



The Riverdale Park *Town Crier*

Official Newsletter, Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland

Town of Riverdale Park Special Run-off Election Notice

February 2006

Volume 35, Issue 1

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In compliance with the terms of the Charter of the Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland, an election will be held

Saturday, February 18, 2006

To elect Town Official for Ward 1 Council Seat.

Polls will open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Riverdale Park
Municipal Center, 5008 Queensbury Road.

Candidates

Robert Louis Oppenheim

David Roland Walker

All citizens, eighteen years of age or older, who have resided in the Town of Riverdale Park for 45 days preceding February 18, 2006 and who are registered to vote in the Town of Riverdale Park are entitled to vote.

Joyce Kay Marcos, Chief Judge
Louis King, Deputy Chief Judge

Editor Wanted

The Town of Riverdale Park is looking for an editor to manage the development of the Town Crier, published 10 times annually. If you are interested, send your resume and writing samples to Patrick Prangley, Town Administrator, Town of Riverdale Park, 5008 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, MD 20737. Position Open Until Filled

Results of December 10, 2005 Special Election

The results of the special election on December 10, 2005 to replace former Ward 1 Council Member Tracey Toscano were: Rob Oppenheim 100 votes; Roland Walker 88 votes, and Bruce Wernek 32 votes. In a Special Election, a 50% majority of votes is necessary to be declared a winner. Since none of the three candidates had a 50% majority, a Run-Off Election is necessary. In a Run-Off Election, the candidate with the highest number of votes is declared the winner meaning there will be no further elections. It is important that Ward 1 residents come out to vote.

MUTC Committee Reviews Wachovia Bank Proposal

The Mixed Use Town Center (MUTC) Committee met on January 25, 2006 for continued discussion regarding the Potomac Development Corporation's (PDC) latest proposal for the vacant corner at Baltimore Avenue (Route 1) and East-West Highway (Route 410)--a Wachovia Bank. The seven-member MUTC committee discussed the Wachovia proposal with PDC's Joe Caputo and Wachovia representatives. MUTC and residents expressed their concerns regarding several issues including the building design and the number of stories proposed for the building.

MUTC pointed out that the plan calls for an "urban/town center" style of development with the building fronting along the sidewalk to emphasize the traditional street wall of the rest of the block.

Continued on page six

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Council Actions

By Colleen Ferguson

Legislative Meeting, Tuesday, January 3, 2006

1. Action to approve suspension of Town Charter §623-1 competitive bid for procurement of lap top computers for new police cruisers since piggybacking on city of Greenbelt bid. – **Approved**
2. Resolution 2006-R-01 to approve amendatory agreement with LaSalle Bank National Associations to purchase (7) seven lap tops for new police cruisers from CDW Government Inc. up to 9,0000.00.- **Approved**
3. Resolution 2006-R-02 endorsing expansion of Public works staff by (1) one horticulturist. – **Approved**
4. Approval of Minutes for December 5, 2005. - **Approved**

Town Welcomes New Code Enforcement Officer

By Colleen Ferguson

The Code Enforcement Office welcomes Keelah Smith as a new Code Officer. Keelah brings a strong background in Code Enforcement, Property Management, and administrative skills that are sure to be an asset to the Town of Riverdale Park. We are pleased that Keelah has joined the Code Enforcement Department. If you have questions, concerns, or comments regarding Code Enforcement, please call 301-927-6381.

Police Activity Report

September Crime Report						
Crime	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Stln. Veh.
Ward 1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Ward 2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 3	0	0	0	1	0	0
Ward 4	0	0	2	2	1	0
Ward 5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 6	0	0	1	2	1	0
Total	0	0	3**	5	2*	1

**2 Citizen, *1 Commercial, *1 residential. 1 carjacking

September Officer Activity	
Activity	Total
Calls for Service	571
Routine Patrols	384
Traffic Stops	*149
Reported Traffic Accidents	**50
Parking Citations	51
Subjects Arrested	17
* 127 Traffic Citations	
** 26 Written Citations	

