

Mount Vernon Belvedere Clarion

December 2009

Volume 24, Number 11

There is no general membership meeting scheduled for December. The next general membership meeting will be January 19, 2010.

The year in review, as 2009 winds down to the end, it is easy to forget what has transpired through the year. The December issue is devoted to some of the many events and changes that have occurred through the year.

In January, MVBA announced its Historic District Signage Project with a matching grant of \$13,000 by the Baltimore Area Heritage Area Authority.

In January, the remains of the Gunther Hardware building are scheduled to be demolished. The Gunther location can be used as a surface parking lot for up to 18 months. After 18 months, the lot must be either developed or converted into green space until development takes place. The lot is owned by the University of Baltimore.

In February, MVBA announced it was entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Baltimore regarding the proposed Homeless Resource Center to be located at 620 Fallsway. In April, the agreement was reported to have been approved and signed by the City.

In February, an application for transfer of ownership of the venerable restaurant, Tyson's Place and Leons took place, with considerable concern over the applicant's intended use, as there was a request for live entertainment included with the application. In March, the application was approved with certain restrictions, particularly with respect to the continuance of live entertainment upon future sale and transfer of the liquor license. To date, MVBA is not aware of any particular issues related to the operation.

In March, MVBA challenges two liquor license renewals, El Patron, located at 801 Charles Street, and Red Square, located in the Belvedere. As part of the new liquor board process, mediation takes place with the applicants first in an attempt to craft a working agreement with the two establishments. At the April liquor board hearings for both establishments, letters of agreements were approved regarding both locations. To date, El Patron has remained closed and its future is unknown. In October, Red Square was brought before the liquor board on several charges that ultimately resulted in their closure for 60 days. On a related issue, the agreement between MVBA and Red Square approved in April that MVBA claims has not been adhered to, was dismissed from the hearing due to procedure issues, but would be heard at a later conference hearing with the board.

In April, MVBA notes that trash pick-up in Mt. Vernon will still take place twice a week along with the implementa-



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tion of single stream re-cycling. Most other areas of the city were scheduled for pick-up only once per week, along with single stream re-cycling.

In April, MVBA announces that it plans to start working on a Master Plan for Mt. Vernon as an extension of the City's comprehensive master plan. MVBA's Lance Decker takes the lead on this important project.

In May, the ever controversial Suites UltraLounge was brought before District Court to defend itself against revocation of their license. The hearing lasted nearly 2 hours with no decision rendered by the Judge. Because of the nature of all the problems at the club, the Baltimore City Police Department announced that it may consider using the Padlock Law to close the operation.

In June, MVBA had a standing room only participation at its general membership meeting of approximately 300 individuals. The topic, safety in Mt. Vernon, as a result of several instances were individuals had been assaulted or robbed at or near Chase and Charles Street, possibly related to Suites UltraLounge and Red Square and the general increase of night life activity in the area. The meeting was attended by Mayor Sheila Dixon, State Senator Verna Jones, Central District Police commander Major Dennis Smith and other city officials.

In June, the former Medical Arts Building at 101 West Read Street that had sat vacant for many years, had been transformed into a fully restored Professional Arts Building apartments consisting of 96 new apartments. The ribbon cutting ceremony took place on June 29.

In June, the former Designer's Hardware location has become a café for breakfast, sandwiches, and homemade entrees ready to take home for dinner

In June, Robert Oliver's, formally Spike and Charlies, applies to have restrictions regarding live entertainment removed from their license. However, they had been charged with several serious violations by the Liquor Board and there was a report of shooting inside the restaurant. To date, Robert Oliver's drop the application.

In June, it was announced that long time community supporter and Flower Mart President, Fred Bierer, 61, passed away. Fred will be greatly missed.

In July, MVBA notes that the City has been working on Live Entertainment legislation to address the myriad of problems associated with live entertainment, particularly live entertainment associated with Class B restaurant licenses. On a related matter, legislation that would address live entertainment in zones B1 and B2 would be introduced. Mt. Vernon is not directly impacted by this legislation.

In July, the Greek Church received approval to demolish the structurally unsound parking garage next door to the former Gunther Hardware location.

In July, the renovation to the Brexton building starts up with renewed vigor. The renovations are scheduled to be completed

MVBA's Annual Holiday Party

Thursday, December 10, 2009

6:30pm-9:00pm

Mt. Vernon Stable and Saloon

909 N. Charles Street

\$20 per person

Cash Bar

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sometime after the first of 2010 as a boutique hotel.

