

# NEWS YOU CAN USE

COLLEGE GARDENS CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER  
NOVEMBER 2008

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## Community Meeting November 18th

You are invited to attend our College Gardens Civic Association Community Meeting November 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM in the cafeteria of College Gardens Elementary School. These meetings provide an opportunity for you to hear about what's happening in our neighborhood as well as creating a forum for our community members to give voice to issues of concern.

Representatives from the City of Rockville will be present to provide an update on the upcoming construction in College Gardens Park. The project, which is described later in this newsletter, will replace our current pond with a functional storm water management pond. City staff will discuss the final plan for the park, what to expect during construction, the remaining steps in the process and the timetable for achieving them. As part of that project, the city will also perform stream restoration work long a tributary of Watts Branch between Princeton and Plymouth Woods.

Also on the agenda is a brief discussion of the impact on our neighborhood from the decision by Montgomery College to institute a no smoking policy on their campus.

## No Smoking Policy at Montgomery College

In the interest of providing a healthy environment and promoting healthy lifestyles for its students, Montgomery College has become a non-smoking campus. While their motives are good, the changes have had some negative impacts for those living close to the campus.

Our neighbors on Princeton Place have reported students in our neighborhood smoking just off campus, which has resulted in increased noise, traffic, and trash. Our neighbors in Plymouth Woods have also reported being bothered by the students congregating off campus.

We are continuing to work with City staff, the Plymouth Woods Civic Association and Montgomery College to develop a plan that satisfies all stakeholders as much as possible.



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## Park & Pond Update

Construction of the new storm water management pond and surrounding park is expected to begin this winter and should be completed sometime next summer. The City wants to uphold the current schedule in order to maintain a grant from the EPA to support this project. The City received ten bids, ranging from approximately \$1.4 million to \$2.5 million. City Staff anticipate that the Mayor and Council will award this construction bid to HMF Paving in November, and construction will begin in early January right after the holidays.

Construction will not start before 7 AM on weekdays and will be subject to Montgomery County's Noise Ordinance, which limits noise from 9 PM to 7 AM on weekdays. Work will be done in phases to minimize the impact on pedestrian traffic and maximize access to the new playground, but some restrictions will be necessary.

The park was visited by the City Forrester who then assessed the many trees in the park. Some of the trees will be removed to accommodate the new storm water management pond and some will be removed because they are unhealthy, but an effort was made to retain as many trees as possible.

Before construction begins, the contractor will install a chain link fence around the park's construction area and will post detour signs for pedestrians, who will be directed along College Parkway around the construction zone. The chain link fence will have an entrance gate at College Parkway that will be locked during nights and weekends. At the beginning and end of the school day, the contractor will post flagmen at the entrance to protect children from construction traffic.

After tree protection and sediment control measures are installed, the contractor will drain the pond and begin excavating the expanded pond basin. During the first six weeks of construction, the new playground will be closed due to close proximity of the work. The playground is expected to remain open for the remainder of the project.

The park shelters, basketball court, plaza area, paths and other park amenities will be built last, after the pond and the underground pipes are completed. Pond and park construction will be substantially completed by June 1, 2009, although some landscaping may be deferred until the cooler fall planting season. 31 trees less than 12" in diameter and 33 trees over 12" in diameter are slated to be removed in the park. Trees in or directly adjacent to construction may be in the way of the new features, and construction impacts cause root damage even if the tree itself is not in the construction zone. Trees in poor condition will be removed in cases where the tree has heavily exposed roots, damage or disease, or pose post-construction safety concerns.

New landscaping will add 122 trees (almost twice the number being removed), 167 shrubs and 1,600 perennial plants to the park, as well as plants along the stream valley and in the pond's wetland fringe. College Gardens Park will be fully landscaped with plants native to the Mid-Atlantic area after the construction is completed. New plants will be temporarily protected from geese and other animals with netting until they are well established, but it is expected that some of the new plants will not survive.

As part of this storm water management project, the City is planning to perform stream restoration work to a tributary that feeds into Watts Branch from Princeton Place to the Plymouth Woods inlet. The section of the tributary where the work will occur runs parallel to College Parkway.

Work includes various structures to stabilize the eroding banks of the stream and a new inlet to eliminate erosion where storm water enters the stream from Plymouth Woods. Stream restoration will proceed concurrently with the pond construction. The stream work is anticipated to be complete by the end of February, 2009.

As proposed in the park concept, several amenities are listed in the bid as add alternatives, which means that they will be built if the park improvements budget allows. After discussion at the College Gardens Civic

Association annual meeting in June, community members indicated that their first priority was the new basketball court located on the existing softball infield area. The other add alternatives were prioritized in the following order: the overlook deck at the playground end of the pond, an additional shelter (a roofed structure) for the interpretive deck at the ballfield end of the pond, and concrete pads under the proposed picnic tables. All four add-alternatives are affordable and are expected to be built, including the basketball courts and the pond decks. A decision on the alternatives will be made before the Mayor and Council award.

Residents are invited to follow construction updates that will be mentioned in Rockville Reports, distributed through the College Gardens Civic Association, and posted on the City's website at [www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov). For further information, please contact Lise Soukup of Rockville Department of Public Works at (240)314-8515 or via email at [Lsoukup@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:Lsoukup@rockvillemd.gov).

Dr. Hakenkamp and Mr. Andy Martin collected baseline data this summer for their study of the pond ecosystem before and after construction. We can anticipate receipt of their initial report in the near future.

