



NORTHWOOD NEWS

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Council Votes to Put Soccer Field Back in Parks CIP Budget; Construction Not Scheduled Until 2015

By Carole Barth

Despite the budget shortfall and despite the wishes of our community, the County Executive, several other downcounty communities, several County-wide citizen organizations, and even against the wishes of local soccer enthusiasts, the County Council voted to put the North Four Corners Park

Soccer Field project back in the Parks FY09-14 CIP budget. Added to other Council CIP actions, the budget shortfall is now significantly worse than it was under the County Executive's CIP recommendations.

Theoretically, the park project could be reconsidered before the Council takes its final vote on the whole CIP, but that is very unlikely. The Council can also amend the CIP at any time, but that is usually only done to address emergency shortfalls once a project is actually underway. This means that our best chance to reverse this decision will be when the next CIP is developed, two years from now.

In addition, the current Council members' terms will expire in December 2010, so we will have the opportunity to let both incumbents and new candidates know how much voters care about this issue before it comes before the Council again.

So let me be clear about what the Council did. They chose to ignore the voters and instead listen only to Council and Parks staff. They relied on a heavily biased, wildly inac-

curate report and verbal statements from staff, both of which completely misrepresented our position. We were

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Next Meeting on 9th of April

The next meeting of the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association will be held on Wednesday, 9 April 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at the North Four Corners Rec Center. The Rec Center is located at the end of Southwood Road, just off Edgewood Drive.

All residents of the Northwood-Four Corners-Forest Knolls area are invited to attend and express their views. Please note that only paid members of the NFCCA are eligible to vote. (Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at the meeting.)■

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring Flowers: Fragile Yet Stubborn

This is the time of year I eagerly search for signs of spring. Of course, it always cheers my heart to see the snow drops, crocus, and winter aconite in the garden, but for me it's not spring until I see the woodland wildflowers.

One of the first shrubs to bloom is the spice bush. In March, before any leaves unfurl, the spice bush is covered with tiny chartreuse flowers. In April or May, these flowers would never be noticed. In March, however, this color is so sharp and bright against the dull tans, greys, and black of the winter woods that you gasp when you see it. It is the visual equivalent of a squirt of lime juice on the tongue.

Although it appears fragile in bloom, the spice bush is a very tough plant. It survives both drought years and deluges. It's called spice bush because the leaves emit a bracing herbal sent when crushed. It apparently tastes spicy also, since it's one of the few native shrubs deer don't like to browse.

Under the spice bush, the forest floor is home to a host of delicate spring flowers: saxifrage, bloodroot, trout lily, Dutchman's breeches, spring beauties, hepatica, star chickweed, lady slippers, Virginia bluebells, and more. These are called ephemerals because they take advantage of the brief window of time between the end of winter and leaf-out in the forest. They enjoy full sun until the canopy closes over. Rather than struggling to survive the low light levels and heat of summer, they die back and lie dormant until the next spring.

It's a race for these plants to grow, flower, be pollinated, and ripen seed in time. That takes a tremendous amount of energy and, once the shade closes in, there is very little energy to be had. So woodland wildflowers don't set seed very often. One study documented that Dutchman's breeches advance by seed spread at the rate of about a hundred yards per millennium.

So the spring ephemerals more often spread vegetatively by runners or other means. A large patch of trout lily may really be a single plant with hundreds of stems. We understand it takes many years for a large tree to grow, but we may not realize that a large stand of trout lily clones probably took centuries to grow. If left undisturbed, they may live for centuries to come.

So this year, come out to the woods, crouch down and take a good look at these miraculous harbingers of spring. Marvel at their delicate strength and tenacity. Meditate on the paradox of their fleeting, yet almost immortal life span. I'll see you there!

—Carole A. Barth

Creek Cleanup on 26th of April

It's time for our annual spring cleanup of Lockridge Creek. Join us on Saturday, 26 April, at 9:30 a.m. at the intersection of Lockridge Drive and Dennis Avenue. We will work our way north to the trail head.

Be sure to bring gloves and wear sturdy shoes, long sleeves, and long pants. We will also be removing invasive vines, so bring loppers and clippers if you want to help save trees. The rain date for our cleanup will be Sunday, 27 April.

FMI, call Carole Barth at 301.593.7863. ■

NORTHWOOD NEWS

Northwood News is published by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. The NFCCA represents the 1,493 households in the area bounded by Colesville Rd. (Rte. 29), University Blvd. (Rte. 193), Caddington Ave., and the Northwest Branch.

Any resident of this area is eligible to join the NFCCA. Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at any Association meeting or mailed to the treasurer.

Northwood News is published five times a year—in October, December, February, April, and June. To place an ad or discuss a story, please contact the editor.

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Council Puts Soccer Field Back in CIP

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not allowed to speak to offer corrections. They rushed to vote on this issue, even though construction would not take place until 2015.

