

SPRING 2003

Neighborhood News

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 9 AM - 1 PM

■ **Hazardous Waste Drop Off**

Drop off household paints, chemicals and automotive fluids for recycling or proper disposal.

AT Maryland State Fairgrounds, York Road, Timonium

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 10 AM - 3 PM

■ **Towson Gardens Day**

AT Towson Courthouse Fountain Plaza and W. Pennsylvania and Baltimore Avenues in Towson

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 10 AM

■ **St. John's Chapel Cleanup**

Please help rake, mulch and beautify the gardens and lawn of the church. Meet in chapel. Free refreshments.

AT 7534 Bellona Ave. at Dunlora Rd.

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 10 AM - 3 PM

■ **MARYLAND HOUSE & GARDEN PILGRIMAGE IN BARE HILLS**

Call RRLRAIA at 410-494-7757 for more information.

THURSDAY, MAY 22, 7 PM

■ **RRLRAIA Annual Meeting**

Development Pressures on RRLRAIA Neighborhoods

AT Church of the Good Shepherd

Parish Hall 1401 Carrollton Avenue

ALL MEMBERS INVITED -- REFRESHMENTS -- SEE YOU THERE!

THURSDAYS 4 PM

■ **Smart Growth and Community Design 2003 Speakers Series**

Sponsored by The Baltimore County Planning Board.

AT County Courts Building, 401 Bosley Avenue, Room 407.

● **May 15** Larry Rosenberg

Redevelopment: New Vitality for an Older Community

● **June 19** Adele Stephens

Expanding Choices Through Transit-Oriented Development.

■ **FUTURE EVENT** RRLRAIA Plant Exchange/Sale

As your garden grows, think about plants to swap in the Fall. Take photos of plants in bloom.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE RRLRAIA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by Sarah Fenno Lord

Look to see if the flag is flying outside the Rider/Yellow House across from the Riderwood Post Office. That's when RRLRAIA's executive director, Peggy Squitieri (blond, with a self-effacing smile and cornflower blue eyes) is inside.



Peggy Squitieri, executive director of RRLRAIA, hangs the flag on the front porch when she arrives. When you see the flag flying, please come in and say hello.

"I'm usually in the office by mid-day. I tend to do errands on the way in, such as look at a property or stop by the County office building to pick up plans. Often, I attend evening meetings for the Association. I am the staff person for the RRLRAIA board. Even though I am often the face and the name associated with the Association, I take my direction from the board and I speak with Biff Hearn (president) daily."

Peggy has mastered the interstices of zoning regulation. She learns of developers' plans while they are still in the concept stage, takes the time to know the players in Towson and burnishes the Association's quiet reputation for effectiveness. Other community groups might make the mistake of mobilizing too late, rushing hotly into hearings without knowing how to turn the tide, being naïve about what the regulations

continued on page 6, *A Day in the Life of...*

RRLRAIA ANNUAL MEETING — THURSDAY, MAY 22, 7 PM

Major developments are occurring in our neighborhoods and they are expected to accelerate. What is causing this pressure? What have we done? What do we intend to do? These will be topics for our **2003 Annual Membership Meeting**.

As you will read in this newsletter, several large parcels of land are being subdivided for development. One of the key mandates we received from surveying our residents for our Community Plan was *Maintain the rural character of our community*. To do this, we need your help as well as the help of our County officials. *This is so important, that it is the sole topic of our 2003 Annual Membership Meeting*. Keynote speakers:

STEVEN ALLEN—a resident of the Woodbrook Community (off Charles Street) which is facing the addition of several houses where there is currently one

ARNOLD F. (PAT) KELLER, III—Baltimore County Planning Director, will educate us on planning and zoning options

COUNTY COUNCILMAN KEVIN KAMENETZ—will address possible legislative remedies.

Your ideas and support are imperative. RSVP if possible, it would be helpful in planning the meeting. Call our office at 410-494-7757 or email us at office@rrlraia.org.

