

BANNOCKBURN CITIZENS ASSOCIATION



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Letter from the President

Ted Garrett

December marked the end of my first (half) year as BCA President, and I look forward to 2008 with optimism. Your BCA Board is committed to addressing matters of interest and fostering a sense of community. We welcome your thoughts about issues of concern to the community.

Family Festival. On September 30 BCA hosted a fall Family Festival, a terrific event with a great turnout. Many thanks to Rene West, Karen Lesser, Janice Dreier and others who helped put that event together. We are now thinking of holding a similar event in the Spring. Stay tuned. If you have ideas for events (a fun run? dog show?) or wish to volunteer, please contact us.

December Meeting. The General Meeting on December 6 at St. Mark Orthodox Church began with a festive holiday social hour followed by a substantive presentation. We thank Movita Hercules and others for their efforts in providing and setting out delicious refreshments for the meeting, and Father Gregory and his wife Alexandra who been most generous and welcoming to us.

Our guest Speaker at the meeting was Susan Kirby, from the County's Dept of Env'tl Protection, who provided clear and sparkling comments and timely information about the County's energy efficiency and clean energy programs, as separately described below. Ms. Kirby also provided a number of handouts and free samples, including pamphlets, calculators and energy efficient light bulbs.

At the December 6 meeting, Doug Bonner reported on developments with the County's Infill Development Task Force. Because our BCA covenants are limited in scope, these Task Force efforts led by Council Member Roger Berliner are important. Doug has represented us

tirelessly on the Task Force, which has made much progress, including an agreement on lowering the height limits on R-200 lots and neighborhood notification of a building permit. These efforts should pave the way for County Council action early in 2008. An update from Doug Bonner is included below.

BCA website. Please register on the website and provide your e-mail address so that I may contact you concerning emergencies and important BCA news.

<http://www.bannockburnweb.com/association/cahome.cfm>

Your e-mail address will not be distributed. Chris Hull has been updating the website, which contains useful documents including the BCA covenants and past issues of the Newsletter, which we invite you to peruse.

Best wishes for the New Year!

Ted Garrett, President



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SWITCH TO CLEAN ENERGY

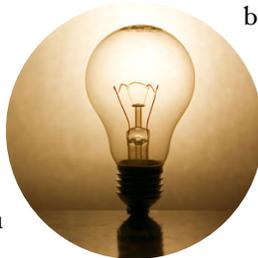


Almost everyone now appreciates that Global Warming is with us for sure and that individuals, along with governments and industries, have roles to play in reducing the baleful effects on the planet of our increasing demands for energy. Here are some suggestions from Montgomery County:

What if you could do one thing to reduce pollution, help protect the health of humans and animals, and increase the nation's energy independence? You can. The Montgomery County Clean Energy Rewards program is helping you make the switch from electricity generated using fossil fuels to clean energy!

Over 60% of our electricity is generated by burning fossil fuels. This fuel mix contributes a lot of pollution and greenhouse gases into our air. However, you have a choice! You can make the switch to clean electricity generated from wind, solar, or sustainable biomass and reduce your families' fossil fuel consumption. It's easy! Learn more and make the switch on-line through the Clean Energy Rewards web site in a matter of minutes. Just log-on to: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cleanenergyrewards>

It gets better! You will automatically receive a reward when you choose clean electricity or RECs through the Clean Energy Rewards program. Residents will get 1¢, and small businesses and other organizations will get 1.5¢ for each kilowatt-hour (kWh) of clean energy used. The reward will either be credited to your electricity account, or will be visible as a discount on the price of the renewable energy certificates (RECs) you choose. Clean energy does cost a little more than brown-power, but after rewards the average added cost of clean energy is just \$10-20 a month. For the cost of a pizza you can breathe easier knowing you've done away with electricity generated from fossil fuels! Doesn't it make you feel better knowing you can make a difference?



Be Rewarded for Making the Switch to Clean Energy

Please remember, **BCA Dues** for 2008 are due January 1. Send your check to our Treasurer, Wendy Landres. Also please pay your 2007 dues if you have not yet done so. You may find it easier to pay both at once. You can do so using the mailer in the newsletter.

