

SUMMER 2004

Neighborhood News

RRLRAIA 2004-2005

Kimberly Warren, RRLRAIA's new president, was elected at the Annual Meeting in May. She represents District 6 and lives on Meadow Ridge Road. She has lived in the RRLRAIA area for 12 years with husband, John Cammack, and sons, Henry and Walker. She grew up in Rochester, New York, and practiced law in Boston and Washington before moving to Baltimore. Kimberly is also a master gardener and has worked in Baltimore City establishing community gardens. She enjoys walking around Lake Roland with her two Bassett hounds. Kimberly wants to see RRLRAIA strengthen member participation to preserve and improve our community.

Officers are: **Jamie Cahn**, *First Vice President*; **Fran Anderson**, *Second Vice President*; **Sibley Classen**, *Treasurer*; and **Judith Wright**, *Secretary*.

We welcome six new additions to the Board. **Tony Dale**, *Overbrook Road, District 5*; **Candice Dalrymple**, *Indian Head Road, District 9*; **Kathy Lumsden**, *Ruxway Road, District 8*; **Jay McCormick**, *Piccadilly Road, District 1*; **Helga Morrow**, *Hollins Lane, District 10*; **Susan Nestler**, *Ridervale Road, District 4*.

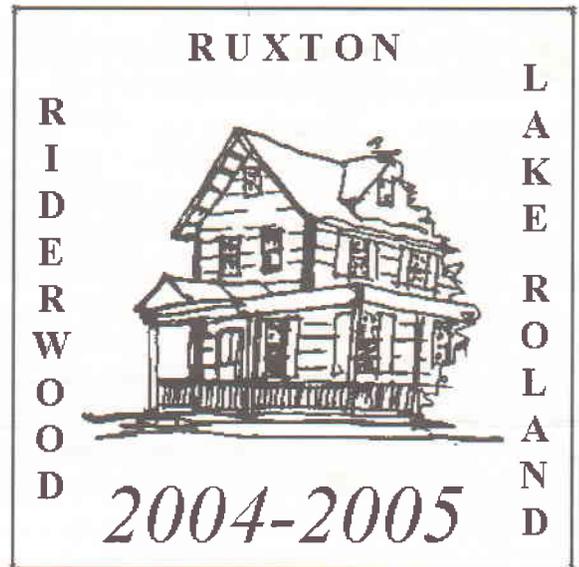
Nancy Worden Horst, our new executive director, holds an M.A. in Geography and Planning. She worked for the Baltimore Metropolitan Council as a transportation planner and as executive director of The Towson Partnership. Nancy has served as president, secretary, and zoning chair for RRLRAIA. She and her husband live in the Ruxton-Riderwood area. ■

WE COUNT ON YOUR 2004 MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to all who have supported our community association this year! To date we have almost 1100 members who have paid their dues. For those of you who have joined RRLRAIA for 2004, your RRLRAIA sticker is included in this mailing. Thank you for your support! We hope you will display the sticker on your car as a resident of our special community. The sticker depicts an image of the community association's home, The Rider House, located at 8013 Bellona Avenue across from the Riderwood Post Office.

For those of you who have not yet joined RRLRAIA this year, we hope you will consider becoming a member of the Association. Your participation assures that the Association will continue to act on all the issues that will affect the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

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RIDER HOUSE ROOF NEAR COMPLETION

by Joseph M. Coale, Vice-President, Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Foundation

The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Foundation has been working to preserve the 1880s Victorian Rider House on Bellona Avenue. Our efforts are being rewarded, and we hope you have had the opportunity to see the progress at the site.

With any historic preservation, it is said you never know what you are getting into until you are in the middle of it. We have had a few surprises, but progress has been good this summer. We did not anticipate the degree of deterioration of the back section



Roofers complete roof restoration.

or the roof until we started making repairs. The major summer project has been repair of the standing seam metal roof installed by Miller Sheeet Metal of Westminster, a firm recommended by the Maryland Historical Trust, that has done many historic roofs of this type. In the rear section, when some of the contemporary siding was removed, we found a notation from a worker, "May 1944,

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Year of the invasion." As roof repair was underway, we found the chimney in advanced decay and needing to be replaced. Aldo Construction, master mason, was retained to perform the work.

The roof is complete and we are turning our attention to restoring the siding. Some of it was damaged when asbestos shingles were installed 50 years ago, but it is not beyond repair. The materials have been custom milled and are being installed by C. Robert Bennett, historic preservation contractor from Annapolis. Once complete, the siding will be painted in the historic colors of the original 1880s construction. Painting consultant, Leslie Webb, has been a faithful advocate for this project. Next up—enhancement of the landscaping and grounds.