We tried to counter the misinformation by sending the Council: (1) an updated copy of our Community-developed alternative for the park, (2) a 17-page debunking of the staff document, and (3) bullets outlining a win-win solution for preserving Rachel Carson Meadow, saving money, and improving soccer field availability. They did not allow enough time in the process to even review the materials we sent. Nor did they listen when two of our state legislators (Mike Lennet and Roger Manno) asked them to postpone action on the park for a year even though our district is currently without a County Council Representative.

Most disturbing of all, their primary reason was that it would set a dangerous precedent to listen to affected communities:

“Staff notes that the Council would be setting a precedent if it determined that this local park should not have an athletic field. Since residents adjacent to parks frequently ask that their park remain undeveloped and oppose any park facility that attracts residents from outside the immediate neighborhood (e.g., hard surface trails and ballfields), it will be difficult to deal with future objections to lo-

cating fields in local parks. This in turn will make it more difficult to meet the need for land for active recreational purposes.

“Staff strongly believes that a decision not to place a multi-use field in this local park would set a dangerous precedent and lead to future requests for active recreational areas to be changed to passive uses to minimize impacts on adjacent communities.”

At the same time, it became clear that a very ugly rumor about our community was circulating—specifically, that our opposition to the destruction of Rachel Carson Meadow for a soccer field is rooted in racism. We sent letters explaining that nothing could be farther from the truth and expressing what a deeply offensive accusation this is. We submitted data showing that our community is actually more diverse than the county at large and that our Elementary School, Forest Knolls, is a “majority minority” school with a student body that is 69 percent minorities.

As I already stated, none of this information deterred the Council. I believe that is the real “dangerous precedent” of this affair. Are whole communities to be excluded from the decision-making process because they will be affected by the decision? Are diverse communities to be disenfranchised because of ignorant rumor-mongers?

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NECCA BOARD

The Board of Directors for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association meets five times a year, in September, November, January, March, and May. Current officers for 2007-2008 are:

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Council Returns Soccer Field to Budget

(continued from page 3)

This is pretty scary stuff, and not just for our community. If this decision is allowed to stand, then it can be applied to any public project and citizens are wasting their time going to meetings or writing letters to their elected representatives because the agencies are free to dictate our communities' quality of life.

In addition, they are finally acknowledging that MNCPPC's mismanagement of its facilities has turned what should be public amenities into public nuisances that must be imposed on communities regardless of the cost or inappropriateness of the site characteristics.

The Good News

Yes, there is some good news. We are not alone. The County Executive, Ike Leggett, has stood firm in his opposition to the soccer field project. We are also getting support from some of our state legislators. We continue to have the support of the Montgomery County Civic Federation and other citizen groups. We have collected more than 660 signatures on our petition. Individuals from outside our neighborhood who support preserving green space, providing sensible soccer fields, and promoting responsive and responsible government are supporting our efforts. With a team like this, it doesn't make sense to quit now.

This is not the end. In

December of 2010, work will begin on the next CIP cycle, and a new Council will take office. We've kept pushing for five years already; let's see the race through.

We have also gained some things from this struggle. We have increased our membership numbers and more and more residents have become actively involved. Although the work is hard and frustrating at times, it is a genuine pleasure to work together with so many talented, caring people. We have amassed an incredible amount of valuable information and experience. Our network is much wider than it was a few years ago and it continues to expand. In fact, I am now getting calls and emails from other communities asking for our advice on combating out-of-control agencies. All of these things make us stronger and better able to work toward a sustainable community with a high quality of life.

Finally, let's take some inspiration from our Nation's founding. Remember, George Washington lost every battle except the last one. The key is not to hibernate for the next two years, but to work steadily and strategically toward the next Council and CIP. If we continue to build partnerships and broaden our coalition, we will prevail. As the saying goes, "El pueblo unido jamas sera vencido." *United we will never be defeated.* ■

Special Election to Fill Marilyn Praisner's Seat

Our District 4 Councilmember, Marilyn Praisner, died in February. A special election has been scheduled in order to fill the resulting vacancy on the County Council. Primaries will be held Tuesday, April 15. The General Election will be on Tuesday, May 13. The winner will serve until noon on the first Monday in December 2010.

District 4 includes all or parts of Aspen Hill, Burtonsville, Calverton, Cloverly, Colesville, Derwood, Fairland, Olney, Sandy Spring, Silver Spring, Spencerville, Wheaton, and White Oak. (Northwood/Four Corners is the southernmost tip of the district.) At press time, five candidates had filed. However, the deadline to file is not until March 24, so by the time you read this, there could be more candidates.

The candidates are as follows:

- Mark D. Fennel, Rep.
- Steve Kanstoroom, Dem.
- Nancy Navarro, Dem.
- Don Praisner, Dem.
- Pat Ryan, Dem.

