

## **Roland Park E-letter**

**Web Editor's E-letter**  
**November 16, 2009**

### **1. Roland Park Area Master Plan.**

The first of four master plan “charrettes” or community forums is taking place this Saturday, Nov. 21, at 9:30 a.m. until noon at the Roland Park Elementary/Middle School (5207 Roland Avenue). Residents’ participation is strongly encouraged.

Planning is nothing new in Roland Park. The neighborhood was planned in exquisite detail when first developed between the 1890s and 1920s. As we near the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, the time is ripe to contemplate a new all-encompassing, area-wide plan.

Why now? For a start, the city itself completed a master plan in 2006 called “Live Earn Play Learn” (<http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/compplan>). Likewise, the Baltimore City zoning code is being revamped for the first time since the 1970s. And of course the 2008-2009 matter of the would-be development of the Baltimore Country Club’s land in an unprecedented manner kindled local residents’ interest in the long-term character of our neighborhood. Finally, the city’s sustainability initiative and its Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge (<http://baltimoreenergychallenge.org/systems/energy>) have spawned an RP affiliate, the Roland Park Civic League Sustainability Initiative (<http://rolandpark.org/SustainInitiative.html>).

The planning process will solicit area residents’ views on zoning and land use, historical preservation, and resource sustainability. The idea is to turn these views into a comprehensive plan than in turn can be used to inform city zoning regulations for this area. Keep up to date with the latest master-plan developments at RolandPark.org’s dedicated web page, <http://rolandpark.org/MasterPlan.html>.

What sort of topics will the master plan address? This rather depends on what residents want it to address, but likely candidates for discussion are:

- Parking, traffic and congestion;
- Sidewalks, bike paths and medians;
- Road improvements/design and alternative transportation;
- Design guidelines, historical preservation and the maintenance of our residential scale/character;
- Homeownership, senior housing and “aging in place”;
- Green-space enhancement, recreational fields, pools, parks and playgrounds;
- Zoning, mixed-use commercial/retail areas and institutional expansion;
- Roland Park governance and the role of the three civic organizations (Civic League, Roads and Maintenance Corp., and Community Foundation);
- And many other issues.

### **2. Child Care at Master Plan Charrette.**

It is likely that child care will be available at the charrette. We have a willing provider but, as of press time, have not secured an additional room at the school. However, we do not foresee a problem. The charge will probably be \$10 per child for three hours. Please e-mail

rpcommunication@rolandpark.org if you would like child care at the event. Please put “Charrette Child Care” in the subject line.

### **3. Area Neighborhoods’ Input Sought.**

We have been asked a few times over the past few days if the master-planning process is restricted to Roland Park proper or if it is open to the immediately surrounding neighborhoods too. The answer is the latter. We are most anxious to have the neighboring communities involved, and RP Civic League President Phil Spevak has e-mailed a letter of invitation to all the local area community leaders. So the effort is certainly not restricted to Roland Park alone. Other area neighborhoods — Evergreen, Tuxedo, Keswick, etc. — are encouraged to participate. We’re all in this together. The exact boundaries of the area to be covered by the master plan have not yet been determined. Indeed, one of the reasons for soliciting the opinions of the neighboring areas is to find out if they wish to be included or not.

### **4. Leaf Vacuuming on University Parkway.**

Last week RolandPark.org was a number of times asked if the current city leaf-vacuuming program would be extended the University Parkway, given the major repaving operation now underway there. Thanks to the efforts of Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke, I can tell you that there will be no — repeat, no — municipal leaf vacuuming on University Parkway until the road work is complete. After that point, the city “will address” University Parkway, according to the Public Works Department. No further details are available at this time.

### **5. Rolden and Roland Park Reject RPP Parking Plan.**

Two weeks ago, we reported that Roland Park Place’s planned parking-lot expansion was to be the primary topic of discussion at the November RP Civic League meeting. For full details on the various presentations made at that meeting, please visit <http://rolandpark.org/RPP.html>. To summarize, though, the discussion revolved around (a) reconfiguring the RPP campus lot to take an additional 32 cars, (b) razing the 1889 church at 4001 Roland Ave. to create 30 spaces and (c) creating a 12-car lot behind 4021 Roland Ave., but retaining the actual building, which RPP would use for office purposes. (RPP owns both these buildings.)

The upshot of the meeting is that both Rolden — the association covering the 4000 and 4100 block of Roland Avenue — and Roland Park have resolved to oppose major components of the RPP plan. Rolden opposes RPP’s putting parking lots at 4001 and 4021 Roland Avenue and has “strong reservations” about the plan to reconfigure RPP on-campus parking, though it conditionally approves that latter nonetheless.

Roland Park’s position is very similar. By a vote of 14 to 0, the RP Civic League resolved as follows: “RPCL supports the efforts of Roland Park Place to expand its on-site parking within its existing boundaries, provided there is effective and appropriate screening for noise and sightliness. RPCL will work with Roland Park Place to accomplish this goal. RPCL opposes the plan to expand parking beyond the current borders of Roland Park Place and to demolish or modify any property along Roland Avenue for use as additional parking.”

### **6. Village at Home at Next Civic League Meeting.**

The Village at Home “aging in place” organization, run by Roland Park resident Susan M. Newhouse, will make a presentation at the Dec. 3 Civic League meeting. The mission of the

Village at Home is to “build a supportive community to include all ages, with a specific emphasis on providing activities and services to older adults and persons with disabilities so that we may have the practical means and the confidence to live full lives in our own neighborhoods and in our own homes.” Susan will make a 20-minute presentation, followed by a 10-minute Q&A.

Best regards,

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