****See Major Developments.... page 7**

BOWEN HOUSE MAKES PRELIMINARY LANDMARKS LIST

by Joseph M. Coale

The circa 1740 farmhouse built by Samuel Bowen that stands on the bluff overlooking the intersection of Charles Street and Towson Boulevard was placed on the Baltimore County Preliminary Landmarks list on December 17, 2002. The vote was unanimous. The Baltimore County Council will vote on listing it permanently within the next couple of weeks.

GBMC would like to demolish the structure—it represents an inconvenience and potential cost to restore. The Bowen farmhouse has been largely ignored for the past 40 years that GBMC has owned the site. Used for the volunteer *Nearly New Sale* for years, the



The Bowen farmhouse, part of the 500-acre Samuel's Hope land grant, was built in 1740 and is on the GBMC campus. A true gem, this piece of history should not be destroyed or neglected by the hospital. Contact Councilman Vincent Gardina to voice your opinion to place it on the County's Permanent Landmarks List and insure its future.

of 1966 specifically denies this as a legitimate excuse for destruction of historic resources.

The Bowen farm house was built as a frontier, first settlement generation vernacular structure in the extreme northeast corner of a 500-acre land grant Samuel's Hope laid out in



Another 1700's home, built by Thomas Carr and later sold to Solomon Bowen in 1752, has enjoyed loving care and preservation by Leigh and Josh Hall. The property is on the County Landmarks List and in the Land Preservation Trust.

of its antiquity. Even in the Federal Assessment of 1798, the residence is already listed as an old frame dwelling house 20 by 34 feet and a log kitchen 18 by 24 feet. Other outbuildings noted included an old frame barn fit for fuel and a stone mill house, whose ruins remain to the west of Charles Street on the Towson Branch stream. Very few of these vernacular structures exist today because they have not had the sponsorship or grandeur of the great houses like Hampton, Evergreen or Homewood. Yet they are even more important to understanding

the structure is now attached to a maintenance shed and used for storage. It's a classic example of demolition by neglect. Let an old building go to seed and then use that as an excuse to demolish it.

The National Preservation Act

1694. It was a perfectly rectangular piece of land reaching south to what's now Bellona Avenue, west to the Jones Falls and north to the St. John's AME chapel at Dunlora Road and Bellona and returning to GBMC. A lot of local history happened here and we are fortunate to have this humble, innocent cottage, older than our Republic, survive.

The house is extremely early for Baltimore County in terms



our history and culture because most of us can trace some portion of our ancestry back to these basic but proud beginnings. One thing for sure, its pedigree is 100% Baltimore County.

According to the hospital, the house doesn't fit in with GBMC's plans for continued expansion. That's unfortunate because with a little imagination and money the structure could serve as an asset and play a role in the hospital's mission. A few suggestions have been offered such as a headquarters for the volunteer staff, a guest house for visiting consultants, doctors, etc., a BOQ for interns, development office and entertainment resource. The hospital should capitalize on this rare and unique resource looking for reasons to save the building, not to destroy it.

At the northwestern corner of Samuel's Hope another 1700s home built by Thomas Carr and later sold to Solomon Bowen in 1752 has enjoyed another more positive fate. It has been in private hands all these years and owned by a succession of owners who saw the value and richness in preservation. Now under the stewardship of Josh and Leigh Hall, it is in the Land Preservation Trust and listed on the County Landmarks List. It is truly one of the most remarkable properties in the county.

The current GBMC capital campaign that will raise \$30 million is underway. The hospital should provide the opportunity, through its many public and private benefactors, to contribute to the restoration of this site and return the Bowen farmhouse to productive use.

