



Wyndhurst
Improvement
Association

WIA News

AUTUMN • OCTOBER 2013

BALTIMORE, MD

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LET'S GARDEN THIS FALL

by Eva Khoury

When we think of gardening, we tend to think spring; however, fall offers several great reasons to go outside and enjoy our gardens. For example, fall gardening offers a simple way to transition into winter: both literally (preparing soil and planting perennials or bulbs) and figuratively (reminding us of transitions and cycles of the seasons and life itself). If we plant bushes with fall berries (holly tree, elderberry, spicebush), fall also offers us an opportunity to provide our animal friends with much-needed sustenance.

Practically speaking, fall is the best time to prepare for next year's garden.

Here's a fall to-do list:

Create composting bins, allowing nature to do the work of making soil for you. Try sheet mulching. It can reduce—or even kill—those insistent weeds.

Pruning: Fall is the time to prune most trees and shrubs

Planting: trees, shrubs, perennials & bulbs. Roots get established easier without the fear of overheating. Bulbs MUST be planted in the fall;

Design for problem spots in your garden: What about shady areas at which the sun refuses to glance? How about that soil that Johnny Appleseed couldn't get a hoe through?

Design for that special place



One of many autumn zinnias blooming in the peaceful garden of Eva Khoury, a Master Gardener who relocated to Wyndhurst with her husband and daughter in 2012.

just for you, like a memorial garden or a tea garden to harvest hyssop, chamomile, bee balm, borage, certain roses, and mint.

Cleaning.

Gardens offer us so much calm space to reflect, meditate, or simply enjoy. You know the old adage “stop and smell the roses.” Our gardens can really help us do just that.

Eva Khoury received her Master Gardener certificate in 2001. Recently moved to the Wyndhurst neighborhood, she has taken on the biggest landscaping challenge of her life in her own yard. If you would like a consultation or help with your landscape, she can be reached at earthalley@gmail.com

PLANNING ON PAINTING YOUR HOUSE?

Most of us think about the hazards of lead paint if we're scraping and painting inside our houses—but not many of us are aware of the dangers of removing exterior paint from an older home. If children are anywhere in the vicinity of a house where lead-based paint is being scraped—or worse, being removed by blowtorch—they are at high risk for neurological damage. This is true for adults as well, but children, with their still-developing nervous systems, are the most vulnerable.

Baltimore City has lead paint removal regulations, but apparently most contractors ignore them and the City does

nothing to enforce them. Here is a link to an EPA pamphlet, **“Renovate Right”**, that all painting contractors are required to give property owners before they start a painting job.

This pamphlet describes the required safe practices for work that involves lead-based paint. The City may have something similar. The important thing is that we know the safe work practices, as we will be the ones who must enforce them!

TREE UPDATE

Many of the stumps left behind after the Tree-Baltimore planting project last year have not yet been ground, and there are still a few residents awaiting new trees. We are fortunate to have a member of the Forestry Board, Wil Hylton, on our neighborhood board. Wil has approached the head of the Urban Forestry Division for information and assistance, and as a result, there has been some recent stump removal. The Forestry Division is badly understaffed, but we will continue to remind them of our ongoing needs.

HISTORIC HOME ONE OF EARLIEST IN WYNDHURST

According to Wikipedia, the 200 acres that make up the Wyndhurst neighborhood were purchased in 1694, when they were known as Faux or Fox Hall. The land changed hands several times through the years before it was bought in the 1850's by W.C. Wilson and Michael Alder and subdivided in 1877 into four quadrants. One of the four, Tuxedo Park, was developed by the Kansas City Land Company in 1892, before the development of Roland Park.



The 1892 home of Allison and Patrick O'Brien is one of the oldest in the area, predating the development of Roland Park.

According to Jim Bready, unofficial historian of Baltimore and writer for the Baltimore Sun, a house at the foot of Gladstone Ave. is one of the earliest houses in the area. It was said to house an overseer for a farm. Later, in the 1890's, the house was expanded, and the additions were done in the Victorian style. A lean-to on the back held milk from a dairy farm on the other side of Stony Run. The house was purchased in the 1920's by the Albert family, who ran the old coal bins across Stony Run where trains would unload coal to be delivered by truck around the city. Later they had an oil business (which may explain why Mrs. Albert had the home's gas lines torn out all the way to the street). The flame-haired Mrs. Albert was a dog trainer, who built a large, fenced dog run beside the house. She also

had a big garden and a flock of chickens, priding herself on being food self-sufficient during World War II. She may have been reluctant to leave her home, as subsequent owners have reported at least two ghostly sightings of a red-haired woman sitting in a chair in front of a bricked up fireplace in the living room.