Funds from the Baltimore County Office of Community Conservation, the Maryland Historical Trust, the France-Merrick Foundation, and the nearly 200 individual gifts from local residents have made this rescue possible. The Foundation has provided the Community Association with a place to do business, administer many activities to enrich our neighborhood, and preserve a unique part of local history. We are on time and on budget. The Foundation is ready and willing to take on another project, and your input as to what that should be is welcome! ■

TRAFFIC ISSUE RESOLVED

A long-standing and dangerous sight line problem at the intersection of Darnall and Ruxton Roads has recently been resolved, thanks to Baltimore County Bureau of Traffic Engineering in cooperation with property owners and various neighbors. Our thanks to the those who have actively pursued a positive outcome to this problem: William Conklin, Skip Steuart and Jerome Trout; the RRLRAIA Transportation Committee; and Darrell Wiles, Chief, Traffic and Transportation Bureau. ■

ROBERT E. LEE PARK/LAKE ROLAND OPEN FOR THE SUMMER

by Jeffrey Budnitz

There is light at the end of the tunnel! The pedestrian bridge linking Lakeside Drive with Robert E. Lee Park/Lake Roland is scheduled to be replaced beginning Fall, 2004. Analysis of the existing pedestrian bridge showed that it was structurally unsound for bearing weight other than foot traffic. This raised concerns that emergency vehicles would not be able to enter the park. In addition, Baltimore City Parks Department was unable to perform significant maintenance on the 25-acre peninsula.

Originally scheduled to begin in Spring, 2004, the project was delayed due to budget issues. The peninsula was closed at that time due to fecal contamination, a result of off-leash dog owners not picking up after their pets. The park has been re-opened temporarily because Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks felt it was unreasonable to keep the peninsula closed during the summer with the delay in beginning the bridge replacement project.

Once the project begins, the peninsula will be closed for 14 months. The bridge replacement project is funded with \$400,000 from Baltimore County and \$800,000 from the City through State of Maryland Motor Vehicle Registration funds.

When construction is complete, efforts will be made to fund a public/private partnership to establish a park ranger program to enforce park ordinances governing off-leash dogs and owners who fail to clean up after their pets. The long term objective is to create a park everyone in the community can enjoy for years to come. ■

LIGHT RAIL — COMING SOON TO A NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR YOU

During construction of the original Light Rail, logistical and budgetary constraints forced the MTA to install a single track along some sections of the line. These were primarily in residential areas where space and grade made construction of a second rail difficult.

The MTA is now in the process of Double Tracking, installing a second track in sections south of Baltimore City (Linthicum and Ferndale) and in sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 (North Avenue north to Warren Road). Our member communities in Thornleigh, and on Rider Avenue, Ruxway Road and Ballston Road are adjacent to Section 2, where work has been underway since December 2003. The completion date is estimated to be in 2006, although that could change if the MTA shuts down regular Light Rail operations north of the city for a period, allowing work to progress quicker. The new track will be west of the existing track, extremely close to private residences in this section.

The MTA's rationale for the Double Tracking, which will leave 2.6 miles of single track, is "increased system reliability and flexibility" and a "better maintenance environment." Additional detail can be found at the Doubletrack@mtamaryland.com

The RRLRAIA actively represented our neighborhoods during the original Light Rail construction and has been in contact with affected neighborhoods during this new phase, sending representatives to meetings and acting as liaison with MTA community relations employees. Individual communities continue to meet and correspond with the MTA to convey their concerns. Some of these concerns are immediate, but temporary:

- continuous and excessive noise, especially during nighttime and early morning hours
- heavy equipment being driven at high speed through neighborhood streets
- damage to streets, roads, and curbs due to the constant traffic of heavy equipment

Other concerns are for the long-term condition of the communities, because the Double Tracking Project has resulted in:

- damage to private property, such as fences
- clear cutting of the green buffer between the Light Rail and private property – some of

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this buffer was planted during the first phase of construction, and supplemented by RRLRAIA funds. The loss of this buffer means visual pollution, increased sound pollution and loss of privacy for homeowners. It also presents safety concerns, since the deforestation has made pedestrian access to the Light Rail easier and more obvious.

- possible violation of property lines – in response to complaints from affected residents and support by Delegate John Trueschler, a second survey has been conducted, but no official notification has been given to residents.
- new grades and drainage patterns – a large drainage pipe has appeared behind a property on Ruxway Road, and the community is attempting to have County and/or state environmental agencies inspect it to determine its impact on the local stream.

