for more than 70 years and it is an honor to have them become an MVBA member. Visit them at 9 E. Franklin Street – they have a wide assortment of books and lots of other materials for sale.

Please patronize all of these as well as our other business members. They are all supporting Mount Vernon with their membership in the MVBA. Strong businesses and institutions make our entire community stronger.

MVBA Business Members in the News

Double congratulations go to Sammy's Trattoria for being selected by the Sun's restaurant critic as one of the best Italian restaurants in the region outside of Little Italy and for making the Sun's list of great value restaurants. Particular mention was made of Sammy's \$ 35 per person family style dinner. Another neighborhood favorite, the Helmand, was included on the great value list as well and applauded for its good food, appealing décor and excellent service. Also making the list from Mount Vernon were Five Guys, Iggies and Dukem.

Kudos to the Peabody Court Hotel for their award as Hotel of the Year by the Sunburst Hospitality Corporation. This was a major achievement as this was Bibi Hackshaw's first year as a General Manager. Bibi acknowledged "that it was a team effort by the hotel staff" when receiving the award. Sunburst is an owner/operator of 35 hotels nationwide. The award is based on criteria such as high customer satisfaction, low employee turnover and profitability.

And what is one of the five best places to house extra overnight guests this holiday season? At the 4 East Madison Inn, according to October's Baltimore Magazine.

MVBA Members in the News

Jim Forcum appeared in a news story by WJZ Channel 13 to talk about Mount Vernon's selection as a top retirement location in the U.S. and Larry Peterson appeared on ABC Channel 2 speaking about the proposed Charles Street trolley.

And hats off to Mount Vernon resident Nicholas Piscatelli who is leading the development of a new hotel with the full historic restoration and conversion of the "Utz" building downtown.

Cultural Highlights in Mount Vernon November and Early December

It's a busy season – enjoy it!

Now through November 18 Broadcast at the Contemporary Museum Broadcast explores the ways in which artists since the late 1960s have engaged, critiqued, and inserted themselves into official channels of broadcast television and radio. Featuring works in video, sound, photography, and installation, Broadcast is the first exhibition of its kind to examine this provocative body of work. Wednesday – Sunday 12-5 Thursday until 7 p.m. 100 W. Centre Street. www.conemporary.org

Now until December 2 Hearts by Willy Holtzman Scrapy Donald Waldman and his card-playing cronies have a lifetime of memories in common, but World War II left him with secrets he can't share. Every evening except Mondays, plus Saturday and Sunday matinees until December 2. Center Stage, 700 N. Calvert www.centerstage.org
Now Until January 1 Deja vu? Revealing Repetition in French Masterpieces
Tickets \$ 6 - 12 www.thewalters.org

November 8 – 17 Hystery of Heat
Thurs - Sat @ 8pm; Sun @ 3pm
Hystery is a multimedia performance piece about heat, love, death, dance, hysteria and the dangers of rock and roll. The Theatre Project (City Paper's Best Theater 2007!), 45 W. Preston. www.theatreproject.org

November 9, 10 and 11 Mendelssohn, Sibelius and Schubert by the BSO
Nov. 8 and 9 at 8:00 p.m., Nov. 11 at 3:00 p.m. Gunther Herbig, Conductor. www.bsomusic.org

November 10, 14, 16, 18 Maria Stuarda by the Baltimore Opera Company

November 15 – 18 Jewelry Fair
At the Walters \$ 10 entrance fee.

November 16 through December 16, 2007 The Lion in Winter by James Goldman
Friday & Saturday at 8pm, Sunday at 2pm
Every intricate move superbly thought out, Henry II of England and his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and their three sons, who all vie for the throne. At Spotlighters, 817 St. Paul Street. www.spotlighters.org

November 17 Library Orientation Series: Introduction to Genealogical Research
A 45-minute session in the MD Historical Society Library. No registration is required. Sessions are free with library admission. 9:10 a.m.

November 23 The Wagner Family Christmas Garden Opening Party
Skip the malls and head to the Maryland Historical Society to kick off the holiday season! See the Wagner Family Christmas Garden, play with toy trains and learn about toys from the past. 1-4 P.M. FREE ADMISSION. Reservations recommended. Call 410-685-3750 ext. 321 for reservations.