We are inviting all the candidates to attend our April 9 Association meeting, and we will try to contact them in advance with questions. However, the timetable for this election is quite short, so we will all need to work hard to become informed voters. ■

Price Comparisons Among Six Local Grocery Stores

By *Jacquie Bokow*

Since we have so many choices now, I thought it would be interesting to compare prices among the various grocery stores in our area. I was surprised at how difficult it was! I absolutely could not find comparable paper products (paper towels, toilet paper, or facial tissues), so I left them off the list. The amounts are all everyday prices recorded March 12-20.

I discovered Woodmoor Market basically sells beer and wine, with a few fruits

and veggies thrown in. If you need chips and beer for a party quick, it's the place to go, but there isn't much else.

Trader Joe's, a "gourmet" cooperative, mostly carries its own brands, and *nearly* everything at better prices. For instance, it sells Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream only in quarts, but the price is \$3.99, the same price—or cheaper—as a pint elsewhere (\$4.19 at Safeway)!

The biggest surprise was Magruder's, which I had been told was expensive. It certainly had the best selec-

tion of many items—including milks, Pop-Tarts, pickles, honey, and Ramen Noodles. Both Magruder's and Shopper's had large selections of Progresso Soups and Kosher items not seen elsewhere.

Magruder's also had a large selection of pastas, but SuperFresh was tops for *whole wheat* pastas.

And it had always seemed to me that Safeway was more expensive than other stores; now I have proof.

[If you'd like to see other comparisons, call the editor.] ■

Item	Giant	Safeway	Magruder's	Shopper's	Trader Joe's	SuperFresh
1 doz. Large Eggs	\$2.39	\$3.29	\$2.19	\$2.29	\$1.79	\$2.09
1/2 gal. Tropicana O.J.	\$3.49	\$4.69	\$4.39	\$3.28	\$2.99*	\$3.49
PF 100% Wh. Wh. Bread	\$3.69	\$3.69	\$3.69	\$3.49	N.A.	\$3.69
1/2 gal. 1% Milk	\$2.39	\$2.59	\$2.27	\$2.25	\$1.99	\$2.29
16-oz. 4% Cottage Cheese	\$2.00	\$2.89	\$2.49	\$2.62	\$2.29	\$2.29
8-oz. Sour Cream	99¢	\$1.49	\$1.09	\$1.29	\$1.69†	\$1.09
\$/lb Chicken (boneless, skinless breast)	\$3.99	\$5.49	\$2.49	\$3.49	\$3.49	\$5.29
\$/lb Beef (80% lean)	\$2.49	\$3.99	\$1.99	\$3.29	\$2.49	\$2.99
\$/lb Salmon Fillets	\$7.99	\$7.99	\$7.99	\$7.99	\$7.99	\$7.99
\$/lb Granny Smith Apples	\$1.49	\$1.69	\$1.28	\$1.50	49¢ ea.	\$1.99
5-lb Bag Idaho Potatoes	\$2.99	\$3.29	\$2.50	\$2.98	\$2.99	\$3.99
1 Cucumber	75¢	79¢	34¢	\$1.00	\$2.29**	67¢
\$/lb Bananas	54¢	54¢	49¢	53¢	49-53¢‡	69¢
\$/lb Green Peppers	\$1.89	\$1.99	\$2.48	\$1.00 ea.	\$1.99††	\$2.49
1-lb Baby Carrots	\$1.50	\$1.99	\$1.50	\$1.98	\$1.69^	\$1.99
42-oz. Quick Oats	\$2.79	\$3.59	\$2.99	\$2.39	N.A.	\$3.29
64-oz. Edy's Ice Cream	\$4.49	\$6.49	\$5.99	\$3.79	N.A.	\$5.79
10.75-oz. Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup	\$1.00	\$1.00	99¢	85¢	N.A.	85¢
16-oz. Bag Lentils	75¢	85¢	99¢	62¢	N.A.	59¢

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Long & Foster recently announced that Barbara Ciment was ranked #58 out of 9,700 agents in 5 States in 2007

Parks Dept. Crews Damage Rachel Carson Meadow

By Carole Barth

On 5-6 February, Parks Department crews brought heavy equipment to the meadow for what they claimed was routine maintenance and invasives removal. What they did, in fact, was cause a great deal of damage and create conditions that without prompt remedial action will actually worsen the invasives infestation.

They ran heavy equipment all over the meadow when the soil was wet, tearing up the grass and compacting the soil. They even drove right over the roots of most of the mature trees. (Without careful remediation, this will shorten the trees' life.) This includes the 176+ year old walnut where they ran right over the buttresses, gouged out the earth to a depth of over 20", and piled up debris. Incredibly, volunteers had already removed the invasives from the walnut tree so they really didn't need to do anything there but trim some dead limbs.

It's pretty ironic that citizens are supposed to abide by the rules and not play on County ballfields during wet weather so as not to destroy the fields, but the very professionals charged with protecting and maintaining park facilities did nothing to cushion the ground.

