



NETWORK

ORIGINAL NORTHWOOD ASSOCIATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE PRES _____ **1**

BRIEFLY _____ **2**
News, updates, calendar

TREASURER'S REPORT _____ **3**

NEWS _____ **4**
Smart Meters from BG&E, Morgan Community Mile Initiative

WHITHER THE PLAZAS? _____ **5**
Change is coming to Coldspring; why is Northwood still such a dump?

SPRING CLEANUP _____ **6**
Help us plan to clean our alleys and sidewalks

NEXTDOR HIGHLIGHTS _____ **7**

PHOTOS _____ **8**
Every seasons produces more beautiful photos of our neighborhood



Greetings, Neighbors!

The weather has cooled and the crows have arrived, suggesting that we are well on our way to winter. Safety issues typically subside this time of year, but I had a chance to learn some important information at the ONA annual meeting that I wanted to pass along.

Major Worley, who is the Commander of the Northeast Police District, discussed some of the crime statistics, and I was surprised that **many of the issues we had this summer did not register on his report.** Major Worley encouraged us to call 911 for all safety concerns, including suspicious behavior. If a formal police report is not filed, they will not show up on his report, and crime patterns like we saw this summer will not be acted upon. We know that police in the Northeast District (which is surprisingly large) are busy so he also informed us of the ability to file reports online.

We also heard from Lance Hatcher, the Interim Chief of Police and Public Safety at Morgan State. He talked about some of the initiatives that Morgan is undertaking to improve safety. You have probably seen the blue security booths on the Morgan campus. These booths are

staffed by security guards from 6pm–4am 7 days a week. Additionally, as of the meeting in September, Morgan was in the process of hiring a security guard to work in Courts 6 & 7 of the Marble Hall Apartments (4200 block of Kelway) which is off campus housing for Morgan State students. Any concerns or issues in those two courts can be addressed

through the Morgan Communication Center at (443) 885-3103, the mechanism to dispatch Morgan State Police who have jurisdiction. Morgan State Police are also doing tandem patrols with BCPD 5 days a week from 3pm–11pm.

Finally, if you haven't done so yet, I would encourage you to **sign up for Nextdoor** (nextdoor.com). This has proven to be a very

successful online communication tool for discussing everything from suspicious behavior to contractor recommendations. Posts are sent to your email, and you can easily control which ones you get, although the traffic has not been too heavy.

Here's to a mild and disaster-free winter!

Eric Lapointe
President, ONA

Yes, you really can call 911!

The BPD uses aggregated police reports to allocate resources to neighborhoods, so it is important to do so even for seemingly trivial issues. This can be done online (tinyurl.com/bpd-report) or by calling 911.

Many of us grew up with the idea that calling 911 was only for emergencies, but the BPD has invited us to use it to report any incident. Calls are routed as appropriate, so you need not worry about tying up the line.

Briefly

Board positions filled

We are happy to report that all board positions have been filled. **Su-sanna Bauder** (Northview) is our new Treasurer, vacating her previous position as Social Chair and filling the big hole left by longtime member Liz Allen. **Lynnette Dodson** (Roundhill) has assumed Social chair responsibilities, and **Emily Weber** (Deepwood) is our new Secretary.

We want you!

Have ideas for the newsletter?

Email Matt Post (email on page 7) if you have ideas or would like to contribute. We would also be interested in seasonal photos of the neighborhood for the web page and the back of the newsletter.

Traffic Calming Islands

We are pleased to report that the traffic calming islands have been installed, and traffic seems to have adjusted to their presence—after an early incident in which one of the islands was driven over and quickly replaced (perhaps by a commuter not paying enough attention to the change). Discussions on Nextdoor suggest that they do seem to have slowed traffic down and that they definitely make it easier to cross the road, with many residents reporting cars actually stopping to allow them to cross. All in all, we count this as a successful interaction between our neighborhood and the city, and something that benefits the pedestrian life of Original Northwood.

Sign up for Nextdoor!

This summer, Original Northwood established a presence on Nextdoor (nextdoor.com), a social networking site for neighborhoods that verifies members are residents. So far, it has been a rousing success, with neighbors connecting over contractor recommendations, crimes, missing pets, neighborhood events, ran-

dom acts of kindness, and other things. You can adjust your notification settings, including how much email you get, how often, and from whom.

