



The Riverdale Park *Town Crier*

February 2007

Volume 36, Issue 1

Welcome to our new Public Works Director, L. Ron Goff



Happy Valentine Day,
Wednesday, February 14th



President's Day
Monday, February 19th



Town Hall and Public Works Closed,
see page 7 for regular trash and yard
waste pickup changes.

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HYATTSVILLE, MD
PERMIT No. 2090

To:

Postal Customer



NEW STREET SWEEPER ARRIVES

By Patrick J. Prangley

The Town is pleased to announce a TYMCO Regenerative air street sweeper has arrived and is presently operating and working to keep our town **Safe, Clean and Beautiful.**

The Town of Riverdale Park, in partnership with the City of Hyattsville, was awarded a \$100,000 grant to purchase this street sweeper. This state of the art street sweeper will be jointly shared with our neighbor the City of Hyattsville. This equipment will also contribute immensely in reducing the amount of debris and waste finding its way to the Northeast branch of the Anacostia River and eventually to the Chesapeake Bay.

Council Actions December 4, 2006

By Waverly Pollitt

1. **Approved** - Civilian Classification System, motion to accept Job description, motion to accept civilian pay scale.
2. **Approved** - Wachovia Bank plan subject to covenants, and formal plans.
3. **Approved** - EYA agreement to work on easements for route 410.
4. **Approved** - Request for a 20 day, temporary vendor license for Christmas tree sales located at 6100 Baltimore Avenue.
5. **Approved** - Motion to pass 2006-OR-11 a resolution to amend §50-14 to specify the fine for §50-15 outdoor unenclosed storage prohibited.
6. **Approved** - Motion to pass 2006-OR-12 penalties is longer the last section of the chapter, Mayor and council wish to designate § 50-14 as §50-18.
7. **Failed** - Motion to pass 2006-OR- 13 to adjust the compensation of the Mayor and Council beginning June 2007.
- 8- **Approved** - Action to authorized state bid on street vehicles for general government and code.
- 9- **Approved** - Action to approved variance of 16ft. front yard depth and 1ft. side yard Width, 21.8% net lot coverage at 4905 Riverdale Road for Mrs. Theresa Jackson.
- 10- **More information requested**- Action to approve variance on two story addition at 4901 Madison Street for Edy Najeras.
- 11- **More Information requested** - Action on proposal from Edmonston Associates,LLC. 5810 47th avenue, Parking Proposal.
- 12- **Approved** - Letter of support to send to Park & Planning for Property at 5424 Powhatan Road for Dr. Michael Darden, Medical Center
- 13- **Tabled**- To re-open West Beale Circle for two way traffic.
- 14- **Approved**- Motion to accept G&C bid subject to negotiations.

Council Actions January 2, 2006

1. **Introduced**- To Ordinance Resolution for Verizon, 2007-OR-01
2. **Approved** - Support letter for Commercial Zoning Bill.
3. **Denied** - Support of variance for a two story addition at 4901 Madison Street, for Edy Najeras.
4. **Request more information**- Position on Support for EYA East Village.
5. **Approved** - Resolution authorizing Police Department to expand to (19) uniformed officers, based upon hiring on highly sought after qualification.
6. **Introduced** - New Resolution for Salary of Elected Officials, 2007-OR-02



Can you help?

The Town of Riverdale Park is looking for a Stenographer to attend and transcribe the monthly Legislative Meeting. The Town of Riverdale Park meets on the first Monday of each month at 8:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, if you are interested please call Waverly at 301-927-6381.

Town of Riverdale Park

www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us

Town Hall

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Mayor Vernon Archer
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varcher@gmail.com

Council Members

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Ward 3 David Lingua 301-779-3849
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Vincent Harrison, Chief

Town Crier

The Official Newsletter of the
Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland
Editor-in-Chief:

rptowncrier@comcast.net

It is the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park, pursuant to the provision of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The American with Disabilities Act, to prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in any aspect of employment within the government.

It is also the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park to disallow discrimination in fair housing based on race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disabilities, and/or age.

Some materials contained in *The Town Crier* represent the opinion of the authors and do not necessarily represent the view of the Town of Riverdale Park.

Submission deadline: 15th of each month.

The Mayor's Report

By Vernon Archer

New Tax Assessments

Like most of the homeowners in Town, I received my new property tax assessment from the state a few weeks back, and saw that it had increased almost 20%! Most houses had similar increases. The Town will soon receive a report from the state that tells us exactly how the whole Town's assessable base has changed. Now, what will this mean to us when tax time comes? First of all, I can only address what will likely happen in Town. Keep in mind, the majority of our property taxes go to the county and to the state.



Our property tax is set as a rate against the assessed value of a property. When the assessed value goes up very rapidly, the Town can reduce the rate of taxation to compensate, so that the actual tax paid in dollar terms does not change, or changes much less than the assessments. Under my administration, for both of the last two years, we have done exactly that: reduce tax rates while assessments rose. For the upcoming tax year, the Town will probably be able to reduce rates while keeping our budget balanced.

