

Roland Park E-letter

**Web Editor's E-letter
February 10, 2010**

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1. RP Roads & Maintenance Corp. Update.

As of 3 p.m. Wednesday (Feb. 10), Roland Park Roads & Maintenance contractors have ceased their snow removal efforts. Conditions simply did not permit them to continue effectively or (more importantly) safely. Additionally, the mayor has ordered Phase III of the city's snow plan. Only "city-authorized emergency vehicles" are permitted on streets.

We know that conditions on most streets and in many alleys are poor, but given the recent severe forecasts they will likely get worse before they get better. At this point, we encourage people to be patient. We'll send another update once snow removal has begun again.

Expect our crews to wait for snow to stop falling and/or blowing before they get back to work. This will ensure that they are not wasting their energy — and your money. Once work resumes, our contractors will work as quickly and efficiently as possible to get all the lanes cleared.

I want to reiterate some guidance from an earlier message:

- Please shovel your sidewalks promptly once the snow stops falling. Encourage your neighbors to do the same.
- If you live near a fire hydrant, please dig it out also.
- Do NOT shovel or plow snow into the alleys or the streets.
- To report problems on city streets, call 311.

After we resume snow removal in the alleys, we encourage you to e-mail updates about the condition of your alley to RMVPMaintenance@rolandpark.org or to call the office at (410) 464-2525. Voice messages will be retrieved daily.

Vincent Vizachero
Vice-President, Maintenance
Roland Park Roads & Maintenance Corp.

2. Where to Direct Complaints.

While the condition of Roland Park's roads is at present appalling, the facts are (a) that the city snow-plowing system is overwhelmed (and to all appearances devoid of a clearing plan) and (b) that the Roland Park snow-plowing truck has been forced off the streets due to municipal snow-emergency regulations. Please remember that RP Roads & Maintenance is only responsible for the "lanes" (i.e., the alleys). The city — and the city exclusively — is responsible for the actual roads. Complaints about street (not alley) clearing must be directed to Baltimore City. Our City Council members are:

- Sharon Green Middleton (Sharon.Middleton@baltimorecity.gov).
- Mary Pat Clarke (MaryPat.Clarke@baltimorecity.gov).

And the director of the city Dept. of Transportation is:

- Alfred H. Foxx (Alfred.Foxx@baltimorecity.gov or Transportation@baltimorecity.gov).

3. Message from Mt. Washington.

However, we are not helpless. The following e-mail from Mt. Washington was forwarded to me by Roland Parker Paris Kern (to whom thanks):

Mt. Washington has "many able bodied folks with shovels and small teams have formed and are shoveling out streets. I think we have barely scratched the surface of the people power here in our neighborhood. We had almost a block party on 2500-2600 blocks of Manhattan yesterday. We had kids pulling each other on the snow to flatten down the middle [and] folks of all ages shoveling.... And if we start to get too proud of ourselves on Manhattan we look to our neighbors on Rusk at the end of a dead end street. They have no chance of seeing plow. They shoveled out 2 plus blocks that is slightly up hill.

"The city is overwhelmed. Yes, we pay taxes and all that. We can also jump into the spirit of making a difference and get creative and resourceful. Ideas:

"Shovel while it is still snowing, several times if possible. (Makes it much more manageable later.)

"Use the cut-it-like-a-piece-of-cheese method with big piles of snow on the edge of the curb.

"You don't have to shovel out all the snow. Packing down the middle helps a lot and makes it easier to pass with a car.

"Carry a shovel and some sand or salt in your car.

"Teams who want to offer their serious shoveling skills [should] be paid. Make it reasonable, be willing to work hard, collaborate and be good natured.

"People who for health reasons can't shovel can make hot chocolate, become an overseer and cheering section for the shovelers, watch the kids and help organize the teens and younger folks in the neighborhood."

