



Westerlee Community News



A Proud Covenant Controlled Community

Spring, 2007

www.westerleenews.com

A Message from the President



Dear Neighbors,

All of you who drive must have had unpleasant experiences on Rolling Road, starting with the difficulties of turning in or out from our community to the unclear conditions on the roadway itself. I have been in contact with the County about this since 2003.

Recently Sam Moxley, our Councilman, sent me a letter from the head of Public Works, Mr. Adams and his response. I took this opportunity to reiterate our concerns in a letter to Mr. Adams. So you can see all arguments, we publish all documents here and start with my letter in lieu of the usual "message".

N.H. Philipsen

Baltimore County Dept. of Public Works
Edward C. Adams, Jr., Director
County Office Building
111 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 307
Towson, Maryland 21204
(Telephone numbers were deleted to ensure privacy)

Dear Mr. Adams,

With interest we followed the correspondence between Councilman Moxley and you regarding North Rolling Road in the section between Crosby and Ethel Roads. The issues addressed in the correspondence have been in our focus for some time and had been the subject of previous correspondence with Mr. Heil of Community Conservation and Stephen Weber at Traffic Engineering. In a letter in April 2004 we stated the following:

"We share the County's concern that the current condition is not satisfactory because the overly wide lanes currently invite motorists to create two informal lanes with a lot of jockeying for position and illegal right passing occurring at all times of the day. This condition is unsafe for motorists on Rolling Road, for vehicle trying to turn off Rolling Road or onto Rolling Road as well as for bicycles and pedestrians trying to cross the road. The current condition also invites speeding and vehicles can be observed exceeding the 35 mph speed limit on a regular basis. (Continued on p. 3)

Westerlee Community, Inc. BOARD OF DIRECTORS



President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Klaus Philipsen
Shirley Smith
Marilyn Maxwell
Jim Holman

Directors:
Joan Goudy
Ron Matthews
Chuck Sprague

Bettye Gray
Ed Hastry
George Simon
Charles Yingling

Vandalism Prevention

Lately, we have received several reports of vandalism in our neighborhood: yard statues stolen, mailboxes uprooted, and car windows broken, among other things. Yet, I (Marilyn – as Westerlee representative at the monthly meetings of the Police Community Relations Committee for Precinct 2)) talked recently to our Community Resource Officer, Alisha Helphenstine, who informed me that only **ONE** incident had been reported to the police. She insisted that it is imperative that we call 911 to report **ALL** incidents, no matter how small we feel they may be. Because I brought it to her attention, she is scheduling additional police patrols through our neighborhood.



PLEASE– IT'S NO JOKE!! Report all acts of vandalism to the police. Because many vandals are juveniles you may not be the only victim. Documentation is important when connecting cases that may be attributed to the same individual. It will be especially important in sentencing and restitution if the individual is caught.

Clean up vandalism as soon as possible after reporting it. Replace signs, repair equipment, and paint over graffiti. The message given if they are left in disrepair is that the owner doesn't care and it invites further damage.

Depending on your situation proper lighting, building

materials (such as hard to mark surfaces), or landscape materials (such as thorn or prickly hedges) may help in discouraging vandals.

DON'T THINK THE VANDALISM DONE TO YOUR PROPERTY IS TOO SMALL. REPORT IT!!

Protecting Yourself from Mailbox Vandalism

(The following article was taken verbatim from the USPS website)



Rural area mailboxes are vulnerable to vandalism because they are usually isolated, located on public thoroughfares, and frequently not visible to the box owners from their homes. City residential mailboxes are vandalized to a lesser

degree.

Mailboxes are considered federal property, and federal law (Title 18, United States Code, Section 1705), makes it a crime to vandalize them (or to injure, deface or destroy any mail deposited in them). Violators can be fined up to \$250,000, or imprisoned for up to three years, for each act of vandalism.

