

To my fellow Roland Park residents:

We learned tonight that the Baltimore Country Club membership approved the sale of 17 acres of land to Keswick Multi-care.

Though we are disappointed, the vote was expected.

This vote is just the first step of a long process since the land is zoned low density residential and the proposed facility is incompatible with the single family nature of our community. While we seek a compromise for all parties that will be superior to the current proposal, we are working aggressively to oppose any change inconsistent with the R1 (most restrictive residential) zoning designation of this land. Our community and the Baltimore Country Club have benefited from this classification over the past 110 years and to change zoning now, would fundamentally and adversely affect the character of our community. There will be no compromise on this point.

This will be a vigorous political and legal battle. We are prepared for both. Together with other community leaders, the Civic League has developed a strong committee of talented land use attorneys, political strategists, communication professionals, and land developers. Without revealing our tactics, I can tell you we are meeting regularly, developing and carrying out a legal and a political plan.

Regarding the political battle, we have begun to communicate two messages to our elected political officials. First, the community is adamantly against the proposed plan by Keswick. Second, it would be politically unwise to ignore the community opposition and to propose a change in current zoning to allow building of this facility.

An engaged community is essential to win this political battle. Please do two things now:

- First, write to your elected officials and express your opposition to any zoning change. By referring to our Roland Park Web Site, you can find out to whom you can write and the key points to include in your communication.
- Second, we need every resident to participate in a massive public expression of opposition so that our message will be unambiguous. We ask that every homeowner place a poster or banner of opposition to this proposed zoning modification. You can make your own poster or banner or find out on the Web Site how to get one. Both of these campaigns will continue until we win this political battle.

I also want to tell you about the development of an alternative plan. This is very exciting and an important, positive message of our effort. We have assembled a team of landscape architects and urban planners of national and international reputation. They live in Roland Park and have been involved in substantial projects. These individuals will engage the community in developing a green space plan for all of Roland Park possibly including the surrounding communities, many of which have already expressed interest. We hope to involve City planners and other important stakeholders throughout the City. The team is beginning to consider how to secure critical areas of green space in Roland Park in addition to the property that is part of the Baltimore Country Club.

I am frequently asked how we could pay for the Club land and for a larger green space plan. Although I cannot provide specifics at this time, we have had conversations with foundations, non-profit land trusts and government sources and have received strong expressions of support. In my mind, there is little question that we can create an outstanding plan and along with community support, secure the necessary funding.

I am also asked if we might end up with something worse if we fight the Keswick proposal. Yes, worse outcomes are possible, but they are unlikely and are not currently proposed. More importantly, there are better outcomes such as our green space plan, and that outcome is worth the fight.

One other very important point to make: we are working for a compromise. We have reached out to both to the Club and to Keswick. We are exploring means to help the Baltimore Country Club stay on their current site and to address the structural problems of their beautiful Roland Park clubhouse. We want the Club to stay in our neighborhood, and we wish to work with them to do so. At the same time, we have met with representatives of Keswick and have offered to work with them to find another location for their project.

On behalf of the Civic League and other community leaders, I can tell you that we are personally deeply committed to this effort because we see an opportunity to leave a legacy for future generations in our community. Opportunities like this do not come along every day. We are asking you to join this effort. With an engaged community and a willingness of all parties to listen and to work towards compromise, we can accomplish something of which we can all be proud.

Sincerely yours,

Philip J. Spevak

President, Roland Park Civic League

What Roland Park Residents Should Do Now

1. Write to your elected representatives expressing opposition to the Keswick plan.
2. Place a poster or banner in your yard showing public opposition to the plan.
3. Get involved in the cause. You choose, but get involved somewhere whether it is to oppose the Keswick plan or to help in the development of the alternative plan.
4. Join the Civic League.
5. Contribute to the Civic League Advocacy Fund. All parties are working as volunteers. This money is to pay for posters, banners, and other advocacy efforts.

Go to www.rolandpark.org for details of how to do all of the above