

Mount Vernon Belvedere Clarion

August 2009

Volume 24, Number 08

There is no general membership meeting scheduled for August. The next meeting will be on September 15 at the Belvedere Hotel.

What's Happening with the Lots at Biddle and Cathedral?

Good question. As previously reported, the demolition of the burned buildings at this corner was approved by MVBA only after the lot owner, the University of Baltimore, worked with the community to ensure that the land would only be used as surface parking for 18 months. If the University is still not ready to pursue its planned market rate apartment development at that time, the land must be converted to green space.

On the northern half of the now-open area, the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation received approval to demolish the two story parking building they owned at this site. This building had been found to be structurally unsound earlier this year. We were just informed that from a zoning perspective, the church can convert the space to surface parking thanks to a bill that was presented to the Baltimore City Council in early 2007 by current City Councilman Bernard "Jack" Young and former City Councilman Keiffer Mitchell. The community did not get our normal courtesy calls on this legislation therefore missing the opportunity to weigh in on the impact of another permanent surface parking lot in our midst. The church began placing asphalt on the site in early July. A stop work order was issued the same day by CHAP (Commission on Historic and Architectural Preservation) which has not reviewed or given its approval for paving this large lot in the Mount Vernon Historic District, a requirement for all work on exterior buildings and lots. Look for updates on this issue.

More Great Development Coming to Mount Vernon

While development in other areas of the city has slowed down, been cut back or stopped altogether, Mount Vernon keeps roaring ahead. The owner of 11 E. Chase Street, a large and elegant building currently without occupants, will be restoring the property and bringing it back to life as market rate apartments. MVBA had contacted the owner several times in the last year to encourage development of this beautiful property, and it appears that this encouragement, plus some well-timed housing code citations resulting in housing court appearances, has had the desired effect.

On a smaller scale, but equally important to lovers of great architecture, work has begun again on Park Avenue's Brexton building (the one with all of the great turrets). The owner is still planning to convert this property into a boutique hotel.

And the Professional Arts Building at 101 W. Read Street had a very grand Grand Opening on June 29 with dignitaries including Mayor Dixon, Representative Cummings and Council President Rawlings-Blake celebrating the completion of this major renovation. Formerly known as the Medical Arts Building, MVBA members Somerset Development, along with Streuver Brothers, took this vacant and difficult property and returned it to its former grandeur. Incredibly, the building is already substantially leased. Be sure to welcome the many new residents you can see arriving every day at 101 W. Read Street.

MVBA: Successfully Promoting Mount Vernon as a Travel Destination

Check out the July issue of Maryland Life magazine (page 126) and the upcoming September issue of Washingtonian for glowing articles about Mount Vernon. MVBA has encouraged this kind of coverage by initiating regular contact with regional and national travel writers and editors with information about Mount Vernon over the past 9 months, MVBA was contacted by both authors for their stories. We were pleased to support both articles with beautiful photos and background information.



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 member-ship@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.

Mount Vernon Door Contest Deadline Approaching

To encourage members – both businesses and residents – to put the very best face on all of our properties with beautiful doors, MVBA is pleased to support the Mount Vernon Door Contest. Competition Rules:

1. Complete the work between January 1, 2009 and September 1, 2009 in either paint or a natural finish.
2. Work must be reviewed and approved in advance by the MVBA's Architectural Review Committee (arc@mvba.org)
3. Submit a before photo and an approved notice to proceed on or before September 1, 2009.
4. Send entry to MVBA, 1221 N. Calvert Street, Baltimore MD 21202 Attn: ARC

There will be winners in both a business category and a residential category and hundreds of dollars in cash prizes will be at stake. We wish to thank Lou and Maureen Van Dyck for sponsoring this event. Winners will be announced at the 2009 MVBA Holiday Party.

Chamber Music at First Unitarian Church –

Friday, October 9, 2009 at 8 p.m. The 2009-2010 Concert Series opens with Peabody Faculty member Courtney Orlando, violinist, leading other faculty and students in a performance of Contemporary Strings featuring Arnold Schoenberg's Verklarte Nacht for string sextet, and Lisa Bielawa's piece for singing violinist, "Kafka Songs." The concert is free and open to the public. Contributions will benefit the Historic Niemann Organ Restoration Fund. Location: The Enoch Pratt Parish Hall, First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, Charles and Franklin Sts. For information contact musiccommittee@firstunitarian.net

Upcoming MVBA November elections

As per our by-laws, elections will take place this November to fill seats that will be vacated due to expiring terms of certain board members. If you are interested in serving on either the board of directors or the nominating committee, please e-mail me at president@mvba.org. . By October 1st, the nominating committee will need to interview and select qualified candidates and present a slate of candidates whose names, along with brief autobiographical sketches, will be published in the October newsletter. At the October general membership meeting, calls for nominations from the floor for anyone else interested in serving on the board of directors will take place. Any names that come forth will be included in the list of candidates to be published in the November newsletter. The following members are up for re-election:

Jason Curtis - President
 Paul Warren - Vice President
 Philippa Strydom - Secretary
 Brian Coleman - Treasurer
 Robert Beachy - Corresponding Secretary
 Sandy Lawler - Director
 Kendra Ingram - Director

Charm City Circulator Update

The city's free shuttle service from the Inner Harbor to Penn Station is scheduled to begin after Labor Day

(we are now told this means November due to some bus manufacturing delays). The routing has these hybrid buses going north on Charles Street and returning on Saint Paul Street. MVBA and a number of our cultural institutions requested that the return routing be done on Cathedral Street which would bring the circulator closer to more institutions including The Lyric Opera House, The Meyerhoff, The Theatre Project, School for the Arts, Maryland Historical Society, The Contemporary Museum, The Walters, The Eubie Blake Center, The Basilica, and The Enoch Pratt Library. It appears that the city's transportation department is sticking with the much more congested Saint Paul Street route.