Seven large, mature trees were cut down (six silver maples and one locust). Six of these were cut down ostensibly because they were hazards to the public, but

three of them were perfectly healthy. Three of them were old trees with cavities, so I could understand if they were in a parking lot or looming over the playground. However, these were not in any such proximity. Moreover, I think they could simply have cut dead limbs rather than cutting whole trees.

Basically, a park visitor would be more likely to win the lottery five times over than to be injured by the "dangerous" trees the crew cut down. If the same standard were applied everywhere, we would have no habitat trees in County parks, and certainly no snags would be allowed. The seventh tree (also a maple) was cut down by the invasives crew because it was growing at the fenceline and the crew said they had to remove it in order to remove the invasives covering the fence.

We have further documented that the invasives crew cut, rammed, or pushed over seven species of healthy natives: silver maple, red maple, locust, staghorn sumac, cherry, dogwood, and hickory. In one section, healthy native locust trees were removed but invasive trees (*Ailanthus altissima*) were not.

Thanks to the intervention of Councilmember Marc Elrich and State Senator Mike Lennett, we got them to halt the destruction and agree to sit down with us and develop a consensus maintenance plan. The NFCCA hired an expert in invasive

plant removal, Dr. Marc Imlay, to tour the site and prepare a sensible removal plan. He confirmed that:

- Heavy equipment is not needed or recommended for controlling invasives on this site.

- There is no need to remove healthy native vegetation in order to control invasives.

- There is no need to remove healthy native vegetation in order to improve visibility and deter crime. (Simply removing the invasive vines can change the level of visibility from 80 percent obscured to only 10 percent obscured.)

- Trees with hollow spaces serve important ecological functions and as such should be retained wherever possible.

- No heavy equipment (including skidsteers or bobcats) should be driven within the dripline of living trees.

I met with Carole Bergmann (she is the forest ecologist who runs the highly respected Weed Warriors program for MNCPPC) and Mark Allen, the manager for North Four Corners Park, to discuss what to do next. The Parks Department will remove the trash from the park and they will chip up the invasive vine debris. Some of these chips will be placed around the trees to re-start the natural soil-life cycle which is so vital to trees. Any extra chips will be available for the community to take and use. They will place the

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Asphalt

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How MoCo's Historic Preservation Program Works

By David S. Rotenstein

First things first: The Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission does not have the authority to tell people who own properties designated as historic under county law what color to paint their walls or where their living room furniture may be placed. Since 1979, Montgomery County has had a law on the books—codified under Chapter 24A for those brave enough to navigate the legalese—defining the legal standards for what may be determined historic, the process by which a property is designated, and the regulatory framework for ensuring the protection of designated properties. The historic preservation ordinance created the Historic Preservation Commission and paved the way for staffing units in the Planning and Parks Departments housed in the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission which document and ensure the protection of the county's archaeological, architectural, and cultural landscapes that make Montgomery County unique.

Montgomery County's historic preservation program is like hundreds of others throughout the nation at the county and municipal level. It is based on federal historic preservation programs administered by the National Park Service. The National Park Service administers the nation's honorific inventory of important historic and prehistoric places known as the Na-

tional Register of Historic Places. To be listed in the National Register a building, site, structure, or object (e.g., a statue or a historic ship) must meet one or more criteria. Properties may be listed be-

cause of their association with significant individuals; they may be important because they reflect important periods in history or an important event occurred there; they

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Parks Dept. Damages Meadow

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cut hollow logs in the hedgerow to serve as habitat, and the large healthy logs will be cut for use as benches and seats throughout the meadow.

After the debris is cleared and the vegetation has leafed out, we will assess what needs to be done in the way of invasives removal. That will probably involve a machete crew under the direction of Carole Bergmann's staff. Carole will also provide a special training event in the park for our community weed warriors so we can help keep the meadow clear and healthy. If you want to help, email me at cbarth@mindspring.com.

I am still seeking expert advice from a number of sources on how to ameliorate the soil compaction and what can be done to help the damaged tree roots heal. I will also try to arrange for a native plant understory survey this spring. We also need to insist that Parks replant trees, shrubs, and meadow plants so the invasives don't colonize all the clearcut areas.

That's the good news. The bad news is that the Planning Board and Park Director Mary Bradford still

maintain that what the crews did was appropriate maintenance. Mary Bradford even claims they own no heavy equipment. The larger issue is that, as long as Parks endorses what was done here, it means that any park can be randomly (or, in our case, conveniently) destroyed and there are no consequences for Parks.

While our case is probably the most dramatic, we have started collecting other examples of maintenance gone amok from around the County. I'm even hearing about crews taking out healthy 16-foot straight trees, presumably for milling as logs. We are also discussing possible ways to get the maintenance responsibility (and funding) away from Parks maintenance in order to give it to someone who actually cares about the public's natural resources. This might mean putting maintenance of natural resources under the direction of MNCPPC natural resources staff, or transferring the responsibility to the Department of Environmental Protection, or funding a nonprofit "Friends of Rachel Carson Meadow." ■

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Historic Buildings in the County

(continued from page 10) may be architecturally significant; or they may have archaeological significance. Maryland also has its own inventory program known as the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties.