Wachovia Bank for Baltimore Avenue / East-West Highway and Improvements to the Intersection

The Council endorsed a final proposal for the Wachovia Bank building proposed for the vacant corner at East-West Highway and Baltimore Avenue. This endorsement was subject to one overwhelming condition: that the developer grants an easement giving additional right-of-way to the Town along Baltimore Avenue. I negotiated with the developer to get this additional right-of-way in order to provide an additional turn lane on Baltimore Avenue (Route 1). Riverdale residents know that one of our major traffic problems is backups caused by cars turning left at that intersection from northbound Route 1. The Town was in an ideal situation to demand such a concession from the developer. I thank the Council for its support in seizing this opportunity, and note particularly the assistance of Ward One Councilman Rob Oppenheim in making this deal happen.

Welcome to New Director of Public Works

Please join me in welcoming our new Director of Public Works, L. Ron Goff. It was something of a coup to get Ron to come to work for Riverdale Park. He is one of the most widely respected directors in Maryland, developing an excellent reputation while at the Town of Bladensburg. Ron not only has a very strong track record working inside the Town of Bladensburg, but he also has an impressive history of working cooperatively with surrounding communities. One sign of the esteem with which he is held is the fact he is currently President of The Maryland Public Works Officials Association. In the hiring process, I saw that Ron buys into the vision and priorities for the Town of Riverdale Park shared by myself and the Council. He is clearly determined to run his Department in concert with the rest of the Town government to create a safe, clean, and beautiful Town.

Dumm's Development Project

Pete Spiropoulis and his family partners, who own and operate Dumm's Market and Pizza, brought a revised plan for redeveloping their properties to the Mixed Use Town Center Review Committee last month. You may recall that a plan that was put forth by the Patriot Group development group was withdrawn last spring. The new project represents a clear improvement for the Town in several ways.

First, the land owners will themselves take full responsibility for the project. The Spiropoulis family are committed stakeholders in Riverdale Park -- their future rides on the success of this development over the long-term. Second, under the new plan, development will take place in two separate phases, with one section being built on the south part of the property during phase one, then a second section on the north portion during phase two. Because of this, Dumm's Market and Pizza will be able to continue to operate continuously during building, finally moving into new, larger spaces across the street from their current location. Both buildings will consist of retail/commercial space on the main floor with condominium units on the upper floors.

Lastly, the south building is being proposed at the height of four floors which is more sensitive to the historic homes on Riverdale Road and Oliver Street. After a great deal of discussion with a number of developers unconnected to the project as well as our support staff at Maryland National Capital Park and Planning (the folks who oversee zoning), it is clear to me that any further reduction would risk making the project economically unviable. In other words, it is unlikely that anyone would be able to get financing for a smaller project. The Council may take a position on the project as soon as the February Legislative meeting, so if you are concerned about this project please come to the meeting, or share your position with me or your ward representative as soon as possible.

El Reporte del Alcalde

Translation by Verenice Garay

Nuevas Evaluaciones de Impuestos

Como la mayor parte de los propietarios de casas en la ciudad, recibí mi nueva evaluación de impuestos territorial del estado algunas semanas atrás, y vi que había aumentado casi el 20%! La mayor parte de casas tenían aumentos similares. La ciudad recibirá muy pronto un reporte del estado que nos dirá exactamente como la base evaluatoria de la ciudad ha cambiado. Ahora, que significara esto para nosotros cuando el tiempo de los impuestos venga? Antes de todo, sólo puedo decir lo que pasará probablemente en la ciudad. Tenga presente, que la mayoría de nuestros impuestos territoriales van al condado y al estado.

Nuestro impuesto territorial es puesto como un precio contra el valor fiscal de una propiedad. Cuando el valor fiscal sube muy rápidamente, la ciudad puede reducir el precio de impuestos para compensar, de modo que el actual impuesto pagado en términos de dólar no se cambie, o se cambie mucho menos que las evaluaciones. Bajo mi administración, durante los dos años pasados, hemos hecho exactamente que: reduzcan el precio de los impuestos mientras las evaluaciones se elevaron. Para el próximo año de impuestos, la ciudad probablemente pueda reducir precios y mantener nuestros presupuestos equilibrados.

Wachovia Bank for Baltimore Avenue/ East West Highway and Improvements to the Intersection

Los Consejeros respaldaron una oferta final para el edificio del Banco de Wachovia propuesto para la esquina vacante en East- West Highway y Baltimore Avenue. Esta aprobación será sujeta a una condición: Que el promotor conceda el derecho de dar el paso adicional a la ciudad a lo largo de la Baltimore Avenue. Yo negocié con el promotor para obtener este paso adicional a fin de proveer un carril adicional en el Baltimore Avenue (ruta 1). Los residentes de Riverdale saben que uno de los mayores problemas de tráfico es causado por regresadas de coches que dan vuelta a la izquierda en aquella intersección de la ruta 1 con dirección norte. La ciudad estaba en una situación ideal para exigir tal concesión del promotor. Le doy gracias a los Consejeros por su apoyo en la toma de esta oportunidad, y noto particularmente la asistencia de Rob Oppenheim, Consejero de la Barrio 1 en hacer este trato.

Bienvenido El nuevo director de Trabajos Públicos.