Club Update

We have good news and no news on the club front. The good news is that the Hippo has decided to discontinue its "hip hop" nights on Thursday. Residents and business owners in the area of the Hippo had been negatively impacted by this weekly event. Regrettably, it took a major altercation involving dozens of club goers to finally shut down this problem. As reported recently in the Sun, we have received no decision from the judge who is considering whether to rescind the liquor license of the Suites Club in the basement of the Belvedere. And the MVBA is organizing opposition to an expanded live entertainment license application for Robert Oliver Seafood Restaurant. This restaurant, across from the Meyerhoff, has already been the location of a stabbing on a "club" night. MVBA is pleased to have the surrounding cultural institutions as well as nearby businesses with us opposition to this application.

MVBA MEMBER OFFER



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2009/2010 RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMITS

Current Area 28 parking permits expire on September 30, 2009. You can start renewing on-line beginning August 25th at www.baltimorecity.gov/government/parking.

OR

VISIT THE RPP OFFICES at 200 West Lombard Street, Suite B.

Apply on-line by September 16. New residents must apply in person after September 18 at the RPP office. Note that the RPP office does not accept cash for the purchase of permits. See documentation requirements below or complete requirements on-line. For further info, call the RPP office at 443-573-2800.

PICKUP PERMITS at one of three Mt. Vernon Belvedere Association sponsored pick up sites! **Only pre-paid** permits can be picked up. No applications will be accepted. MVBA can be reached at 410-528-1919 or e-mail at parking@mvba.org.

PICKUP SESSIONS: Wednesday, September 16, 6pm – 8pm
 Saturday, September 19, 10am – 12 noon
 Location: Belvedere Condominiums
 1 East Chase Street
 John Eager Howard Room

 Tuesday, September 22, 6pm – 8pm
 Location: Midtown Benefits District Office
 1221 North Calvert Street

GENERAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

You must provide your **driver's license** and **current vehicle registration**. The registration should be in your name and reflect your Mt. Vernon address. If the vehicle registration is **not** in your name, you will also need to provide a **notarized letter** from the owner of the vehicle stating that you are the sole driver, along with proof of residency (a current lease, current utility bill, cable or phone bill).

Students and military must have and show a **current ID**.

If the vehicle registration is out of state and you do not have a Maryland driver's license, you must obtain a non-resident permit from the Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles. You must provide the receipt from DMV and provide a copy of the application.

Lack of proper documentation will result in the issuance of a temporary permit only. Temporary permits may **only** be picked up at the RPP office.

Other notes:

Previous permits must be removed from your windshield or you may risk being ticketed. Also, abuse, photo-coping, providing false documentation can result in a misdemeanor charge.

Residential Parking Permit renewal is provided as a service by your local community association, the Mt. Vernon Belvedere Association. If you are not already a member, please consider joining! Visit our websight at www.mvba.org for more information and to join.

TRIVIA:

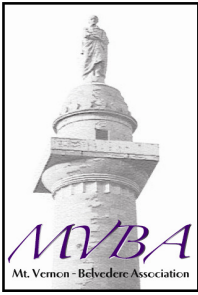
In the action thriller *Enemy of the State* (1998) starring Will Smith, the exploding building in the movie was, in fact, the late Dr Pepper plant in Baltimore.

The number of centenarians – 100 years and older – has more than doubled since 1980 to about 50,000. Eight out of ten are women.

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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.

Officers

President..... Jason Curtis president@mvba.org
Vice President..... Paul Warren vicepresident@mvba.org
Treasurer..... Brian Coleman treasurer@mvba.org
Secretary..... Philippa Strydom secretary@mvba.org
Corr. Secretary..... Robert Beachy corrsecretary@mvba.org

Committees

Architectural Review..... Steven Shen..... arc@mvba.org
Sanitation..... Sandy Lawler sanitation@mvba.org
Property Stewardship..... Barbara Jean Gilbert..stewardship@mvba.org
Liquor..... Steve Johnson..... liquor@mvba.org
Zoning..... Paul Warren zoning@mvba.org
Marketing..... Regina Minniss rminniss@cbmove.com
Development..... Paul Warren development@mvba.org
Safety..... Gary Oldenburg..... safety@mvba.org
Membership..... Susan Warren membership@mvba.org
Parking..... Pam Stewart parking@mvba.org

Board Members

Petula Nash
Barbara Jean Gilbert
Sandy Lawler
Kendra Whitlock Ingram
Ernest Liotti
David Wiesand

Appointed Members:

Gary Oldenburg
Stan Keyser
Jim Maza

Ex-officio Members

Steve Johnson
Jack Dana
J.J. Pecora
Mary Ann Henderson

Historic Mt. Vernon/Belvedere

Visit MVBA at www.mvba.org



**Residential Parking Permits
Expire September 30, 2009
Renew on-line beginning August 25 at
www.baltimorecity.gov/government/parking
For more information, call the RPP
Office at 443-573-2800**

**Book Festival - September 25, 26, & 27
Parking restrictions will begin
The week of September 21**