Town of Riverdale Park

www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us

Town Hall

5008 Queensbury Road
Riverdale Park, MD 20737
301-927-6381

riverdaleparkmd@comcast.net

Mayor Vernon Archer
240-832-2257
varcher@gmail.com

Council Members

Ward 1 Vacant

Ward 2 Mary Donaldson 301-927-2954
mmarydon@yahoo.com

Ward 3 Novella Sargusingh 301-927-8422
msnovella19@aol.com

Ward 4 Lawrence Taylor 301-474-6868
taylor.lawrence@gmail.com

Ward 5 Gerard Kiernan 301-277-4554
gerardkiernan@earthlink.net

Ward 6 Kenneth Webb 301-523-6202
webbward6@hotmail.com

Patrick J. Prangley, Town Administrator
riverdaleparkmd@comcast.net

Public Works 301-864-1803
James Houser, Public Works Director

Code Enforcement 301-927-6381
coderiverdalepk@comcast.net
Colleen M. Ferguson

Police Department 301-927-4343
rivpd@comcast.net
E. Thomas Parker, Chief

Fire Department **Emergency 911**
Information 301-927-0356
info@riverdalevfd.com,
www.riverdalevfd.com
Vincent Harrison, Chief

It is the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park, pursuant to the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, to prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in any aspect of employment within the government.

It is also the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park to disallow discrimination in fair housing based on race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disabilities and/or age.

Some material contained in the Town Crier represents the opinion of the authors and does not necessarily represent the views of the Town of Riverdale Park.

Submission deadline: 15th of each month.

Some issues of the Crier are available online

Mayor's Report

By Vernon Archer

Moving into the New Year on the calendar means we have passed the halfway point of the town's fiscal year, and this is a good time to take stock of our progress on major projects and look ahead. While the following may seem like a daunting list, I have learned that we have a very strong and capable town staff. They respond to leadership with the hard work needed to move forward and grow, while never compromising on the excellent services they already deliver.

Streets, Sidewalks, Parks and Properties

When I submit the FY 2007 budget to the Town Council in early May, it will include my proposal for addressing *all* outstanding street resurfacing and sidewalk repair needs in Riverdale Park. Bundling all our needed infrastructure work into a single contract will allow us to take advantage of historically low interest rates, gain a price advantage through economies of scale, and attract more bidders to compete for our business. The result will be better streets at a long-term savings. This infrastructure upgrade is a major project, and I see it as one of the lasting legacies of my tenure in office. I am working with town staff to create a truly comprehensive list of needed repairs and upgrades. Help us by raising specific issues about local streets and sidewalks and any drainage issues. ***Write down your concerns marked "Attention: Street Work" and bring them to Town Hall or mail them.*** Streetlight repairs are now complete including those on Queensbury Road. All lamps should now be burning brightly. If you notice any malfunctions, please contact the Town.

Public Works has fulfilled my request to address the problem of weekend trash overflow around Town Center, along Riverdale Road, and at the Field of Dreams. I am happy to report that we now have Saturday afternoon pickup for targeted town receptacles. This should mean less trash in our streets and a net labor savings for Public Works, which is also responsible for removing loose trash from our public spaces.

In January, the Council agreed to my plan to hire a horticulturalist or professional gardener for the Public Works department with responsibilities of beautifying and maintaining grounds around the town buildings, parks, and public rights of way. Keeping our Riverdale Park well-maintained will improve residents' day-to-day enjoyment of the Town, and just as importantly, will help encourage economic development. Watch for improvements beginning this summer.

During the last budget cycle, a consensus was reached by the Council that Town Hall is not large enough to meet our current needs. We are engaging an architect/engineer to propose an expansion. In May, the

Council will consider whether to fund the expansion during the next budget cycle.

