

Coming Together

By Kathy Hudson

Posted: November 23, 2009

Saturday's first charette about the Roland Park area master plan was a great way to go into Thanksgiving week. It was a peaceful coming together of about 140 people from Roland Park, and beyond, at Roland Park Elementary/Middle School. The atmosphere was welcoming, constructive and optimistic.

Organized by the Roland Park Civic League, Roland Park Roads & Maintenance Corporation and the Roland Park Community Foundation, the meeting included Roland Parkers and representatives of many other north Baltimore neighborhoods, including Tuscany-Canterbury, Evergreen, Hoes Heights, Keswick, Cross Keys, Bellona-Gittings, Roland Springs, North Roland Park, Tuxedo Park, Wyndhurst, Chatham, Cold Spring-New Town and Homeland. Calvert School, Gilman School, Roland Park Elementary/Middle School and Roland Park Country School were also represented.

Two City Council members, Sharon Green Middleton and Mary Pat Clarke, participated, as well as several area businesses, zoning, planning and architecture professionals.

Previous planning efforts were reviewed, and the timeline for the 2009-2010 initiative was laid out. As the facilitator, architect and planner Michael Medick, of Guilford, said, many ask why the community is considering a master plan for an area nationally known for its outstanding original design and planning.

The answer: The community wants to keep it that way and to grow with the times. To that end, everyone at the meeting brainstormed in one of eight relevant topics: transportation, future areas of development, infrastructure, housing, green and recreational space, commercial space, historic preservation and institutions and livability.

The point at this first charette was not consensus but dialogue, to see what specific issues are of most concern. Those ideas will then be culled and researched, with the next step of the process being community meetings on Jan. 8 and Jan. 9.

I can't wait to go to those meetings. I hope that I'll be joined then by even more neighbors than were able to attend the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

This democratic time of coming together of people of different ages and viewpoints showed one this neighborhood's, and America's, best attributes: a strong sense of community, where public debate is welcomed.

[Comment on this entry](#) • [No responses](#)



Kathy Hudson

Kathy Hudson is a freelance writer who lives in in Roland Park. Her interests include gardening, literature and city life. She's a terrible cook, so she's always on the lookout for a decent meal, carryout or otherwise. She's written for "The Baltimore Messenger" since 1995 and has had a bi-weekly column, "Hudson's Corner," since 1998. For "Style" magazine she writes spotlights on people and regular garden features.