The current owners, Patrick and Allison O'Brien, have seen no ghosts, but they have discovered a myriad of mysterious antennas and dials on beams in the basement. Mindful of the house's history, the O'Briens have paid careful attention to the exterior color scheme, using authentic muted Victorian colors, and put an addition on the back, perhaps over the foundation of the original dairy lean-to. They have also added some additional "gingerbread" and

PROGRESSIVE DINNER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are in search of one or two families to run this event in February/March of 2014. Carol Bishop, Jr., has done this for two years and is ready to show others how to do it. If you might be interested, call or email so we can tell you what sort of time and energy it requires.

MAKING A POLICE REPORT

If you have an incident to report, remember that it's important to do it in writing. This will ensure that your complaint will get into the official record. At the Greater Roland Park meeting with the police in May, it was clear that many incidents were not being officially recorded, thus creating a false impression of our crime rate. You can record your complaint at www.coplink.org. The other thing to remember, of course, is NEVER to leave anything in your car, locked or unlocked.

installed two stained glass windows designed by Patrick, who is an artist. One would think that Mrs. Albert would be eager to pay them a visit one day!

NEIGHBORHOOD LISTSERV: CHANGING OF THE GUARD

David Champney is now running the Listserv, with Elizabeth Gething as backup. The communication glitches you may have noticed in the past few months were related to this transition. The Listserv is for announcements of interest to the entire community (crime reports, community social events, dumpsters, etc.) Except in cases of emergency, the effort will be to consolidate announcements so that you will receive no more than one WIA email a week. If you have an announcement for the Listserv, please send it to wyndhurst@gmail.com.

MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

John Bishop, chair of the maintenance committee, reports that the committee continues its practice of doing two "tours" of the neighborhood each year, and that any problems (such as shrubbery obstructing sidewalk traffic) are being reported to homeowners and addressed by them in time. John notes that we are each legally responsible for clearing snow from our front sidewalks, and that if this is difficult for some, neighbors will be glad to help.

We are responsible in general for our front sidewalks. If they are broken or uneven and pose a hazard to walkers, the City will fix them and charge the homeowner. They will NOT charge the homeowner if the problem is caused by the roots of trees planted in the parking strip.

It's also possible for residents to hire a private contractor to do repairs, but this usually costs more than having the City do them. You can contact the City in this regard by calling 311.

COMING IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE

Improvements to Roland Avenue between Coldspring Lane and Northern Parkway as requested in the Greater Roland Park Master Plan are coming soon. These will include:

- landscaped curb bump-outs for the purpose of traffic-calming,
- the replacement of all traffic signals,
- a signal for turns into the Gilman and Bryn Mawr Schools from Northern Parkway,
- new trash cans and benches,
- Re-paving (!)

Work is scheduled to begin on 2/14/14 and will (inexplicably) take 360 days.

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE OF WIA

There has been some confusion expressed recently about how WIA "works".

What follows is an attempt to clarify the not-too-complex complexities of your neighborhood association.

First it's important to note that WIA doesn't work exactly the same way from year to year, as changes in leadership often mean changes in priorities and leadership style, as in any all-volunteer organization. That said, the basic structure has remained the same over time.

We have a slate of officers who are elected at the annual meeting early in each new year. All residents are encouraged to attend that meeting (which will be announced in various ways when the date has been set), but the names will be broadcast on the Listserv and also appear on the masthead of this newsletter. Officers may serve for more than one term, and many do so.

We also have a volunteer

DUMPSTER DATE: DECEMBER 7

The last dumpster of the year will be on Lawndale in the parking lot next to the cleaners on Saturday, 12/7. It will appear some time after 7:30 and will disappear some time after 2. (Dumpsters are picked up in the order they're distributed, so the earlier it comes, the earlier it will be gone.)

Also, November is the last month this year that you can drop off hazardous household waste at the Northwest Sanitation Yard (2840 Sisson Street). The dump is open Monday through Saturday, from 9 to 5. Hazardous waste drop-off is the first Friday and Saturday of the month. Drop-offs will begin again in April, 2014.

captain for each neighborhood block. Block captains hand out flyers, send out emails, and distribute hard copies of the newsletter to those who don't receive it electronically. They also meet every few months with the officers to discuss neighborhood issues. Any resident may attend a block captains meeting if they have an issue to bring up, or they can convey their concerns to their block captain who will represent them. A list of block captains will go out with the list of officers in the new year; they are also listed on the newsletter masthead (left column, page 1).

