



WESTERLEE COMMUNITY NEWS

Westerlee: A Proud Covenant Controlled Community

www.westerleeneews.com

November 2017



Editor: Pam Jarrell

President's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

The weather came through for our community and provided warmth and sun for the annual picnic on September 24. Weather and party brought more neighbors out to meet neighbors than ever before, yet we still had food left at the end! Nothing shows better what our association is about than seeing so many community members sitting together and enjoying each other's company. In a time of division and hostility in so many parts of society it is a joy to see community come together across differences in age, culture, race and gender. Many thanks to Jacqui Johnson and Wanda Richardson who planned the picnic from food to chairs, from tables to tents and from balloons to flower pots acting as table decorations.

That our community is tolerant and accepting is also evident from something entirely different. Nobody came to oppose a new marijuana dispensary planned for what is known as Caton Radio on Baltimore National Pike. What caused all types of reflexive opposition in some other communities went through without opposition in this case in a recent zoning hearing, even though the hearing and project had been announced in Next Door. These new dispensaries have no track record yet and one can't be sure how they will perform, but we know they are heavily regulated by the State. The zoning hearing had been necessary because the business is located in a Revitalization Zone which requires a hearing and because some variances were needed for how the parking is arranged. The applicant's lawyer had described the operation this way:

The medical marijuana operation is conducted as follows. The dispensary will occupy 3,500 square feet on the first floor of the existing building. There is a public entrance into the facility where customers will enter into a foyer that is staffed by a security guard. There, the individual needs to produce a "written certification" (similar to a prescription form) to enter the premises. Once entry has been approved, the individual will fill their prescription, in a manner somewhat similar to that process that anyone follows in filling a prescription at drugstore. There will be no browsing by the general public as the sales are only permitted per State law and for medical purposes.

Caton Auto will remain in operation at this location. They will occupy the upstairs portion of the building for offices and the two service bays that currently exist. There are also upgrades proposed to the exterior of the building, signage and landscaping on the property.

A perennially uniting topic is traffic: Anybody who leaves our neighborhood on Cedar Circle at Rolling Road knows about the difficulty of navigating that intersection, even if it is for a simple right turn, let alone a left turn. The onslaught of vehicles is relentless at most hours, especially, of course, rush hour. Identifying a suitable gap is further made difficult by the fact that the cars approach in pairs, even though Rolling Road isn't marked for dual lanes. Speeds frequently far exceed the posted 30mph and enforcement is scant. It has been my impression that crashes happen often, judging from how often I have encountered mangled vehicles and emergency personal on this road. For years I have

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY, INC.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Klaus Philipsen

kphilipsen@archplan.com 410-685-2002 (W)

Vice President: Wanda Richardson

Secretary: Fred Hickok

Treasurer: Rizwan Mahmoodi, send checks to: 2126 Fernglen Way

Directors: Chris Goatee - Jacqueline Johnson - Fred Kirk - Joe Reid

tried to convince the County's traffic engineers that the road should undertake what is often called a "road diet", meaning slimming the roadway from its overly wide lanes to a standard lane plus a marked shoulder for parking and at intersections, a designated turn lane. I have argued that this would be much safer, more predictable, would move cars further away from the residences, and allow safer bicycling as well. Marked space for turn lanes would prevent being rear ended while waiting for a gap to turn. The reduction in capacity would be irrelevant, since the capacity of the entire road is defined at its worst bottle-necks. Those are not the regular sections but the signalized intersections at Crosby Road and US 40 at the Double T Diner which long have reached capacity. (Which is a good thing, otherwise there would be even more traffic on Rolling Road).

The previous chief county traffic engineer Steve Weber is now retired, but his predecessor was not much more excited about the idea of a "road diet" when I first spoke with him. I have now requested crash-data from County police to further build the argument that something should be done. Road diets, slower traffic and increased pedestrian safety and concern for adjacent residents has become the hallmark of traffic engineers all around the country, it is time that Baltimore County catches up. For those commuters of Rolling Road who are not local and who want to travel fast and unimpeded I say: Use the Beltway!

As you know, Baltimore County will elect a new County Executive in 2018 and several candidates have already announced that they are running. Obviously, Westerlee Inc. or I as Association President can't and won't endorse any particular candidate, but I can encourage everybody to pay close attention to the candidates to find out which has the most convincing plans for improvement of the quality of life in our communities.

With winter upon us, we will prepare once again for the holidays and many of us will install holiday decorations. We will again conduct a little contest to honor creativity, effort and a festive spirit.

On behalf of the entire board of directors, I wish everybody a wonderful winter season and harmonious holidays!

Klaus Philipsen,
Westerlee Inc. President



Meeting Minutes Westerlee Community Association, Inc. November 9th, 2017

Present were officers Klaus Philipsen (President), Wanda Richardson (Vice President), Fred Hickok (Secretary) and Rizwan Mahmoodi (Treasurer), board members Chris Goatee, Jacqueline Johnson and Fred Kirk and newsletter editor Pam Jarrell. Absent was board member Joe Reid.

