



MPNA News

The Melrose Park Neighbors Association

From MPNA President – Andy Rudin
October 1, 2004

Well, look at this! A new masthead, new president – me, and the beginning of a new autumn season. Albert Fried-Cassorla is still on the Board, and, on behalf of MPNA, I thank him for his leadership and enthusiasm over the past few years. Keep up the good work, Albert.

Other members of the Board are Phil Kates, Michael Schectman and Jim Muldoon. If you are interested in helping out with MPNA, please email me at andrewrudin@earthlink.net

The News:

New website for MPNA

The Board of Directors has voted to start an MPNA website – www.melroseparkneighbors.org. Check it out.

Celebration for new SEPTA station

We can all see our beautiful new Melrose Park train station now. MPNA is planning a morning rush hour celebration later this month. If you want to help out, please email me at andrewrudin@earthlink.net.

Study for a new service district

The Township has been awarded a grant to hire a consulting firm to develop a plan for a new commercial services district along Cheltenham Avenue. The idea is to create a joint venture, somewhat like the arrangements with businesses in a mall, involving both Philadelphia and Cheltenham businesses, each of which would pay a membership fee. The service district would not supplant any existing services, but could add services like additional security, clean up crews, and so on. The businesses would cooperate in marketing and advertising as well.



Separately, the section of Cheltenham Avenue roughly between Coventry and Front is due for new gateway signs and banners, planned Township-wide as early as 2005. This is part of the streetscape enhancement program that applies to five commercial districts in the Township.

Fall Festival

The 14th Annual Cheltenham Community Harvest Festival promises fun for all ages with a lineup of exciting events on Saturday, October 9, 2004. Rain date is Sunday, October 10. 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!* In addition, entertainment takes center stage throughout the day with several live performers and other festival highlights include:

- haunted hayrides through the arboretum with spooky surprises
- a craft fair featuring great buys for holiday shopping
- 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
- a treasure tree of mystery prizes
- face painting, pumpkin decorating and other delights.



Admission to the Community Harvest Festival is free, and plenty of on-site parking is available.

New Librarian

Cathleen Ann McCoy is the new head librarian at the Elkins Park Free Library. Cathy has worked in libraries at the University of Alabama, in Atlanta and in Birmingham, among other places. She has a BA in English from Northern Illinois University and an MLS from the University of Alabama.

Volunteers needed to pick up books

Norma Rotman organizes the book sales at the Elkins Park Library. She is appealing for someone to help pick up boxes of books that are donated to the book sales. These pickups are irregular and usually happen when an estate liquidates or someone moves. If you are interested in helping out, email Norma at mrotman2@comcast.net

Yorktown redevelopment

According to David Kravnik, our Township Manager, “the Yorktown redevelopment is scheduled to break ground in October with completion anticipated in September 2005. Unfortunately, the delay – caused by litigation, not the Township – meant that Blockbuster, which planned to relocate there from Elkins Park Square, could not. Walgreens may not have been anyone’s first choice for the location, but the Township worked hard to create an aesthetically appealing plan, and the pharmacy will provide an anchor for numerous small businesses, including a gourmet pizza shop, florist, day spa, cleaners, premium ice cream, dressmakers and paper boutique.”

New Housing at the Ashbourne Country Club

Ashbourne Country Club has met with neighbors to discuss constructing town homes there, while still preserving an 18-hole golf course.

Mill Run – the stream that flows through our neighborhood

Mill Run starts at what's called an "outfall" or concrete opening, at Coventry and Cheltenham, and ends by flowing into Tacony Creek, near the fire training tower and Ashbourne golf course at New Second Street and Tacony Creek Parkway. Three mixtures of water can come out of our outfall. First, there is enough clean spring water coming out to fill a large pond that used to exist just to the north of Cheltenham Avenue where Melrose Station Apartments now exists. Second, when it rains, all the street inlets collect rain water, gravel, oil and trash and empty them into our stream. Third, to a much lesser extent than before, when some of us flush our toilets or do a laundry, that too can appear in Mill Run. We should see some construction activity starting there in October 2004. The purpose is to stabilize the banks of the stream to prevent further erosion during storms. Cheltenham Township has a new ordinance about storm water runoff at www.cheltenhamtownship.org/stormwater/index.htm

This past winter and spring, I participated in the formation of a watershed organization for the Tacony/Frankford drainage area, which is about 29 square miles. Most of the watershed is in Cheltenham Township, but the authority to manage the watershed resides mostly with the Philadelphia Water Department. You can see a draft watershed management plan and other documents at www.phillywater.org/Tacony-Frankford/River%20Conservation%20Plan/draft%20plan.htm

Township Comprehensive Plan

The Township Planning Commission, with assistance from the Montgomery County Planning Commission, crafted the update with input from the Economic Development Task Force, Historical Commission and Shade Tree Advisory Commission. The plan's overall mission is to preserve and enhance the community's existing commercial, residential and open space features to improve the quality of life, while promoting economic development. Specific goals include:

- continuing revitalization and redevelopment of both commercial and residential areas
- maintaining and enhancing diverse housing stock and encouraging additional commercial development that is compatible with surrounding areas
- accommodating office development to provide jobs and enhance the Township's tax base without sacrificing the residential character of the Township
- providing safe, efficient transportation systems that balance automobile, pedestrian and public transportation
- maintaining existing industrial uses within the Township, while allowing new environmentally friendly/hi-tech light industrial uses
- maintaining and enhancing the Township's parks and recreation areas and encouraging the connection of open space
- using existing community facilities efficiently and replacing obsolete facilities
- promoting the Township's unique natural features and encouraging their preservation
- encouraging the preservation or restoration of irreplaceable historic structures and landscapes.

A draft of the plan is at www.cheltenhamtownship.org/comprehensiveplan/index.htm

This Newsletter

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