4. Snow-shoveling Etiquette.

I have received a number of e-mails from local area residents complaining about the thoughtlessness of others. We all get frustrated dealing with mounds of snow, but please be considerate. In particular:

- Two RP residents wrote to me about double parking on their streets. Please do not do this. While it may seem harmless, given the lack of traffic, in fact double parking can have serious consequences. First, when the plows do start running again, they will not be able to get down streets blocked by double parkers. Second, if you are double parked and another car comes up behind you, it will be virtually impossible for this second car to back away. If it tries, it will almost certainly skid and hit another parked vehicle. If there is a double-parked car blocking your street, you may call 311 to have it towed.
- A Tuxedo resident noticed various people shoveling out their cars by dumping snow into the thoroughfare. To be sure, carrying snow to the outer edge of the sidewalk is heavy, but please do it anyway (it's good exercise, after all). Shoveling into the street simply compounds an already excruciating situation and will ultimately make parking more difficult: when the plows start work again, that dumped snow will end up as a wall of packed snow between the cars and the roadway.

5. Power and Trees.

As I write, the worst of the storm seems to be over. The snow should lighten considerable by about 7 p.m. and taper off after 10 p.m. Nonetheless, while we have been spared so far, but there is still the possibility of downed trees and power outages. Eddies is closed today and driving to the Hampden supermarkets is out of the question (and illegal). Given this, residents may wish to consider conserving some of their existing stocks of food and water, just in case there are downed power lines tonight.

6. Towed-car Parking.

Residents should be aware that parking is prohibited along designated snow emergency routes, which are demarcated by black and white signs. Vehicles parked along these designated routes will be ticketed and towed. Citizens with questions concerning the location of their vehicles should call 311. Additional parking has been made available by the city for citizens at designated schools and other locations equipped with parking lots. These include:

- Western High School at the corner of Falls Road and Coldspring Lane.
- Walbrook High School at 2000 Edgewood Street.
- Thomas G. Hayes Elementary School at 601 N. Central Avenue.
- William Pinderhughes Elementary at 1200 N. Fremont Avenue.
- Patterson High School at 100 Kane Street.
- Thurgood Marshall Middle School at 5000 Truesdale Avenue and Moravia Road.
- Edmondson Westside Skill Center on Athol Avenue.
- Francis Scott Key Elementary at 1425 E. Fort Avenue.
- Digital Harbor High School at Covington and Cross streets.
- Thomas Johnson Elementary at 100 E. Heath Street (parking lot in rear).
- Locust Point Recreation Center located at Fort Avenue and Andre Street.
- M&T Bank Stadium, lot F.
- Park roadways inside Patterson Park (please park on asphalt surfaces only).

7. Home for Heroes Chili Cook-off at the Radisson Hotel at Cross Keys.

Great news, the Radisson has generously offered to host our 2nd annual chili cook-off for free! On Saturday, February 27, join us there for this fun, family-friendly event. All proceeds will benefit Baltimore City's brave firefighters and emergency medical personnel. The event is from 5 to 8 p.m.

- **Chili Chefs:** We still have room for a few more chefs. Do you have a great recipe? You might win a great trophy (and bragging rights) in either the judges' or people's choice competition. Please contact Kate Culotta by February 15 for more information on entering the contest: krulotta@msn.com or 410-889-4095.

- **Chili Lovers:** The Home for Heroes Chili Cook-Off is a great cure for the 2010 Snowpocalypse blues! For \$10 per person (over age 10), you can sample a variety of chili recipes and pick your favorite for dinner. Homemade cornbread, soft drinks and dessert will round off your meal. There will be a cash bar.

We've sold about 90 tickets already, so reserve your spot now! Please RSVP by February 20 by e-mailing Firehousefund@rolandpark.org or calling 410-889-4095 (Kate Culotta).

Martha Marani
Co-chair
Home for Heroes Campaign

8. BNEC Information Sessions.

Three one-hour sessions for information and sign up for the Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge will be held at the Roland Park public library on the following dates:

- Feb. 13, Saturday at 3:00 p.m.
- Feb. 17, Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 24, Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

Organizers Rita Walters and Mike McQuestion hope that you can attend one session and will encourage others to attend. At these sessions, you will be able to learn more about BNEC and sign up.

Best regards,

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

(Vince Vizachero and Martha Marani contributed to this e-letter.)

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