If you feel as though the Bowen farmhouse should be placed on the Permanent Landmarks List, write, phone, or fax

Councilman Vincent Gardina
Fifth District

Baltimore County Council
400 Washington Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

PHONE 410-887-3384

FAX 410-887-5791 ■

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Recently, we began our membership drive for 2003 by sending community residents a dues request envelope. If you were a member in 2002, your dues request envelope was mailed with your directory. *If there is an envelope in this newsletter, it means that as April 1 we have not received your dues.* If you have already mailed your check, thank you for your support. Directories will be mailed to new 2003 members while the supply lasts. Be sure to send in your dues payment of \$45 to ensure that you will be listed in the next directory. You can help RRLRAIA save time and money by paying your dues promptly; this eliminates the need for a follow-up solicitation.

OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION TO OUT-GOING BOARD MEMBERS

Due to term limitations—our bylaws allow board members to serve two consecutive three-year terms—we are losing four very effective board members. Along with more mundane community association business, these board members went well above and beyond the call of duty.

DAVID WHITMAN was instrumental in establishing our liaison with the Land Preservation Trust. He assisted in saving many acres of RRLRA land from development by helping residents place tax-deductible conservation easements on their property.

SOPHIE GERARD headed the RRLRAIA Community Plan Enhancements Committee. She was one of the driving forces behind acquiring the Rider/Yellow House for the Association office. Fortunately, Sophie will continue to be involved in the restoration of the Rider/Yellow House.

SKIP STEUART proved to be a wonderful chair for our Zoning Committee. His common-sense approach to zoning enabled us to effectively deal with the myriad of zoning issues we have confronted.

JOE COALE'S laser focus resulted in the forming the RRLR Foundation, obtaining several grants, procuring the Rider/Yellow House for the Association office, preserving Riderwood Station, saving the Ruxton Oak on Bellona (at Dunlora), and adopting the RRLRA Community Plan to name just a few of his contributions.

The good news is that these people are all involved with the newly-formed RRLR Foundation. Joe Coale serves as the Foundation's vice president, Skip and Sophie are members of its board, and we hope that David will soon join the board.

We look forward to many wonderful community enhancements stemming from the RRLR Foundation. We hope that you will support the Association with your dues and the Foundation with your *tax-deductible* contributions. ■

PROPOSED 2003/2004 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Jeffrey Budnitz ■ James Cahn ■ Michael Chasney ■ Sibley Classen ■ Taylor Cook ■
■ Thomas George ■ Joseph Gerlak ■ Leigh MacDonald Hall ■
Biff Hearn ■ Louise Hildreth ■ Mona Hoff ■ Christopher Kroft ■ Neil Meyerhoff ■
■ Michael Regan ■ Tate Showers ■ Michael Sicher ■ Kimberly Warren

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS SEEKING SECOND TERM

Aviva Hord ■ Janet Reynolds ■ Snowden Stanley

PROPOSED NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Christine Hanley ■ Eric Hanson ■ Nancy Horst ■ Andrew Murray ■ Judith Wright

BARE HILLS PILGRIMAGE TOUR, SUNDAY, MAY 18 TO BENEFIT SCOTT SETTLEMENT

by Sarah Fenno Lord

On Sunday May 18th the prestigious Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimages will conclude with a tour of nine residences in Bare Hills.

Through the persistence of Bare Hills resident Adelaide Rackemann and with guidance from Ruxton resident Margie Powell (MHGP's public-spirited executive director), this walking tour will take place.

The eclectic Bare Hills neighborhood is an unusual choice for this distinguished tour, now in its 66th year. Grand houses



Recently, a house in the historic Scott Settlement on Falls Road caught fire and crumbled. Dating from the 1800s, this settlement is a rare survivor of free black culture. We must not let a precious legacy become a tattered memory. All profits from the Bare Hills Pilgrimage will benefit the Scott Settlement.

and gardens all over the state are more typically the sites visited on the Pilgrimage, which raises money for charities. However, two years ago MHGP paid for the repainting of St. John's Chapel and parsonage, founded in 1837 by the Rev. Aquilla Scott. This spring's Bare Hills Tour includes a house built by one of Rev. Scott's granddaughters, who married businessman John Gardmon.

