

14 July 2008
2:15am

RP Meeting, 7pm, Tue., July 15, 2008

Friends,

As I am sure you know, the Baltimore Country Club will complete its vote on whether or not to sell 17 acres of its land to Keswick Multi-Care Center by about 6pm, Monday, July 14.

If two-thirds of the BCC voting membership votes for the sale, then the matter becomes a zoning issue, for Keswick will only buy the land if it is successfully rezoned from low-density R-1 (like the rest of Roland Park) to high-density R-5. If the land is not rezoned, Keswick walks away.

Regardless of the outcome of the BCC vote, the Roland Park community will be coming together in front of the RP library (5108 Roland Avenue) at 7pm on Tuesday, July 15. The event is to communicate what our next steps are.

If the BCC vote is for the sale, these steps are, in the immediate short term, to make new signs and hang new signs. New signs will be here by the end of the week, so people can sign up for sign delivery. There will also have to be mailings or e-mailings to elected representatives. (Go to <http://rolandpark.org/RPReps.html> for a list of reps and their e-mail addresses.)

If the vote is against the sale, thought should be given toward RP's next move.

There will be free ice cream for children at the event.

Before signing off, there is one matter I would like to address. Though there have been a number of letters and editorials sympathetic to the preservationist side recently, certainly those in the Sun have generally been followed by several anti-Roland Park anonymous postings. (In the on-line version of the Sun, after any article or editorial, etc., readers may leave comments on a blog-like listing.)

Many of these comments are not worth discussing, but there is one recurring theme I would like to pick up on — that the land is BCC's to do what it likes with and that Roland Parkers should consequently pipe down.

Roland Park has never denied that the land is BCC's, nor that it has a right to sell it. However, the purpose of zoning is to balance owners' property rights with neighbors' rights. Your neighbor may wish to turn his house into an auto-body shop, and claim the property right to do so. However, you have the right to voice your opposition, given that your neighbor's action would undoubtedly be objectionable on many fronts and would consequently lower your house's value, thereby impinging on your property rights. The conundrum is resolved through the zoning process. This being the case, there is no moral reason why RP should not look to zoning as one means at its disposal to preserve the land.

If Keswick develops the BCC land, there is reason to suppose that property values, at least in the immediate vicinity of the development, will fall. Therefore, concerned residents have every right to voice their objection to the sale and should not be intimidated into silence.

In case you have not seen it, the Sun's most recent item on the BCC/Keswick matter is a July 12 signed editorial. It may be found at this URL:

http://rolandpark.org/documents/SunEditorial071208_000.pdf.

Best regards,

D.P. Munro
Web-site Editor
RolandPark.org

P.S. If your name is on multiple RP mailing lists, you may get multiple copies of this e-mail. Given recent events, I regret that we have not had time to merge all the lists and delete duplicate names. Please bear with us.