



# Abell Improvement Association Newsletter

April 2013

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Neighbors,

Spring is finally springing, and there are lots of activities ahead for the Abell Improvement Association. Below are a number of things coming up this Spring. We hope you'll join us!

**General Membership Meeting** - Wednesday, April 17, 6:30 p.m. at the Barclay Recreation Center. We will discuss a number of important issues including the upcoming Street Fair and Summer Film Series. **Also, we will vote on a change to the AIA By-Laws.** The change being proposed will allow us to elect our representatives to the Charles Village Community Benefits District (CVCBD) at our November meeting so that they can be sworn in to the CVCBD board at their first meeting of the year in January. Please see below for the language of the proposed amendment.

**Mayor's Spring Cleanup** - Saturday, April 20 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. This year our new Sanitation Committee Chair, Peter Matchette (petermatchette@gmail.com), is organizing AIA's efforts for the cleanup. Peter is coordinating with some volunteers from Hopkins to help our neighborhood clean up some of the alleys in Abell. We need your help, too. Please consider volunteering your time to help with the cleanup. More details will be announced by email in the coming weeks. Please contact Peter with any questions or to sign up to volunteer.

**Memorial Day Picnic** - Sunday, May 26 at 4 pm in the Open Space. As in the past, the AIA will provide food for the grill and some drinks, but we ask everyone to chip in with side dishes, desserts, and drinks. In addition, we need volunteers to help set up, cook, and clean up. We hope to see you there.

Now is also the time to begin considering how you would like to volunteer for the annual AIA **Street Fair**. Although it seems like a long time until September, we are already beginning to make plans for the event. In particular, we need folks to help sign up vendors and collect donations for the silent auction. Please contact me (drewcwalker@gmail.com) or Bonnie Bessor (bbessor@gmail.com) if you would like to help out. Also, look for an announcement soon for a recruitment party for 2013 volunteers.

Finally, as you may know, JHU has begun making plans for developing the former Olmstead project at 33<sup>rd</sup> and St. Paul Streets. They are asking for community input. The AIA has already written a letter in support of Eddie's Market. If you would like your voice to be heard, please fill out the survey at the following web address: <http://www.3200stpaul.com/>.

Hope to see you all at the upcoming meetings and events. Please consider volunteering to help us make it another great spring in Abell.

Take care,

Drew Walker  
President, Abell Improvement Association

**Proposed Amendment to the AIA Bylaws** - Voting at the Membership Meeting on April 17: The AIA appoints two representatives to serve on the Board of the Charles Village Community Benefits District Management Authority (CVCBDMA). These representatives also serve as voting members of the Executive Committee. Representatives shall be elected at the November General Membership Meeting in accordance with the standard voting procedures.

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### **Abell Resident Receives Lidinsky Public Service Award**

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake presented **Ms. Beth A. Strommen** with the Richard A. Lidinsky, Sr. Award of Excellence in Public Service at a ceremony on March 20 in City Hall. Strommen has worked for the Planning Department for 22 years.

"Each year, we have an opportunity to celebrate the exemplary employees who have dedicated themselves to making their agency-and this city-a better place," said Mayor Rawlings-Blake. "Beth Strommen is constantly seeking to improve and restore environmental conditions to make our urban communities greener and healthier places to live."

The Richard A. Lidinsky, Sr. Award of Excellence in Public Service was established to recognize long-serving City employees who have worked to improve City services and make city government more efficient. The award is named after Mr. Lidinsky, who was employed with Baltimore City for 43 years and served as deputy comptroller under eight mayors.

### **Volunteer Green Service Day at Schoolhouse Garden**

The sculpture garden in honor of School 115, which generations of African American children attended from the 1890's to the end of legal segregation, is still under construction. Please join with other volunteers to help prepare the garden on April 20 at 10 a.m. at Merryman Lane and Brentwood Ave.