The specific conditions and possible solutions to these problems are not uniform. In some areas, plant material may be adequate to restore the quality of life. In other areas, the right-of-way between private and state property is so narrow that plant material can not be used and a fencing option is being researched. In all cases, the neighborhoods are attempting to preserve their safety, quality of life and property values, and to approximate the conditions they enjoyed prior to the Double Tracking.

We need your help for the greater community to maintain its comfort and character. We need you to voice your concerns regarding the issues that we face. If you have questions or concerns about specific neighborhoods, you should contact one of the following neighbors, MTA employees or elected representatives which are listed in a dotted box found on page five.

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CZMP PROCESS MOVES TOWARDS COMPLETION

As previously reported in this newsletter and other communications, the quadrennial Comprehensive Zoning Map Process mandated by Baltimore County Code is rapidly moving toward completion. The 12-month cycle began with issues filed in September 2003 and concludes with the County Council vote at the end of August.

The Office of Planning has reviewed each issue, the Planning Board has held public hearings and voted on staff recommendations, and the resulting *Log of Issues* has been presented to the County Council. The Council, in turn, has held seven public hearings, one in each district. The County Council vote on each issue will occur on August 31, 2004. The official amended zoning maps are then prepared and the final *Log of Issues*, reflecting the council vote on all of the issues, is published.

The RRLRAIA believes our community is at a significant crossroads if we are to preserve the character of our neighborhoods. We decided to act decisively, rather than attempting to fight each zoning or development battle on a case-by-case basis, which is impractical and usually in vain. We decided to be proactive in getting a handle on inappropriate, incompatible infill development, and look for long-term strategic solutions. As one important step in this process, the board filed the following requests:*

1. All properties currently zoned above DR2 be down-zoned to DR2
2. All properties currently zoned DR2 be down-zoned to DR1
3. Robert E. Lee Park be considered for an RC7 zone that would permit one house per 25 acres (currently zoned DR1 – 1 house per acre).

* *Properties with recorded subdivisions are not impacted by zoning changes.*

This was not done lightly or capriciously, but with a good deal of forethought. An integral part of the Community Plan developed in 2001 by this Association and approved by the County Council as part of Baltimore County Master Plan 2010 was a mail survey sent by RRLRAIA to all households identified in the Association's defined area. The results of the survey were very clear: there was a strong consensus that the rural character of the community be preserved.

The neighborhoods that comprise the Lake Roland, Riderwood and Ruxton community are under increasing pressure from developers hungry for ever-scarcer buildable land. This additional development pressure, in an area that is essentially built out, often results in houses that are incompatible with a neighborhood. Our community is vulnerable to what is called "infill development," the process of filling in any lot that is capable of being developed. Such infill development is rampant throughout the county. According to the Office of Planning, there has been a significant increase in development plans and permits in our area in the last few years.

Down-zoning is not a panacea. It will limit the density of future subdivisions, but it will not prevent development of already subdivided lots. Down-zoning is one device that will help preserve the long-term value of our properties by maintaining the open space so greatly prized by residents and sought after by those wishing to live here. Most of our residents are here for the long term, appreciate the quality of the Ruxton, Riderwood, Lake Roland area, and will welcome the down-zoning option.

The ultimate decision rests with our County Councilmen, Kevin Kamenetz in the Second District (west of Charles Street) or Vince Gardina in the Fifth District (east of Charles Street). Contact their offices to voice your support for, or concerns about, this action.

In addition to requesting down-zoning, the Association continues to work with our councilmen and the Planning Office to devise strategies to address the barrage of variances, special exceptions, zoning changes and subdivisions received weekly. The requested zoning changes have sparked spirited and well-informed debate among all

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stakeholders, which will help formulate a shared vision for the future of our community.

The Board of RRLRAIA believes that failure to take action will have consequences that impact our daily lives — increased vehicular traffic, overcrowded

classrooms, and loss of open space. By limiting growth, we make our community more attractive and our properties more valuable. By working together to support the proposed zoning changes, we can preserve the community's legacy that has survived for generations. ■

SECOND DISTRICT

Issue No. 2-032 West Side of Charles Street to I-83 to the City Line

The Association is vigorously pursuing the down-zoning of this area. Just north of the Baltimore City line, this area is most at risk for infill development. Recent infill development at Lake and Falls has added considerably to traffic congestion. The Association concurs with Planning Board recommendations for DR2 zoning in this area.

