

NORTHWOOD NEWS

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Upzoning Proposal Would Increase Housing Density in Mont. County

By Sharon Canavan

In December 2020, Councilmember Will Jawando introduced Zoning Text Amendment ZTA 20-70. The twin goals of this proposed change are to increase the supply of “Missing Middle” housing [montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative/missing-middle-housing], which would be market rate (i.e., nonsub-

sidized) but more affordable to moderate- and middle-income households, and to encourage denser development along existing transit corridors. A change to allow increased density is often referred to as “upzoning.”

As introduced, ZTA 20-70 would amend the Montgomery County zoning code to permit denser development within a mile of a Metro station. This proposed change would allow redevelopment of single-family homes in residential areas zoned R-60 to build duplexes, townhouses, or small multifamily buildings on a parcel. Most of the Four Corners area is zoned R-60.

In February 2020, the Montgomery County Planning Department sent its evaluation of ZTA 20-70 to the Montgomery County Planning Board (view the ZTA 20-07 Planning Board Staff Report at montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ZTA-20-07_Final.pdf). The County Council held a public hearing on ZTA 20-07 on February 11, 2020.

On March 4, 2021, Coun-

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Next Meeting on 8th December

The next meeting of the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association will be held on Wednesday, 8 December 2021, at 7:30 p.m. ***The meeting will be held virtually.***

The access codes for the online Zoom meeting will be sent to everyone who’s on the listserv (see page 2) and also posted on the home page of our website at www.nfcca.org the week of the meeting. We promise we won’t forget this time! (Apologies for October.)

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 online or mailed to the Treasurer (page 3).] ■

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WWW.NFCCA.ORG

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the October NFCCA meeting, I was reelected as president for the 2021–2022 year. Thank you to our Board members and volunteers for their service during the preceding year. I would also like to introduce our Board of Directors members, who include two new Board members. Julie Whitcomb (vice president), Sondra Katz (treasurer), Sharon Canavan (secretary), and Robin Loube (at-large) were reelected to another term. Ed Levy moves on the Board to immediate past president. The two new members of the NFCCA Board of Directors are Mario “Ema” Perez of Margate Road and John Prochilo of Southwood Avenue.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the October NFCCA meeting was conducted remotely, via Zoom. The 8 December NFCCA meeting also will be an online Zoom meeting. The Zoom meeting information will be posted on the NFCCA website (nfcca.org), listserv (nfcca@groups.io), and NextDoor/Northwood-Four Corners.

Our October 2021 meeting featured a presentation and question-and-answer session with Wade Holland, Montgomery County Coordinator of the Vision Zero program. Vision Zero is a County plan dedicated to eliminating traffic-related fatalities and to improving safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

For the second year, neighborhood volunteers joined together to give the children in our neighborhood a fun, socially distant Halloween. The Halloween committee promoted outdoor trick-or-treating, allowing residents to safely distribute treats to children without contact. The NFCCA also sponsored community Halloween contests, including pet costume and house decorating contests. Photos of the Halloween contest winning entries appear in this newsletter (see page 14). Thanks to the neighborhood Halloween committee for a lively Halloween celebration.

By the time you read this message, Thanksgiving and Hanukkah will both be over. Sunset now occurs around 5:00 p.m. I do not like the early darkness and wish that Daylight Savings Time was year-round. But December also brings holiday lights and my favorite light show—the Garden of Lights at Brookside Gardens—has returned after a year’s absence due to COVID-19 (see page 13).

Cold weather has forced many outdoor activities inside, although some restaurants are still attempting to make outside dining warm with propane heaters and fire pits. Much of daily life has returned to a semblance of normality, but masks, vaccine booster shots, testing, and quarantines, as well as periodic breakthroughs of COVID variants, will be with us for the foreseeable future. As *Hill Street Blues*’ Sgt. Phil Esterhaus would say, “Let’s be careful out there.”

—Linda Perlman

Communicate With Neighbors

NFCCA Listserv

To join:

nfcca+subscribe@groups.io

[add “un” to unsubscribe]

To send messages to group:

nfcca@groups.io

Nextdoor/Northwood-Four Corners

<https://nextdoor.com>; enter your street address; choose “Northwood-Four Corners.”

Twitter: @NFCCAMoCo

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nfccamoco

NORTHWOOD NEWS

Northwood News is published by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. The NFCCA represents the ~1,485 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 online, at any meeting, or mailed to the treasurer.

The *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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Visit Our Website

www.nfcca.org

Four Corners Likely to Move To New County Council District

By Ed Levy

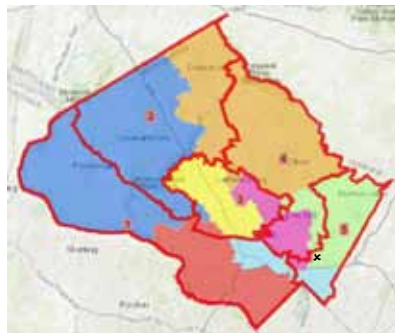
On 3 November, the Montgomery County Redistricting Commission voted to approve revised County Council District lines. The new lines, which implement a 2020 voter-approved ballot initiative, would move from a Council with five Members elected by district and four at-large Members to a Council with seven Members elected by district and four at-large Members.

Four Corners will be moved from its current Silver Spring-based district to a new district that moves north and northeast to include White Oak, Colesville, Fairland, Cloverly, Burtonsville, and Leisure World. The new map will require County Council approval after the Council holds two public hearings during the week of 15 November.