Postal Inspectors recommend these actions to protect your mailbox and any mail that may be inside it:

Immediately report theft, tampering or destruction of mail or mailboxes to your postmaster. You'll be asked to complete PS Form 1510, Mail Loss and Rifling Report, or PS Form 2016, Mail Theft and Vandalism Complaint. The forms help the Postal Inspection Service determine whether your problem is isolated, or one frequently experienced in your neighborhood. Obtain Label 33 from the Postal Inspection Service and affix it to your mailbox. The sticker warns that willful damage to mailboxes and theft of mail are crimes.

Keep your mailbox in good repair, and make sure it's properly installed. This may help prevent theft of the mailbox itself.

If you have information on mailbox vandalism, call the Postal Inspection Service to report it. Your cooperation helps apprehend violators. You may provide your information or complaints to your local postmaster or your nearest Postal Inspector.

Editor's Note: the only phone number we could find for our Catonsville post office is 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777).

(Message from the President, continued from p. 1)

Our Website



Try to make it a habit to check our website frequently. It contains items of interest to all of us, and is updated frequently. It's the only way we have of getting information disseminated in a timely way. It's easy to remember:

www.westerleenews.com. And, if there's anything you think should be there, please e-mail me at westerleenews@comcast.net.



From our Kitchens...

Lemon Whoopie Pies

What better dessert that a nostalgic favorite: a whoopie pie, and lemon to boot?

1 ½ cups cake flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking soda
6 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 cup sugar, plus 2 tablespoons
3 large eggs
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
⅓ cup milk
¼ cup lemon juice
Zest of 1 lemon
1 cup cold heavy cream
2 tablespoons crystallized ginger, chopped



Make the cakes: Heat oven to 375° F. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt, and baking soda together and set aside. Beat the butter and 1 cup sugar in medium bowl using a mixer set on medium-high until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time. Mix the vanilla and milk together and add to batter in thirds, alternating with the flour mixture, until combined. Stir in the lemon juice and zest. Pour ⅓ cup of batter into each section of a nonstick muffin-top pan and bake until the cakes test clean with a toothpick and are golden around the edges -- about 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 5 minutes. Release from the pan and cool completely.

Make the cream filling: Beat the heavy cream and remaining 2 tablespoons sugar together to firm peaks. Stir in the crystallized ginger. Invert half of the cakes and place about ¼ cup of cream on each. Spread to about ½ inch from the cake edge and top with the remaining halves. Serve immediately or keep chilled for up to 3 hours.

However, the Board of our Association is concerned that

the proposed two continuous northbound lanes will not improve the existing conditions but rather make it even harder for residents to navigate but more convenient for out of the area motorists to speed and use Rolling Road as an alternate route to the Beltway."

In our letter then we had suggested to investigate alternative striping plans that essentially have one through lane and allow safe parking and turning. We continue to have the same concern. Regarding your detailed outline of issues in your memorandum of 4/18/07, please allow us to comment in some detail:

We recognize the function of Rolling Road as a major north south connector which we, as other communities use as access to our community as well as to points north and south of us. However, we believe that this is not a major regional arterial since all more distant destinations can also be reached by alternate means, namely the Baltimore Beltway with excellent east west access at Security Boulevard and US 40. Rolling Road has limited two lane capacity north of the 2700 block and south of US 40. The section south of Crosby Road has exclusively residential land use on both sides, as such needs to function as a street that does not eliminate the viability of that use.

As you recognize in your memorandum, the roadway design has to respond to more than just car traffic needs. As a "whole street" it needs to be safe for pedestrians, for adjoiners turning in and out of side streets or driveways or for parking along the curb, for bicyclists and it needs to be tolerable to live and sleep in the houses next to the street. All those needs are currently not met.

Regarding the traffic volumes: an average daily traffic volume of up to 30,000 is certainly very high and exceeds tolerable levels for residential streets. It needs to be analyzed who is using the road today and if it should truly be the function of Rolling Road to serve as a bypass for the Beltway particularly now, after the Beltway widening south of Frederick Road has been completed and congestion levels southbound have been reduced.