Issue No. 2-033 West Side of Charles Street, North of Woodbrook Lane to I-83

The Association asked that this area, which comprises the historic heart of Ruxton-Riderwood, be down zoned. Our request is intended to prevent inappropriate and incompatible infill. Of special concern is the following high-risk property:

1. Ridge-Ruxton School, owned by Baltimore County, should be zoned DR1 rather than DR2. Baltimore County periodically disposes of 'surplus' property, which is then sold for development.

Issue No. 2-043 Robert E. Lee Park

Concern about Baltimore City's interest in selling some of this urban park for residential development highlights the need to conserve this precious resource. The Association requests that Robert E. Lee Park be zoned RC7 rather than the current DR1.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Issue No. 5-047 East Side of Charles Street Between Towsontowne Boulevard and Joppa Road

The Association has requested down-zoning in this area to prevent inappropriate and incompatible infill. Of special concern is the following high-risk property:

1. Baltimore County Board of Education at Greenwood, 21 acres, should be rezoned from DR2 to DR1.

RRLRAIA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FALLS ROAD CORRIDOR

Issue No. 2-003 We *OPPOSE* the request for MLR unless covenants are in place to restrict certain odious uses.

Issue No. 2-010 We *SUPPORT* the Planning Board recommendations for BL zoning, believing that the AS designation is unnecessary and potentially harmful to this fragile area.

Issue No. 2-15 We *SUPPORT* the Planning Board's recommendation for BR zoning, and oppose any AS zoning as unnecessary and potentially harmful to this fragile area.

Issue No. 2-017 We *OPPOSE* request for ML due to the potential for inappropriate use.

Issue No. 2-04 We *SUPPORT* Lake Falls Community in their downzoning request for the property known as the Breezeway.

EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS

For a more definitive list, contact the Planning office, 410/887-3480 or the RRLRAIA office, 410/494-7757.

DR (*Density Residential*) permits low, medium and high density urban residential development. The numeral in each classification indicates maximum number of units per acre Ex: DR1 (one unit per acre) DR2 (two per acre) etc.

MR (*Manufacturing Restricted*) the most restrictive industrial classification

MLR (*Manufacturing Light Restricted*) industrial plants or offices with access to expressways to serve as industrial employment centers

ML (*Manufacturing Light*) permits light industrial uses such as assembly plants, processing, etc.

BL (*Business Local*) small to medium scale commercial

BM (*Business Major*) large scale commercial

RC7 resource preservation

AS automotive services

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The Board of this umbrella organization consists of representatives from each neighborhood in our community. Our mission is to lend professional and experienced support gained from our familiarity and liaison work with governmental, business, and other community groups to accomplish our community's goals.

The annual dues for each household for 2004 are \$55.00. To become a member, please send your check made payable to RRLRAIA to P. O. Box 204, Riderwood, MD 21139. If you have any concerns or comments, please do not hesitate to let us know. Contact Nancy Horst, Executive Director, at 410-494-7757 or ruxrider@bcpl.net or office@rrlraia.org.

If you have recently moved into the area or are moving elsewhere, please let us know so we can update our files and send you some information about our community organization. ■

RRLRAIA BEGINNINGS

Ever wonder why I-83 jogs when heading south from Timonium to Baltimore City? It is due to the efforts of more than 200 neighbors who got together in 1953 and adopted a constitution and bylaws for the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association. The newly formed organization had several goals: to be alert for encroachments and threats to community life, to keep residents informed, and to bring problems and community concerns before appropriate agencies.

RRLRAIA's first project was to stop the proposed I-83 link from going through Riderwood-Ruxton, past the L'Hirondelle Club, and over Lake Roland. The association vigorously promoted the interceptor sewer line and additional lines to stop pollution in Lake Roland, and has been active in numerous zoning issues to preserve the quality of life in our community.

This year begins the second half-century of RRLRAIA, and we plan to share tidbits of history from the annals of our organization. *If you have any stories or items to share about the association, please contact the editor at: office@rrlraia.org.* ■

RRLRAIA HISTORY QUIZ

Why is Charles Street Avenue, not Charles Street, the eastern boundary for the Association? Who are the only husband and wife who served separately as presidents of RRLRAIA? Where is the City / County line? ■

Contact Information for Light Rail Project

Ruxway and Ballston Roads

■ Kathy Lumsden madcatlums@comcast.net 410-583-4670

Thornleigh Road

■ Patti Steinberg steiny1021@comcast.net 410-823-5665

Rider Avenue

■ Julie D'Ambrogi 410-769-8386

Report Anything of Concern to the MTA

■ Robert L. Smith, MTA Administrator
Rsmith@mtamaryland.com 410-767-3946

■ Ruth Silverstone, Community Relations
Rsilverstone@mtamaryland.com 410-767-3848