Coincidentally, the State legislature is using 2020 Census data to redistrict boundaries for state legislators and Members of Congress. The State legislature will hold a special session in December to begin this work.

The County Council-related ballot initiative was proposed by current At-Large Councilmember and Silver Spring resident Evan Glass. Glass noted that the County population had increased 50 percent over the last 30 years while Council representation remained the same, leaving each County resident with reduced representation.

I spoke with Glass on 9 November who told me that



The red outlines and numbers indicate the current five districts. The colored areas show the new seven district delineations. The 'x' marks our neighborhood; our new district would extend from the Beltway north to the County line. Go to www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/BCC/redistricting to view an interactive map.

six of the seven new districts will have a majority of people of color, reflecting the County's population distribution. He told me the Redistricting Commission was appointed by the current Council and included four Democrats, two Republicans, two independents, two unaffiliated voters, and one Libertarian.

Councilmember Glass concluded that there is one important thing that a new map can't do: it will be up to the voters to elect more women Councilmembers!

[Levy, who has lived on Thistle Court for 35 years and has volunteered in politics since he was 14 years old, was Vice President for several years of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board.] ■

NFCCA BOARD

The Board of Directors for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association serves for one year and meets every month except July and August. Current officers (until October 2022) are:

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Upzoning Proposal Would Increase Housing Density

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

cil President Tom Hucker and Hans Riemer—Chair of the Committee on Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) of the Montgomery County Council—sent a letter asking the Planning Board to evaluate zoning reforms to increase Missing Middle housing and make recommendations on zoning text amendments. Planning staff responded with the Attainable Housing Strategies [*montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative*] report making the following preliminary recommendations to the County Council (see PowerPoint Presentation at *montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Planning-Board-06.24.21.pdf*):

- In the R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones, allow house-scale duplexes and triplexes “by right” and allow quadplexes by right in areas closer to transit.

- Conform Missing Middle housing redevelopment to a Planning Board-approved pattern book that gives guidance on massing, scale, and design to blend in among single-family homes.

- Create a new optional method of development to encourage consolidation and development of duplexes, cottage courts, townhouses, and small multiplexes and apartments near transit, along Thrive Growth Corridors and near the County’s centers of activity.

- Support more corridor-foc-

used master plans to identify locations ideal for larger-scale attainable housing, including townhouses, stacked flats, and apartments along select growth corridors.

PHED Committee Chair Riemer is drafting further changes for a ZTA Missing Middle proposal. Among the changes being considered are permitting Missing Middle housing types in single-family residential zones for any property within one-quarter mile of an existing or planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor if “the property has frontage on an arterial or higher roadway classification” or the property is recommended for Missing Middle housing in the applicable Master Plan. This change would directly impact the Northwood-Four Corners community, as the BRT Flash buses are already operating on Route 29 and the area on University Boulevard from Wheaton to Langley Park is one of the recommended BRT routes in the Countywide Transit Corridor Functional Master Plan. Noting that these changes “are complex and very significant,” Riemer asked the Planning Board to review “Missing Middle, provide more opportunity for public input, and develop recommendations for the Council.”

In part, the impetus for the Missing Middle housing zoning changes is being driven by the efforts underway and being considered under the Thrive Montgomery 2050 (TM 2050) planning process that is evaluating the County’s

future growth, housing needs, and transportation priorities. Although the TM 2050 plan has not yet been adopted, the planning document has a strong focus on equitably addressing affordability and housing needs. TM 2050 does not directly implement zoning changes, but it is intended to serve as a conceptual planning framework for evaluating and recommending future zoning amendments.

NFCCA is a member of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, which sent a letter to the County Council opposing adoption of the TM 2050 general plan until there is more opportunity for public input and suggesting the need to accumulate more data and strategic proof of concept through pilot projects. A copy of the MCCF letter and accompanying articles can be found at *www.montgomerycivic.org/files/CFN202111.pdf*. [Editor’s Note: I strongly urge you to read the objections raised by the MCCF.]

The Planning Board will continue to review staff recommendations, but future decisions will fall to the new planning commissioner. Once final recommendations are adopted by the Planning Board, the report will go to the County Council, which will hold a public hearing. Councilmember Riemer is not expected to take up zoning text changes in the PHED Committee until the TM 2050 general plan is finalized.

NFCCA will continue to monitor these planning and zoning developments. ■

Jumping Worms: Can We Stop 'Em in Their Tracks?

By Lisa Schamess

Maybe you went walking in the woods in warm weather and a strange creature slithered underfoot or across your path. Congratulations: You've seen a jumping worm. These slimy, fast-moving, and sinuous creatures are unlike any worm you've ever seen, and their presence indicates diminished soil quality, erosion, and stress for native habitat.

"Jumping worms" describes three similar invasive species of worm whose populations have exploded in recent years in 37 U.S. States, including in Maryland. The Maryland Invasive Species Council published an excellent overview in 2019, with photos to help identify them, and the depleted soil they leave in their wake (<https://mdinvasives.org/iotm/nov-2019>). In a nutshell, here's how to spot them:

- Churned-up soil like coffee grounds or hamburger meat.
- Rapid, snakelike movement.
- Appearance: Larger than regular earthworms, jumping worms are typically four- to six-inches long when mature. Their color ranges from pink to dark purple. Most importantly, look for a flat white band like a little cigar band, the *clitellum*, that goes all the way around their bodies.
- Habits: Jumping worms like shade, thick leaf litter, and mulch. They tend to stay in the top two inches of the soil, and are easy (and creepy) to spot.



Laurel Watt, Ramsey Master Gardeners

Jumping worms deplete soil and threaten ecologies.