As you are well aware, capacity of the roadway is not solely determined by the width and number of traffic lanes but also by the capacity of intersections along the roadway. Determining capacity choke points are Security Boulevard, Crosby Road and the Baltimore National Pike. It makes no sense to have lane capacity in between these points that exceeds the intersection capacity. For this reason we doubt your assertion that a single lane configuration with parking lanes and/or turn lanes and shoulders would effectively lead to a decrease in capacity. Rather, the lane reduction would reduce speed to get closer to the posted limit of 30mph which is currently exceeded on a permanent basis with speeds easily reaching 60mph by vehicles that pass slower vehicles in an unsafe and illegal manner on the left or right sides although no second lane is marked.

Any widening of the roadway with the objective of a continuous four lane section would further increase travel speeds and make the road even less safe for pedestrians, bicyclists and turning traffic. Such a widening would fly in the face of County policies that recognize the importance of quality of life in the older communities and of smart growth policies that strengthen older communities and emphasize walkability, connectivity and alternative means of transportation.

We welcome your offer for suggestions at the end of your memorandum and request a meeting with all associations adjoining Rolling Road in which these issues can be debated with the objective to find a consensus regarding the issues that need to be addressed.

Sincerely,

Klaus Philipsen, President Westerlee Community Association

Cc: The Honorable Samuel Moxley
Tina Brown, Woodbridge Valley, Steven Whisler, Westview Park

TO: Edward C. Adams, Jr., Director
Department of Public Works
FROM: S.G. Samuel Moxley
DATE: April 25, 2007

I am in receipt of your memo, dated April 18, 2007, regarding N. Rolling Road and Collinsway Road, and am troubled.

I asked the County to consider establishing turn lanes on Rolling Road at Collinsway. The response acknowledges that there is an abnormally high level of rear-end collisions at this intersection, but seems to indicate a solution would only be undertaken if the County decided to review the entire length of Rolling Road, from Johnnycake Road to Ethel Avenue.

I always understood your department's position that creating one lane in each direction with a center turn lane would create unsafe driving conditions and traffic engineering problems along Rolling Road. However, I believe any proposal to change the width of Rolling Road or mark the road differently will increase traffic volumes and speeds, making the roadway just as unsafe. This stretch of North Rolling Road, which I point out is residential, would become a raceway.

Since you have, in essence, laid this at my feet, I won't support any plans to remark Rolling Road, between Ethel Avenue and Crosby Road, into a four-lane highway. Respectfully, I do ask that you re-evaluate my request to have turn lanes on Rolling Road at Collinsway.

I thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

SGM

DATE April 18, 2007

TO: The Honorable S. G. ~ Councilman, First District

FROM: Ed Adams, Jr., Director ~Department of Public Works

SUBJECT: N. Rolling Road N. & Collinsway Road

As your office is well aware., the traffic issues on Rolling Road N. between US -40 to north of Crosby Road have been ongoing for a long period of time. The Department of Public Works recognized long ago the increased importance of this major arterial north-south route. Its level of importance has been elevated due to both congestion levels of the Beltway that limit readily available north-south access for the Randallstown to Catonsville corridor and to the decisions made long ago to delete other new north-south roadways from the County's and State's Master Plans which were intended to provide for the increasing levels of development in this area over the last few decades. Therefore, in a defacto manner, Rolling Road has become the roadway to provide north-south access to the many various communities that have been built along it, from Old Court Road to Frederick Road.

From US 40 to Chesworth Road, Rolling Road currently carries approximately 30,000 vehicles a day and from Chesworth Road to Johnnycake Road carries between 25,000 - 26,000 vehicles per day. The road was designed and constructed to accommodate a 4-lane roadway. While it was designed to perform this function, it has never been marked to do so. Currently we have two marked northbound lanes on Rolling Road from US 40 to Ethel Avenue. Then from Ethel Avenue to Collinsway Road we have two unmarked northbound lanes, which are routinely driven as two lanes since parking is prohibited along the east side of this entire length of Rolling Road N. This agency receives conflicting requests from different interest groups - motorists wanting it to be marked as two northbound lanes to reduce driver confusion, accidents, and road rage, and on the other hand, residents who want it to be left alone, or to put parking on it to congest the road, slow down traffic, and encourage traffic to go elsewhere.