County law establishes two basic categories of historical significance: historical and cultural significance and architectural and design significance. MoCo's inventory of historic properties is known as the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. To be listed in the Master Plan (or in an intermediate classification known as the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites), an individual property or a district of related properties must be evaluated against the county's criteria. This evaluation process involves the completion of an inventory form that includes historical information about the property as well as detailed descriptions of its architecture and environmental setting. Anyone—a property owner or a third party—can nominate a property to be designated in Montgomery County.

The inventory forms are submitted to the Planning Department's Historic Preservation Section for review. Once an application has been found to be complete it is then brought before the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)—a nine-member volunteer board appointed by the County Executive composed of experts in architecture, history, and archaeology, as well as community representatives—which votes on whether the property meets one or

more of the criteria for designation. While the County Council has the final say on whether a property is designated or not, the Planning Board votes whether to forward the designation to the Council with a recommendation to add a property to the Master Plan.

Once a property is listed in the Master Plan, it is subject to the regulatory oversight of the HPC and it becomes eligible for state and county tax credits for qualifying rehabilitation and restoration work. To make significant changes to a designated property, e.g., putting on a new roof, an addition, replacing windows, or demolishing an outbuilding, property owners must submit a Historic Area Work Permit that details the proposed work. The HPC then determines if the HAWP meets the standards established under county law and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. It is this process that is the least understood and most feared by communities. Generally speaking, the standards work to maintain community character by preventing teardowns and McMansionization; property values remain stable or increase in historic areas; and, contrary to popular belief, the rules for designated historic properties are significantly less restrictive than most homeowners associations which dictate paint color and landscaping, among other things.

In our community there is one property that is designated

in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Holly View, an antebellum vernacular farmhouse at 130 Kinsman View Circle, was designated in 1979. Nearby, just south of University Boulevard, is the county's smallest historic district. The Polychrome Houses Historic District consists of five Art Deco-style houses fronting Colesville and Sutherland roads. Built between 1934 and 1936, this district is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Before 1996, there also were several properties in the Four Corners area that were listed in the Locational Atlas. The former William Read house at 507 Dennis Avenue, a frame house built in 1904, was found to have been significantly altered and the HPC and Planning Board recommended removing it from the Locational Atlas.

There currently are about 20 historic districts and 400 individually designated Master Plan historic properties. These include properties such as Bethesda's Riley Farm (Uncle Tom's Cabin) and Silver Spring's Jesup Blair House, both of which are county-owned. There are many properties that have historical and architectural significance in Montgomery County which have not yet been evaluated. Among these are properties in the North Four Corners area, including early homes in the Northwood Park subdivision (1936-1939) and perhaps even the 1950s faux log cabin recreation building in North Four Corners Park.

[Rotenstein is Vice-Chair of the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission and a resident of Northwood Park.] ■

About Home Equity Lines of Credit

By Maureen Carrington

Despite the most recent trend in real estate values, many of us Northwood residents have been fortunate to enjoy and maintain a substantial increase in property value since we purchased our homes. You can use this increased home value to increase your financial security.

A Home Equity Line Of Credit (HELOC) is a loan that is secured by the equity in your house. When you get a HELOC, the lender will provide you with a checkbook that you can use whenever the need arises. Having this easy access to funds is a great comfort if you are suddenly confronted with expenses due to job changes, medical costs, tuition, or if you would like to make improvements to your home. You can also take out a HELOC against a vacation home or investment property.

Opening a HELOC typically costs you nothing as long as you leave it open for three years. You are not required to ever use it, just don't close the account. Since you only pay interest on the outstanding balance, simply having a HELOC with a zero balance costs you nothing, yet provides a great "what if" fund.

If you have credit card balances, a HELOC is a great way to reduce the amount of interest you pay every month. Compared to

the prevailing credit card interest rates of 12-18 percent or more, a HELOC's rates are tied to the "Prime Rate," which is currently 5.25 percent. Depending on your personal situation and credit score, your HELOC rate could be as low as 4.75 percent (Prime minus .5 percent) or up to 6.25 percent (Prime plus one percent).

Another advantage to a HELOC versus other loans is that interest on the first \$100,000 of a HELOC balance is fully tax deductible for almost all people. This lowers your effective interest rate even further. *(If a HELOC balance is over \$100,000, then there are additional requirements to meet in order to maintain deductibility. The requirements for these higher balances are too lengthy to list here, so feel free to call me or consult with your accountant, tax adviser, etc., for details.)*

Right now, interest rates are trending downward and it appears that the Federal Reserve may continue to drop rates in the near future to help stimulate the economy. This will cause the Prime Rate to fall, which, in turn, lowers the interest rate on your HELOC. What is interesting is that credit card companies are keeping their rates high. So if the current trend continues, a HELOC becomes a better option than carrying a credit card balance every month.