What to Do if You See Jumping Worms

Good news: Adult worms die off after a few hard freezes. Bad news: warmer winters and weather-hardy cocoons the size of poppy seeds means a big incursion each spring. So stay on the path when in the woods, and clean your shoe soles and other items in contact with the earth before setting foot on any other ground.

Encourage beneficial plants and wildlife in your garden to help keep soil healthy, such as native nimblewill grass (which is abundant already in our lawns), native asters, white snakeroot, Virginia creeper, and more. Local wildlife might also become your ally: Salamanders, turtles, skunks, moles, and chipmunks have all been seen consuming these worms (results vary).

Careful what soil you bring home. Do not purchase loose soil or compost unless you know the source has heat-treated it. Even so, solarize it carefully under a tarp or in plastic bags at 104°F for three or more days before laying down in the garden. It is best to use bagged mulch and compost that has been heat-treated or sat in the sun

for some time.

Be a thoughtful plant buyer and swapper. Inspect the soil of potted plants from garden centers, or purchase only bare-root plants or seeds. If swapping plants with neighbors, ask for bare-root, stem cuttings, or seeds.

Pesticides won't work against jumping worms, but some fertilizers, alfalfa pellets, and soap (good old Irish Spring) seem to reduce their presence. Anything you put in your soil will also harm beneficial insects, however, so be strategic and sparing.

Please Report Jumping Worms

Use the EddMaps system (<https://www.eddmaps.org/report>, under wildlife, not insects) to report jumping worms where you see them, and tell your friends about them, too.

See more resources from the University of Maryland Extension Service: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/invasive-jumping-worms>.

This podcast includes valuable previews of the eradication methods being tested now: <https://www.thomaschristophergardens.com/podcasts/meeting-the-threat-of-asian-jumping-worms>.

[Schamess is a writer and naturalist-in-training with the Maryland Master Naturalist Program and recently completed her certification as a Montgomery County Weed Warrior. She lives on Loxford Terrace with her husband, son, and three extremely thoughtful cats.] ■

Publishing a Book with an Eight-Year-Old

By Katherine Pickett

When my then 6-year-old daughter, Nancy, said she had an idea for a second-grade chapter book, I wanted to support her ambition. Thanks-giving 2019 was around the corner, and we thought it would give us a fun project for the holidays. Little did we know 20 months would pass before we achieved this dream.

With my professional background in book publishing, I knew writing a book as a team would be a challenge. We would have to agree on the approach, divide the work, and execute. Plus, one of us was a first grader.

So how did we do it?

First, we talked through some of Nancy's ideas. We discussed character names and some of the big ideas she had for the plot. After a few conversations, we sat down to put words on a page. I opened my laptop and began to type.

Screech! It was immediately clear we had no idea what we were doing. Ideas are good, but we needed a plan. We gathered some loose-leaf paper and a pen and began to outline the book. Mostly that meant me asking prompting questions, and Nancy answering.

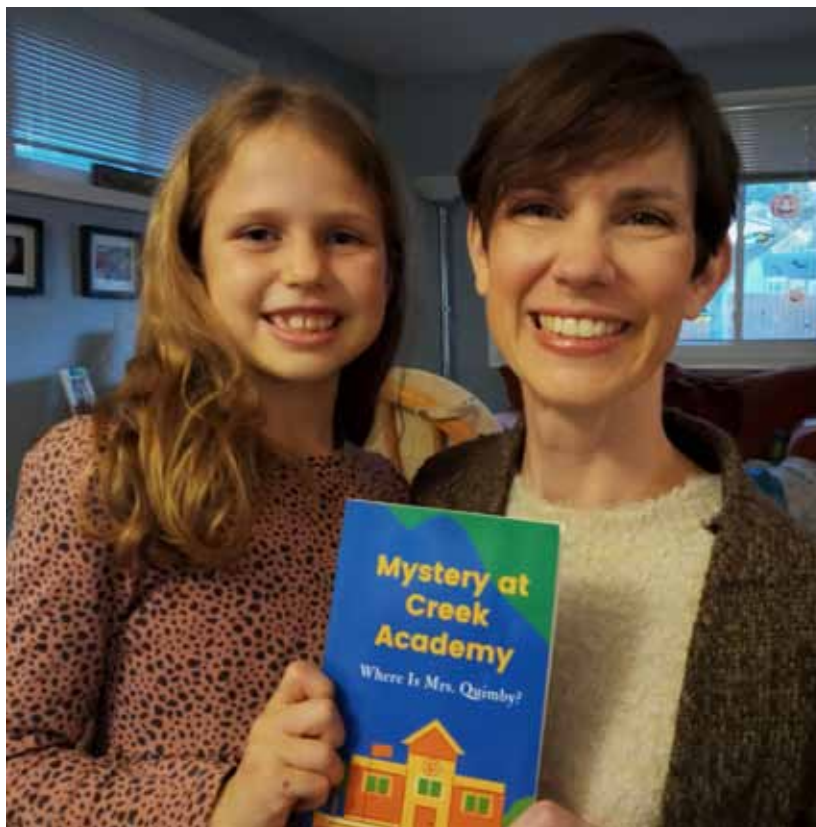
"Where does this story take place?"

"School."

"Who are the characters?"

Nancy named six of her best friends.

"So far all the characters are girls. Will this be a school for girls and boys, or just girls? A regular school or a boarding school?"



Nancy Pickett and her mother Katherine hold the book they co-wrote, which they began when Nancy was in first grade.

"All girls. Boarding school."