Por favor únense conmigo a darle la bienvenida al nuevo Director de Trabajos Públicos, L. Ron Goff. Fue como de golpe poder tener a Ron trabajando para Riverdale Park. El es uno de los directores extensamente mas respetados de Maryland, desarrollando una excelente reputación mientras en la Ciudad de Blandensburg. Ron no solamente tiene un fuerte registro de vigilar de cerca dentro de la ciudad de Blandensburg, pero también tiene un impresionante historial de trabajar cooperativamente con las comunidades de los alrededores. Una señal de nuestra estima para El, es que esta sostenido en el hecho que él es el actual Presidente de los trabajos públicos de Maryland y asociaciones oficiales. En el proceso de empleo, vi que Ron tiene la visión de prioridades para la ciudad de Riverdale Park compartiendo con mi persona y los Consejeros. Él es claramente determinado para dirigir su Departamento en acuerdo con el resto del gobierno para crear una ciudad segura, limpia y bonita.

El proyecto de desarrollo de Dumm

Pete Spiropoulis y sus familiares, quienes poseen y operan la pizza y el mercado de Dumm, trajo un plano revisado para redesarrollar sus propiedades al Comité de Revisión de Centro de la Ciudad de Uso Variado el mes pasado. Usted puede llamar eso un plan que fue adelantado por el Patriot Group el grupo de desarrollo, esto fue retirado la pasada primavera. El nuevo proyecto representa el mejoramiento para la ciudad en muchas maneras. Primero los dueños del terreno van a tomar completa responsabilidad por el proyecto. La familia Spiropoulis esta comprometida con los residentes de Riverdale Park. Su futuro dependerá en el éxito de este desarrollo sobre un largo plazo. Segundo, bajo el nuevo plan el desarrollo tomara lugar en dos fases separadas, con una sección construida en la parte sur de la propiedad durante la fase uno, después una segunda sección en la porción norte durante la fase dos. Por esto el Mercado de Dumm y pizzería podrá seguir operando continuamente en el edificio, mientras finalmente se mueven al nuevo, espacios mas grandes cruzando la calle de donde su actual locación esta. Los dos edificios consistirán en venta/espacio comercial en los pisos principales, con unidades de condominios en los pisos superiores.

Finalmente, el edificio del sur esta siendo propuesta a la altura de cinco pisos que será más sensible a las casas históricas en Riverdale Road y Oliver Street. Después de mucha discusión con un sin numero de promotores que estaban desconectados del proyecto así como nuestro personal de apoyo en el Maryland National Capital Park and Planning (la gente quiénes supervisan la división por zonas), esta claro para mi que aquella alguna otra reducción arriesgaría de hacer el proyecto económicamente no viable. En otras palabras, es improbable que alguien fuera capaz de conseguir la financiación para un proyecto más pequeño. Los Consejeros podrían tomar una posición en el proyecto tan pronto como en Febrero en la reunión legislativa, entonces si esta interesado en este proyecto por favor venga a la reunión, o comparta su posición conmigo o su representate de barrio lo antes posible.

Code Reminders



House Numbers: This code states that every house within the Town is to have the house number displayed on the front of the property – a size 4 inches or bigger and bold so that the house number is easy to identify. Enforcement of the above code is necessary to assist our public safety of our residents. Violation of 33-20 carries a penalty of \$ 100.00.

Sidewalks

24 hours after ice and snow accumulates, residents who have sidewalks, are responsible for shoveling them. Fine for noncompliance: \$ 100.00

Snow

Any resident whose property includes a sidewalk must clear snow and ice from the sidewalk within 24 hours of a snow-fall.

Unless otherwise stated, when snow is predicted, residents who park their vehicles on the street must park on the even-numbered side of the street to allow snowplows and other equipment to clear the pavement. Parking on a designated snow emergency route during a snow emergency is prohibited.

Penalties

Failure to remove snow, ice, or any other impediment from a sidewalk can result in a \$100 fine. Vehicles parked in violation of a snow emergency can be impounded. In addition to a towing and impounded fee, the owner is liable for \$200.

Rental Property

Most single-family homes or apartments within the Town of Riverdale Park that are tenant occupied must have a rental license that is renewed each year. All rental properties are subject to periodic inspection. Rental License applications are available at Town Hall- 301-927-6381.

Welcome Town of Riverdale Park Code Officer Robert Biddle

The Town of Riverdale Park welcomes Robert Biddle as the newest member of the Code Enforcement team. Robert has an extensive heating and air conditioning background and multiple certifications. He is a valuable addition to our staff.



Riverdale Park Police Department

November 2006

Crime Report

Crime	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Stln. Veh.
Ward 1	0	0	0	3	0	3
Ward 2	0	0	1	0	0	0
Ward 3	0	0	1	1	0	0
Ward 4	0	0	3	3	3	4
Ward 5	0	0	0	1	0	0
Ward 6	0	0	3	2	0	0
Total	0	0	8**	10	3*	7

** 5 citizen, 2 commercial, 1 carjacking

*2 Commercial, 1 Residential

Officer Activity

Activity	Total
Calls For Service	808
Routine Patrols	268
Traffic Stops	266*
Reported Traffic Accidents	52**
Parking Citations	79
Subjects Arrested	24

* 260 Traffic Citations,

** 24 Written Accidents

December 2006

Crime Report

Crime	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Stln. Veh.
Ward 1	0	0	0	0	2	2
Ward 2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 3	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ward 4	0	0	3	1	2	0
Ward 5	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ward 6	0	0	0	2	1	0
Total	0	0	4**	3	5*	4

** 2 citizen, 2 commercial

*3 Commercial, 1 Residential

Officer Activity

Activity	Total
Calls For Service	857
Routine Patrols	330
Traffic Stops	303*
Reported Traffic Accidents	58**
Parking Citations	68
Subjects Arrested	19

* 282 Traffic Citations

** 17 Written Accidents

**Introduction of Ordinance Resolution for the
Town of Riverdale Park Maryland on January 2, 2007
at a Regular Legislative Meeting.**

**Town of Riverdale Park
Ordinance Resolution
2007-OR-01**

Cable Franchise – Verizon Maryland, Inc.