Public Safety

We are making substantial progress toward getting a satellite police station on Kenilworth Avenue with a good chance this will happen this calendar year. Prince George's County Police are supporting us in this effort and will share the station with our force. In addition, we are constantly pursuing opportunities and partners in our plan to create a consolidated center for day laborers to be located near our new police station. A freewheeling, unregulated market in day labor is not in the long-term best interest of the workers, the town, or legitimate businesses. The center is clearly a longer-term project, but it is an essential one.

I have asked our police and Town Administrator to investigate how to regulate contractors who are seeking day laborers in Riverdale Park. We license and/or require permits from most businesses in Town and it seems reasonable to extend such requirements to labor contractors. The aim in requiring permits is to encourage responsible practices by contractors, and give us leverage to control loitering. The day-labor center and permits should help address the growing number of legitimate complaints from our residents and nearby communities about loitering, littering, and disorderly behavior along Kenilworth Avenue.

Communications, Economic Development

As part of my ongoing effort to improve transparency and "customer service" in our government, I have drafted Executive Order EO-01-2006 directing Town staff to improve communications. Pat Prangley, our Town Administrator, has begun proactively meeting many of the new requirements before the order has come into effect. You may notice that the text announcements on Channel 71 are being updated more frequently, and that the email announcements sent to the *town-announce* mailing list are more reliable.

I am working daily to bring quality commercial and residential development to Riverdale Park. Two major development projects are in the planning stages within our Mixed Use Town Center (MUTC) zone: the proposed Wachovia Bank on the corner of East-West Highway and Baltimore Avenue, and the condominium/retail development on the Spiropolous property centered on Dumm's Corner. I strongly encourage residents to become constructively involved in the development process. These projects are at very early stages and can still be substantially modified by community input. Stay informed by attending MUTC meetings, usually held on the first Wednesday of the month, and Town Council meetings on the first Monday of the month.

The Richness of Riverdale Park

By Lawrence C. Taylor III

There is much to appreciate about Riverdale Park. We can take pride in our "Tree City" designation which underscores that we realize that not only do trees beautify, but also aid in cleaning the air that we breathe. Our waterways benefit from trees by helping to keep them clean. We can take pride in being on the cutting edge of technology with the development of the University of Maryland's *M Square* in our town's borders. That includes the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration facility with its world-class weather technology which will serve the country. We value our rich history as evidenced by the preservation of the *Riversdale Mansion*. We have a dedicated public safety force and a responsive public works force who serve our richest resource, our residents.

We experience the richness of our residents because we value the voice of each one. As we continue to encourage one another in sharing our voices and gifts, our bright future is secure.

Information about the Fire Department

Some residents have noticed that there have been county fire trucks responding to calls in Riverdale Park prompting the question, "Does our own Fire Department serve all of our residents?" As a matter of fact, all Fire Departments in Prince George's County are controlled by the County and depending on availability and locale of the emergency; you may see a County fire truck responding to a call in our Town. The Riverdale Park Fire Department may be the first responders to a Hyattsville call because they are closer to parts of Hyattsville than the Hyattsville Fire Department. If a call occurs in Riverdale Park while they are out on another call, it is more efficient and safe to dispatch the next closest Fire Department. If you have questions regarding these protocols, please come to the town meeting the first Monday evening of each month where you can speak directly to our Fire Department Chief.

Calling for Recreation Volunteers

I'd like to thank all of our volunteers who have assisted in recent Town events. The 2005 Festival of Lights was a great success and our volunteers made it happen. We have more town events coming up in the future requiring more volunteers. I'd particularly like to see more volunteers from Ward 4. Join us in and become part of our richest resource that makes Riverdale Park a great place to live.

Mr. Taylor is the Ward Four Council Representative.

Why Economic Development is Important to Riverdale Park

By Gerard F. Kiernan

For Fiscal Year 2005-2006, the Town has a budget showing projected revenues of \$3,367,400. These revenues come from four sources: the approximately 2,000 households in Riverdale Park; the approximately 200 businesses in Riverdale Park; state-shared revenues; and miscellaneous revenues.

