

MPNA News

The Melrose Park Neighbors Association

Volume 2 – Number 14
From MPNA President – Andy Rudin
October 1, 2005

The News:

Adding email addresses

The more Melrose Park neighbors that receive this emailed newsletter, the stronger our association will be. Please ask your neighbors and friends to email me (andrewrudin@earthlink.net) to be added to this email list to share information about our neighborhood. We don't share our email list with anyone.

Next MPNA Public Meeting is at 7:00pm on Monday, October 10.

Our next public meeting will be in the Community Room at the Elkins Park Free Library starting at 7:00pm on Monday, October 10, 2005. Our community police contact, Sergeant David Hirschbuhl said that he would like to be at all our meetings. I hope he will be able to attend this one. Encourage your friends and neighbors to attend.

Curtis Dog Park

Curtis Dog Park Committee is looking for interested dog owners to work with their committee. Diane Kolb writes, "We are well on our way to raising the funds needed to build the 1 1/2 acre pasture fence at the lower meadow of Curtis Arboretum. Look for our table at the HARVEST FESTIVAL at Curtis Arboretum OCT 8th.

Diane Kolb, web address: www.curtisdogpark.org email: Dogs@curtisdogpark.org

Oak Lane Road at Asbury

David Herman is concerned about the shrubbery on the left hand corner when I have to turn onto Oak Lane Road at Asbury Ave. It's impossible to see without pulling out a few feet into the intersection, causing the cars in the lane to have to go over the median line.

He has called the police several times; the bushes have remained the same. David writes, "I've spoken to Mike Swavola. He said he'd speak to the people at the Township Building. I'd appreciate a letter from the Association. My next step is to write to AAA; they investigate dangerous intersections and contact the township/city to tell them of their concern. Frankly, such pestering shouldn't be necessary. The neighbors in that home should be told of the danger and their legal exposure if they choose not to trim their shrubbery. If there is an accident, they will certainly be liable."

David Herman, 18 Asbury Ave, Elkins Park, PA 19027

Zoning Hearing Board Meetings about the New Church on Ashbourne Road

Friends of Elkins Park has been created to deal with the West Oak Lane Church of God's plans to build a large facility on Ashbourne Road between the Elkins Park Post Office and the School Administration building. Visit their web site at www.epna.org. The organizer is Karin Helstrom.

“Remember that their current site plan has room for only 453 cars but the size of the building requires 1017 spaces. The special ordinance lets them put the other 564 spaces up to 3 miles away, but their plan shows no parking spaces for busses and no bus drop-off or pick-up facilities.”

The Elkins Park Neighbors Association (EPNA) is represented by Robert Sugarman, a well known Philadelphia attorney. Lynnewood Gardens has joined us in opposition to the zoning appeal and is represented by attorney Michael Yanoff.”

Each month the Board will announce the date and place of the next meeting, but most likely the meetings will be at Curtis Hall on:

- Thursday - October 27
- Wednesday - November 23
- Wednesday - December 21.

When the hearings are completed, the Board will have 45 days to issue its decision.

Forum on Election Reform

Tom Petersen calls our attention to the Election Reform Network, which invites you to attend “A Forum on Election Reform: Is your vote being counted?” Come to this important Forum on Election Reform. Learn what it takes to safeguard our elections and strengthen our democratic process in Montgomery County and across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

1 pm, Saturday, October 29th – Grace Presbyterian Church, corner of Old York Road and Vista Road, Jenkintown, PA 19046. Free Admission

Speakers:

- * Rebecca Mercuri, Ph.D., computer scientist and electronic voting expert; originator of the concept of the voter verified paper ballot for electronic vote machines
- * Ryan O'Donnell, Director of Communications, FairVote.
- * MaryBeth Kuznik, a founding member of VotePA and long-time poll worker
- * Additional speakers from national, state and local citizens organizations, including Common Cause

Topics:

- * Openness and Public Accountability of Elections Officials: No Decisions On Voting Machines Without Citizen Input
- * A Voter-Verified Paper Record of all votes cast through electronic vote machines to ensure accurate audits and recounts, if necessary
- * Full Access to Polling Places for the Disabled, in compliance with federal law
- * Lawful and efficient administration of Provisional Ballots
- * Public Disclosure of the County's Plan for compliance with the Help America Vote Act.

Visit us on the web at: www.electionreformnetwork.org

Election Reform Network, 7426 Barclay Rd., Cheltenham, PA 19102 Tel: 215-782-8218
e-mail: info@electionreformnetwork.org

What to do about those little trees the Township gave us?

Carolyn Gessner (gessner@voicenet.com) wants to know “what to do with a tree from those seedlings we got about three years ago...it is a redbud. It's now about three feet tall!” Any advice?