The tour will visit a house lived in by three generations of Tyson descendants. Isaac Tyson made his considerable fortune through the discovery of chromite in Bare Hills (the first place in America that it was found). Chromite, now the designated State of Maryland mineral, was noted in the serpentine "copper rock barrens" when the old Falls Road

continued on page 4 Bare Hills Pilgrimage...

Turnpike was being surveyed two centuries ago to enable horse-drawn commerce between bustling mills along the Jones Falls.

Other houses on tour include the Japanese-influenced house and garden design of Isao Oishi, recent residences by architects Edward Hord and Thomas Spies, and a celebrated international style house designed by Marcel Breuer to overlook Lake Roland.

Living in the embrace of Robert E. Lee Park's 500 acres, area homeowners value the rural quality of their urban lives, enjoying sylvan views, wooded trails to Lake Roland, the calls of geese, owls and orioles, the sighting of fox and deer. (The only downside is sharing flower and vegetable gardens with those same deer.)

Pilgrimage patrons will be encouraged to experience this sense-of-country, by walking between houses on one of the Park's trails. Vans will whisk MHGP tourists from the parking lots (at the Bare Hills School and the Lake Falls Professional Building) to and from the residences on the tour.

Bare Hills houses will be open from 10 AM to 5 PM. Funds raised will be donated to Scott Settlement restoration.

Please call 410-821-6933 for information. We welcome your participation! ■

\$1000 REWARD OFFERED FOR INFORMATION ON VANDALISM IN RUXTON NEIGHBORHOOD

A house being renovated on Walnut Hill Lane was vandalized Saturday night, March 29. Gallons of white paint were spread throughout the interior of the house and dumped into the HVAC ducts and on the construction equipment. Bricks were used to shatter windows and doors.

The Baltimore County police believe this might have been the work of kids. If you have any information, please call the Association office at 410 494-7757 or Detective Jedlowski at 410 887-5508. ■

NEIGHBORHOOD WINS COVENANT CASE AGAINST BLAKEHURST

by Kimberly Warren and Betsy Sexton

The Neighborhood Advisory Board to Blakehurst recently won an important victory for neighborhood organizations in their case to enforce their Restrictive Covenant Agreement with Blakehurst Retirement Community. In November 2002, the Maryland Court of Special Appeals affirmed the terms of the 1988 Restrictive Covenant Agreement entered into by the 8-member Advisory Board, the RRLRAIA and the Blakehurst owners.

BLAKEHURST HISTORY

The developers of Blakehurst sought a special exception from the Baltimore County zoning commissioner to build Blakehurst, a high-density life care community, in a residential neighborhood of Towson. The neighborhood dropped its opposition to the development once Blakehurst agreed to the Restrictive Covenant Agreement and the accompanying plats that govern the size and scope of the development. On October 25, 1988, the Board of Special Appeals entered a consent order incorporating the Restrictive Covenant Agreement and the plats. The covenants require that any amendments to the agreement must be written and approved by the owners of Blakehurst and of the Advisory Board. Five times in the last decade the Advisory Board approved and signed addenda to the covenants. The changes included the addition of an informal dining room and extension of the Health Center wing, and additional underground parking at two residential wings.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

In November 1999, the Advisory Board initiated two types of legal proceedings. The first case began when Blakehurst circumvented the addendum process and sought the County's permission to build additional parking lots. The County Review Group (CRG) granted Blakehurst's request for 63 more parking places and the Advisory Board appealed. The Board of Appeals ruled against Blakehurst, finding that County zoning officials erred in approving parking lot expansions without a written addendum to the covenants. The owners of Blakehurst appealed the case to the Circuit Court and finally to the Court of Special Appeals. Each time the court ruled in favor of the Advisory Board and supported the addendum process to the covenants.