And finally, the City has now built and installed a display case at the park and posted a summary view of the pond project for review. Watch this space for additional information throughout the construction project. Once the project is completed, a display case will be provided within the park.



New display board at College Gardens Park

## National Night Out A Success

On August 5<sup>th</sup>, we once again celebrated National Night Out in College Gardens Park. The event included food provided by our neighbors and local businesses, entertainment for the kids, door prizes and a silent auction. This year featured some fabulous prizes and proceeds from the event exceeded the CGCA budget.

The event was co-sponsored by the Mayor and Council of the City of Rockville, the Rockville City Police Department, and the College Gardens Civic Association. We were visited by many City officials including Councilmember Gajewski.

Many thanks to Shari Perry, Crista Oehler, Sue Harris Phillips, Mark Pierzchala, Benita Cohen and everyone else who helped create another special evening.

## Capital Improvement Projects

The City of Rockville has requested suggestions for the city's FY 2010 Capital Improvements Program. All ideas submitted will be considered by City staff for inclusion in the proposed budget to be shared with the Mayor and Council next March. All projects must be approved by Mayor and Council to receive funding. Submitted projects must benefit the community for more than 20 years, cannot serve a private purpose or be located on private property and must be equally accessible to all citizens of Rockville. Projects must have a one-time construction related cost of \$25,000 or more to be considered by City staff,

Examples of projects submitted by neighborhoods last year include:

- Neighborhood sidewalk, curb/gutter and street repairs
- Pathway lighting in a neighborhood park
- Additional benches in a neighborhood park

If you have suggestions for projects in our neighborhood, please submit your ideas to Mike Phillips or any other member of the Executive Committee by Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>. Completed proposals are due to City Staff by November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

## Solar Power Addition Underway At College Gardens Elementary School

As reported in the last newsletter, a recent announcement from Montgomery County Public Schools named College Gardens Elementary School as one of three schools that will be used to evaluate solar photovoltaic (PV) systems for potential use on other schools. The other schools in this initiative are Richard Montgomery High School and Clarksburg High School.

Installation of the new PV system has now begun. A staging area was created at the

back of the school to minimize the risk to students and faculty as well as reduce the interference with traffic patterns. Work should occur during business hours.

Once completed, approximately 20 to 40 percent of the school's required power would be provided by the PV system during peak sunshine. The system will generate clean power without noise or pollution, reducing the school's impact on our environment.



Work zone at back of CGES

## Snow Removal Policy

For better or worse, winter is right around the corner. For those of you who may be new to our neighborhood, the City of Rockville's snow removal policy requires property owners to clear all public right-of-ways.

After a snowfall of three inches or less, the owners have 24 hours to clear a path at least 36" wide along paved surfaces. Property owners must clear a path within the first 48 hours when snowfall is in excess of three inches. Ice must be removed and surfaces must be treated to prevent re-freezing. The city may fine violators of their policy.

Seniors or people with disabilities can get assistance with snow removal by calling the Rockville Senior Center at (240)314-8800.

## Zoning Revisions

Many of you have been following the City's effort to revise their zoning ordinance, known as RORZOR. Mark Pierzchala has continued to follow this process and provide updates to the neighborhood.

The final discussion of the draft ordinance and instruction to City staff will occur at the Mayor and Council's regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, Nov. 17. At that meeting, the Mayor and Council are expected to review the final draft ordinance and map, and to give the City planning staff final instructions on any changes. City staff will then prepare a formal ordinance for introduction. Final action on the ordinance normally occurs at the following Mayor and Council meeting. The current schedule calls for introduction of the ordinance on Dec. 8, with final action to take place on Dec. 15.

One area of interest for our neighborhood has been Accessory Structures. Under the ordinance, structures could be up to 15 feet high at the roof peak instead of measuring to midway between the roof and the gable. Also noteworthy is the change in zoning of College Plaza from MXNC (mixed-use neighborhood commercial) to MXCD (mixed-use corridor). The CGCA had originally lobbied for College Plaza to be designated MXNC, but changed to a neutral position upon further review of the zones and their implications.

Many thanks to Mark for his continued attention to this important issue. More information about these changes is available online at [www.rockvillemd.gov/zoning](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/zoning) or in person at the City Clerk's Office.

## Garden Club of College Gardens

From Virginia Render, President

The Garden Club of College Gardens has won several awards for our work at the corner of Nelson Street and College Parkway. We have continued to water at the corner and are planning to replace plants that have died. The club is making plans for another wall which we think is needed on the Nelson Street side.

We edged and weeded several times at the rain garden near the new playground at the park.

For the past several years we have supported Rainbow House Women's Shelter and Manna Food Center. We supplied Manna with 25 turkeys last December and have voted to support Manna in the same way this year. Their requests for help in supplying food for families has greatly increased. If anyone wishes to help in this endeavor, you can send a check made out to the "Garden Club of College Gardens". On the memo line write "for Manna Food Center". Mail to:

Virginia Render  
1614 Auburn Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850-7144

100% of what you donate goes to food for the needy.

## Around Rockville

*Townhall Meeting with Councilmember Gajewski*  
 Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> from 8 to 10 pm Rockville City Hall

*Rockville Concert Band Fall Concert*  
 November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3 pm  
 F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

*25th Annual Holiday Bazaar*  
 Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 2 pm  
 Rockville Senior Center

*Rockville Civic Ballet: The Nutcracker*  
 Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup>  
 F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

*Rockville Art League Exhibit*  
 Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> through Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>  
 Glenview Mansion

*If You Give A Pig A Pancake & Other Story Books*  
 December 13, 2008 at 11am  
 Montgomery College PAC

## For Kids