An Ordinance Resolution for the purpose of granting a non-exclusive cable franchise to Verizon, Maryland, Inc. under certain terms and conditions; approving and authorizing the Mayor to execute on behalf of the Town of Riverdale Park a certain cable franchise agreement with Verizon Maryland, Inc.; providing for the Automatic repeal of this Ordinance and the franchise granted by this Ordinance is not accepted within a certain period of time; and generally relating to the granting of a cable franchise to Verizon Maryland, Inc. and providing cable television services within the Town of Riverdale Park.

WHEREAS, BE IT ENACTED BY THE TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK, that it hereby grants to Verizon Maryland, Inc. a non-exclusive franchise to construct and operate a cable system along and within the public rights -of-way within the corporate limits of the Town of Riverdale Park, subject to the provisions of Chapter 61 of the Code of the Town of Riverdale Park and the terms of a Cable Franchise Agreement which is attached to and incorporated into this Ordinance by reference and which hereby is approved.

WHEREAS, BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the Mayor of the Town of Riverdale Park is authorized to execute on behalf of the Town the Cable Franchise Agreement with Verizon Maryland, Inc. in a form substantially similar to the Cable Franchise Agreement which is attached to and incorporated into this Ordinance by reference.

WHEREAS, AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Ordinance shall be come effective twenty (20) days after its passage by the Council, except that if, within one hundred eighty (180) days after the effective date of this Ordinance, Verizon Maryland, Inc. does not accept the franchise granted by this Ordinance by executing the Cable Franchise Agreement in a form substantially similar to the Cable Franchise Agreement which is attached to the incorporated into this Ordinance by reference, this Ordinance and the franchise granted by this Ordinance shall stand repealed without any further action of the Town Council.

**Town of Riverdale Park
Ordinance Resolution
2007-OR-02**

Whereas, the salaries of the Mayor and Council have not changed since 1995, be it resolved to set the compensation of elected officials in the Town of Riverdale Park to be in line with other towns in the state of Maryland that are of similar size and budget, as follows: (Added language is in italics)

§2-7. Compensation of elected Officials

(a) On and after *July 4, 2007* ~~June 5, 1995~~, the Mayor shall be compensated at the rate of nine hundred dollars ~~(\$900) four hundred dollars (\$400)~~ per month.

(b) On or after *July 4, 2007* ~~June 5, 1995~~, the members of the Council shall be compensated at the rate of *six hundred dollars (\$600)* ~~two hundred dollars (\$200)~~ per month.

Public Works Report

By Debbie Murphy

Holiday Schedule

Public Works is closed for Presidents Day on February 19, 2007. Regular trash and yard waste pickup for Area A will be on Tuesday, February 20, 2007. Regular trash and yard waste pickup for Area B will be on Wednesday, February 21, 2007.

Town Center Clock

Alas our poor clock has been ill for a while. But good news is here. The service repairman has been out and the clock inner workings have been sent back for repair. For now the lights are out on the clock until repairs have been made.

Snow Emergency Parking

During a snow emergency vehicles are to be parked on the even-numbered side of the street, except on streets otherwise designated.

Leaves

Loose leaf collection season is over. Residents who still have leaves will need to bag them and put them out for yard waste on their first collection day of each week. The town office is selling heavy-gauge clear plastic bags for \$2.50 for a roll of 25 bags. Placing yard waste in clear bags will save time as our collectors can immediately identify yard waste from other trash.

Christmas Trees

Discarded Christmas trees are to be put out on yard waste collection day.

Save The Date! Easter-Egg Hunt

The Riverdale Park Recreation Board will sponsor an **Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday March 31, 2007** at Riversdale Mansion. The Easter Egg Hunt will be held from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Save the date, bring your Easter baskets, and be ready to hunt for eggs!



**The
Verdin**

**Company repairing
Town Center Clock**

S & J Restaurant

Daily Lunch and Dinner Specials

“Eat In/Carry Out
Free Wi-Fi”

Breakfast Specials—7 days a week \$3.95

Monday—Tacos, \$1.00 each

All You Can Eat Soup, Salad & Sandwich

Monday—Friday, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Saturday—All you can eat Shrimp--\$15.95

4:00—8:00 p.m.