While most HELOCs interest rates are adjusted according to the Prime rate, others give you the additional option of converting the existing balance to fixed rate at any time you want. This is a no-cost feature that can save you plenty of money in the future.

If you are interested in reducing monthly payments, my recommendation to you would be to take out a HELOC *with the lock feature* and "float" down as interest rates fall. Then, when it appears that the Federal Reserve is about to start raising rates, you should "lock" in the low interest rate available at that time. That will help protect you from payment increases as the rates rise. ■

Any Questions About St. Trees?

Brett Linkletter, Program Manager of Tree Maintenance for the Department of Public Works & Transportation, will provide answers at the April Association meeting. Please bring a list of any street tree problems on your block such as:

- trees that need pruning,
- unhealthy trees,
- places where replacement trees are needed, and
- places that lack trees.

If you can't attend, email your questions and problems to NFCCA President Carole Barth at cbarth@mindspring.com and she will consolidate them and pass them on to Mr. Linkletter. ■

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Listings in Northwood/Forest Knolls/Kinsman As of 3/16/2008

<u>Active</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Bedrms</u>	<u>Full Baths</u>	<u>Half Bath</u>
10625 Eastwood Ave	\$360,000	Cape Cod	4	1	0
10420 Eastwood Ave	\$480,000	Cape Cod	3	1	0
10609 Edgewood Av	\$400,000	Rambler	5	2	0
1016 Chiswell Lane	\$519,000	Colonial	7	3	1
10703 Lombardy Rd	\$359,900	Raised Rambler	3	1	1
10705 Lombardy Rd	\$369,900	Rambler	3	1	1
11201 Lombardy Rd	\$395,000	Rambler	3	2	0
112 Woodridge Ave	\$495,000	Cape Cod	3	1	1
201 University Blvd W	\$459,900	Cape Cod	7	3	0
405 Royalton Rd	\$359,000	Rambler	3	2	0
305 Ladson Rd	\$460,000	Cape Cod	3	1	0
405 Kerwin Rd	\$449,000	Rambler	3	2	0
413 Kerwin Rd	\$399,999	Cape Cod	4	2	0
924 Malta Lane	\$419,000	Split Level	5	3	0
817 Malta Lane	\$389,900	Split Level	4	2	1
1006 Playford Lane	\$474,000	Split Level	4	2	1
800 Whittington Ter	\$435,000	Split Foyer	4	3	0
1106 Caddington Ave	\$449,900	Split Level	4	1	1
1017 Loxford Ter	\$424,000	Contemp	3	2	1
<u>Contract</u>					
407 Hannes St	\$400,000	Split Level	4	2	1
10611 Eastwood Ave	\$459,000	Cape Cod	4	3	0
423 Kerwin Rd	\$360,000	Rambler	4	2	0

** Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed **



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More Memories of 'Downtown' Four Corners

By Linda S. Perlman

This is about the parcel of land in Four Corners, in the middle of University Boulevard, where the 7-11, Jerry's Sub Shop, McDonald's, and Papa John Pizzeria are now located.

The pizza place (Papa John's), next to what is now McDonald's, was for many years an automobile transmission shop. Before that, it was Fire Station 16 of the Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department, which is now located on University Boulevard East, just past the "new" Blair High School and before the entrance to the Beltway.

McDonald's is fairly new at that location; before that it was Roy Rogers (and, briefly, Hardee's), before that Gino's, and before that, Tops.

Gino's was my first paying job, not counting babysitting (which paid, at that time, around 50¢ per hour). Gino's was a typical fast food restaurant, with the addition of Kentucky Fried Chicken. A Gino's Giant was similar to a Big Mac. I worked as a cashier, food packager, and french fry chef beginning in spring 1972, when I was 16 years old, to fall 1972, which was my senior year at Northwood High School. I had to wear a red and white striped uniform and white (non-sneaker) shoes. If you had long hair, which I did, your hair either had to be tied back in a ponytail or worn up, both with no stray locks of hair—or else you had to wear a hairnet. I was paid the grand sum of

\$1.50 per hour when I started (this was below the \$1.60 minimum wage; I'm not sure how Gino's got away with paying less than minimum wage) and was increased to \$1.65 per hour by the time I left. In order to get a raise, in addition to my stellar service and work record, I had to take a test on such important matters as how to assemble and clean the milk shake machine. I quit Gino's, not because of the low pay, hairnet requirement, ugly uniform, or white shoe requirement, but because my Saturday-Sunday daytime shift was seriously interfering with my social life during my senior year of high school and the small amount of money I was earning was not worth it.