Next Meeting. The next BCA meeting is scheduled for Thursday **March 6, 2008** at St. Mark. We will try our best to make it convivial and edifying. As always, the meeting will be an opportunity to visit with your neighbors and pass along news and comments. Please try to hold the date.

You can also receive rewards for generating your own clean electricity on-site. Visit the Clean Energy Rewards web site to download an application for your home's or business' solar photovoltaic system. Montgomery County will also provide rewards for the electricity you generate each year.

Please visit the Montgomery County Clean Energy Rewards web site <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cleanenergyrewards>, or contact Susan Kirby (240-777-7753, or susan.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov).

MAKE YOUR NEWSLETTER BETTER!

WE CONTINUE TO CONSIDER WAYS TO MAKE THE NEWSLETTER MORE USEFUL AND INTERESTING. LET US KNOW WHAT TOPICS ARE OF INTEREST TO YOU. NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS? REAL ESTATE MARKET CHANGES? PLEASE SEND ANY SUGGESTIONS TO EDITOR, CHARLESASCHMITZ@COMCAST.NET.



OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS



Because elementary and secondary school quality profoundly affects real estate values in a neighborhood, we plan to include in each quarterly edition of the BCA Newsletter a bit of pertinent information on one or more of our local schools. For starters, here is a thumbnail

sketch of Walt Whitman High School:

Six elementary schools feed Thomas W. Pyle Middle School, which in turn feeds to Walt Whitman. The elementary schools are Wood Acres, Bannockburn, Burning Tree, Carderock Springs, Bradley Hills, and Bethesda.

In 2005, in wake of Hurricane Katrina, a Whitman student and her two younger sisters started Project Backpack, an organization which donated backpacks filled with toys to displaced children. The project exceeded all expectations and got thousands of backpacks. To honor their deed, President Bush invited them to light the national Christmas tree.

The Black & White is a national, regional and state award-winning newspaper that is student-financed and student-run.

WWHS is known for its successes in the performing arts. Several music groups are among the top rated student groups in the country.

Walt Whitman High School was the subject of the 2006 book, The Overachievers. The non-fiction book concerns itself with several students who were members of Whitman's class of 2004 and 2005.

(source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walt_Whitman_High_School)

Walt Whitman Statistics:

88% of the Seniors attend 4-year colleges.

6% attend 2-year colleges.

More than 75% attend college out-of-state.

Some foreign students return to college in their own country.

Students come from more than 40 countries. 77% of students are white, 3% are African-American or Black, 7% are Hispanic, 13% are Asian-American.

(source: Whitman web site: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/whitmanhs/general/profile2006.shtml>)

Seniors	456
Juniors	491
Sophomores	444
Freshmen	501



National Merit	
Class of 2007	
Semi-Finalists	24
Commended	65

Maryland Distinguished
Scholar Program

Class of 2007	
Finalists	21
Semi-Finalists	24
Honorable Mention	43

National Merit	
Class of 2006	
Semi-Finalists	17
Commended	69

SCHOOL REPORTERS

If any readers of this Newsletter (or their children) would like to gain valuable experience and contribute to the community as Newsletter stringers to report news about of our neighborhood schools, please contact the Editor, charlesaschmitz@comcast.net

INFILL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE



On behalf of the greater Bannockburn community, Doug Bonner, BCA Vice President, has been one of a handful of Montgomery County community associations participating in the Montgomery County Infill Development Task Force since May, 2007, at the invitation of our Councilman, Roger Berliner.

Summary: There was agreement that lot coverage should be based on lot size and that the regulations should be broken down by 1,000 SF increments.

The mandate of the task force (including representatives of Mo. Co. community associations as well as the development community) has been to review problems associated with Infill Development under existing Montgomery County, MD zoning laws -- principally oversized homes that are incompatible with existing adjacent homes -- and to recommend to the Montgomery County Council a framework for new legislation to try to minimize the impact on immediate neighbors from infill development in existing neighborhoods. This applies to teardowns and rebuilds, but also additions to existing homes. The Task Force has completed its review of these issues and issued its recommendations, some of which reflect a consensus, while other, more controversial issues such as lot coverage percentages, divergent recommendations were made by community representatives and the building community.

On December 10, 2007, the Task Force held its final meeting. Councilman Roger Berliner attended and was an active participant. I attended, as did Bannockburn resident, Ben Schlesinger, along with a large number of representatives of the building community.