## **The Transform-Baltimore Comprehensive Rezoning Process and AIA's Housing Committee Activities**

A complex and comprehensive six-year process of drafting, reviewing, meeting, discussions, and remapping resulted in a new zoning code that will be introduced as City Council Bill 12-0152 in April, 2013. In one of the last public hearings of the planning commission, Thomas J. Stosur, director of Baltimore City Department of Planning, highlighted four key goals as central to the changes "Transform Baltimore" seeks to achieve:

- simplify and streamline the development process
- improve Urban design and environment
- preserve neighborhood character
- create new zoning tools to promote mixed-uses

The new zoning code streamlines the specific list of uses, characteristic for the 1971 established zoning code, into broader generic categories that permit greater flexibility in their application. Overarching goals are neighborhoods that are pedestrian friendly and allow mixed use development aimed at decreasing automobile use and encouraging alternative transportation use to reach schools, hospitals, recreational facilities, markets /shops and the workplace. Laurie Feinberg led the audience at the Planning Commission Hearing at Morgan State University through the new user guide of the New Zoning Code, a well-written, handy brochure available at the hearing. See also at [www.rewritebaltimore.org](http://www.rewritebaltimore.org) or write to: [zoningcode@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:zoningcode@baltimorecity.gov).

During the last years of the review process, a flurry of new organizations were created or formed themselves in an effort to bring adjacent neighborhood organizations together to discuss the proposed code regulations and their impact on the communities. Underlying these efforts was the realization that, by collaborating, they may share lessons learned and created a louder voice to get their concerns heard.

**The CVA's Land Use Committee's** move to invite the numerous community organizations to participate in their monthly meetings can be seen as a positive development. This committee hears presentations by developers, home owners, project designers, etc. These parties seek the advice/support of the committee on such requests as: home conversion, treatment abuse centers, tree planting projects, theatre construction, restaurant sidewalk extensions or liquor license approvals. AIA's housing committee representative has been participating in these meetings.

**The Neighborhood Development and Marketing Task Force** (former Central Baltimore Housing Task Force) is another recently-formed group that aims at bringing together neighborhood organizations with marketing professionals and community developers. The purpose of the task force is to bring these parties together so they can get to know each other with the goal to eventually work together and to learn about existing or future opportunities for seeking funds and grants to improve the neighborhoods/communities.

The Neighborhood Development and Marketing Task Force was established by the **Homewood Community Partnership Initiative (HCPI)**. The HCPI was recently endowed with \$10 million by JHU President Ronald J. Daniels and committed to strengthen the neighborhoods and a retail district around JHU's Homewood campus. *(Continued on p.3)*

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## Transform-Baltimore (Continued)

The **HCPI's** declared goals are to achieve:

- a vibrant urban center, growing by 3,000 more households in 10 years with existing new retail business and arts , entertainment and cultural institutions
- a livable community, with a strong residential market, high caliber amenities, and quality public schools
- active communities that collaborate with one another, support one another's projects, and work with JHU and other institutions that help anchor the area

See: <http://web.jhu.edu/administration/president/hcpi>.

Recognizing that safe and vibrant neighborhoods are critical to attracting and retaining the best and brightest students, faculty and staff, President Daniels launched the HCPI in winter 2011. The Task Force meets on a monthly basis and AIA's Housing Committee has attended the meetings. We heard presentations from Old Goucher, Remington, Oakenshawe, Waverly Main Street and also Abell Improvement Association (AIA.) Bonnie Bessor and Susanne Riveles described the main features of our community, our community's assets, activities, problems and needs. The presentation was supported by a photo montage created by Joel Urbanowicz, AIA's new member at large

Over the next months this Task Force's activities will take clearer shape and the hope is that some of the current and future community projects might receive support from the Task Force as they are in sync with the endowments goals and fit within the larger Charles Village area and within the concept of Transform Baltimore.

Though AIA neighborhood does not have the volume of housing problems and code violations persistent in other Baltimore neighborhoods, AIA wants to prevent a worsening of existing problems. Fortunately, houses for sale in our community find buyers relatively easily. It still depends on the vigilance of the community to alert the housing committee regarding existing housing problems and potential housing code violations.

Below are examples of how to tackle housing blight/eyesore, housing decay, and vacancy problems that are rectified partly due to the intervention and activity of AIA's housing committee members.