Steamed Shrimp Everyday

Sandwich/Sub of the Month--\$3.95

Karaoke Tuesday & Saturday Nights

Corner of Queensbury and Rhode Island Avenue
Riverdale Park, MD

301-927-3977

A paid advertisement

Ward One and Community Affairs Reports

By Rob Oppenheim

Let's Walk

Want to take a walk for fun and exercise? Some of us are doing just that—most weekends and some weekdays. Let me know if you would like to join us (oppenheim@email.com, 301-779-1745). We leave home at about 4 p.m. and meet at Town Center at about 4:05. Join us there, or at the park a few minutes later. We enter the park at 51st Avenue & Somerset Road and turn left (north). You can join us pretty much anywhere along there. See the “**Trolley Line—50 Years Ago**” article below for another planned walk.



Fun Board

If you'd enjoy spreading joy to the children of Riverdale Park, consider volunteering with the Recreation Board; new members are always welcome—and they are truly wonderful, fun people to work with. You can reach the chair, Anissa Sunday at al_sunday@yahoo.com or 301-277-2458. Or drop in on the next meeting, Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2007, 7:30 p.m. Town Hall.

Work Board

Town Clock. We need this beautiful old clock fixed and under a service contract, and then we can look at longer-term issues like relocating controls and speakers. The clock works were recently removed for repair. Yea! The clock should be back up and running and properly maintained soon.

Rail Road Crossing Improvements. We are working on making this crossing safe enough to be declared a Quiet Zone, in which case, the train horns would be silenced! (Except for emergencies).



I am working with our state delegation and hope to convince our town to seek professional advice on how best to proceed. I will follow up on the crossing's road repairs (better, but not right) and review the plans for the new 4-way gate and hope to get the train sensors fixed (so the gates function better).

Town Web Site. We have been reviewing proposals on how to update and improve our town web site and have narrowed the selection down to 3 from the original 9 proposals. Many thanks to all who have helped with this, especially Alan Thompson.

Fences. I have been working on new fence code and received many good suggestions. Unfortunately, it is taking more time than I hoped, so I am delaying it for now in order to concentrate on other pressing issues. There are only so many hours in a month.

Email Lists. Town Talk is an e-mail list that lets citizens discuss what is happening and what should be happening. To sign up go here: www.tinyurl.com/dn6tj. We are working on a set of guidelines and procedures governing advertising, elections and moderation procedures for these lists.



And lots of other stuff. Like fixing street lamps, opening West Beale Circle, revising council pay, reviewing curb cuts and sidewalk problems. Hey, we finally fixed that sidewalk in front of S&J—that pool of water that became an unwanted skating rink is gone!

Long-Term Trends and Fixes

Let's start a dialog on Town Talk about long-term trends and problems in our town and what might be done about them. Creative solutions welcomed.

Town Center Condos

A new proposal for developing Dumm's Corner is under consideration. This proposal's 1st phase replaces the Victorian boarding house at 6009 Lafayette Street with a 4-story mixed-use condo and retail building. Dumm's Corner market and restaurant would move into this new building before work begins on the 2nd phase, which then replaces the old Dumm's buildings and credit union properties with a 5-story mixed-use building. You can let the council know your thoughts about this at the council meeting on Monday Feb. 5, 2007, 8 p.m.

Trolley Line—50 Years Ago

A movie about Washington Streetcars shows a trolley rolling through our town center, Hyattsville and College Park from 50 years ago! Come see this short, 15-minute glimpse into our past on Saturday, Feb 3, 2007, 3 p.m. at the S&J Restaurant, 6108 Rhode Island Avenue and Queensbury Road. After the viewing, we'll take a walk and identify some landmarks from the film. As you know, we continue to work at turning this abandoned trolley line into a hiker-biker trail.



Welcome to our new Public Works Director, L. Ron Goff.

As always, let me hear from you. The best way is e-mail: oppenheim@email.com or call 301-779-1745.

Ward 3 Report

By David Lingua

You know I have to admit; our Ward's lights were really good. Way to go folks!

Water, water everywhere... and hopefully the yard won't flood. Unfortunately, for a number of us, our hope is wishful thinking. Several neighbors have approached me about solving this dilemma of the deluge in the way of storm water management. I spoke with Town Administrator Patrick Prangley about this issue, pressing upon him the need to get this addressed in coordination with the pumping station upgrade in Edmonston. With a number of calls, Mr. Prangley was able to set up a meeting with Department of Environmental Resources Senior Planner Mary Fulton and Third District County Councilman Eric Olson. Along with Mayor Archer and Town Engineer Wei Wu, we discussed how to get this project back on track. We also discussed how the county could be of assistance with landscaping oversight. Being that we are on a grade of less than one percent and water needing more than one-half of a percent grade to run off, riding ourselves of our "insta-ponds" will take as much creativity as effort. Thank you, Mr. Prangley.

At the last Legislative Session, one of the actions taken was to deny a variance request by one of our neighbors to build an addition. Several other neighbors voiced their opposition to the variance, which was taken into consideration. While having nothing against one improving their property, a proper presentation of one's construction project is required should one need approval for a variance or a permit. This is to ensure the safety and well being of not only the homeowner, but the neighborhood as well, due in large part to our proximity to one another. A number of our neighbors have presented such plans for additions or new construction in the past and no less will be expected in the future. If there is any doubt as to what is required please feel free to contact me. Code Officer Colleen Ferguson can also help.