She went on to say, “I have noticed on my way home while driving by in the car, a putrid stench from the creek at the bridge at Cheltenham and Coventry. After the rain it dissipated, but was very bad last week...in the future who should I contact?” **The answer is 610-832-6014 during business hours and 610-832-6000 at other times.**

Cheltenham Avenue Traffic Signals

Joanne Eisensmidts writes, “Cheltenham Avenue is a major highway. The intersections of Oak Lane Road and Cheltenham Avenue and New Second Street and Cheltenham Avenue are near my home. The traffic signals are antiquated and inadequate for the volume of traffic. The other night, a traffic signal was hit and lies smashed in the street. The signals at Oak Lane Road and New Second Street are modern and easy to see from a distance. I understand that Philadelphia may be half responsible for the intersections mentioned previously. However, it is dangerous leaving the signals as is. A tragedy is waiting to happen. Please replace the signals as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this very urgent matter.”

Joanne Eisensmidts, 451 Crest Ave, Melrose Park, PA 19027, jeisensmidts@comcast.net

Philadelphia Water Department Project Improves Tookany Creek

The DEP News Release for Friday, September 16, 2005 (reprinted from email)

CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY -- For five miles, Cheltenham Avenue divides northwest Philadelphia from the eastern Montgomery County municipality of Cheltenham Township. The city and the township share the Tookany/Tacony/Frankford watershed, which begins in Cheltenham. The tributary known as Mill Run is a headwater of Tookany Creek (named “Tookany” in Cheltenham, the creek is called the “Tacony” in Philadelphia, and farther south in Philadelphia, “Frankford Creek”). As Frankford Creek, it empties into the Delaware River near the Betsy Ross Bridge.

Shortly after Mill Run begins in Cheltenham, however, the stream bends south, running under Cheltenham Avenue into the city, where it becomes one of Philadelphia’s many buried streams. Approximately 32 miles of historic tributaries to the Tookany/Tacony Creek were encapsulated in combined sewers during the 19th and 20th centuries to facilitate the residential and industrial development of Philadelphia.

Mill Run returns to Cheltenham, re-emerging from under the street, across the county line at a Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) stormwater outfall at the intersection of Cheltenham and Coventry avenues.

DEP has worked closely with the Philadelphia Water Department over the past 10 years to address water pollution in this tributary to Tookany Creek. The stream’s pollution has largely been the result of defective and illegally connected sewer pipes. Sewage that entered the city’s storm water system mixed with groundwater. Rather than moving quickly downstream where it would dissipate, polluted water tended to remain in a deep plunge pool near the outfall.

The city has taken a phased approach to reducing pollution in Mill Run. During Phase I, PWD addressed past sewage infiltration into this storm sewer through its cross connection program, fixing sanitary laterals that were connected to storm sewers.

Phase II, which has just been completed, included the restoration of the area around the outfall. The restoration included removing sediment and other debris that had accumulated on the concrete apron of the outfall; regrading the pool beneath the outfall and 90 linear feet of the streambank to ensure proper flow; and stabilizing 90 linear feet of both sides of the stream banks, using natural stream channel design technology that blends the use of boulders to reinforce the bottoms of the banks and vegetation to sustain the banks and floodplain.

The work was completed by Meadville Land Service, Inc., which provided bioengineering materials grown at Ernst Conservation Seeds, Meadville.

“Having achieved as much pollution reduction as feasible, PWD has now improved the aesthetics of the outfall as to its structure and hydraulic function,” said David Burke, a DEP watershed manager who has been involved with the health of Mill Run for several years. “We are looking forward to monitoring results that will demonstrate the success of Phase II.”

Update on Mill Run Water Quality

Joanne Dahme of the Philadelphia Water Department sent the following data about the quality of the water at the outfall near Cheltenham and Coventry. PWD’s Mike Pickel explained that the spike in fecal in the July sampling was due to debris in the sewer blocking one of the slots that was constructed in the storm sewer that diverts the dry weather flow into the sanitary sewer. The next sample will be taken in October 2005.

DATE	LOCATION	FLUORIDE	FECAL COUNT
1/03/05	Outfall T-088-01	0.28	40
1/03/05	Outfall T-088-01	0.42	20
4/05/05	Outfall T-088-01	0.18	270
4/05/05	Stream 50' below outfall	0.22	10
7/05/05	Outfall T-088-01	0.58	2,600
7/05/05	Stream 50' below outfall	0.28	710

Remember that when MPNA started working on this, the fecal coliform count was sometimes as high as 200,000 colonies per 100 milliliters. So, we have come a long way. Let’s see what the October test brings.