The town's households provide approximately \$1,562,000 of the total project revenues, and the businesses contribute \$1,201,000. State shared revenues account for \$415,000, and miscellaneous revenues are budgeted at \$210,000. These numbers don't add up to the budget, but the rounding errors come from distributing real estate taxes to the various residential, industrial, and commercial categories.

As you can see, 200 businesses contribute almost ten times as much as the Town's households. This is why the development at M Square will be important over the next few years. While the land will be exempt from taxes, we will receive property taxes on the values of the buildings. A \$10 million dollar building would bring us \$56,000 per year at this year's tax rate. If the buildings are occupied by private businesses, we will receive tangible property taxes and business licenses.

In our US 1, Town Center, and Kenilworth commercial corridors, full business occupancy will also improve our bottom line. With the "Lustine" property development in Hyattsville occurring in the next several years, we will need to reach out to those new residents to come to Riverdale Park to eat and shop. This is why the MUTC plan is important to draw people to our original business area at the train station and along US 1. Because of the ease of access for the M Square project to Kenilworth Avenue, we are working on the Kenilworth corridor to attract the new workers from M Square. The Town has applied to the State for help with the Kenilworth redevelopment and will be looking for resident's input on these various redevelopment projects.

Mr. Kiernan is the Ward Five Council representative and a member of the Economic Development Committee.

HELP NEEDED WITH SPANISH TRANSLATION

If you are proficient in written Spanish and would like to help with translating text for the Town Crier, please contact Town Hall.

Ward 5/ Public Safety Report

By Gerard F. Kiernan

Door-to-Door Sales People

I have noticed a growth in people conducting door-to-door selling. The Town requires door-to-door sales persons to have a business license as a mobile vendor. The Town issues these licenses and you should feel free to ask to see a person's license. If you feel anyway uncomfortable in dealing with a door-to-door sales person, or if they don't have a license, please call the Police at 301-927-4343 for assistance.

Police calls for the 4th quarter of 2005

	OCT	NOV	DEC
Ward 1	121	73	107
Ward 2	63	52	70
Ward 3	41	38	39
Ward 4	256	281	233
Ward 5	39	25	17
Ward 6	164	109	104

Wards 1, 4, 6 have a high number of traffic-related calls due to the three state roads passing through Town (US 1, East West Highway-Rt 410, and Kenilworth Avenue-MD 201).

Aside from traffic calls, during the three-month period in Ward 5, Park Tanglewood had 42 calls compared to 24 for the Towers. The categories for calls from the Ward were: suspicious person-14; parking complaint-8; theft-7; stolen vehicle-7; fight-5; noise-4; vandalism-3; domestic-3; disorderly conduct-2; assault-2; robbery-2; breaking and entering-1; 911 hang-up-1; assist citizen-1; unknown reason-1; juvenile-1; abduction-1; welfare check-1; tampering-1; and lost property-1.

The other five wards have similar types of calls for service. I am encouraged by the fact that the highest category was suspicious person which means that citizens are calling the police when things don't seem right. If something strikes you as being not right, call the police.

Mr. Kiernan is Ward Five's Council Representative and serves as Public Safety Chair.

Public Works Report Holiday Schedule

By James Houser

Public Works is closed for Presidents Day on February 20, 2006. Regular trash and yard waste pickup for the Area A will be on Tuesday, February 21, 2006, and for Area B on Wednesday, February 22, 2006.

Leaves

Loose leaf collection season ended January 6, 2006. Residents who still have leaves will need to bag them and put them out for yard waste on their first collection day of

each week, or may schedule an appointment for special pickup of loose leaves **after** paying a \$20 fee at Town Hall.

Plastic Bags For Sale

The town office is selling heavy-gauge clear plastic bags for \$2.50 for a roll of 25 bags. Placing yard waste in clear bags will save time as our collectors can immediately identify yard waste from other trash.

Snow Emergency Parking

During a snow emergency, vehicles are to be parked on the even-numbered side of the street.