Newsletter & Picnic: Pam asked for any more pictures of the picnic. Jacqui reported an increase in attendance and good work by the new caterer. Chris mentioned that we should provide more ice. Pam figures that the newsletter will be ready for distribution after Thanksgiving.

Holiday Decoration Contest: Pam, Jacque and Chris agreed to do the judging on Monday, December 18, at 8 p.m. and that they will choose 3 winners to receive identical prizes without there being specific categories.

4 Traffic Issues: **1]** Klaus reported that the survey by the County again concluded that the traffic on Fernglan is insufficient to warrant the installation of speed bumps. **2]** He also announced that he will be contacting County Councilperson Tom Quirk's office to discuss the issue of car carriers driving through Westerlee. He also said that there need to be safe places for the carriers to unload cars. He said that there should be signs prohibiting the trucks from parking on certain roads, especially facing the wrong direction with their lights shining at oncoming traffic. Chris volunteered to talk with the dealers about all this. **3]** Klaus also noted that the MTA runs an express bus between downtown and Columbia during rush hours and it has stops at the intersection of Nuwood and Route 40. He said there is also the different all-day service of Bus #17, which has a stop at the Giant parking lot off Rolling Road. **4]** Klaus remarked that he has asked the police department for crash statistics on Rolling Road but has not received them yet.

Community Signs: Klaus suggested making another presentation about installing signs at the Rolling Road and Dulong intersections at the next annual meeting. Fred K. urged that we have written ballots. Pam questioned the usefulness of the signs. The board members voted 3 in favor and 3 against so the decision was made not to pursue the issue.

Catonsville/Arbutus Arts & Entertainment (A&E) District: Klaus explained that while Baltimore City has 3 A&E's, Baltimore County has none. Groups in other parts of the County have agreed that the first one should be Catonsville/Arbutus. A Catonsville arts guild has petitioned that the old Catonsville Elementary School building not be demolished to make room for recreation modular buildings but rather be used as a community arts facility. Klaus said that our board may consider supporting this proposition in the future.

Code Violations: Klaus reported some progress after he contacted the County about commercial vehicles housed at a residence on Chantilla. He cited the statement in the Westerlee covenants that prohibits the commercial use of a residence. He also said that parking of commercial vehicles on the street may be reported to the police.

Treasurer's Report: Rizwan reported a balance of \$9160 and that \$2555 has been received for this year's dues. This is up \$180 from last year and amounts to a 65% compliance rate. He said that he still uses a spreadsheet while Klaus reminded him of converting to using QuickBooks. Chris and Jacque volunteered to work with Rizwan at 6:30 on November 13 to prepare letters for sending to delinquent residents.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 15, 2018. Klaus asked Fred H. to send reminders.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Hickok

Westerlee Community Association CY 2016- Quarter 3 Treasurer's Report July 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017

Beginning Balance \$10,392.12

Income:

Other Income-Interest 0.25

Dues 295.00

Total Income + 295.25

Expenditures:

Newsletters/flyers 223.93

Community Picnic- deposit 1146.78

Flags: 150.41

Bank fees 6.00

Total Expenses - \$1,527.12

Ending Balance = \$9160.25

(Beginning Balance + Total Income-Total Expenditures)



**Westerlee
Holiday Home
Decoration Contest**

Three of the most festively decorated homes will receive a \$20 gift card courtesy of Westerlee Homeowners Association.

Judging Date: 12/17

pageborders.org



Annual Block Party, a great success! By Jacqueline Johnson

The Westerlee Community Association Annual Block Party & Cookout was held on Saturday, September 23, 2017. We thank our President, Klaus Philipsen, for letting us use his yard for the festivities. It's central location and nice flat lawn makes it the perfect location with plenty of room for seating areas and play space for the kids.

This years picnic had the best attendance ever, with over 75 people joining in on the fun! Neighbors who attended were a great mix of long term residents to the nearly new. Singles, couples and families with kids all enjoyed the festivities. We were so glad some of our newest neighbors were able to come out, hopefully they love our little slice of Catonsville even more! They were given some welcoming mums as a party favor.

We had a grand time talking and sharing stories. The children played well together in the yard. There were even Girl Scout cookies being sold. Our neighbors delighted us with delicious treats, some were even homemade. We hope everyone enjoyed the food from our new caterer, Maniak. They cooked up such a feast that there was food left for neighbors to take home leftovers!

All in all, the food was delicious, the fellowship was exceptional and the weather was perfect. The attendance is growing and this makes us happy. We relish in the opportunity to spend precious time with our neighbors. A **BIG thank you** to our Westerlee neighbors that pitched in to clean up at the end of the party!

