

MPNA News

The Melrose Park Neighbors Association

Volume 2 – Number 22

From MPNA President – Andy Rudin

October 7, 2006

More Trees Are Coming to Melrose Park

Bryan Havir, Assistant Township Manager, asked that I mention the Township received a second \$50,000 Elm Street grant for planting trees in Melrose Park and Glenside. A consultant will begin working on the planting location list toward the end of the year. Anyone interested in a free street tree can contact Bryan at 215-887-6200, ext. 112 or bhavir@cheltenham-township.org. The trees will be planted in Spring 2007.

Amy Steffen says she is interested in the Elm St. project. “I’ve asked Bryan for guidance on how to have input. I plan to do an informal assessment of streets that need trees and make a list for him. If anyone would like to join me on this, I welcome them. Please put out the word to the membership. You can include my direct email.”

Amy continues, “The Friends of HS Park are planting over 300 native trees and shrubs over the next several weekends. Please join us for a volunteer planting session - dates below. We’re making a big contribution to the tree cover in Cheltenham Township. And it’s fun! Wear work clothes, garden gloves (or we can provide) and meet at the shed in High School Park, Montgomery Ave near High School Road, Elkins Park. For info or to RSVP call Cynthia Blackwood, 215-387-0863 or volunteer@fhsp.org. Volunteer Days:

- Sat. Oct. 14, 9-12 noon.
- Sun. Oct. 15, 9-12 noon
- Sun. Oct 15, 1-4 p.m.
- Sat. Oct. 21, 1-4 p.m.
- Sun. Oct. 22, 9-12 noon
- Sat. Oct. 28, 1-4 p.m.
- Sun. Oct. 29, 9- 12 noon.”

Amy Steffen, 215-635-1993, AmySteffen@verizon.net

What to do about neighboring rundown properties and rubbish?

Several neighbors have contacted MPNA about problems with the upkeep of properties owned by other people. Cheltenham Township commissioners passed a property maintenance code in June 2006. See [Ordinance 2110-06](#) from the Township website.

It incorporates and references the *International Property Maintenance Code*, but as you can see from the Township website, you need the international code to see what our new code says. So, we ordered a copy of it for \$32.50 for a 32-page booklet (Buck a page) via the Township website.

Well, here is what parts of the new code say:

106.4 Violation penalties. Upon conviction before a Magisterial Judge, fines not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per day, together with costs of the suit shall be collectible as permitted by this ordinance.

302.4 Weeds. All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or excessive plant growth [Here you have to go to Chapter 188 in the Cheltenham Code. This section concerns “Nuisances” and 188-2 on shrubbery, grass and weeds reads, in part:

It is hereby declared a health hazard and nuisance and it shall be unlawful for any person to permit any of the following vegetation to grow or the cuttings, clippings and trimmings therefrom to remain uncollected on any lot or tract of ground in the Township:

- (1) Any weeds, tall grasses or noxious plants exceeding 12 inches in height on any developed lot or within 25 feet from the outer perimeter of the property lines of an undeveloped lot.
- (2) Any ornamental shrubbery, trees or other vegetative growth which obstructs normal passage along streets, highways, lanes or sidewalks or which impairs vision at highway intersections.

304.1 General. The exterior of a structure shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and sanitary so as not to pose a threat to public health, safety or welfare.

304.2 Protective treatment. All exterior surfaces, including but not limited to, doors, door and window frames, cornices, porches, trim, balconies, decks and fences shall be maintained in good condition. Exterior wood surfaces, other than decay-resistant woods, shall be protected by the elements and decay by painting or other protective covering or treatment. Peeling, flaking and chipped paint shall be eliminated and surfaces repainted. All siding and masonry joints as well as those between the building envelope and the perimeter of windows, doors and skylights shall be maintained weather resistant and water tight. All metal surfaces subject to rust or corrosion and all surfaces with rust or corrosion shall be stabilized and coated to inhibit future rust and corrosion. Oxidation stains shall be removed from exterior surfaces. Surfaces designed for stabilization by oxidation are exempt from this requirement.

Paraphrasing from now on:

304.3 All homes have to have a street number.

304.4 All structural members need to be rot-free.

304.5 All foundations need to be plumb and free from rodents and other pests.

304.6 All exterior walls shall be waterproof.

304.7 All roofs and drains shall be in good working order. Roof water shall not be discharged in a manner that creates a public nuisance. [Like ice on a sidewalk]

304.8 All the trim shall be in good repair.

304.9 All overhangs shall be in good repair.

304.10 All decks, porches and balconies shall be in good repair.

You get the idea. But there is more...

307.1 No accumulation of rubbish or garbage.

308.1 All structures shall be kept free of insect and rodent infestation.

OK. So now what do we do with our complaints? When we notified Bryan Havir of several problem properties, he referred our complaints to Rudy Kastenhuber, RKastenhuber@cheltenham-township.org who was fairly responsive. Let me know if you find out something different.

Taking care of Elkins Park Mum Barrels

Ruth Shaw, Melrose Park resident and manger of Cheltenham’s Main Street Program, writes “Do you think your members would be interested in planting and maintaining the barrels around Elkins Park? There are a total of 20 barrels, but some are being maintained. The bare ones need mums (Twp could purchase) but they need to be planted, WATERED and weeded. An MPNA sign could be placed on those. In fact, if any folks (business folks that is) would like to ‘adopt’ a barrel, they could have their business name on it. It is a year-round commitment, though. Meaning flowers spring and summer, mums fall and cabbages or something like that in

the winter. Reasonable advertising on the side of the barrels (approved by the Design Committee) would be given in exchange.”

Let me know. Thanks. Ruth
Cheltenham Township Main Street
Ruth Littner Shaw, Main Street Manager
8230 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027
215-887-6200, ext. 113 fax: 215-887-1561 rshaw@cheltenham-township.org

Fall Harvest Festival

The 16th Annual Cheltenham Community Harvest Festival promises fun for all ages with a lineup of exciting events on Saturday, October 14 (rain date Sunday, October 15). As always, the setting for the festival is the beautiful Curtis Arboretum, located on Church Road and Greenwood Avenue in Wyncote ([directions](#)). The fun starts at noon and wraps up after dark with a *grand fireworks finale!*

Donations Needed for Library Book Sales

What to do with all those books in the basement! Pickup is available – Just call 215-635-5000.

WANTED - CD's Video Tapes, Audio Tapes, Vintage Magazines, Comic Books, Software, LP Phonograph Records & ALL KINDS OF BOOKS.

NOT WANTED - Reader's Digest Condensed Books, Old Textbooks & Law Books, Scratched Phonograph Records, Older Encyclopedias, Underlined or Highlighted Books, Partial Sets of Reference Books, Moldy, Water-damaged Books.

All donations of books, videos & CDs are tax-deductible

The book sales are Friday through Sunday, starting on the following Fridays at 1pm – October 27, December 1, 2006 and January 12, February 23, March 23, April 10 and May 18, 2007. Half price sales start June 1st and the final \$5 per bag sale starts June 8th.

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 household. 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 Sheckman, 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

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