Surplus Vehicle

The Town of Riverdale Park is accepting sealed bids for one 1989 Chevrolet pick-up truck VIN #2GCFC24H4K1158877. Sale is "as is" and vehicle may be viewed at 5012 Queensbury Road. Sealed bids will be accepted at Town Hall, 5008 Queensbury Road, until February 28, 2006. The Town of Riverdale Park reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Recycle-Recycle-Recycle

The county charges a fee for your recycling whether you recycle or not. So please join the program. The more the residents get out of the waste stream and into recycling, the more money residents save.

Recycling Buckets

Recycling bucket replacements can be obtained **free** from Prince George's County Office of Recycling by calling 301-952-7630.

Mr. Houser is the Director of Public Works.

Former Riverdale Park Resident Passes

Marjorie R. Spear, age 75, of Hurlock, MD formerly of Riverdale Park, MD passed away on Sunday, December 25, 2005 at her residence. She was born on November 21, 1930 in Camden, New Jersey and was a daughter of the late Edmund and Anna Hill Savage. Mrs. Spear was a homemaker. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Denver C. Spear of Hurlock; four sons, Eddie Spear, Patrick Spear, Ronald Spear and David Spear, all of Maryland; three daughters, Ruth Seligson and Linda Clark, both of Maryland and Michele Davis of Alabama; 15 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, three brothers, Donald Savage of North Carolina, Paul Savage and Philip Savage, both of Maryland. Besides her parents, Mrs. Spear is preceded in death by a daughter, Nancy Spear. A Memorial Service was held on Sunday, January 1, 2006, at the First Baptist Church in Hyattsville, MD with Rev. Colin Thorne, officiating. Memorial contributions can be made to the First Baptist Church, 5701 42nd Ave., Hyattsville, MD 20781. Published in The Washington Post on 12/27/2005.

Recognition of 25 Years of Dedicated Service

By Pat Prangley



Mayor Archer and Town Administrator Patrick Prangley present awards to Police Chief Parker

Chief Tom Parker celebrated his 25th anniversary as a police officer with the Riverdale Park Police Department on December 1, 2005. Chief Parker worked his way up the ranks of the department starting as a private on patrol. He has held all ranks and various assignments prior to being appointed Chief in May of 2004. Chief Parker completed the Maryland Police Training Commission Law Enforcement Executive Officer Program and the FBI/Harford County Sheriff's Department Greater Chesapeake Law Enforcement Executive Development Program. He currently serves as Vice President of the Police Chiefs' Association of Prince George's County, Maryland. Chief Parker feels the police department has a proud past and a very bright future and says it is a very exciting time for the Town with all the possibilities and future development on the horizon.

Chief Parker likes maintaining contact with residents and business owners and addressing their concerns. The Mayor, Council, and staff congratulate Chief Parker on achieving a major service milestone and extend our best wishes for many years of professional service to our community. **Thanks Chief Parker**

Celebrating 20 Years of Dedicated Service

By Pat Prangley and Anna Wendland

Congratulations are in order for Dispatcher Susanne "Susie" Dunn, who celebrated her twentieth year with the Riverdale Park Police Department on Monday, December 19, 2005. Susie is the first Police Department civilian to reach this milestone.

As Susie can attest, the Department has come a long way from the days of operating in a former house which occupied the same site where the current police facility is located. Susie ensures the safety of all officers by following the strict rules, regulations, and responsibilities of being a communications dispatcher. The Mayor, Council, and staff would like to congratulate and thank her for the many years of professional service she has provided to the Department and to the Town. **Thanks Susie**



Dispatcher Susanne Dunn is presented with awards by Chief Parker and Town Administrator Patrick Prangley.

Wachovia Bank Proposal, continued from page one

MUTC's concerns with these issues stem from their desire to stay true to the MUTC vision regarding landscaping, streetscape, building height, architecture, parking, fencing, and lighting.

Throughout the one and a half hour meeting, MUTC members and residents shared their thoughts and asked questions of PDC and Wachovia representatives. The meeting ended with Caputo and the Wachovia representatives promising to revisit the plans and explore options that come closer to implementing the Plan as well as meeting their objectives. Caputo said "we're hopeful we can succeed [with this project]."

