

Hudson's Corner: Roland Park's future taking shape as master plan process continues

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Area residents will have their first opportunity to look at eight designs from the proposed Greater Roland Park Master Plan, on Thursday, April 8, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Roland Park Elementary/Middle School.

The area covered by the master plan extends with ever-expanding boundaries as more communities are involved. Current jagged boundaries are 39th Street on the south, Northern Parkway on the north, Falls Road on the west, and Charles Street, Stony Run and Linkwood Road on the east.

Three different designs will be shown for possible plans for the Baltimore Country Club property, if the community could buy that land. That's a big if, but why not dream? Other designs will be shown for areas around Stony Run, the Roland Water Tower, connecting green spaces, the Eddie's block, Cold Spring Lane and Wyndhurst Station. Other areas covered in the master plan reports on April 8 will be streetscape, infrastructure, transportation and traffic.

While no details were revealed at the April 1 meeting, a few hints about reconfiguration of traffic patterns were enough to make me want to attend Thursday's meeting.

Normally, master plans are not undertaken by community organizations. With the expert and volunteer help of many professionals living in the area and the involvement of residents, institutions and businesses, the Roland Park Civic League is on target to have a master plan finished by late May.

After this week's meeting, the proposed designs, along with committee reports, will be posted on the league's Web site, www.rolandpark.org, so that the league can get feedback. While spring is a busy time, hopefully most households will be able to send a family member to the April 8 design charette.

Between 500 and 600 stakeholders have already participated in developing the plan, including schools and churches, commercial property owners, and community leaders and residents of Roland Park and surrounding communities. Dozens of professional architects, landscape architects, urban planners, real estate developers, engineers, preservationists, conservationists and others have donated thousands of hours since the first charette in January to creating the eight designs.

Other news at the April 1 Civic League meeting was that after a year of bureaucratic delays, work on the kitchen at the Roland Park fire station will begin April 12. The city has not yet told the league the exact locations of the FOG (fat/oil/grease) clogged sewer hot-spots mentioned at a previous meeting, but the owners of the Cold Spring Lane eateries all complained of problems over the years, even with grease traps.

Hoped-for funding from the city will not be available this year for another, expanded event like the one that closed Roland Avenue to motorists on a Sunday last October to promote sustainability.

Many communities are still anxious to organize another such event, known as a *ciclovía*, particularly when budget cuts are hitting hard city recreation programs for children.

Hopefully, with the help of volunteers, communities will organize their own *ciclovías*.

Finally, the annual Roland Park Community Foundation Spring Celebration is Friday, April 23 at the Roland Park Woman's Club.

What a great way to celebrate a beautiful, livable city neighborhood and the involvement of so many..

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