November 30 – December 9 The Nutcracker Ballet at School for the Arts
New costumes, new sets and new choreography! Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays Nov. 30 – Dec. 9 For tickets 410-230-7940 or www.bfsa.org.

November 15, 16, 17 and 18 Peabody Opera
Nov. 15, 16, 17 @ 7:30 p.m. and November 18 @ 3:00 p.m.
www.peabody.jhu.edu/events for this and many other events.

November 16, 17 and 18 Mendelssohn Violin Concerto
Nov. 16 and 17 @ 8:00 p.m., Nov. 18 @ 3:00 p.m. BSO with Arild Remmereit, conductor.

November 17 BSO Family Concert: Oh No! Where is Our Oboe? 11:00 a.m.

November 23, 24 and 25 Classical Mystery Tour
Beatlemania meets the BSO! Nov. 23 and 24 @ 8:00 p.m., Nov. 25 @ 3:00 p.m. Martin Herman, conductor.

November 29 and 30 Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony
8:00 p.m. The BSO with Marin Alsop, Conductor.

December 7 Handel's Messiah with the BSO and Concert Artists of Baltimore. 7:30 p.m. Edward Polochick, conductor.

December 8 BSO Family Concert: The Nutcracker Ballet with Baltimore School for the Arts dancers. 11:00 a.m. Andrew Grams, conductor.

December 8 Renee Fleming at the Lyric! A special benefit for the Baltimore Opera Company. 8:00 p.m. www.baltimoreopera.com

2007 Holly Tour Planned for December 8th and 9th

The Holly Tour will take place this year on December 8 in the evening and December 9 during the day. Again this year only 100 tickets will be available for the special Saturday night, Candlelight Tour. This event sells out so please visit www.hollytour.com for advance reservations. Our unique evening tour begins at 6:30 pm with a cocktail buffet at 5 West Mt Vernon Place, the original Walters Family home which is now part of the Walters Art Museum. Join Museum Director Gary Vikan as he shares a bit of history about this venerable Baltimore landmark.

Next you will be escorted on foot through the parks just a few short blocks from the Walters to three private homes two of which are Mt. Vernon Grand Mansions and one more recent restoration. In each home you will be invited to sample Sascha's cocktail cuisine while with conversing with these Mt. Vernon homeowners. None of the properties on the Candlelight Tour will be open on the Sunday Tour the following day.

The 2007 self-guided Sunday tour has several new highlights this year, which are the result of feedback organizers have gathered over the last few years. Both the First Unitarian Church the 2007 registration site and the Baltimore Basilica a tour stop will offer free Holly Tour concerts. At noon the Unitarian Church's Music Director James Houston and Jeffrey Spangler will perform seasonal duets for organ and piano. The organ Mr. Houston will play was hand built in 1893 by Henry Nieman. Then at 2:00 pm the renowned Basilica Choir will perform a choral celebration in the magnificently restored **building recently restored to its original design of Benjamin Henry Latrobe and Bishop John Carroll**. A variety of music will be heard in other places along the tour as well including the entertaining a cappella group the Hopkins Symphony Singers and an elegant renaissance harpist. Prices for the 11- stop Sunday tour are \$25 in advance and \$30 the day of at registration. Don't miss the terrific Holly Tour Brunch at Sascha's, 527 North Charles. The Brunch price is \$30 per person with seatings at 11:00am, noon and 1:00pm. For reservations visit www.hollytour.com.

This year organizers have designated the Garrett Jacobs Mansion as the special “warm up” stop for coffee and hot chocolates in what is considered by many one of the most beautiful spaces in Mt Vernon. Note that Sunday registration will be in the Parish Hall of the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore not in the main church. Look for signs marking registration entrance at 514 North Charles.

All Holly Tour proceeds benefit the Friends of Mt Vernon Place (FMVP) the volunteer group focusing specifically on the maintenance and restoration of the four historic park squares, which are based on the London residential squares of the Georgian period. During the past year FMVP has addressed several critical lighting and usage issues, seeded and planted during spring and fall and enlivened the parks with successful weekend yoga classes and a weekday outdoor movie series. The FMVP depends on and thanks its volunteers for their generosity of both spirit and time. The group offers several opportunities to be involved including helping with the Sunday Tour, serving on a committee for planting and maintenance, programs, and special events like the annual Holly Tour.