"Okay, now is there magic in this story?"

"No."

We planned 10 chapters, and Nancy and I took turns with the typing. (That was likely the most harrowing part, but we were a team!) We often wrote just a few sentences at a time, but after several months, we had completed a first draft. Working title: *Carla and Lola Go to School, But Where Is Ms. Quimby?* Celebrations ensued!

Nancy asked what more we would need to do before we could publish our book. I explained all the steps, and she vowed to follow them.

Next up: Revisions.

Not surprising given the age and experience of the authors, several plot points were illogical. Why would there be a tree that looks like a shed? If Ms. Quimby is married, why would she run off and marry a prince? Now age seven, Nancy recognized these problems and we fixed them. Eventually we made it through the revisions. Again, celebrations ensued.

"Nancy, it is time for us to read the story straight through on our own. We will each take a copy and make our changes, then we will compare notes."

"Okay!"

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The Family That Writes Together...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

I read my copy—all 80 pages—in a matter of days. Nancy took months. She said the first chapter was boring (better fix that!). It felt like homework. Whenever I suggested she read the manuscript, she shrugged.

So, what finally got her to complete her reading?

One day, she was left alone in the family room with her father, who had a business call. The sketch pad and books were upstairs, and the only thing around to read was *Carla and Lola*. She read the manuscript in one sitting and declared she loved it.

One problem: The title no longer made sense. Carla and Lola, Nancy said, were not the main characters anymore. The whole gang of friends were equally important. So we revised the title.

That brought us to February 2021.

The next several steps went much faster. I called in a few favors from friends and applied some elbow grease to move the project along:

- Children's book author and friend Katherine Melvin and my husband, Chris, were our first readers. They identified several areas for improvement. More revisions!

- We purchased an interior design from www.bookdesigntemplates.com, and I did the layout. Thank goodness for how-to videos.

- We created the cover design using a free graphic design website called Canva.

- Friend and editor Kathy Clayton proofread the book.

More revisions!

Meanwhile, Nancy worked on the illustrations. She had completed five or so back in 2019, when we started the project. She hadn't intended them for the book, but I loved them. They made the cut. We identified eight or 10 other places that needed a picture. She drew four over the next three months. What gives? Again, it felt like homework.

By August 2021, the art still wasn't finished. So, we flexed: We cut some of the illustrations we had planned, teamed up on a few others, and called it good.

To complete the project, we uploaded our files to two websites. KDP, which is part of Amazon, is producing the print book, and Draft2Digital is distributing the ebook.

Those processes were not seamless. The cover design had to be redone multiple times over four weeks; a professional designer would have completed it in one week. We also had to add some pages so that our names could appear on the spine. There are now two special features at the back of the book.

At long last, on 20 September 2021, *Mystery at Creek Academy: Where Is Mrs. Quimby?* was published!

Climbing into her top bunk one night after rereading the book, Nancy said, "Our book would be a lot different if we hadn't had other people help us with it." Very true. It is a much better book because of their input.

We are proud of the final result. Nancy has given sev-

eral copies to teachers and friends, and my friends have given copies to their children. The kids have enjoyed it, and it may even be included in the Forest Knolls Elementary School library. Nancy and I are so pleased to have completed such a long and rewarding project.

Now Nancy's five-year-old sister, Hazel, has caught the publishing bug. She is planning to write her own book with me as coauthor. Working title: *How I Learned to Cross-Stitch*. Check back in 2023 to find out how it went!

[Katherine Pickett is a professional writer and editor on Lombardy Road. Mystery at Creek Academy: Where Is Mrs. Quimby?—coauthored with her daughter Nancy—is her first children's book.] ■

The Tree Fairies Decorated, Too

Halloween decorations appeared one day on the Fairies' front doors along Cavalier Drive near Hannes Street. ■

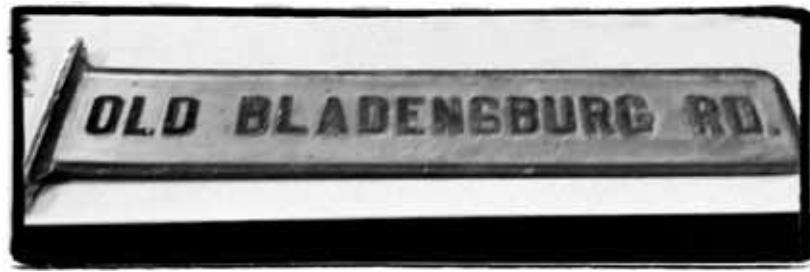


Early Roads in (and Through) Four Corners, Maryland

By Ken Hawkins

In the spring of 1855, three road examiners were appointed by Montgomery County's commissioners to survey a new road to connect the neighborhood of the Carroll Chapel (near today's Forest Glen) on the Union Plank Turnpike (Georgia Avenue) to "intersect the Bladensburg or Burnt Mills road near the residence of the late Thomas Gittings" about two miles east (at Colesville Road near Blair High School), in response to a petition. The petition and the recording and dedication of the road that came from it (now Forest Glen Road) highlight the two types of early road development in the County—roads built from growing neighborhoods to reach larger, established older roads—and the people of multiple races who they impacted.

The road examiners included Henry McCeney, George Knowles, and Thomas Connelly, all three of whom enslaved Blacks to work their landed property in the area. Such examiners surveyed the roads with the labor of chainmen and axemen, taken in some cases from Blacks they enslaved. They confirmed that "the public convenience" required the new road for access to two churches near its east end, as "a short and convenient route to a large portion as a mill road" for the Burnt Mills, to promote "social intercourse of the respective neighborhoods," and to increase the value of the lands through which it would pass.