■ Norma Secoura, Community Relations
Nsecoura@mtamaryland.com 410-767-8361

Write to Elected Representatives stating that you support your neighbors' efforts and expect the public's interests to be served

■ Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. governor@gov.state.md 410-974-3901
State House, 100 State Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401

■ Robert L. Flanagan, Secretary of Transportation
rflanagan@mdot.state.md.us 410-865-1000

■ Senator James Brochin jim_brochin@senate.state.md.us 410-841-3648

■ Delegate Susan Aumann susan_aumann@house.state.md.us 410-841-3258

■ Delegate William Frank william_frank@house.state.md.us 410-841-3258

■ Delegate John Trueschler john_trueschler@house.state.md.us 410-841-3258

PRESERVING THE RUXTON DOLL HOUSE

When Kater Leatherman passed her Ruxton childhood home on the corner of Army Road and Malvern Avenue, she was saddened by the disrepair of the doll house, a charming replica of the main house where she and four siblings were raised. Built in 1975, the miniature house, a precise one-quarter-scale copy of the main house, was designed and constructed without blueprints or plans by her father, Gordon Leatherman. The doll house replaced a playhouse built in 1960



This dollhouse, a quarter-scale replica of the main house, is at the corner of Army and Malvern. It is desperately in need of attention.

which had wallpaper, furniture and a battery-operated phone. It provided many hours of entertainment for neighborhood children.

When the playhouse foundation settled, Gordon Leatherman built the doll house in

its place. The house is 27 feet long, 6 feet wide and 7-1/2-feet tall. Construction took four months.

Now, Diana and Willie DeVeas and their two children live in the house. They were thrilled to meet Kater and are looking forward to the restoration. Local contractor Chuck Massey estimated that it would take three months and cost \$10,000.

Kater is mounting a campaign to restore the doll house to its original condition as a tribute to her father and to keep a "legacy alive." Call Kater Leatherman if you have any questions at 410-255-0555. *If you would like to contribute, make checks to "Save the Dollhouse." Send to 1201 Bolton Street-Storefront, Baltimore, Maryland 21217. Names of contributors will be listed on a plaque near the doll house.* ■

REMINDERS FROM TOWSON POLICE

- If your passion is biking, hiking, or strolling through the neighborhood, keep your eyes and ears open for anything that *just doesn't seem right*.
- Be mindful of home security while weeding and watering backyard gardens. We don't want anyone taking advantage of unsecured front doors and windows while you are tending to other tasks.
- Put yard care tools, equipment, bikes and other valuables away when they are not in use. Many summertime losses can be avoided by not leaving these items unattended.
- Lock your sheds, lock your sheds, lock your sheds! ■

FREQUENT POWER OUTAGES?

Do you suffer frequent power outages at your home? Many residents have complained of this problem and the lack of response from BGE. BGE indicated that they want documentation of the frequency

of the problem. Therefore, in addition to the regular call-in number (410-685-0123), please call Donna Fordyce at BGE 410-291-3739.

Also, send an e-mail report of any outages to: bonnie.johansen@constellation.com with copies to Milton.r.Branson@constellation.com and the Association at ruxrider@bcpl.net. We will keep track of these reports and join in pressuring BGE to be more pro-active. ■

KEEP UNWANTED ELECTRONICS OUT OF THE LANDFILL!

Residents can take computers and other electronics to any of the five Office Depot stores in Baltimore County for *free* recycling until Monday, September 6. All brands of computers, monitors, digital cameras, copiers, fax machines, cell phones, person digital assistants (PDAs), and TVs 27 inches or smaller are accepted. A PC and peripherals counts as one product. Only one product per day can be brought in for recycling. ■

RECEIVE A TAX DEDUCTION BY DONATING EXTRA TICKETS

If tickets to cultural and sporting events are unused, even at the last minute, donate them to the Ruxton, Riderwood, Lake Roland Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization---and receive a tax deduction! We will email members notifying them of the availability of tickets at a discount.

Everyone wins -- the donor receives a tax deduction, the recipient receives discounted tickets, and the Foundation receives funds for community projects. If you have questions or want to make a donation, please send an email message to ruxrider@bcpl.net or call our office at 410-494-7757. ■

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEB SITE

www.rlriraia.org

Thanks to Mike Regan for all his hard work putting this together. We always welcome your suggestions. ■

RUXTON-RIDERWOOD
LAKE ROLAND AREA
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 204 ■ Riderwood, MD 21139

PHONE 410-494-7757

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