By the time this is published, I will have spoken with the neighbors around the industrial park at 47th Avenue regarding the parking issue. My hope is to give a report to the Council so that we may be able to address Mr. Shoemaker. Also, I have received a petition from the residents along the west end of Nicholson Street requesting speed humps. Please feel free to contact me with any comments.

As Chair of the Public Works Committee I would like to extend a warm welcome to Mr. L. Ronald Goff, Riverdale Park's new Director of Public Works. A resident of Edgewater, Mr. Goff comes to us from Bladensburg. We all feel he will be a great addition to the town. I would ask that a warm Riverdale Park welcome be extended to him should the opportunity arise. Also I would

like to thank Debbie Murphy for filling in as acting Director for the past eight months. I appreciate her commitment and effort towards a considerably daunting task.

One birthday of note this month is that of our former Mayor and Ward Three neighbor, Guy Tiberio on the 26th. Mr. Tiberio is currently serving as the Town Administrator in Edmonston and giving the Energizer Bunny a run for his money. May we all be as active in our golden years. Happy Birthday, Guy!

Ward 5 Report

By Gerard F. Kiernan

Kitchen Safety

In the December, 2005 Town Crier, I wrote the following:

"As we approach the holiday season, please work to keep yourself and your family safe. When preparing holiday meals, please keep an eye on your younger helpers in the kitchen. One easy thing to do is turn all pots and pans on the top of the stove so that the handles are over the stove top and not sticking out over the edge of the stove."

Between the late December 2006 and mid-January 2007, Park Tanglewood has had two fires caused by food on stove tops catching fire. In one case, the family was home and called 911. In the second case, the people had left food on the stove and went out someplace. Fortunately, neither fire caused much damage or spread beyond the stove top. "Damage" to other apartments was just the smell of burnt food.

In my 36 years here, I have seen someone burn out their entire kitchen because they used an improper pot to fry chicken and the grease exploded out of the pot and set fire to the kitchen.

Please use the proper equipment and don't leave cooking food unattended. If you have a fire, you may not destroy just your own house but those of many of your neighbors. Please keep in mind that we live within feet of each other.

Public Safety Report

By Gerard F. Kiernan

A different view of Public Safety

Police and fire services are reactive by nature. Most of the time, they show up after something has happened.

How can we improve safety before something happens? Make sure that our homes are constructed properly. How do we do this?

When you plan on making a renovation that includes structural work, additional electrical services, major plumbing upgrades or grading work in your yard; con-

sult a professional (e.g., general contractor, electrician, plumber). If you want to be a "Harry Homeowner" as Hechinger's hardware used to call them, then contact the County Permit Department. They will tell you if you need a permit or not. If you do, they will review your plans and make sure they meet the appropriate building codes. If you ask nicely, they might even provide helpful hints on how to do the work or avoid problems that they have seen on other projects.

Following the building codes will both protect you and your family and your investment when you want to sell your property.

Riverdale Park Historic Home and Garden Tour

By Laurie Lynch

As mentioned in the last Town Crier, Riverdale Park will host a Historic Home and Garden Tour on Sunday, June 3, 2007 from 1:00—5:00 p.m. The tour will feature homes over 100 years old as well as the spectacular gardens in the town. Tours of the Riversdale Mansion will also be incorporated. Tickets for the tour will be \$10.00 in advance and \$12.00 on the tour day.

We'd like to recruit volunteers for the planning phase and the actual weekend of the tour (June 2nd - 3rd) to help get things set up and other logistics. Specifically, we need people for:

- House selection – we are trying to find 8-10 willing homeowners of 100 year old houses - East of Rte. 1 and South of East-West Highway
- Advertising the tour through various channels
- Fundraising including selling ads for the booklet
- Booklet preparation with pictures and history of each home
- Developing a Walking-Tour booklet that lists the other 100+ year old homes that aren't on the tour
- Docents in the houses to give people information about the homes (no training needed)
- Help with getting the houses ready and sign put up around the town
- Developing a list of contractors to help homeowners get the homes ready
- Decorations such as flower arrangements, etc...
- Host a post-tour party

We will be meeting the 2nd Thursday of each month – February 8th, March 8th, April 12th and May 10th. Join us for the next meeting February 8th at 7:00 p.m. at 4707 Oliver Street, Riverdale Park – yellow house between 48th Street and Lafayette.

Contacts: Lori Lynch at llynch@arec.umd.edu, and Danielle Glaros at dmglaros@co.pg.md.us

Riverdale Elementary School Update

By Danielle Glaros

Thanks again to our latest volunteers--Jared, Kate, and Iris--who helped with the Science Fair judging. The teachers really appreciate the support they are feeling from the community. The school is very focused on improving student test scores and to that end they have an after school and weekend reading programs as well as a several programs geared to helping parents assist their kids. Ms. Philips, one of the school's kindergarten teachers, will be demonstrating her teaching style to the entire County in early February. It's great to know that one of the County's best kindergarten teachers is at our school!

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

March 2nd- Dr. Seuss Day

The school is looking for 30 guest readers to come in anytime during the school day and read to students.

June (date TBA)- Career Day

The school is looking for volunteers to come in anytime during the school day and give a short 15-20 min presentation on their career.

If you're interested in any of these volunteer activities, please email me at dmglaros@gmail.com.