Community Policing Issues

As with our May meeting, Sergeant David Hirschbuhl will be at the October 10 meeting. The MPNA directors have a couple questions for him:

- How can we calm any future noisy parties at 506 Oak Lane?
- How can we best protect our replacement for the hose that was stolen from the Melrose Park train station?

Bob Schaffer of the 600 block of Elkins Avenue is interested in neighborhood town watch. He will not be at our October 10 meeting. Those interested in town watch can email Bob at dart2300@aol.com.

What other community policing concerns do you have? You can bring them to the meeting, or email them to me so I can put them in our agenda.

Your help needed for an enjoyable Fall Planting at Melrose Park Station, Thursday, October 27th!

MPNA members are responsible for the beautiful plantings around the inbound Melrose Park SEPTA station. Come join your neighbors and till the soil a bit, by planting bulbs and more. We will have bulbs, but you are welcomed to bring additional plants, digging tools, clippers, etc. Come for any time -- even 30 minutes -- will make a difference and lead to a lovelier spring:

- Place: Melrose Park Station, southbound side
- Date: Thursday, Oct. 27th (rain date, Friday, Oct 28th, same time)
- Time: Any time you can spare between 4:30 and 6:30 pm

Notice of a Public Visioning Meeting for Planning an Outside Sculpture in Glenside

From Assistant Township Manager, Bryan Havir... "You are cordially invited to participate in a humanities discussion and public visioning process to help formulate the creation of an outdoor public art sculpture that is proposed for the Glenside Commercial District. The Township has received several grants from the 5-County Arts Fund of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. Our public visioning process will focus on the historical and humanities' aspects of the Township and region to identify important community elements that might be captured in public art.

Bonnie Hayes, a professor at Arcadia University, has volunteered to be the humanities' facilitator for the first session. Renowned artist Zenos Frudakis of Glenside will attend the community discussion to obtain input to create a series of artist concepts that will be refined during future public meetings over the next several months with further input from the community.

The humanities' discussion will be held in the Mirror Room of Arcadia University's Grey Towers on Wednesday, November 2, 2005 from 6 to 8 P.M. Light refreshments will be served. Parking is free in the front lot, near the castle.

Please RSVP to Ruth Littner Shaw, Cheltenham Township Main Street Manager, at 215-887-6200, ext. 113, or rshaw@cheltenham-township.org by October 21 to ensure ample seating."

Autumn Celebration

The 15th Annual Cheltenham Community Harvest Festival promises fun for all ages with a lineup of exciting events on Saturday, October 8, 2005. As always, the setting for the festival is beautiful Curtis Arboretum, located on Church Road and Greenwood Avenue in Wyncote. The fun starts at noon and wraps up after dark with a *grand fireworks finale!*

On a more serious note, this year will also feature a **Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund Drive**. Clean Machine Car Wash of 401 W. Glenside Avenue in Glenside is offering a 30-day pass for free car washes for every donation of \$10 or more. The special offer, which applied to one car, one wash per day for a maximum of 30 days, expires until December 15, 2005.

As usual, entertainment takes center stage throughout the day with several live performers and other festival highlights include:

- haunted hayrides through the arboretum with spooky surprises ([Create a "scene" for the hayrides and win prizes!](#))
- a craft fair featuring great buys for holiday shopping ([Crafters Wanted](#))
- over a dozen gigantic inflatable amusements, including a 40-foot sinking *Titanic*, a 32-foot rock climbing mountain and a haunted house
- wacky arcade-style games where youngsters win fun prizes

- a delicious food court offering tempting treats, such as barbecued ribs, funnel cakes, ice cream and candy apples
- face painting, pumpkin decorating and other delights.

Admission to the Community Harvest Festival is free, and plenty of on-site parking is available. The rain date is Sunday, October 9.

Volunteers help make this wonderful community event a success every year. Anyone willing to be a creature in the haunted hayride, staff a table or help set up that morning should call the [Cheltenham Parks and Recreation Department](#) at 215-887-1000, ext. 227.

This Newsletter

If you have any suggestions for items for this newsletter, feel free to email them to me at andrewrudin@earthlink.net.

MPNA memberships

Membership in MPNA helps pay for plantings, signage, and many other things. Annual dues are \$10 per individual, \$20 per family. Send your contribution to MPNA Board member Jim Muldoon, 106 Parkview Road, Cheltenham, PA 19012.

MPNA Board

Members of the MPNA Board are Andrew Rudin, Phil Kates, Gene Silver, Michael Shectman, Jim Muldoon and Albert Fried-Cassorla. If you are interested in helping out with MPNA, please email me at andrewrudin@earthlink.net. This newsletter is available or will be soon, maybe with photos, on our website – www.melroseparkneighbors.org