(Note: One paragraph was deleted here to save space: it only reiterates what we all know already about current lane markings.)

While the community groups and adjacent residents ask for the County to re-stripe the road to only allow one lane in each direction, the reality is that it can no longer happen without creating serious increases in congestion levels on this portion of Rolling Road N. and the consequence that it will force numerous drivers to seek other alternatives on inappropriate adjacent collector and local streets. The theoretical capacity of a two-lane

roadway is 20,000 vehicles. Of the major roadways in the County that are truly only two lanes wide, this number is very accurate. The reason Rolling Road N. carries 30,000 vehicles per day between US 40 and Chesworth Road is because it is generally driven like a 4-lane roadway, particularly during peak hours. That is the only way it can do so. The Department of Public Works first approached the communities on this issue in the mid-1980's and the message was clear at that time that they did not want the County to address the problem and they didn't want Rolling Road to be serving the function it was serving. While the problems have only continued to increase and the motorists who use the road have complained more, the County has failed to take any action to address them.

Thus, the recent request by one of your constituents to address the safety of Rolling Road N. at Collinsway Road by providing a two-way left-turn lane on Rolling Road is only one of a series of different proposals that keeps serving to identify that there is indeed a problem. However, it is the conflict inherent in all the solutions and the inability of many of the solutions to address the current and future traffic demands on Rolling Road N. that has made it impossible to implement anything. When examining the most recent 7 years of reported accident history from the Police Department for this intersection, we do find that rear-end accidents on Rolling Road N. are the predominate type of accidents, comprising $\frac{2}{3}$ of all intersection accidents. The northbound rear-end accident rate is twice the southbound rear-end accident rate. While the total accident rate is within normal ranges, it is admittedly somewhat rare to see this percent .of rear-end accidents at a non-signalized intersection. However, the preliminary investigation of the accident data does not necessarily indicate that it is left turners who are being rear-ended and therefore it is not clear that adding left-turn lanes would reduce the number of rear-end accidents or accidents overall. Part of the problem may be that this is the location where many drivers are trying to merge back into one northbound lane as they approach the area where there is generally on-street parking on the east side of Rolling Road N.

It is our professional determination that this is an issue that is eventually going to have to be faced and a solution developed. It is likely not going to be a pleasant one nor one that will have adjacent community support. However, at the same time we have responsibility to provide for the current 30,000 trips that are made on this road every day and will continue to grow in the future. The drivers of these cars are also County residents who have expectations that the County will provide a transportation system that will adequately provide for their needs. At the same time the adjacent communities living along Rolling Road also have the expectation that the County is going to ensure that through traffic is going to stay on the major roadways intended for through traffic and that we aren't going to allow those roadways to become so choked with traffic that drivers are

encouraged to start short-cutting onto the local community streets. It is our opinion that Rolling Road N. needs to be marked as a 4-lane facility today between Johnnycake Road and US 40 and that we need additional left-turn lanes at Crosby Road. At the same time, we also recognize that to make allowances for these lanes we are probably going to have to widen certain portions of Rolling Road so that we provide for parallel parking in those areas where we currently allow parking. However, this is going to have to be approached in a comprehensive manner with a clear vision of where we are going, because the actions to date have only resulted in providing a piecemeal solution to the previous safety problems at Crosby Road and ignoring all the other issues along the road for fear of antagonizing anyone.

We are certainly open for any suggested methods to help resolve this issue and move towards solutions that can both serve to preserve Rolling Road's function to service north-south traffic in the corridor and to preserve the adjacent residents' needs for maintaining their residential character as much as possible. It is very likely that something like a Capital Project may have to be initiated to provide the roadway improvements that will be needed to help carry out both desires. Please let me know how you might best want to proceed on this matter. If you have any questions, certainly give me a call on (Note: the phone number was left off here for privacy purposes)

Out of Cycle Zoning for Frosty refrigeration:

The application from the Frosty Company for "out of cycle" consideration of their re-zoning request for the former Jehovah Witness property on Powers Lane was approved by the Baltimore County Council in spite of the protest from the Westerlee Board communicated with Councilman Moxley. (Frosty wants to open his business on the Jehovah lot and needs to re-zone from residential to business.). The approval for "out of cycle" consideration must be based on public interest, something we contested being applicable in this case. The next step is that the application will be heard by the Zoning Board of Appeals. We will post the date of the hearing on our website once it will be known. Please consider attending the hearing to state your opinion if you are against re-zoning of this property.