Here are the results of the Task Force's work this year:

1. Height of homes in R-200

The Task Force finally reached agreement to lower the 50' height building standard in the R-200 zone for the following lot sizes:

15K sq. ft and less -	30 ft to mean roof/35 ft. to peak (current law for R60/R90)
15K sq. ft. -25K sq. ft. -	35 ft./40 ft. (5 ft. higher than the R60/R90 standard)
25K sq. ft. - 40K sq. ft. -	40 ft./45 ft.
Over 40K sq. ft. -	50 ft.

I tried my best to hold out for the R60/R90 standard for all "nonconforming" R200 lots less than 20K sq. ft., but there was resistance to that, and there was pressure to win agreement on this issue. I do feel that this was a huge win for the R-200 community by extending the height restrictions of the Howard Denis legislation 2 years ago to R-200 zoned lots for the first time.

2. Lot Coverage Limits

In a preordained result, no agreement was reached on actual %s for lots, because of widely divergent positions between community representatives and the development community. Lot coverage is generally recognized as the single most important factor determining the scale and mass of infill development. Here is a summary of the retrospective positions. Please note that agreement was reached that lot coverage regulations should be uniformly based on lot size, not as they have historically been determined by zoning classification (R60, R90 or R200), and that the regulation should be broken down by 100 SF increments.

Lot Coverage Recommendations

Lot size	Builders	Community	Midpoint
< 6000	35%	25%	30%
6000 -- <7000	34%	24%	29%
7000 -- <8000	33%	23%	28%
8000 -- <9000	32%	22%	27%
9000 -- <10,000	31%	21%	26%
10,000 -- <11,0000	30%	20%	25%
11,000 -- <12,000	29%	19%	24%
12,000 -- <13,000	28%	18%	23%
13,000 -- <14,000	27%	17%	22%
14,000 -- <15,000	26%	16%	21%
>15,000	25%	15%	20%

The Midpoint numbers were those developed by Roger Berliner's Staff, and provide for 20% lot coverage for lots over 15K sq. ft. The current R200 Development Standard is for

25% lot coverage. At no point either in our Saturday, Dec. 8 negotiation meeting or in our Dec 10 final Task Force meeting was the development community willing to reduce the 25% development standard for lots greater than 15K sq. ft. This signaled to me that no agreement could be reached by the Task Force on this most important issue. Councilman Berliner indicated he



will have to recommend %s of his own "in the public interest" based on his own conscience, which will form the basis of legislation likely to be introduced by mid to late January, with hearings and a vote

to follow in March, 2008. There is also the possibility that the development community may want to resume negotiations with community representatives to try to hammer out a consensus as the legislative process advances.

3. Neighborhood Notification

Agreement was reached that, prior to a building demolition permit being issued or a permit being granted for renovation when 200 sq. ft. or more of enclosed space is being added to a home, that the permit applicant be required to notify adjoining and confronting homeowners (and any homeowners association on file with Park & Planning). The permit applicant will be required to provide the Department of Permitting Services with a signed statement attesting to such notice having been provided as a condition for the permit being granted.

4. Massing Guidelines/Neighborhood Guidelines

There was agreement that neighborhood guidelines be voluntary, and that neighborhoods receive assistance in developing design guidelines from Mo. Co. Park & Planning. As for Massing Guidelines, it was suggested that it would be good to encourage porches and indentation breaks in side walls.



5. Establishing Building Line (EBL) or Setbacks

- a detailed proposal for altering the current EBL regulations was circulated among task Force members. The proposal would allow the setback of new construction to meet the setback of the existing house and for an optional method of determining the setback by averaging the two adjoining lots. This method (along with further lot coverage and height restrictions) may mitigate to some extent the problem with certain row homes which have been built in Bannockburn, which were set back so deeply into the lot that they impose dramatically on their neighbors to the rear and on either side.



- Douglas Bonner

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ACTIVE AGING IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

George Burns said, “You can't help getting older, but you don't have to get old.” While we don't have complete control over our health or genetic background, most experts agree that staying physically active is the key to successful aging.

Even as bodies and abilities change, there are plenty of ways to keep moving in Montgomery County. From “Heart Smart Trails” in our County parks to dance and chair exercise classes, we can stay fit in ways familiar and new, with others or alone.