As the cold weather approaches we know we will wave at each other as we run inside from the cold. Let's not forget the fun times we shared.

Hope to see everyone in the spring at the Annual Meeting!



Westerlee Board gets Mews to keep path clean.

By Klaus Philipsen

When the development of the Catonsville Mews townhomes on the former Hoffman farm were negotiated, Westerlee Inc. arranged with the developer that a footpath would be built connecting the dead end of Nuwood south of Cedar Circle to the part of Nuwood along the shopping center that older residents known as the Toys R'Us center (now Plaza). Another trail was built in the required green buffer between the townhomes and the boundary to the homes along Cedar Circle. That path had been pretty overgrown this summer and trash had accumulated along the fence. Westerlee Inc. contacted the management company which maintains the Mews and achieved that the groundskeepers cut back the vegetation and cleaned up trash. The path is now open again for a dog-walkers or anybody out for a stroll or a bit of exercise. The path forms a loop with the Mews access road going back down to Nuwood. One day we hope to extend the path through the buffer strip all the way to Rolling Road.



CELESTIAL SIGHTS

By Fred Hickok, Professor Emeritus of Astronomy, Community College of Baltimore County

December 3 - Full Moon, Supermoon. This was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Cold Moon because this is the time of year when the cold winter air settles in and the nights become long and dark. This moon has also been known as the Full Long Nights Moon and the Moon Before Yule. The Moon will be near its closest approach to the Earth and may look slightly larger and brighter than usual.

December 13, 14 - Geminids Meteor Shower. The Geminids is the king of the meteor showers. It is considered by many to be the best shower in the heavens, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon, which was discovered in 1982. The shower runs annually from December 7-17. It peaks this year on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Gemini, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

January 2 - Full Moon, Supermoon. This was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Wolf Moon because this was the time of year when hungry wolf packs howled outside their camps. This has also been known as the Old Moon and the Moon After Yule.

January 31 - Full Moon, Supermoon, Blue Moon. As the second full moon in the same month it is sometimes referred to as a blue moon, from an Old English word *belewe*, which means tricky.

March 2 - Full Moon. This was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Worm Moon because this was the time of year when the ground would begin to soften and the earthworms would reappear. This has also been known as the Full Crow Moon, the Full Crust Moon, the Full Sap Moon, and the Lenten Moon.

Source: <http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy-calendar-2017.html>

Successful Eclipse Trip!

My wife Helen and I went to Myrtle Beach State Park with 2 grandsons 8 and 5 a week before the eclipse. By the weekend the forecast for the Charleston area was not good so we packed up and drove 4.5 hours to Anderson, South Carolina, west of Greenville. The professor, who took over the CCBC planetarium for me, was also there and set up his telescope in the town park. There were some big clouds around but thankfully they didn't obscure the Sun. During totality I saw red prominences and a nicely structured corona through binoculars. The sky got to a twilight stage and we saw Venus and Jupiter. The temperature dropped about 8 degrees. People oohed and aahed at the start of totality and cheered at the end as the diamond ring (light reappearing through a valley on the Moon) appeared. Very impressive. Extensive traffic jams afterwards so we got home two days later.



k0260972 fotosearch.com ©

Our neighbors Jan Caughlan and Rafi Sela viewed the eclipse from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and took a video that showed the Moon's shadow racing across the valley toward them and then the eclipsed Sun.

Benjamin Banneker Planetarium Shows

Community College of Baltimore County
800 South Rolling Road, Room 030A Free admission

December 1, 8:00 pm: What was the Christmas Star? There are many different explanations concerning what could have been the "Star of Bethlehem." Come see what some of them are, based on both ancient writings and modern technology. Outdoor observing afterward, weather permitting.

December 2, 10:00 am: The Last Christmas Tree (children's show) What happens to the last Christmas tree in the sales lot, the one that nobody else wants?

Local fun around town

24th Annual Catonsville Tree Lighting

November 29th at 6:30, Catonsville Fire Dept on Fredrich Rd. Santa, music & refreshments.

39th Annual Ellicott City Midnight Madness

December 1st from 6pm to 12:30am. Tree, Santa, Carolers, and Winterfest garden. Free Shuttle and late shopping.



Picnic & the Holiday Contest

Just a few of the things your \$25 annual dues pay for. Many neighborhoods pay a lot more and get so much less. If you have not yet paid your 2017 dues, drop a check in the mail to:
Westerlee Homeowner's Assoc. c/o
Rizwan Mahmoodi, 2126 Fernglan Way.

Join Your Neighbors on line!

Become a member of Nextdoor, the online communication platform tailored to our community. Go to: <https://westerlee.nextdoor.com>.

It's a great way to connect with neighbors for everything from finding a babysitter to selling a sofa. You can ask neighbors if their streets have been plowed or let others know about upcoming local events.

Participation requires an invitation. Please e-mail Klaus a request at kphilipsen@archplan.com