A Thank You from Riverdale Elementary

By Rebecca Roland

Riverdale Elementary School would like to thank the Community for all of their support this winter. The many donations that were given to the school will long be remembered by the students, families, and staff. Thanks to the generosity of the community, our students were able to benefit from clothing, coats, hats and gloves, food baskets, holiday presents, gift cards, and monetary donations. We would like to extend a special thank you to Nancy Mooney and Help by Phone, Peggy Higgins and The Our Heart to Yours Campaign, Bill Milligan, Prince George's County Public Safety Assistance Program, NCHS, Yolanda Patterson, Frances Philip, Ronald Lamot, Laura Townsend and the Giving Tree Program, UMD, Beverly Landy More and St Matthew's U.M. Church, The Elks Lodge, The First Korean Presbyterian Church, and Baltimore FDA Import Office.

Our Town

By Marita Novicky

2006 Festival of Lights 4th Annual Bakeoff--Slim Pickings

Riverdale Park's fourth annual Festival of Lights (FOL) Bakeoff, this past December 9, 2006 at local and long-time famous Calvert House Inn, was a bust for local bakeoff devotees. With only two entries, the three judges—Eric Olson and an elegantly dressed couple at the Calvert Tavern to hear “Chemistry” a jazz band playing the Saturday night show—gave Jared Liu's “Grandma's Chocolate Yum Yum cake” first prize.

Liu and his wife Kristin, who moved to Riverdale Park in 2005, were delighted to take first prize and in a Town Talk e-mail message offered to share it—a \$50 gift-certificate for the Calvert Inn—with local residents. Jared and Kristin were joined by a dozen friends and well-wishers at the Calvert on Saturday, December 15th and spent the prize while listening to a trio playing in the Tap Room. The Calvert, the scene of two previous FOL Bakeoffs, has been newly rejuvenated by Ferybous Salimi and wife following their buyout of the Calvert from Ferybous' brother Ferydoun Salimi. And from the crowd's seen at the Calvert, the Salimis are doing a great job with their rejuvenation of the Calvert House. Congratulations to them and their staff.

The Bakeoff's second-place prize went to previous win/place and local resident Marita Novicky for a “Chocolate Raspberry Torte” inspired from a recipe found in the cookbook “Angels in My Kitchen”. After asking friends to choose their best bet for a winner, Novicky reported that she baked the Torte three times before she got it right! When asked to comment after the December 9th contest, Novicky said she regaled in laughter when upon telling her older brother John of the Bakeoff's outcome, he replied, “so let me get this right, you came in dead last”! It's rumored that Novicky has been buried in her kitchen since churning out Chocolate Raspberry Tortes since the Bakeoff.

We can all hope that next year's FOL Bakeoff shows more local participation and gives Liu and Novicky some competition.

2006 4th Annual Festival of Lights and 1st Annual Holiday Market Are Huge Successes

Riverdale Park residents and others from surrounding communities were treated to two major successes this past December 2006—The Riverdale Park 4th Annual Festival of Lights and the 1st Annual Holiday Mar-

ket. Held on Saturday, December 9th, and Sunday, December 10th, the events drew strong crowds in spite of cold weather. The combination of these two events brought an early holiday season to Riverdale Park and a great round of applause goes to Danielle Glaros, Jim Coleman, Mark Molino, Anissa Sunday, and scores of others that volunteered their time to make these events a success. A special thanks goes to Riverdale Park's Public Works Department for their tremendous efforts to support these events. It goes without saying, we are the luckiest to have such a great Public Works Department—they shine in all their efforts. And much thanks to Mayor Vernon Archer and our Town Administrator and Town staff for their support in developing such a successful Holiday Market and Festival of Lights.

Festival Well Received by Town Residents

Riverdale Park residents showed their holiday spirit with well-decorated houses lit for the season. While there were three entries for the house-lighting contest, no judges reviewed and decided which house was the best! Let's agree, that all the entries made a strong effort to liven up the holiday season.

2006 Festival of Lights and the first-time Holiday Market were a real success. We learned from the conduct of these events and can plan for bigger and better events in 2007. Thanks to everyone for their tremendous show of holiday spirit.

Our Town is a collection of notes and stories about Riverdale Park residents written by Marita Novicky who lives on Sheridan Street in the house formerly known as Three Oaks, now affectionately called the Riverdale Retreat. If you have a story you would like told about someone or something in Riverdale Park, write to Marita at rptowncrier@comcast.net.

M-UTC Update

By Alice Ewen Walker
M-UTC Committee Chair

In December 2006, the M-UTC committee met with Pete and Sons (owners of Dumms) to review their new application for redevelopment of properties at Queensbury / Lafayette/ Riverdale Road. The project would result in a 5 story mixed-use building in the block north of Riverdale Road, where the sub shop, grocery, and credit union are located, and a 4 story mixed-use building in the block south of Riverdale Road where the boarding house is located. The committee was pleased to see that the project addressed many of the community comments that were made in the Fall, during the previous review of the Patriot Group's development proposal (which was later withdrawn).

The project will not meet the M-UTC guidelines on a few major points: building height, setback, and parking. These are mandatory standards, which the zoning committee has no legal ability to waive. Therefore, the M-UTC committee voted to approve the project, subject to the developer securing permits from the county through the special exception process. In essence, this means the zoning committee approved everything that we have the authority to approve and now the proposal passes to the county to secure variances. The county will consult with the Town government in this review.