In October, Red Square, located in the Belvedere Condominiums is closed for 60 days by the Liquor Board. Charges included serving alcohol after 2am, not serving food after 2am, no application for transfer of ownership filed with the Liquor Board (there was a notice posted on the premises indicating a change of ownership), and property taxes that had not been paid. Serving food during normal hours is still a concern. Red Square has a class "B" restaurant license.

In November, Suites UltraLounge received notice of intent to use the Padlock Law to close the operation. Later in November, a hearing held at the Police Department resulted in a recommendation that Suites be closed. Late in November, it was announced that Suites UltraLounge was padlocked closed for 1 year.

Mayor Sheila Dixon comments:

"I applaud Police Commissioner Bealefeld for taking action and padlocking the Suite Ultralounge. By doing so, we can begin to make significant improvements to the security of residents and visitors in Mount Vernon.

Every restaurant, business and bar owner must be a responsible partner with their community. The actions of their patrons can negatively impact the lives and livelihoods of others. For far too long, community leaders and residents have been working to find a solution to the problems created by the Suite Ultralounge.

This establishment is a nuisance to the Mount Vernon community, and the Commissioner's action today provides the owners, the Police Department and the community with an acceptable resolution to all of their concerns.

This is an excellent example of targeted enforcement in action. We must continue to use every available tool to shut down any establishment that blatantly disregards the law and makes our neighborhoods less safe."

In December, 7-11 opens its newest store at the former location of the Buttery Restaurant that was located near the southeast corner of Mt. Vernon Square. There was considerable opposition mounted by the community to prevent its formation, but lost out in the end.

In Hazelton, Pennsylvania, there is a law on the books that prohibits a person from sipping a carbonated drink while lecturing students in a school auditorium.

Rosemary, oregano, thyme, and marjoram belong to the mint plant family.

The English word "pajamas" has its origin in Persian. It is a combination of the Persian words *pa* (leg) and *jamah* (garment).

Notes from the every busy Architectural Review Committee

Windows at 828 Park Avenue
 7-11 Signage at 529 N. Charles Street.
 Brownstone steps repair at 1020.1026/1038 Calvert St.
 838/840 Park Avenue, demolition of carriage houses.
 210 East Chase Street addition to rear
 829 N. Charles Street, Never On Sunday signage and storefront renovation.
 933 St. Paul Street, new front door.
 928 St. Paul Street, 3 side doors, marble stoop repairs.
 901 St. Paul Street, un-permitted paint color.
 910 N. Calvert Street, new fence in rear.
 723 St. Paul Street, paint color approvals
 927 N. Calvert Street, paint color approvals

Violations at:

529 N Charles (7-11), un-permitted installation of exterior molding, and wooden door/steel frame that does not fit the opening properly.
 517 N. Charles (Cozy Corner, paint color)
 1014 N. Calvert Street, brownstone patching.
 1015 St. Paul, painting façade.
 107 East Preston St, un-approved signage.

Finally, throughout the year, the community has suffered through the renovation of Charles Street and its associated streetscaping. Although nearly complete at the southern end of the project, it is still a work in progress with the area near Mt. Royal now under re-construction and the remainder comprised of many details.

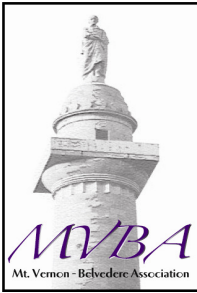
One of the side benefits to the renovation work is the construction of corals to enclose newspaper boxes. This help to consolidate as well as eliminate unnecessary boxes.

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Mt. Vernon ~ Belvedere Clarion

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Vice President..... Paul Warren vicepresident@mvba.org
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Zoning..... Paul Warren zoning@mvba.org
Marketing..... Regina Minniss rminniss@cbmove.com
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38th Annual Lighting of the Washington Monument Presented by Saul Ewing

Thursday, December 3rd
5:30—7:30pm
Mount Vernon Square

MVBA's Annual Holiday Party
Thursday, December 10, 2009
6:30pm-9:00pm
Mt. Vernon Stable and Saloon

Historic Mt. Vernon/Belvedere

Visit MVBA at www.mvba.org