Street sign for Old Bladensburg Road, saved after the road name was changed to University Boulevard in 1957.

Courtesy: Woodmoor Cleaners.

The value the road would give to adjoining landowners (including the Clark heirs and Thomas N. Wilson) was such that damages were nominal, "except Ben Johnson (negro) through whose garden more than half the road is located." Connelly and the others agreed that he be paid damages (\$25) and directly for property (\$125), several times more than the others.

Johnson was a free Black who had lived in the area since at least 1840, keeping a house that included an enslaved man and two women. He remained at the location, joined by other Blacks like the Wallaces, for many years, north and south of the park later named for their neighbor George W. Getty (who, according to his daughter, tried without success to buy them out). While it is unclear if Johnson was paid these amounts, the road that took land from him and ran to the Gittings—also known as the Cross Roads and, after the Civil War, as Four Corners—was built and many of us still drive it today.

What the petition called the "Bladensburg or Burnt Mills Road" was in fact two separate roads that were among the area's earliest and formed its distinctive cross roads. While themselves passing through and beyond the area, these two roads tied it closely to the transport of slave-produced tobacco, grains for milling, white suburbs, and today's rush hours. Of the two, the earliest was the road coming from the south (and ultimately Georgetown) to the mill seat on the Northwest Branch established by Samuel Beall, Jr., in the 1740s. His son, Walter Beall, operated the mill through the 1790s and the road leading to it was referred to as reaching his place. The rolling road that crossed it followed the highest levels between the Sligo and Northwest Branches to reach the tobacco port at Bladensburg, about eight miles to the south and east. After Montgomery County was established in 1776, it became known as the Main Road, running from Montgomery court-

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HISTORY CORNER(S)

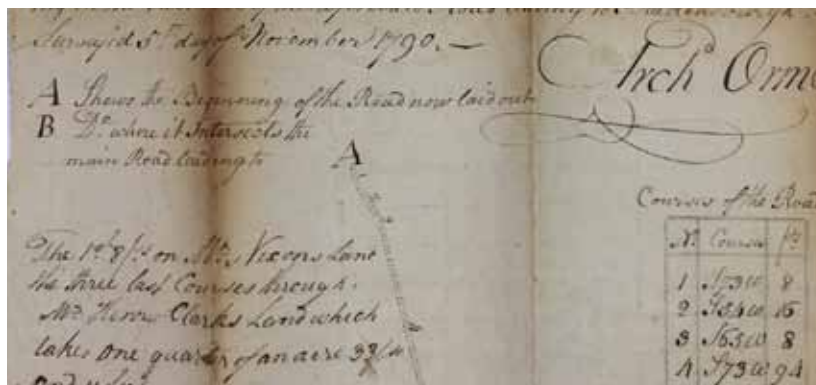
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house to Bladensburg.

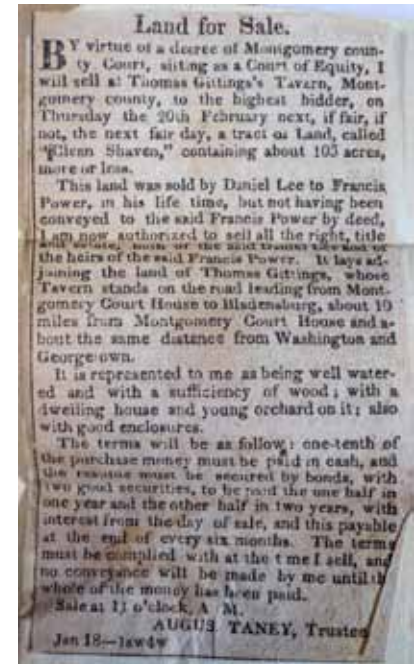
Whether it truly was used long as a rolling road is uncertain, as tobacco quickly exhausted the area's soil and some planters turned to raising corn and other grains. In any case, it became well-established and used, often appearing in property advertisements with miles distant from those points to help readers locate the eligible sites. Both roads had long histories. In 1831, local Whig assemblyman and enslaver Thomas Gittings steered a bill through to improve the road to Burnt Mills from the north and thence to the Cross Roads near his house. Through the 1840s, the Main Road featured a number of landmarks, including a toll gate, a wolf pit just north of a marsh east of the Cross Roads, and a way to walk to a family burying ground set aside in 1772 as an easement from the adjoining properties, maintained in following deeds until the 1950s.

Other early secondary roads included one that was

laid out in 1790 from the Jonathan Nixon plantation across the lands of Henry Clark to the northeast of the cross roads, to the Bladensburg Road. It was lost over time but others remain. The beginning of Eastwood Avenue, where it climbs the hill from Southwood, originated as a way to the eighteenth-century Holly View plantation of Josiah Bean and the Gittings, and later as one of the lines by which a trust established in the 1850s by Emily Beale for her grandchildren was divided in 1903. Another property line that dated to the Gittings became the eastern boundary of George Beale's Indian Spring Farm, then belonged to District U.S. Judge Abram B. Olin and, finally, to Elwood Matthews, also from the District but a sometimes bootlegger who laid it out in 1912 as the first subdivision in the area. Matthews named the road he had built on the line after himself, as it remained until 1937 when he was murdered in a notorious Four Corners crime spree; afterwards it became St. Lawrence Drive. The point at which it meets University Boulevard was the



1790 plat for road from Jonathan Nixon's plantation through Henry Clark's land to the road from Montgomery Court House to Bladensburg. Maryland State Archives.