Watch for our new website with member communications and programs to go live early next year.

To reserve your tickets for the 2007 Holly Tour please visit www.hollytour.com or send a check in a SASE to The Friends of Mt Vernon Place 1221 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21202.

Holly Tour Volunteers Needed

The 2007 Holly Tour is on Sunday, December 9 between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. This event brings more than 1,000 visitors to Mount Vernon for the day to tour private homes and churches. More volunteers are needed to serve in various capacities in each property (greeting guests, answering questions, or watching over the owners' property). There are two volunteer shifts, 10:45 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. If you would like to be involved in an important and fun community event this year, please contact Angela Bernstein at angela.bernstein42@gmail.com. Not just residents, but businesses are also encouraged to sign up for this event.

November MVBA Elections:

As required by our by-laws, at the October general membership meeting, a call for nominations from the floor for a position on the MVBA Board of Directors was made. Noting that there were no nominations forthcoming, the call for nominations was closed. Therefore, the slate of candidates proposed by the MVBA Nominations Committee will be adopted at the November general meeting. The following slate of candidates follows:

President: Jason Curtis
 Corresponding Secretary: Robert Beachy
 Director (3yr): David Wiesand
 Director (3yr): Ernest Liotti
 Director (2yr remaining): Kendra Whitlock Ingram
 Director (1yr remaining): Barbara Jean Gilbert

Architectural Review Committee:

Mr. Donald Kahn of Kahn & Associates, presented the latest plan for development of the Chase Brexton Building. The plan involves created a limited service boutique hotel of approximately 30 rooms. The entrance would be located on Park Avenue. Current plans call for completion in September 2008

1305 St. Paul Street, Michael Shacklette, owner, Kathleen Lechleiter, Architect. Significant changes includes replacing the current and inappropriate 1960's cedar shake 1st floor storefront façade with one of more appropriate historic profile. A blurry photo of the original condition of the building was discovered at the Maryland Historic Society that aided the proposed changes.

127 West Read Street. This involves proposals to correct existing violations of the exterior of the building.

204 West Read Street. The owners have received a Main Streets Façade Grant that will enable them to renovate the Read Street façade. There was also discussion on how best to handle the Park Avenue façade.

931 St. Paul Street. This involved the removal of original wood window sashes due to lead paint issues, that were replaced with vinyl windows. Vinyl windows are generally not permitted in historic districts.

University of Baltimore, Streetscape, furniture, signage, and plaza design on Mt. Royal Avenue.

In addition, the following addresses were reviewed: 892 & 894 Tyson St, 1015 N. Calvert St, 1108 Guilford, 712 St. Paul, 200 E. Preston, 815 St. Paul, 8-10 West Madison, 11 West Mt. Vernon Pl, 1201 N. Charles St, 24 E. Eager St, 1211 St. Paul, 107 W. Madison, 1122 N. Calvert St, 1208 N. Calvert St, 1223 N. Calvert St, 1017 N. Charles St, 1209 N. Charles St.

311 and the Mount Vernon Place Parks

Please remember that the Mount Vernon Place parks are officially closed at dusk. If you see sleeping or loitering in the park after dark or any inappropriate activity during the day, please call 311 immediately.



Mt. Vernon ~ Belvedere Clarion

1221 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, Md 21202

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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Property Stewardship.....Lance Humphries
Liquor.....Steve Johnson
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Board Members

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Appointed Member:

Bill Oelke, Walters Art Museum

Ex-officio Members

J.J. Pecora
Mary Ann Henderson
Jason Curtis

Historic Mt. Vernon/Belvedere

NEW TRASH PICKUP HOURS

**Tuesday and Friday 4:30-6:30pm:
Trash(in covered cans) and paper
recyclables.**

**2nd and 4th Mondays by 7am
(barring holidays): Plastics and
glass in separate bags.**

**Watch for New Recycling Program
in January!**

Paper Recycling schedule:

Every Tuesday & Friday after 4:30pm-6:30pm

Bottle Recycling schedule:

2nd & 4th Mondays, by 7am. Glass & Plastic
in separate bags