There are various committees at different times under the aegis of the neighborhood board (officers plus block captains). The most active committee is the Social Committee, currently chaired by Beth Ratrie and Kirsten Sandhofer. This committee organizes the neighborhood Progressive Dinner, Floating Fridays, Block Party and Halloween Parade. (A report by chair Beth Ratrie appears in this newsletter.) Other committees are the Stony Run/Parks Partnership committee, chaired by Helen deClercq, and the Maintenance Committee, chaired by John Bishop. Currently Becky Hornbeck and Beth Ratrie are working to develop a Welcome Packet to be distributed to all new residents. It will contain, among other things, the information discussed above, clearing up confusion before it arises.

One more source of information about our neighborhood is our website, wyndhurstneighborhood.org. Developed by Peter Wayner and

Steve Oxman, it is being maintained and updated by Helen deClercq, Beth Ratrie, and Kirsten Sandhofer. Contributions to the website from any neighborhood resident are most welcome.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Clarification—Social Committee is a misnomer: there are only two people. When other life priorities led Caroline Wayner to give up this committee, I was lucky enough to

enlist Kirsten Sandhofer as my new partner. Please feel free to contact either of us with any feedback, ideas or questions you have regarding the parties/socials that we sponsor. Our goal each time is to get two families to run an event so that we get to know each other better and there is always someone in training for the next time. If you volunteer to run an event for us, you will have LOTS of support.

Beth Ratrie — 410-323-7032 or bratrie@yahoo.com

PHOTOS: BRION MCCARTHY 2013



WYNDHURST'S ANNUAL
HALLOWEEN PARADE
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27 4-6 P.M.

Kate Dixon (new to the post) and Tamara Wahlin (returning to the job) will be this year's Guides of GhouL. Kids of all ages are invited to assemble in the 600 block of St. Johns Road for a parade around the block, some fun and games as well as some spooky snacks.

ALL AGES WELCOME

WEAR A COSTUME!

Kirsten Sandhofer
kirstensandhofer@gmail.com

SUCCESSFUL SUMMER --

This was the second summer for Floating Fridays—those happy hour/pot-luck dinners that occur on Friday evenings in the summer. We had seven events and about 30 people (kids and adults) at each one where you really get to know your neighbors better. While doing anything after work on Friday can seem exhausting, these seem to be energizing for many. Since no one person is doing all the food, the effort to participate seems worthwhile. Yes, you can just buy some food to share—homemade is not required! The Blue Ribbon for participation in hosting this year has to go to Gladstone Ave. folks. About 60% of the parties were held at homes on Gladstone. This year we didn't have any hosted by a block—so next year let's try for some "group entries". Also, with a little earlier planning, we hope to sponsor one every Friday next summer!

ANNUAL BLOCK PARTY

All the planets must have aligned this year for we had great weather, a great turn-out and lots of new people becoming integrated into the fabric of the neighborhood. The name tags helped break some ice, the food was terrific and kids were riding all over the place. The WIA tables gave folks a point of contact for getting info, signing up for communications and we collected \$800 in dues that day alone (that helps pay for the cost of communications, social events and some of the cost of



The Annual Block Party was well-attended by neighbors who enjoyed grilled fare and the usual delicious array of homemade dishes. See more of David Champney's photos on page 7.

doing business as a non-profit). None of this could be done without the folks who step up every year to sweep, bring tables and chairs, grill the food and make it all go away at the end of the evening—thank you! Mark your calendars now for next year's Block Party: the second Saturday in September, 2014.

TRANSFORM BALTIMORE

The rewriting of the Baltimore City Zoning Code
 by Helen deClercq

Baltimore City is nearing the end of a lengthy process to rewrite its zoning code with the ordinance (City Council Bill No. 12-0019) now before the

City Council.

Revision of the zoning code was motivated by the City's Comprehensive Master Plan adopted in 2006 which recommended modernizing the zoning code. The Goals for Transform Baltimore, as it became called, were developed beginning in 2007 and the drafting process begun in 2009. The first draft was presented to the public in 2010 with a February 2011 deadline for public comment. The second draft was presented in 2011 with the deadline for public comments January 2012. This was followed by the City Ordinance version submitted to the City Council by The

THE WYNDHURST ALERT LISTSERV VS. THE YAHOO LIST

If you are not already on the Wyndhurst Listserv and would like to receive official notices about crime, communications from the City of Baltimore, and invitations to Wyndhurst social events, please contact David Champney—wyndhurst@gmail.com.