The Town is in the process of gathering input for MUTC review and encouraging little deviation from the MUTC standard. Town officials are encouraging citizens to attend the next MUTC meeting on February 21, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss further the Wachovia proposal. The staff report that details issues and deviations from the MUTC standards is available to residents at Town Hall.

What People are Saying About the Wachovia Proposal:
I encourage businesses to come in [to our Town], but they need to meet our needs. Jim Coleman
We want a win-win situation. I hope to see a plan that meets the standards. Ann Marie Larson

Community Circles

EVENTS

AHA! For Kids:

BLACK CHERRY PUPPET THEATER presents “Billy Goats Gruff-kin” Sunday, February 12, 2006, 3:00 p.m. at Old Parish House (4711 Knox Road at the corner of Dartmouth Avenue in College Park). Features lavishly designed puppets, this is the classic Scandinavian story as interpreted by Michael T. Lamason and presented with a beautifully produced sound track by the performance art group “Laughing Tree.” This free program is ideal for children ages 3—8; registration is appreciated. For more information, contact College Park Arts Exchange at 301-927-3013 or email info@cpae.org

ORGANIZATIONS

Northern County Soccer Alliance

For more information on Soccer Alliance, Inc. and on travel, recreation, home-school, and training programs. NCSA@juno.com or (301)927-0560. PG Soccer League@juno.com

Riverdale Park Business Association (RPBA)

Contact Audrey Bragg at (301)277-7393.

Riverdale Park Girl Scouts

Contact: Charmaine Wilson at (301)449-5690.

Riverdale Park Boys Scouts – Troop 252

Contact: Scoutmaster Bob Killen at (202)282-8302.

CIVIC COMMITTEES

History Center Committee

For information, contact Doug McElrath at (301)277-2085.

Madison Hill Homeowners Association

For information, call (301)513-9188 or email MadisonHillHOA@aol.com

Recreation Board

Monday, February 13, 2006, 7:30 p.m. Town Hall. Volunteers needed. For information, call Doris Pullman, (301)927-6992.

Riverdale Park Farmer’s Market Task Force

Contact Pat Gladdings at (301)927-1362.

Riverdale Park Tree Committee

Email Laura Hilden at laurachildren@yahoo.com or call Rebecca Feldberg at (301)864-2779.

Riversdale Historical Society

Riversdale Mansion. Contact (301)864-0420.

Traffic Study Committee

February 7, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall – 5008 Queensbury Road

Web Site Committee

For information, contact Alan Thompson at (301)927-7407 or email him at webmaster@ci.riverdale-park.md.us

If you have information to share with the community, please submit it to the Editor, Town Crier, 5800 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, Maryland 20737 by the 15th of the month, or email: RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net.

Letter to the Editor

Smoke Free PG is Working

Jan. 15, 2006

To check out how the new “Smoke Free PG” law is working, I dropped by our local pub and honky-tonk, S&J, late Saturday night. Business was lively and the air was clean and clear. Really. We had a good time.

S&J’s (301-927-3977) is a friendly local pub, sports bar, and restaurant that features no-cover karaoke on Saturday nights. Smokers are still welcome at the outside deck that’s been fitted out with a tent top and heater. Nonsmokers might find it best to sit away from the smoking deck door.

Because all bars and restaurants in the county are now smoke-free, there are more nonsmoking options available around town. Calvert House Inn has live music after 10 p.m. most Friday nights with a \$5 cover charge. Both the Alamo Restaurant and the Riverdale Pizza Pub feature live Spanish music and dancing on Friday and Saturday nights with a \$10 cover charge.

The county banned smoking in public bars—but not in private clubs, so there’s concern that private clubs might pull away patrons and harm business. Hopefully nonsmokers will make up the difference. If you have avoided S&J’s because of the smoke, I urge you to give it another try.

Enjoy

Rob Oppenheim, Ward 1, 5902 Cleveland Ave, Riverdale Park, Md.