Shortly after the Advisory Board filed the first appeal, Blakehurst violated the covenants again by erecting a large garden shed in designated open space and bypassing the addendum process. The Restrictive Covenants stipulate "there will be no parking permitted, no buildings nor structures nor paving of any sort constructed..." in the open space south of Cemetery Road, for 50 years. In the second case the Advisory Board filed suit in Circuit Court seeking to enforce the covenant agreement. They asked for injunctive relief to dismantle the shed and enjoin the use of parking spaces built during the litigation process, attorney's fees for both legal proceedings and a declaration on the enforceability of the agreement. The Circuit Court ruled for the Advisory Board, ordering Blakehurst to remove the shed and discontinue use of the parking spaces. According to the ruling additional parking cannot be built and all legal fees are to be reimbursed as per the Restrictive Covenant Agreement. Blakehurst appealed this decision. In December 2002 the Court of Special Appeals affirmed the Circuit Court's ruling, finding that the Covenants clearly stated that structures were forbidden and the overriding concern in creating that part of the covenant was to protect open space. The Court ordered Blakehurst to reimburse the Advisory Board for all the accumulated legal fees, to remove the garden shed, and it prohibited the construction of the proposed extension of the health care parking lot. Most importantly, the Court acknowledged the enforceability of the Restrictive Covenant Agreement. The Advisory Board to Blakehurst would like to thank all the neighbors, RRLRAIA and our attorneys, Glenn Bushel and Carroll Holzer, for their support during this lengthy legal battle. ■

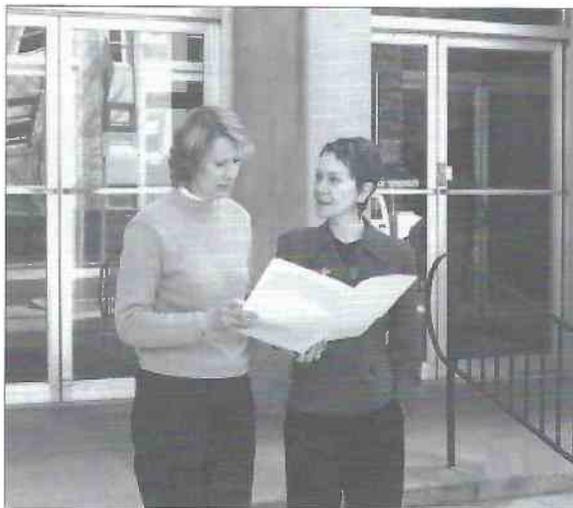
The board meets monthly and its directors have, of course, joined committees in order to be helpful. "People call me with their traffic woes and I pass them on to Mike Sicher," Peggy says, grateful that a RRLRAIA past president missed the action enough to come back on board, now chairing the traffic committee with heartening efficiency.

Other past presidents who have re-upped are Louise Hildreth, co-founder of the Robert E. Lee Park Conservancy, and Nancy Horst, recently executive director of The Towson Partnership (slated to rejoin the board this year). Advertising exec Barry Truax moved laterally; he's now head of the Ruxton, Riderwood, Lake Roland Area Foundation.

Cecily Matthai is in charge of nominating. "It's her task to find people who make good board members—problem solvers with community spirit." Architect Janet Reynolds chairs the membership committee and thinks up various ways to increase membership. We have 3200 names in our database; but only 1200 are dues-paying members. When members have an issue in their neighborhood, they suddenly understand how much they get for their membership dues. One of the benefits of membership is being included in RRLRAIA's e-mail database. "We are able to quickly advise

members of issues of interest—upcoming meetings, crime concerns, zoning hearings, community events, etc. I try not to send out too many Association emails, but it is the most efficient way to communicate with our members."

Peggy is grateful when community members volunteer to help. "When we had to get the December newsletter out ASAP, I



Peggy Squitieri meets with County planner, Karin Brown, in front of the County Office Building.

called several people who had indicated that they would help with mailings. We enjoyed Christmas carols and a sense of camaraderie and got the newsletter out in record time. There is so much miscellaneous stuff to do and there are many volunteer opportunities at the Rider/Yellow House. Gardening, for instance."