For many people, the surest way to stay physically active is to find something fun to do. While some people love the challenge of charting progress on an exercise bike or treadmill, others do best by focusing on a game or a companion. The health benefits of these activities may be more of a “bonus.”

Older adults in Montgomery County play golf, tennis, basketball and volleyball; they swim or exercise in water. (Water exercise is especially helpful for people with balance problems and joint pain). Some folks join friends to walk their neighborhoods and play yard games. Still others stay on the cutting edge of fitness by taking classes in Pilates, weight training or even belly-dancing. Many of these activities can be adapted to changing physical abilities.

Starting January 1, 2008, Ride On and certain routes on Metro Bus are FREE for seniors and people with disabilities. Seniors must be 65 years or older and have a valid Metro Senior ID card or Medicare card and photo ID and persons with disabilities must have a Metro Disabled ID card. Therefore, lack of private transportation should not prevent people from being physically active. (Call 240-777-7433 for route information.)

In addition, many physical activity providers offer discounts or scholarships for people with limited income.



Here are some helpful resources:

1. To search online for programs near your home, go to www.ActiveOptions.org. Simply enter your zip code and see what pops up.
2. To learn about “Heart Smart” trails in Montgomery County parks, call 301-495-2595 or go to www.montgomeryparks.org.
3. For fitness classes (land and water), dance classes and sports offered throughout the County, pick up a Guide to Recreation at your local library or go to: <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/>, click on Departments and then Recreation.
4. The Active for Life(r) Center of the National Capital Region, (301) 255-4205, offers the following programs: Active Living Every Day; Living Well With Chronic Disease; Active Now! Maryland! (in Spanish, Mandarin, Korean, and Russian); and Healthy Eating Every Day. Go to <http://www.activeforlifecenter.org>.
5. Holy Cross Hospital offers Senior Fit classes at various locations and Suburban offers Senior Shape and mall walking programs.
6. OASIS, an educational non-profit, offers health education and exercise classes, among others. Call 301-469-6800.
7. Holy Cross Hospital Senior Source in Silver Spring provides an array of health and wellness classes. Call 301-754-3404.
8. Five senior centers offer a wide variety of fitness activities five days a week. In addition, 14 neighborhood senior programs housed in community centers and senior apartment buildings provide weekly exercise and guest lectures, among other activities. Call 240-777-4925.

So if you're not already physically active, choose something now and go for it!

Contributed by Montgomery County

**FROM BANNOCKBURN'S RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS -- (OCCASIONAL NOTES
FROM BCA'S GOVERNING DOCUMENTS, OF RECENT INTEREST TO OUR COMMUNITY):**

"Fourth. All commercial autos or trailers owned or being used by the owners or occupants of said property shall be housed, and not allowed to be parked on or in front of said property, unless they are entirely hidden from view from the front street and the adjoining neighbors.

Fifth. That no sign, billboard or similar device shall be erected, placed or maintained upon said property; nor shall said property or the building or structure erected thereon, be used in any manner so as to endanger the health and comfort of or unreasonably disturb the peace and quiet of any owner of the adjoining property or of the neighborhood. This covenant shall not apply to signs erected by the selling agents of this property."

Full text of the covenants can be found on the BCA website at:

<http://www.bannockburnweb.com/association/cahome.cfm>

Citizens: Nota Bene -- **January 22, 2008** is the **Voter Registration** Deadline to Vote in the Primary

Note especially: The right of 17 year-olds to vote in the February 12, 2008 primary has been restored as long as they will be 18 years of age by the November 4, 2008 General Election.

Register to Vote:

http://www.elections.state.md.us/vote_registrationindex.html

Bannockburn Citizens Association Dues Payment Coupon

Please complete and send to BCA Treasurer
Wendy Landres, 7009 Loch Lomond Dr.

Annual dues are \$30 per household within Bannockburn. Voluntary contributions for more than the dues amount are welcome and are used for miscellaneous BCA expenditures, such as refreshments for General Meetings and the Summer Festival.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Enclosed is my check for \$_____, which includes \$30 for 2008 BCA Dues and my voluntary contribution of \$_____.

Many thanks for your support of your community.