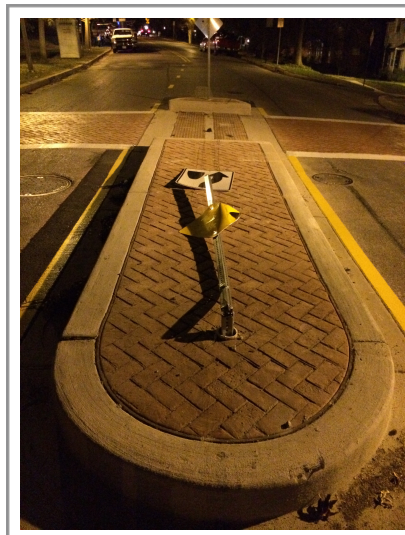
We have signed up 137 neighbors, representing 105 of 373 households (28%). Judging by the traffic, Nextdoor is becoming the preferred method for neighborhood communication, and the board is increasingly relying on it for conveying news and issues. Sign up so that you don't miss anything!

Speedbumps on Westview

In response to neighbor requests, the board asked the city to consider putting speed bumps on Westview and Northview. The city has decided against it after conducting a study that did not find sufficient traffic to justify it.

The evaluation was undertaken by The Department of Transportation Traffic Division, who looked at the intersections of Westview Road, Northview Road, and Eastview Road. The evaluation included a review of the three (3) year crash history of the intersections obtained from the Baltimore City Police Department, along with a radar spot speed study and a field survey investigation by a staff member.

A number of criteria were cited for the decline. Speed hump installation requirements state that the 85th percentile of observed vehicles must be at least 10 miles per hour over the posted speed



CALENDAR

JANUARY 28

Zoning hearing re: loading dock at East Coldspring plaza for incoming Family Dollar (see p. 6)

JANUARY 31

Last day of Xmas tree collection

FEBRUARY 15

Dumpster
4122 Westview Rd

MARCH 29

Wine & Cheese Party
Location TBD

APRIL 26

Spring cleanup day (see page 6)

MAY 10

Garden Walk

The ONA board meets every month on the second Wednesday at 8 PM. ONA members are welcome to attend; please email Eric Lapointe (president@originalnorthwood.org) for meeting location.

limit. Additionally, they wrote that installing speed humps in curved areas of roadways can create a potential hazardous condition.

Contractor recommendations

We are in the process of taking contractor recommendations for the website. Contractors will be listed along with the first name and last initial of the recommender. Please forward your recommendations to Matt Post (email on page 7).

Treasurer's Report

In terms of the bank balance, fiscal year 2013 was about even: we started the year with \$21,639.74 and ended with \$21,284.98. See the report on the facing page for more detail.

Treasurer's report

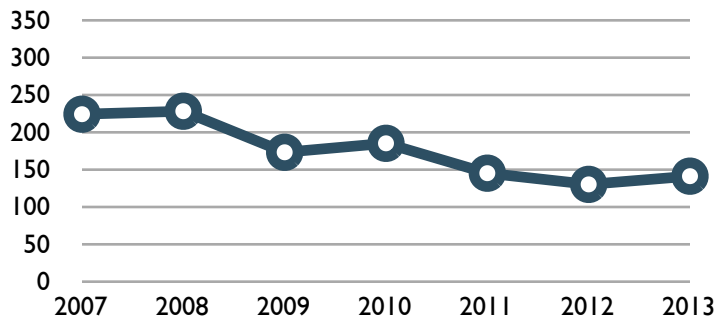
Street (# houses)	Paid (2012)	Paid (2013)
The Alameda (33)	7	4
Deepwood (37)	15	12
Roundhill (33)	18	19
Roundtop (8)	2	5
Loch Raven (14)	1	0
Argonne (49)	17	22
Westview (41)	18	21
Northview (70)	18	25
Eastview (10)	3	0
Southview (39)	16	23
Havenwood (19)	10	6
Kelway (16)	4	3
Total (369)	129	140

Please pay your dues! Our small budget is funded entirely through the \$35 fee paid by Original Northwood residents who choose to become members. Your dues benefit the neighborhood in a variety of ways, including social events and maintenance, and are part of what keeps our neighborhood beautiful.

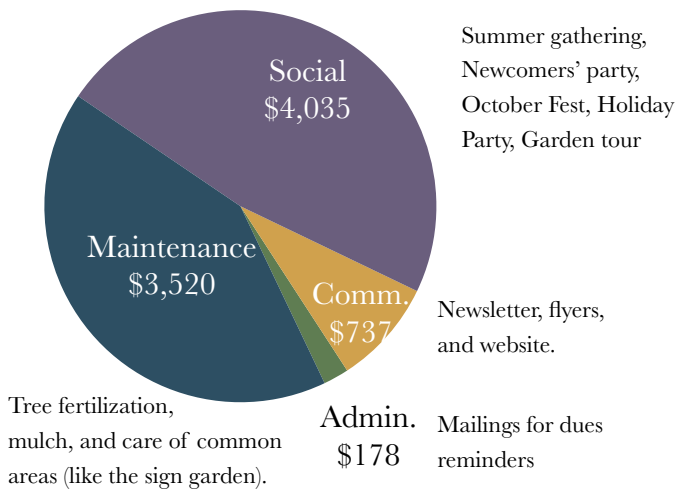
You can pay via credit card using the payment link on the website (originalnorthwood.org), or you can mail a check to the following address, made out to the Original Northwood Association. Please email treasurer@originalnorthwood.org with any questions. Membership in ONA is voluntary.