In the committee's analysis, building height is the only major area of concern that the town and county will deliberate. The variance needed for parking and building setback is minor. The parking variance will ask for 2 fewer spaces than zoning requires. The building setback variance will allow the building to be built closer to the train tracks in a manner consistent with historic build-to lines in our town.

About the project - The proposal reflected effort by the applicant to incorporate community comments. Several of the concessions/ improvements that were made in this application are:

- Four (4) stories rather than 5 on the building on the south side of Riverdale Road
- Use of quality materials and articulation on all faces of the building, including the courtyard/back sides
- More surface level parking to serve retail businesses
- No net loss of retail space. This version of the project provides about twice the retail area as what the Patriot Group had earlier proposed for the site.
- Effort made to minimize the roof profile
- A two phase building process that will allow the owners to continue to operate their businesses with no shut down and no loss of these valued businesses to the town.
- Larger unit sizes to the residential units than what was previously proposed

While there are some details that are still pending regarding interior amenities, landscaping and other features, these are things that the applicant has stated will be in compliance with the M-UTC guidelines.

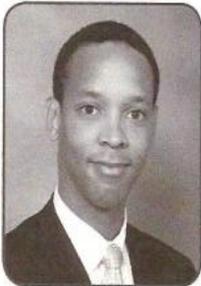
At this point, the applicant is going to move with all haste to submit for the special permit with the county. Pete & Sons is seeking financing themselves and will be the developer for the project.

If you have opinions about the project, the most appropriate thing to do is to review the plans at town hall and get in touch with your council person and the mayor. You may view pictures of the project online at <http://www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us/>. The Town elected government will be instrumental in the County's decision on the special exception.

Many thanks to the Spiropolous family and their architecture team for a thorough and straight forward presentation of the project.

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Community Circles

What to Watch For:

Friday, February 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd—Guided tours of Riversdale, 4811 Riverdale Road, 12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.; \$3.00 adults, \$2.00 seniors, and \$1.00 students and ages 5-18.

Sunday, February 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th-- Guided tours of Riversdale, 4811 Riverdale Road, 12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.; \$3.00 adults, \$2.00 seniors, and \$1.00 students and ages 5-18.

Monday, February 5, 2007—Legislative Meeting, Town Hall, 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 6, 2007—Traffic Committee, Town Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 7, 2007—RPBA meeting, 5:30 p.m., call 301-277-7393 for location; M-UTC meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, February 12, 2007—Lincoln's birthday; Boy Scouts Order of the Arrow, Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.; Recreation Board, Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 13, 2007—Madison Hill Association, Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.; Lecture, first in the series, Riversdale and Federal America; Riversdale, 7:30 p.m.; Michael Olmert, Emmy-award winning documentary film writer, *Dairies and Other Outbuildings in the 18th Century Backyard*, fee--\$5.00.

Wednesday, February 14, 2007—Valentine's Day ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Thursday, February 15, 2007—Town Crier deadline—submissions to rptowncrier@comcast.net or to the Crier Editor, 5008 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, MD 20737.

Monday, February 19, 2007—President's Day, Town Offices and Public Works Closed; **NO TRASH PICKUP.**

Thursday, February 22, 2007—Washington's birthday.

Sunday, February 25, 2007—*The Plummers' Kitchen, a Celebration of Black History Month.* Riversdale, 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. See the Riversdale Kitchen Guild prepare foods common among Maryland's 19th century African Americans including Riversdale's Plummer family.

Monday, February 26, 2007—Work Session, Town Hall, 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 28, 2006—Lions Club, Town Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Town Organizations:

Northern County Soccer Alliance, Inc. (NCSA): For more information on NCSA and on travel, recreation, home school, and training programs, contact www.ncsa-soccer.org or call (301-927-0560). NCSA is the only all year-round soccer club in the North/west Prince Georges County area. Tax deductible donations accepted at www.justgive.org. Volunteers needed—this is an excellent opportunity to get involved with your child in fun and great physical activity.

Riverdale Park Girl Scouts: Contact: Charmaine Wilson at (301-449-5690).

Riverdale Park Boys Scouts—Troop 252—Contact: Scoutmaster Bob Killen at (202) 282-8302

Riverdale Park Business Association—Call Audrey Bragg, (301) 277-7393 for meeting date and site.

Civic Committees:

Madison Hill Homeowner's Association—For information call (301) 513-9188 or email MadisonHillHOA@aol.com.

Recreation Board – Volunteers needed. Call Anissa Sunday at (301) 277-2458 for more information. **Save the Date: Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, March 31, 2007** at Riversdale Mansion from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lion's Club—Contact Guy Tiberio at (301) 864-3545 for more information.

Riversdale Historical Society—Contact Riversdale Mansion (301) 864-0420 for more information.

Riverdale Park Tree Committee—For information contact rebecca.feldberg@gmail.com.

Traffic Study Committee—Contact Gerry Kiernan (301-277-4554), gerardkiernan@earthlink.net.

If you have information to share with the community, please submit it by the 15th of the month to the Editor, Town Crier, 5008 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, Maryland 20737, or email rptowncrier@comcast.net

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