1817 advertisement from the *Daily National Intelligencer* newspaper for a sale at Gittings Tavern, showing the importance of roads and distances for commerce in daily life and historical evidence.

Courtesy: Maryland State Archives.

location of the wolf pit.

Most later roads in Four Corners were filled into the spatial framework of roads and property established under Maryland's slave society and carried into the restricted residential subdivisions of the 1930s to 1950s. Some of the street names, including the old rolling road, Bladensburg, were changed as the area was made over into a place at once modern and tied to its history. But the underlying structures, and at least some of the power and rights they expressed or withheld, remained to help carry us as we move about today.

[Hawkins holds a Ph.D. in history and lives with his family on Lorain Ave.] ■



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Are You Selling? Do You Want Top Dollar? You Must Be Listed in the MLS!

Excuse me for shouting! But I have never felt more strongly that owners who try to sell their homes by themselves are giving up significant dollars. They don't realize what possibilities come from the broadest exposure to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). Some owners get too eager to sell and sometimes accept offers while in Coming Soon status. My owners, who held off for all contracts to come in, did best in my experience.

Homes Are Selling Beyond Owners' Dreams

The power of the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) has been proven with every listing we've had this year. Agents are coming from offices in DC, Chevy Chase, Bethesda and Potomac and begging to give their buyers a chance to get our Silver Spring listings.

When you list with me, we help you prepare and list your home so buyers can offer contracts with no contingencies on inspections, loans and appraisals.

We Help Home Owners Sell for Top Prices

Sellers who have followed our advice have enjoyed minimal fix-up expenses and received offers well above what they desired. Our professional contacts help prepare homes quickly and for reasonable costs. Our sellers have been satisfied with the clean-up and renovations we helped arrange.

We specialize in helping you make decisions to get the right experts to solve your selling, buying, and moving problems. We will discuss needed declutter and repairs to prepare your home for sale and, possible renovations or yard work. We share our contacts for various home-care professionals, who will service your needs knowing, we are very mindful of how they treat our clients and customers.

Recent Sales in Northwood/Forest Knolls

ADDRESS	LIST/SOLD PRICE	LIST PRICE	RATIO (S/L)	CLOSE DATE	STYLE	BR	BA/HBA	DOM	LOT SQ FT	SUBDIVISION
1143 Loxford Ter	\$560,000	\$559,000	100%	11/5/2021	Split Foyer	3	3	14	6,906	Forest Knolls
239 Hannes St	\$450,000	\$480,000	93%	10/29/2021	Rambler	3	2	45	6,506	Northwood Park View
10407 Royalton Ter	\$450,000	\$450,000	100%	10/28/2021	Cape Cod	5	2	53	7,388	Northwood Knolls
10201 Sutherland Rd	\$601,000	\$575,000	104%	10/15/2021	Rambler	4	4	6	11,759	Northwood Park
10917 Lombardy Rd	\$468,000	\$450,000	104%	10/15/2021	Rambler	3	2	7	9,956	Northwood Park View
407 Hannes St	\$565,000	\$545,000	103%	10/1/2021	Split Level	4	2/1	2	6,157	Forest Knolls
11107 Lombardy Rd	\$480,000	\$480,000	100%	9/30/2021	Rambler	3	2	7	7,513	Northwood Park View
102 Southwood Ave	\$760,000	\$740,000	102%	9/17/2021	Contemporary	3	3/1	6	8,289	Northwood Park
10914 Lombardy Rd	\$515,000	\$499,000	103%	9/17/2021	Rambler	3	2	5	7,800	Northwood Park View
311 Marvin Rd	\$528,000	\$525,000	100%	9/17/2021	Colonial	3	2	6	6,496	Northwood Village
420 Kerwin Rd	\$385,000	\$400,000	96%	9/10/2021	Rambler	3	2	16	5,441	Northwood Village
10817 Lombardy Rd	\$550,000	\$529,000	103%	9/1/2021	Bi-level	4	2	3	6,500	Northwood Park View

For a real-time update for Northwood Sales: www.ciment.com/northwood

In the above chart, we now show **Sold Price and List Price** and **Ratio of Sold Price to List Price (S/L)**.
The **SoldPrice/ListPrice Ratio** gives you a sense of the strength of **Seller Market** versus **Buyer Market**.

It is a Great Time to Sell! We Need Listings for the Many Buyers Contacting Our Listings
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The Problem With Pouring Salt on Your Sidewalk

By Jennifer McGuire Cox

It's winter. The weather forecasters are predicting a snow storm, maybe possibly freezing rain at any time. You run to the shed or garage to get your rock salt out and start pouring it out in buckets all over your driveway and sidewalks. Makes for less work later, right? But is that the most effective approach? And what does all that salt mean for the environment?

The Problem with Salt

It's estimated that 40 percent of the country's urban streams have chloride levels that are so high they pose risks to aquatic wildlife. Those severely impacted include amphibians—such as frogs and salamanders—crustaceans, fish, and aquatic plants. The primary reason for this chloride? The over-salting of roadways, driveways, and sidewalks in the winter months. In 2014, more than 22 million tons of salt (sodium chloride) were scattered on U.S. roads annually—137 pounds of salt for every American. Millions more are spread by private property owners.

Once spread on roadways and sidewalks, these highly concentrated salts start to do their work not just on snow and ice, but the environment around them. Plants and trees near road salt can become dehydrated and even die, creating desert-like conditions that make it harder to absorb water and encourage

runoff and pollutants to enter the watershed. Likewise, many animals congregating at these deposits for much needed minerals are hit by cars and others, such as domestic pets, can become sick from ingesting salt and face the potential for vomiting, convulsions, and kidney damage.