Treasurer, Original Northwood Association
1310 Argonne Dr, Baltimore, MD 21218

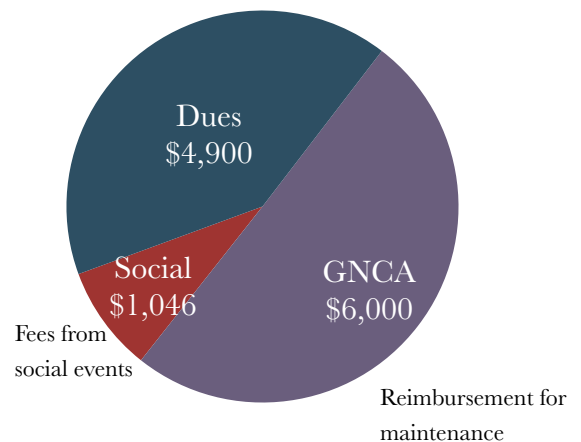
Households paid per year



2013 Expenses



2013 Income



Neighborhood News

Smart Meters are coming!

On November 6, Baltimore Gas & Electric (BG&E) held an informational session about the smart meters that they are installing. What follows is a summary of the 90 minute meeting.

1. Smart Meters are going to be installed by BGE. It will be an easy switch if the meter is outdoors and available; they'll need for someone to be home if indoors or a dog or locked fence, but they'll have evening and weekend hours.

2. Right now there is no charge to customers but once BGE proves the benefits to the Public Service Commission they will be able to pass the cost of the installation on to the customers.

3. The benefits will be that we can go online to see our usage and adjust appropriately. Also there will be Smart Energy Rewards (separate from Peak Rewards program), a few days a year when they will ask for people to use less energy and then receive rewards for that. A woman who was there said that there were 4 of those days this summer and she received rewards from \$6 to \$15.

4. There is a disputed health risk to the Radio Frequency (RF) microwave radiation that the Smart Meters will emit. There is also discussion about how often those emissions occur — from 14,000 to 190,000 pulses each day to the equivalent of 2 minutes in 24 hours — probably different ways of saying the same thing. The issue is that Smart Meters are always on, always sending information via RF radiation, and they have not been adequately tested for safety. They are reported to affect pacemakers. Some people have said they start fires and have damaged wiring or appliances.

5. You may opt out of a Smart Meter, but you have to write a letter to BGE and there is a charge for it, which has not been decided yet by the PSC. Different amounts have been suggested, but it will be a monthly fee between \$15.00 to \$45.00.

I have some papers that I collected at the meeting -- let me know if you would like to see them, but I think that the websites will probably be good sources of more information.

I learned a lot by going and am not sure what we will do. Whether we opt out or not, there will be a mesh grid of radiation waves in our neighborhood going to a router which will collect the information and send it 6 times a day to the electric company. This means that the company has a lot of information about whether we're at home or not and how many appliances we are using, so there is an issue of privacy and how they could misuse this information at some time.

I hope this information guides your decision.

■ *Carol Cook*

Morgan Community Mile Initiative

The Morgan State University—Morgan Community Mile (MCM) Initiative was introduced to the community beginning in fall 2012. In the spring of 2013, Morgan State University kicked off the initiative with an event that brought in City and State elected officials, members of the Northeast community, and other honored speakers and guests.

The Morgan Community Mile Initiative, a vision of Dr. David Wilson, 12th President of Morgan State, is designed to connect the University with community partners, residents, businesses, public officials and other stakeholders in an effort to identify specific strategic goals and objectives based on the community's needs.

The social, economic and environmental need for this MCM Initiative has been developed and currently consists of community partnerships aimed to increase awareness and access to residents in over 49 communities. The approach is to identify project resources that promote livable, viable, sustainable communities in Northeast Baltimore City.

After two years of task force planning sessions and research and development of the initiative, the final board selection was completed in September 2013. The board composition comprises 16 board members (1/3 representing Morgan State University, 1/3 representing the Northeast Baltimore Community and 1/3 representing area stakeholders.)

Dr. Wilson and the appointed board continue to identify the strengths and diversity of the communities that exist within one mile of the University and has extended the message that it will leverage the skills, knowledge, academic research and community engagement activities necessary to improve and sustain the Morgan Community Mile Initiative.