When computer graphics designer Aviva Hord joined the board, the newsletter, directory, and membership mailings suddenly got a stylish look and took on a vibrant sense of purpose.

Mike Chasney is the events chairman. He coordinates RRLRAIA-sponsored Dumpster Day when the Association arranges for dumpsters to be placed at Riderwood School so residents can empty out the junk. "Mike will schedule the yuletide bonfire again someday, if the weather ever cooperates," Peggy smiles. It has been cancelled in the past few years

because of wind, mud, and drought. "Biff jokes that he is going to replace Mike with someone who has more control over the weather."

Jeff Budnitz and Joe Gerlak seek solutions to Robert E. Lee Park's complex and pressing environmental problems. "There is so much to do, but we have very competent people addressing these issues."

The Association is very fortunate to have Joe Coale as a board member. His accomplishments have included procuring the Rider/Yellow House for the Association office, setting up the Ruxton, Riderwood, Lake Roland Area Foundation and ushering our RRLRAIA Community Plan through to adoption in the Baltimore County Master Plan 2010.

Peggy Squitieri is RRLRA's fourth and ever more busy, part time, paid executive director. Well-informed and reliable, she builds on the legacy of those who came before. This became evident when Councilman Wayne Skinner stepped down last year. He was principled, dedicated, and unusually conscientious about bringing developers and community people into the same room to come up with creative solutions to difficult problems.

"He was also quite thoughtful," Peggy says. "When he took his staff out for a farewell dinner, he invited me to join them. I looked around and asked him why I was included, since obviously I was not a staff person or from his home neighborhood of Loch Raven. I always teased Wayne about RRLRAIA being his satellite office. I guess he agreed since he answered that I was invited because Ruxton-Riderwood had helped him do his job well. I found that very flattering."

Peggy adds, "It really is true—my association with RRLRAIA has proved this—that when the government, the community and the business groups work together, the result is an improvement for everybody." ■



Peggy Squitieri meets with engineer Rick Chadsey and attorney Rob Hoffman in the Baltimore County zoning office.

FALLS ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

by Bruce Boswell

We have received a firm commitment from the State Highway Administration that there will be a full three-foot shoulder on both sides of Falls Road for the entire distance from the bridge over the light rail tracks/Jones Falls all the way to the new park at the north end of the project.

Three *pinch points* — north of Hollins, south of Copper Hill Road, the exposed rock face next to the old Home School have all been addressed so that the three-



These signs on Falls Road mean progress.

foot shoulders on both sides of the street are consistent. Traffic lanes will be reduced to 10 and one-half feet.

In areas where there is erosion and uncontrolled

water movement, an additional two-foot width of concrete with a slight bevel to catch and direct water to existing drainage catchments will be built. Weather permitting, the project should be completed in four months and should begin mid-August.

This is a major victory for our community and will improve safety for our residents, visitors and those who are passing through—especially those on foot or bike. Thanks to everyone who has been a supporter of this effort. Call Bruce Boswell at 410-823-4829 if you have any questions.



Driving north on Falls Road near Gerstung, the street improvements have begun.

actually regulate. Not so RRLRAIA, which long ago learned that comprehending planning and zoning in Towson is essential to protecting neighborhoods. “Zoning and development issues are very time consuming,” Peggy nods, looking up from her computer in her second story office, “even in an off year.” Some of the board members who meet monthly in the Yellow House might not know what an “off year” signifies in the feast or famine battleground which is Baltimore County’s tiered system of zoning regulation. But, luckily for all our neighborhoods, Peggy knows.

It used to be that all she knew was stacked up on her dining room table at home, rendering the table useless at family mealtimes. “The Yellow House is a much better arrangement, for me, and for anyone who wants to stop by with a question or help us with a mailing,” she reports.

“I love rumors,” Peggy says. Her eyes are twinkling, and her visitor laughs, aware that Peggy Squitieri is by nature a conservative person, as discreet as she is efficient, not eager for the limelight, someone who keeps the lid on a lovely sense of humor. “I am always glad when a resident asks me about a rumor. Either we know about it and we have taken a position on it, or it tips us off to something we are going to need to know. Even a little lot line adjustment means something is happening.”