The Wyndhurst Yahoo Group was established, and is currently moderated, by Allison O'Brien. If you sign up, you'll be able to post and have access to information about lost pets, found objects, recommendations of contractors, and other useful information. To sign up, [click here](#) or visit: www.wyndhurstneighborhood.com/node/39

WIA NEWS

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Department of Planning April 2013.

The last significant revision to the zoning code occurred in 1971. With the challenges involved in an overhaul of this magnitude it's not unreasonable to expect another 30-40 years to go by before the zoning code is revised again. Consequently it's been critically important that the neighborhood's interests be advocated as part of the public process.

Residential Districts

In the current zoning code, there is one residential title (Title 4) composed of ten districts. Each district subtitle falls along a range of "uses" (permitted, conditional, and non-permitted) and "bulk and yard regulations" (height limits, lot sizes, setbacks, etc.). Districts range from R-1 to R-10 with lower numbered districts having more limited uses and lower density bulk and yard parameters. Currently Embla Park is zoned R-1 and Tuxedo Park is zoned R-5.

In the proposed zoning code there are now two residential titles; "Title 8 — Single Family" and "Title 9 — Rowhouse and Multi-Family". Districts have uses reflecting the title they are gathered under. Title 8 contains R-1-A to R-4 districts and Title 9 contains R-5 to R-10 districts. Within a title districts vary primarily in their bulk and yard regulations.

Embla Park

The issues in the rezoning of Embla Park were relatively straightforward. The new code divides the current R-1 district into multiple R-1-(A to E) & R-1 districts to allow finer control of bulk and yard parameters. Embla Park was mapped into R-1D and R-1E districts consistent with existing lot parameters. There is no sig-

nificant change in uses from the current R-1 district to the new R-1 districts except for a change in educational use related to the establishment of Educational Campus Districts.

Tuxedo Park

Because the R-5 district was placed into Title 9 of the new code substantial increases in uses were introduced for the Tuxedo Park portion of Wyndhurst. The changes that were of most concern were:

Multi-family dwellings are now a permitted use in the R-5 District. (Current code only allows multi-family as a conditional use.)


Neighborhood commercial establishments are allowed by conditional use in the R-5 District. In the current code commercial establishments are "not permitted". (Existing businesses within the residential zone are "grandfathered" as non-conforming uses.)

To understand the implication of the proposed changes it's important to appreciate the distinction between "conditional use" and "permitted use". A conditional use is a use that is generally allowed but subject to approval by the Zoning Board to ensure that concerns such as parking, noise, etc., are addressed. A "permitted use" is permitted by right and not subject to review. A conditional use provides a mechanism by which the impact of the proposed use upon the neighborhood (and the views of the neighborhood) may be considered—a permitted use does not.

To be fair, it should be noted that multi-family and neighborhood businesses would only be allowed in new construction or in non-residential existing buildings. In this way Title 9 of the new code seeks to allow for the re-purposing of underuti-

lized non-residential structures nested within communities, (shuttered churches, movie houses, corner stores, etc.) without threatening the residential character of the neighborhood. However, there is a "loop hole"; the current code does not, as written, offer any protection from demolition. In a perverse "law of unintended consequences" Title 9's efforts to protect homes from conversion could encourage their demolition. With no controls on demolition our neighborhood could not afford the loosening of controls on multi-family and neighborhood commercial establishments created by the placement of the R-5 district in Title 9 of the new code.

Over the course of this past two and a half years we have reviewed three drafts, submitted three letters commenting upon said drafts, attended multiple public meetings as well as several meetings with the Department of Planning. We feel that we have achieved a very good result in the residential zoning with close to 100% of our concerns addressed. While we have continued concerns about the potential increases in use and building density in our neighborhood business districts we feel that we were successful in getting our most serious concerns met and appreciate the Department of Planning's willingness to work so closely with the neighborhood.

Due to space limitations, Helen's report has been condensed. Anyone wishing to have more detail, especially regarding educational and commercial zoning regulations, may request the full article from Libby Champney, libbycc@aol.com. 

THE WIA BLOCK PARTY
SEPTEMBER 7, 2013

PHOTOS DAVID CHAMPNEY © 2013