After the storm passes and the salt dissolves, it gets carried away through runoff and deposited in these surface water streams, rivers, and lakes. It also absorbs into the ground and permeates the groundwater underneath us. Millions of Americans rely on local streams for their drinking water. And while we mostly rely on WSSC for treating our water, even the most advanced water treatment plants are not equipped to filter out this excess salt. This means that salt ends up back into your pipes and in your tap water, a health risk especially for individuals on salt-restricted diets. Excess salt can also easily corrode your car and break down concrete surfaces, such as driveways. With all these negative effects, Canada has actually categorized road salt as a toxin and placed restrictions on its use.

How Much Salt to Really Use?

Salt is quite effective in preventing ice from forming, as it lowers the freezing temperature of water so ice and snow can be removed more easily. As a result, it takes surprisingly little to adequately protect your sidewalks and

driveways. You don't actually need to feel it crunching underneath you to know the salt is doing its job. It only takes 12 ounces of road salt (about the size of a mug) to cover a 20-foot driveway (or 10 sidewalk squares) for instance. Make sure to space grains out for full effectiveness. Using a lawn spreader can help evenly spread de-icer and prevent it from clumping. That said, adding even more than the recommended amount of salt on a surface does not help in making the snow and ice melt faster, or prevent you from needing to shovel.

Don't simply just rely on laying salt down to clear your property. Montgomery County Government recommends a three-step approach to winter weather and clearing sidewalks and driveways. First, shovel right away when winter weather hits and before snow turns into ice. Second, know when to treat. Check the temperature and weather conditions. If the sun is out, let it help you melt the ice and snow. If temperatures are forecasted to rise, de-icing products might not even be necessary. Otherwise, read the label on your de-icing products for correct usage, as weather conditions can impact their effectiveness. Salt de-icers, for instance, become ineffective when the temperature drops below 15°F. Also, only apply these products to surfaces that are already icy, or you're just wasting your

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

NATURE

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money and negatively impacting the environment for no reason. Finally, at the end of the weather event, make sure to sweep and clean up any salt, sand, or any de-icing product that has not dissolved. These can be used for the next storm.

Alternatives to Salt

Instead of using pure road salt, or sodium chloride alone, consider using it mixed with sand. Many municipalities use a mixture of 30 percent sand, 70 percent salt. The sand helps eliminate the “bounce” factor of the salt when it hits roadways and sidewalks, allowing for less salt to be used but with the same overall effect. Scattering sand on icy surfaces can also provide temporary traction and reduce slipping dangers, especially if temperatures are expected to quickly rise after the storm.

Other alternatives that have proven beneficial to homeowners and road crews alike are mixing salt with cheese brine and even sugar cane molasses. These alternative mixes help prevent freezing at lower temperatures and helps road salt to stick better and reduce its corrosive qualities. Likewise, calcium magnesium acetate, while more expensive than regular sodium chloride de-icers, is considered a lot less environmentally harmful. While kitty litter is often used like sand for traction, its habit of clumping and not dissolving makes it not an ideal choice.

Whatever you use, do however watch out for ice solutions labeled as “eco-friendly” or “pet-friendly” as, often times, these products still contain salt that can harm animals and plants.

How You Can Help with the Road Salt Problem

Environmental organizations, concerned about the amount of salt being used in communities, are seeking citizen science volunteers to pinpoint exactly how bad the problem is. The Izaak Walton League, for example, has a Winter Salt Watch program. Trained volunteers use a kit with chemical test strips to monitor waterways throughout the winter season. Results are reported to a national database and are used to communicate with decision-makers. For more information, visit Winter Salt Watch at <https://www.iwla.org/water/stream-monitoring/winter-salt-watch>.

Another way to encourage less salt use in the community is by alerting our County and State Departments of Transportation as well as our legislators to the impacts of road salt. These agencies can work with their drivers on best practices for road salt use, hopefully resulting in less being used.

For more ideas on how to help, and educate, individuals on the use of salt, visit <https://www.iwla.org/water/stream-monitoring/winter-salt-watch/what-you-can-do>.

[Jennifer McGuire Cox is a naturalist and certified Maryland Master Naturalist; she lives on Belton Road.] ■



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Thanks to Emily Ellerbe on Loxford for
the amusing photograph of her cat!

Holiday Village, Model Train on Margate Rd. Returns

By Mario Emanuel Perez

For some of us, particularly those of us with toddlers, one of the highlights of the holiday season is festive holiday activities and train displays. Unfortunately, the pandemic has put a damper on some of these exhibits, which are often held indoors. Notably, the Washington, Virginia, and Maryland Garden Railway Society will not be presenting its Garden Railway Exhibit at Brookside Gardens this year, which typically accompanies Brookside Gardens' Garden of Lights event (Garden of Lights will return but with outdoor events only).

Last year, thinking that I would try to make something festive for my three-year-old son in our own house as a substitute, I asked the neighbors in the Four Corners Buy Nothing Group for any materials that I could use to make a holiday village. I was not expecting the extensive and high-quality donations that I received, and I decided to build the village outside so that everyone who had donated to the village, and all of our many toddler neighbors, could also enjoy it. What started as an off-the-cuff idea became what my wife would probably describe as a bit of an obsessive hobby, as I looked for additional buildings, figurines, and materials to build out the village. I have looked forward to rebuilding the village this year, and I hope you will stop by and check it out.