Peggy’s job is to keep the Association in the loop and out in front. “I call the County. I call the neighbors. I call the property owners. I try to bring everybody together. We set up meetings. I tell people about the hearings and explain the process.” Ultimately, the individual neighborhood must carry the ball—show up for the hearings, speak up about the issues and/or sometimes hire a lawyer. First, neighbors need to understand the process, and Peggy proves invaluable. “It is better when people can work together. Most situations do not have to be adversarial.”

The executive director’s job requires persistence, patience and a nose for ferreting out information. A good portion of this can now be gleaned on-line, and Peggy is an admirably capable software wizard. But she still makes the rounds in person in Towson. On any given day, she might need to see three different people in the Planning Office, consult with a couple of people in Permits, talk to an inspector, call the traffic engineer. She often needs the

advice of Councilman Kevin Kamenetz or his able administrators, Debbie Files and Adele Kass. She might need to check with the Zoning Commissioner’s office, ask the People’s Council a legal question, offer a suggestion to the County Executive’s administrative assistant, brainstorm with Mary Harvey at the Office of Community Conservation, or testify at a hearing. Even though most of our issues are County-related, Peggy also knows our State senator and delegates.

Telephone the Association office with a question and you’ll find Peggy has the answers, or will get back to you. “An air traffic controller is what I feel like. Information pours in and I try to get it out to the appropriate people.”

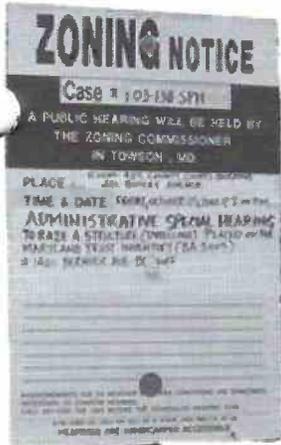


Baltimore County Councilman Kevin Kamenetz routinely meets with Peggy Squitieri and RRLRAIA board members about neighborhood issues.

continued on page 5 A Day in the Life of...

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PLANNED FOR RRLRAIA NEIGHBORHOODS

by Peggy Squitieri



Infill development pressures are being felt by many RRLRAIA neighborhoods. The scarcity of building lots, convenient location, large lots and desirable neighborhoods are the primary reasons we are certain this trend will continue. RRLRAIA is currently involved with several properties in various stages of the development process.

ABELL MANSION AND RIDGE SCHOOL—As reported in our last newsletter, the Abell Mansion in the 1300 block of W. Joppa Road is being renovated as a private residence. Plans are to demolish the Ridge School building and develop a 14-home gated community on this 16-acre site. A hearing will be scheduled before the Baltimore County Zoning Commissioner who has final approval authority on development plans.

BERWICK ROAD—A developer purchased the property at 1401 Berwick Road. In September it was discovered that a four-house development is planned for this 1.1 acre property at the corners of Labelle, Locust, and Berwick. The plan includes the demolition of a 90-year-old American Bungalow—one of the earliest houses in the Ruxton Heights development and a key neighborhood landmark. Since a Maryland Historical Trust inventory number is assigned to this house, demolition has been delayed pending a decision by the Baltimore County Zoning Commissioner. At the urging of the neighborhood, RRLRAIA nominated this house and a sister house on Labelle Avenue for consideration as Baltimore County Landmarks. In February, the Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to place these structures on the Preliminary Landmarks List. This recommendation now goes to the County Executive for comment and then will be forwarded to the County Council for a vote to be placed on the Final Landmarks List. Please contact County Executive Jim Smith and Councilman Kevin Kamenetz if you would like to express your support for having these houses placed on the Final Landmarks List.