After a lengthy process, two homes located at 3051 and 3201 Abell Ave., within AIA's immediate boundaries, are up for receivership and may find a "caring" owner after the auction process. Two problem homes on Barclay Street have also seen positive development in addressing their decay. The 3210 Barclay street home has been successfully rehabilitated and the 3236 Barclay street home is currently in the process of purchasing the tax certificate from the city.

Acting upon a JHU School of Public Health research study that documented the consistent link between the concentration of liquor store outlets and violent crime and poor health the city planners decided to decrease the number of retail license liquor licenses and reduce the overabundance of liquor stores.

AIA supports the city's commitment to reduce the density of liquor outlets and supports the Transform Baltimore zoning decision to phase out non-conforming liquor stores.

In Charles Village there are a number of liquor stores housed in residential neighborhoods that will be affected by this ruling, regardless of whether they have caused any problems or encountered violent behavior in their vicinity. AIA

has argued that an individual liquor outlet may be allowed to remain in a residential neighborhood after a case by case evaluation, and only via rezoning of the property to a partial commercial use. The Schnapp Shop on Calvert St. & 30<sup>th</sup> Street may qualify under this provision.

*Susanne Riveles*

### New Arrival in Abell

*From Lisa Nawrot*

**We have a new baby to announce!**

**Eleanor Julia Nawrot was born February 27 to Ilissa Gould and Lisa Nawrot at 3227 Abell.**

***Welcome, Eleanor, and congratulations to Ilissa and Lisa!***

### Ernestine Palmer

Mrs. Ernestine Palmer, a longtime resident of the 3200 block of Barclay, died on January 31 at the age of 94.

Neighbors recall that Mrs. Palmer was a stalwart on the ad hoc anti-hotel committee that successfully opposed the building of a hotel on the lot where the Farmers Market now does business. That episode unfolded between 1973 and 1975.

Mrs. Palmer ran the bake sale at the AIA Street Fair for many years. Neighbors will miss her generosity.

Several Abell residents have reported recently that **packages** delivered to their home address and left on their porch have been taken. You may want to consider having your packages delivered to an office or work address where you can pick up your package if you will not be home when they are delivered.

***Robert Rose** of the 3000 block of Abell wishes to thank those neighbors who brought food to him during the winter months. He greatly appreciates their kindness.*

## - Bulletin Board -

### Officers Contact List

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Email list and other info:  
www.abellimprovement.org

Trash & Recycling  
Schedule

**TRASH**  
**EVERY TUESDAY**



**RECYCLING**  
**EVERY THURSDAY**

Trash may be put out after  
6 p.m. the night before, by  
6 a.m. the day of pick-up.

*Trash must be in rigid  
containers with tight-fitting  
lids.*

*Residents may be fined for  
trash disposal violations.*

You are warmly invited to attend the Baltimore

### **BLUE MASS**

A community-wide Service of Prayer  
For the protection, encouragement and guidance of the Police,  
Fire-fighters, and Paramedic Teams of Baltimore City

Tuesday, April 23, 6:30 p.m.

**SAINT JOHN'S CHURCH**

3009 Greenmount Avenue  
Greenmount at 30<sup>th</sup> Street

Reception following the Service

**Catering provided by *Darker Than Blue Café***

## **Memorial Day Picnic**

**Sunday, May 26**  
**4 p.m.**

Come enjoy an  
afternoon with your  
neighbors for hot dogs,  
hamburgers and  
drinks.

*Bring a dish to share.*

**Abell Open Space**  
**32<sup>nd</sup> Street between Abell &  
Gullford**

## **AIA Membership Meeting**

Wednesday, April 17  
6:30 p.m.

**Barclay Recreation Center**  
**300 W. 29<sup>th</sup> Street**



*Topics to be discussed  
include:*

- ★ Summer Film Series
- ★ Street Fair
- ★ Bylaws change for  
electing CVCBD  
representatives

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's

## **Spring Cleanup**

**Saturday, April 20**

**9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

*Join your neighbors to help clean Abell's alleys*

To volunteer, contact Peter Matchette -  
petermatchette@gmail.com