The village and model train are located in the cherry tree in front of 10608 Margate Road and will be up until early January. The village lights are illuminated nightly, and the train leaves the tunnel every evening, weather permitting. If you stop by and the train is not running,



Frances Spiegel

just knock on the door and, if I am home, I will gladly come out and turn it on.

Thank you to the many neighbors who have contributed to the holiday village! For anyone who would like to help out this year, I have a few specific requests:

- Like last year, the train and the lights are battery-powered (sizes C and AAA). Battery donations are gratefully accepted. You can leave them on the porch if no one is home.

- I have learned that there is a diversity problem among the available Christmas village figurines. If anyone comes across some non-white figurines, I would love to add them to the village.

Professional Model Train Displays Running This Year

Brunswick Heritage Museum

40 West Potomac St., Brunswick, MD 21716

The Museum's third floor features a 1,700-square-foot HO Scale model railroad that depicts the B&O Metropolitan Subdivision beginning at the west end of Brunswick's rail yard and running eastward through Montgomery County communities all the way to Union Station in Washington D.C. Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. FREE Admission but donations are welcome.

B&O Ellicott City Train Station Museum

3711 Maryland Avenue, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Enjoy the museum's holiday train model on display thru January 2, 2022. Wed-Thurs: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Fri-Sun: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more info contact: Jake Feirson, 410.313.2922 or jfeirson@howardcountymd.gov. FREE Admission.

National Capital Trolley Museum

1313 Bonifant Rd., Colesville, MD 20905; 301.384.6088.

Enjoy the Winter Garden Railway and holiday village inside the museum. On display Saturday Dec. 4, 11, 18 and Sunday Dec. 19. The Winter Garden Railway runs from Noon to 5 p.m. The museum strongly recommends purchasing tickets in advance through their website: dctrolley.org. Admission is \$10 for Adults, and \$8 for Children 2 thru 17 and Seniors.

Roads and Rails Museum

200 N East Street, Frederick, MD 21701; 301.624.5524

The Roads and Rails Museum houses one of the largest miniature world model train displays in the country. Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday Noon to 5 p.m.; Monday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Tues-Fri. Admission is \$10 for Adults, \$5 for children, and free for under 3 yrs.

United States Botanic Garden

100 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20001; 202.225.8333

The Botanic Garden outdoor train runs through a display of agricultural scenes from across the United States and around the world, all made from plant parts! The train layout is located in the gated outdoor gardens. On display from Nov. 24, 2021, thru Jan. 2, 2022; closed on Christmas Day, Dec. 25. The outdoor train runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. FREE Admission. ■

This Year's Fantastic Halloween Contest Winners

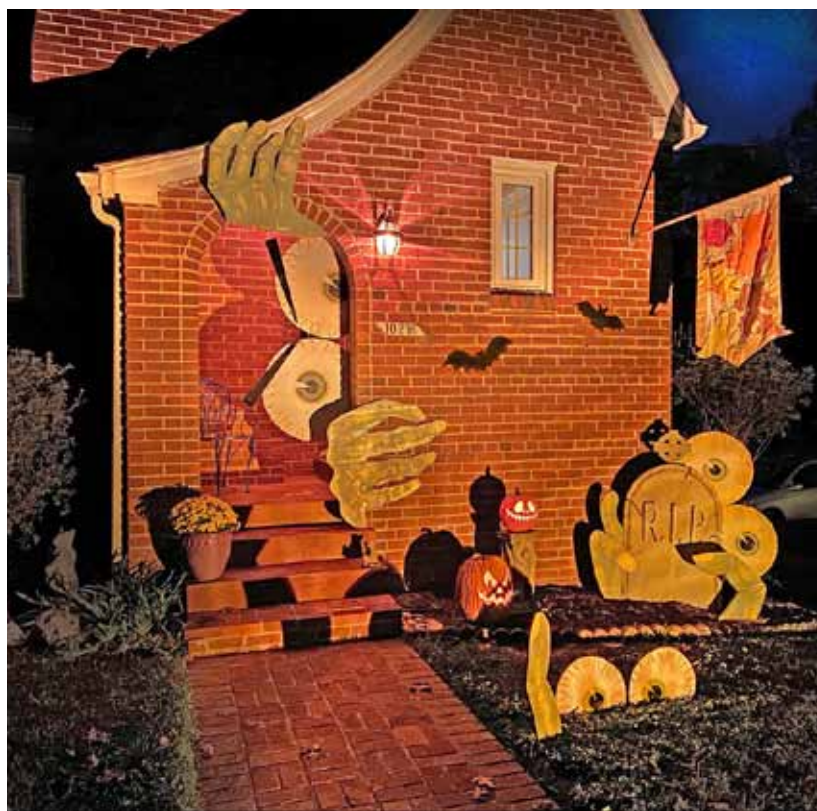
Thank you again to everyone who decorated, showed off their adorable pets, judged the house-decorating contest, and handed out candy.



Best Jack-o-Lantern (all four!): 10831 Margate Road



Kid's Choice: 10602 Cavalier Drive



Most Creative: 10216 Lorain Avenue

It was a wonderful Halloween! A special thank you to the NFCCA neighborhood organization for sponsoring the prizes and promoting the

event through the newsletter and Facebook page.

We're excited to show you the winners of this year's contests!



Spookiest: 413 Belton Road



Fall Festival: 10819 Margate Road

Our Winning Pets



First Place: Nordy the Puppy Latte (Donnelly, Chiswell La.)



Second Place: Chickenosaur (Kragie-Bates, Belton Road)



Third Place: Super Saturn the Pumpkin Patch Protector (Lackner, Thistle Drive)

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