Westerlee Community News is published by the Westerlee Community Association, Inc., and is edited by Marilyn Maxwell. For further information or to submit articles for publication, contact her at westerleenews@comcast.net

Tree removal becomes a hot topic in Westerlee

Several instances of drastic cutting of mature and healthy trees has alarmed and frustrated neighbors whose views from their properties have been altered drastically by these actions. This issue has been brought up at our annual meeting and has become a matter of many discussions in the community. Many came here for the leafy and tranquil character of this neighborhood with its large lawns and large trees. Longtime residents that have planted trees and saw them grow to maturity point out that the covenants are installed to secure and maintain the character of the community. New information on climate change highlights the importance of trees for CO2 reduction, air quality and cooling.

In the history of Westerlee no falling tree has ever destroyed or severely damaged a house. Cutting huge healthy trees down out of fear that they will fall on houses appears to be a disproportional and radical measure. The Westerlee Board asks all residents to protect their trees and refrain from further altering the character of the community.

Anybody who has an opinion on this matter is invited to write "letters" to the newsletter which we will post in the next edition and also on our website.

Construction Plans must Be Submitted For Approval



Our covenants state that all external changes to our homes or lots must be approved by the Board of Directors, in order to maintain the integrity of the architecture and landscaping in Westerlee:

"No garages, outbuildings, fences or other structures shall be erected without prior permission of Westerlee Community, Inc., its successors or assigns, or its duly appointed agent, and no building shall be built closer to the front street than forty (40) feet, no closer to the side street than twenty-five (25) feet."

For that reason, an Architectural Review Committee studies all plans and submits their findings and recommendations to the Board only at the regular quarterly meetings. That means that you must plan ahead if you wish to add an addition, a shed, or even a fence. Architectural plans must be submitted four weeks before a board meeting to give the Architectural Review Committee and the Board adequate time to review the plans. The dates for the upcoming Board of Directors meetings are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

The committee requires a full set of architectural drawings for any changes to the exterior of your home. If you contact one of the Architectural Review Committee members:

Klaus Philipsen at (410)747-5351
or by e-mail at archphips@aol.com

Shirley Smith at (410)744-6171
or by e-mail at sjs@westray.com

Richard Maxwell at (410)744-3449
or by e-mail at rfmaxwell@comcast.net

Future Board Meetings



Board Meetings for the rest of 2007 will be held at 7:00 p.m. on July 12th and October 11th. You are very welcome to attend. Call a board member to find the location.

Catonsville Farmer's Market

Did you know that there is a wonderful Farmer's Market in Catonsville? It's held at the



Bloomsbury Community Center
106 Bloomsbury Avenue
Catonsville, MD

every Wednesday, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm. from May 2nd to November 21st. Go – and enjoy really fresh fruit and vegetables!

2007 Dues

Westerlee Community Association
Dues for 2007 (\$15.00) can be sent to



Jim Holman, Treasurer
2124 Fernglen Way
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

Advertising in Our Newsletter



Advertising in our newsletter reaches many of your neighbors who might need a service performed that you do professionally. It's a good way to spread your message, and allow us to give our business to our neighbors. At the same time, it will help defray the cost of the newsletters. All advertising in the newsletter is paid advertising, and does not reflect the views or recommendations of the Board of Directors or the editor of the newsletter.

Fees are as follows:

A quarter page ad	\$10.00
A half page ad (vertical or horizontal)	\$20.00
A full page ad	\$40.00

You will be responsible for creating the artwork and layout (I will be glad to help) and can send it, with your check, to

Westerlee Newsletter, 2019 Cedar Circle Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21228