The Stone House Inn, above—actually located in a stone building—was at University Boulevard and Colesville Road, where the 7-11 and Jerry's Sub Shop now stand. It opened about 1947 and continued in business until at least 1972 or 1973. The Stone House Inn was known for its fried chicken dinners, which I recall liking as a child, and, at least during part of its history, had live music on weekend nights. My father also tells

me that, in the days before Montgomery County had liquor by the drink, in the late 1950s to perhaps the early 1960s, the waiters at the Stone House Inn would go across to the Montgomery County Liquor Store in Four Corners (located between the bank and the library) and purchase miniatures (i.e., small liquor bottles like the ones you would get on an airplane) for you. You then would purchase a "set up"—glass with ice, mixer, lemon twist, etc.—from the Stone House Inn and pour the miniature into the set up.

I wish I could tell you why and when the Stone House Inn closed. As best as I have been able to discern, the Stone House Inn closed in or about 1973, after a 26-year run of business, and the building was torn down soon thereafter.

(Thanks to the silver springsingular.blogspot.com for some of the information for this article.) ■

S.S. Judged Most 'Walkable City'

The April issue of *Prevention* magazine rated each of 50 states for Walkability. Silver Spring, Md., was rated #1 in Maryland and #17 of the Top 100 cities in the Nation.

The other Maryland rankings: (2) Bethesda, (3) Gaithersburg, (4) Dundalk, (5) Baltimore, (6) Frederick, (7) Germantown, (8) Wheaton-Glenmont, (9) Columbia, and (10) Ellicott City. ■

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The Bugs Who Came to Dinner: A Bed Bug Saga

By Caitlin James

It all started one morning last October when I woke up with an itchy rash. I ignored it. I only took notice when it started spreading to more parts of my body. On the fifth day of the rash spreading, I saw my doctor. What she told me was to turn my family's life upside down for the next couple of months.

"It looks like bed bug bites," she said and called her colleague in for a second opinion. The second doctor concurred.

"Bed bug bites?" I said incredulously.

Bug bites were not something I had even considered since I was the only one in the house with the rash. But I learned from my doctor that day that some people react to bed bug bites and some people get bitten and never react. She told me of a case of a woman who had about 300 visible bed bug bites on her body whose husband slept in the same bed and had no visible bites.

I dove into the Internet when I got home and quickly became a bed bug expert. I talked to a Cornell entomologist. I had three exterminators come over to inspect. I learned how to pronounce "diatomaceous earth," an organic substance used for pest control. I became obsessed with finding a solution—and as non-toxic a one as possible.

I learned that there has been a surge in bed bug infestations in the U.S. in recent years and that it can be extremely difficult to get rid of the bugs—and to find them.

Bed bugs are nocturnal creatures that hide in mattresses, wooden bed frames, furniture, or cracks in the floor or walls near the beds during the day. At night, they feast on human blood (thankfully, they are not disease-carrying) when the human is sleeping and then immediately go back into hiding. It's unlikely that the person being bitten would feel them. To this day, we have never seen a bed bug, except one that the first exterminator who came to inspect showed me, which he said he found under my daughter's bed. I later came to wonder if he had planted it as I discovered that some of the information he had given me was grossly inaccurate. I wondered whether he was playing on the fears I was clearly displaying.

None of the exterminators who came to inspect found any of the classic evidence of bed bugs in our house: blood stains on bedding, exoskeletons, or fecal matter. We clearly did not have an infestation. We don't even know if we had any. But going on the doctors' hypothesis, we proceeded as if we did.

I also became deeply anxious about figuring out how the bed bugs might have gotten into our lives. The experts say that the usual culprits are: a trip involving a stay at a bed-bug-infested motel or hotel, a bed-bug-laden house guest, or the acquisition of used furniture (especially mattresses, wooden bed frames, or other furniture that was placed close to a bed). Occasionally, bed bug eggs

may be laid in clothing and, therefore, second-hand clothing can also be the source.

In our case, we had two theories about how the bed bugs may have come to live with us. We had recently acquired a wooden-framed child's chair with a dirty cover from the "As Is" department at IKEA. It is only in retrospect that we realized that it may have been a return rather than something that had been sitting around in a warehouse as we originally assumed.

With two young children, we are also often given bags or boxes of clothing that friends' children have outgrown. The bed bugs arrived in our lives in October, soon after we had brought up some of the gifted clothing from our basement as the weather got cooler.

After in-depth discussions with two of the exterminators and the Cornell entomologist, we embarked on a chemical-free approach to bed bug elimination. We learned that the best defense against bed bugs is vacuuming. We vacuumed all of the bedrooms aggressively. We banished the IKEA chair to the backyard and spent many hours over several weeks putting all of our clothing, bedding, and curtains into the dryer for 15 minutes per load (high heat for 15 minutes kills the bugs and any eggs) and packing the clothing into plastic storage boxes where it stayed for the next two months. When I became overwhelmed by the work at one point, my dear friend and neighbor Cathy

(continued on page 19)

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The Bugs Who Came to Dinner

(continued from page 18)

Lawler came over and emptied out my daughter's closet, hauled the clothing to her house, threw it all in her dryer and returned it packaged, sorted, and labeled.