WOODBROOK LANE—The single-family house on 5.5 acres at 104 Woodbrook Lane (off Charles Street) was purchased by a developer who intends to construct an additional seven homes. The existing house has a Maryland Historical Trust inventory number. The community is opposed to the density and scale of this proposed development—a threat to the character of this neighborhood. There are also concerns about the impact on storm water drainage and sewer capacity. RRLRAIA joined in filing for a Special Hearing before the Zoning Commissioner to address issues such as under-sized lots, appropriate process (major vs. minor subdivision), vested lots, and compatibility.

THORNTON ROAD—The 6-acre property located at 8028 Thornton Road (at the corner of Thornton Ridge Road) was recently purchased by a developer. After working closely with RRLRAIA and the surrounding neighborhoods, the developer has submitted plans to construct an additional four houses. The County requirements for the addition of curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and streetlights would result in a significant loss of trees and alter the character of the neighborhood. We are negotiating with the developer and the County to waive these requirements in exchange for improvements of the existing sidewalks on the east side of Thornton Road. Other items of importance to the community are buffers between the proposed houses and the existing homes on Thornton Ridge Road and Thornton Woods, maintaining the existing trees and bushes, and limited access points.

W. JOPPA ROAD—The Full Gospel Baltimore Church located at 2133 W. Joppa Road (immediately west of Sunset Knoll) has submitted a plan to Baltimore County for a one-story block and brick multi-purpose building. The proposed building is planned for the northwest corner of the previous addition. Additional parking is also proposed.

PRESERVING THE FABRIC OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS
Please contact our office if you would like to be notified of the dates of public hearings or meetings pertaining to any of these development issues. ■



The community is trying to save 1401 Berwick Road, a 90-year old American bungalow, from demolition.



New construction on LaBelle Avenue at corner of Locust Avenue in Ruxton Heights.



Property slated for development of four additional houses at the corner of Thornton Road and Thornton Ridge Road.

RESTORATION OF RIDER HOUSE PLANNED FOR SPRING

by Joseph M. Coale

The RRLR Foundation was formed last year as a 501-c-3 organization in order to accept the "Yellow House" across from the Riderwood post office from Manor Care. Originally scheduled for demolition, after the construction phase of Arden Courts, Manor Care was asked to donate it to the community. The Rider/Yellow House now serves as the Association office, community-meeting site and historical and record archives. In order to help restore the building, originally built in 1880 by Edward Rider in the Victorian style, the Foundation applied for and has received from the Baltimore County Office of Community Conservation a grant of \$17,500. A community match of one to four is required so it is highly leveraged in our favor. As part of the house exterior work, we plan to remove the 1930s asbestos shingles which cover the unique Victorian and decorative wood siding. A landscaping plan has been provided to the Foundation, which will enhance even further the contribution of this unique and historic site to our community. In the next several months, the Foundation will be reaching out to the community to help with the match for this restoration work and other capital community projects for which the Foundation is especially suited. We urge each resident as a first step to join the Association and then later this spring to consider a tax deductible donation to the Foundation to help with the matching grant. Greater explanation of the Foundation's role will be presented at that time. ■



If the flag is out drop by the Association office for a tour.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Please show respect to neighbors by not leaving trash cans on the street
- Now that Spring is here and windows are open, please make sure barking dogs do not disturb neighbors.
- **WARNING** from Baltimore County Police Department—lock your sheds, lock your sheds, lock your sheds.
- Obey the posted speed limits

EXTRA TICKETS = TAX DEDUCTION

Donate tickets for performances—a play, concert, sports event, ballet, lecture—to RRLR Foundation and receive a tax deduction. We will send e-mails offering these tickets to Association members. Don't let your tickets go to waste!

NOTARY SERVICE AVAILABLE

Complimentary notary service is available to RRLRAIA members at the association office. If possible, please call 410-494-7757 before stopping by.

**RUXTON-RIDERWOOD
LAKE ROLAND AREA
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.**

P.O. Box 204 ■ Riderwood, MD 21139
PHONE 410-494-7757

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