We bought bed-bug-proof mattress covers for our three beds. My husband sprayed the inside of the children's dressers (theirs only since only they received used clothing) with Ethyl alcohol, which also kills the critters and their eggs. We bought metal bed frames for the two beds that were on the floor, applied petroleum jelly to the legs of the frames and moved them several inches away from the walls. Bed bugs cannot easily hide

in metal frames the way they do in the crevices of wooden frames, and it is much more difficult for them to crawl up metal legs, especially if they have been coated with petroleum jelly.

One of the hardest parts of the whole experience was the psychological ramifications. The idea of the bugs crawling undetected over our bodies at night and sucking our blood drove us to do everything we could to banish them.

I do know that I will never look at a piece of used furniture—especially wooden—in the same way again. Any used clothing given to us now immediately goes into the dryer. The next

time we stay at a motel, we'll do a very careful inspection of our luggage before we leave.

During the two-month period following the appearance of my rash, each of us got one or two bites from time to time. However, we were never sure they were bed bug bites. I never got anything like the rash I had in October again. The last time any of us had anything resembling a bite was in December.

I learned that bed bugs can live for over a year without a blood meal so it's possible that if we had them, they are still here. We don't know ... and we may never know. Whenever any one of us gets a red, itchy welt—even a mosquito bite—we are bound to wonder ... could it be? ■



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Real Estate Activity in Forest Knolls and Northwood from November 2007– March 14, 2008

ACTIVE LISTINGS

Address	List Price	BR	Baths	Type	Style	DOM
1106 Caddington	\$449,900	4	1.5	Detached	Split Level	13
1016 Chiswell	\$519,000	7	3.5	Detached	Colonial	19
10420 Eastwood	\$480,000	3	1	Detached	Cape Cod	60
10625 Eastwood	\$360,000	4	1	Detached	Cape Cod	7
10608 Edgewood	\$400,000	5	2	Detached	Rambler	36
405 Kerwin	\$449,000	3	2	Detached	Rambler	14
413 Kerwin	\$399,999	4	2	Detached	Cape Cod	7
133 Kinsman View	\$335,000	3	3.5	TH	Colonial	29
305 Ladson	\$460,000	3	1	Detached	Cape Cod	165
10703 Lombardy	\$359,900	3	1.5	Detached	Rambler	72
10705 Lombardy	\$369,900	3	1.5	Detached	Rambler	102
11201 Lombardy	\$395,000	3	2	Detached	Rambler	240
1017 Loxford	\$424,000	3	2.5	Detached	Split Foyer	56
817 Malta	\$389,900	4	2.5	Detached	Split Level	9
1006 Playford	\$474,900	4	2.5	Detached	Split Level	2
405 Royalton	\$359,000	3	2	Detached	Rambler	196
201 University	\$459,900	7	3	Detached	Cape Cod	86
800 Whittington	\$435,000	4	3	Detached	Split Foyer	11
112 Woodridge	\$495,000	3	2.5	Detached	Cape Cod	79

CONTRACT PENDING LISTINGS

Address	List Price	BR	Baths	Type	Style	DOM
407 Hannes	\$400,000	4	2.5	Detached	Split Level	14
423 Kerwin	\$360,000	4	2	Detached	Rambler	147

SOLD LISTINGS

Address	List Price	Sold Price*	BR	Baths	Type	Style	DOM
105 Belton	\$449,900	\$415,000	3	3	Detached	Rambler	47
1117 Caddington	\$379,900	\$364,656	4	1.5	Detached	Split Level	19
1005 Chiswell	\$349,900	\$310,000	3	2.5	Detached	Split Level	99
1015 Chiswell	\$385,000	\$375,000	3	2.5	Detached	Split Level	49
10617 Eastwood	\$448,000	\$432,000	3	3	Detached	Cape Cod	62
322 Hannes	\$415,000	\$395,000	5	2.5	Detached	Split Level	53
9 Kinsman View	\$379,000	\$361,000	3	2+2	TH	Colonial	108
1011 Loxford	\$375,000	\$360,000	3	2.5	Detached	Split Level	10
905 Malta	\$355,000	\$355,000	3	2.5	Detached	Rambler	11
501 Royalton	\$399,900	\$394,200	3	2	Detached	Rambler	92
10204 Sutherland	\$449,900	\$435,000	3	2	Detached	Rambler	13
216 Thistle	\$399,875	\$385,000	4	2	Detached	Split Level	98

*Sold price reflects any seller subsidy towards purchasers' closing costs.

DOM = Days on the Market

All information deemed reliable but not guaranteed. This advertisement is not intended to solicit any listing with another broker.