Quote from Dr. Wilson: "The MCM Initiative was designed to be a research and community engagement linkage to connect resources ranging from education to social services to healthcare."

■ *Lynnette Dodson*

Whither the plazas?

A Family Dollar comes to Coldspring Plaza; what awaits Northwood Plaza?

After a long search for a new anchor store to replace the wig shop, the owners of the shopping plaza at Loch Raven and Coldspring (just west of the library) have signed a lease with Family Dollar. The lease is contingent on having a loading dock installed, a hearing for which is scheduled downtown at 1 PM on January 28. Representatives from the plaza owners and the company hired to manage it, Schwaber Holdings, met with the ONA board last month. Their plans showed an unobtrusive design for the dock, to be located between the library and plaza, with expectations of roughly one delivery truck per day. The owners do not expect that it will affect traffic very much.

While the prospect of another Family Dollar store in the area may not be exciting, nor its presence useful to many of our residents, it has some potential to increase economic activity at the plaza, which has languished in recent years. The owners were eager for our support, and were also solicitous of suggestions for stores that might do well at that location.

We had a favorable impression of the group, which comprised a member of the family that owns the plaza, their realtor, and a representative of the company managing the property. They seemed serious about developing and maintaining the plaza, and competent to do so. Their meeting with us was at their initiation, which speaks well of their intentions. In summary, while the immediate reaction of the board to another Family Dollar is ambivalent, overall, we see this as a positive development for the plaza and area.

The real question this raises in my mind is the status of Northwood Plaza, the area's blighted anchor, whose owners have for years resisted improvements. Many of you may be aware of the char-

rette that was undertaken in 2008 (see sidebar), which suggested bold redesigns for that plaza, with the aim of turning it into a community "main street", akin to Belvedere Square or St. Paul St in Charles Village. So far, little has come of the enormous effort that went into that document, but there's hope that pressure for change is increasing. Morgan State now has a presence in the plaza, and — we hope — cannot be too pleased with their eyesore of a neighbor.

In fact, a proposed redesign is floating around; unfortunately, it appears to be limited to a façade, and an ugly, ill-fitting one that is utterly unrepresentative of the distinctive architectural features of the homes in our area. It ignores the key findings of the charrette, which suggested such changes as a multi-story mixed residential and commercial development,



interior parking (so as not to dominate the site), and pedestrian friendly streetscapes. The redesign is so opposite the suggestions of the charrette that one wonders whether it was a calculation.

This is to our own detriment, but also to that of the owners, who are surely far from maximizing the value of their property. A Northwood plaza redesigned with the findings of the charrette in mind, and with good stores meeting the needs of the area, would do wonders for quality of life of the residents of our neighborhood. It feels to me that change is in the air, and I wonder what could be

THE CHARRETTE

A *charrette* is a formal study undertaken to study a problem and present potential solutions. In 2008, just such a study was completed in response to the continued problem of Northwood Shopping Plaza. This charrette was developed at the request of the Northwood Working Group with the help of Neighborhood Design Center volunteers (www.ndc-md.org), and considered the interests of many neighbors, including ON and other neighborhoods, Morgan State University, the mayor's office, and others.

The charrette included many findings and suggestions for Northwood Plaza aimed at turning it into an area "main street" that invites use by the entire geographical community. Chief among these was that the income levels of households in the surrounding areas are higher than those of Belvedere Square, suggesting that area plazas (Northwood in particular) could support good stores.

The charrette documents are worth reading. They can be found on our website, and include a written summary and multiple survey results.

Documents

- originalnorthwood.org/documents
- ndc-md.org/project/creating-a-new-main-street/
- baltimorefuture.blogspot.com/2009/11/northwood-plaza-slam-dunk.html

done to put our plaza on the path to a charrette-inspired rejuvenation.

■ *Matt Post*

Spring Cleanup Day

Let's make our neighborhood shine like the top of the Chrysler building

Mark Your Calendars: April 26

We are planning a four-hour neighborhood cleanup event for Saturday, April 26. The goals will be to clean the streets, alleys, and sidewalks in Original Northwood, removing accumulated debris (organic and otherwise), trimming overgrown brush, and anything else that comes to mind during the planning phase. This effort will be part of the city-wide spring cleanup day, organized annually by the mayor's office.

We need your participation! Please email Matt Post (email on page 7) if you think you'd like to help out. More information will follow as we commence our planning.

Rough outline of the planning phase

- Map out the alleys and roadways, dividing them into areas of responsibility that can be assigned to small groups of neighbors. Presumably people would like to form groups for their own stretches of the neighborhood.
- Locate and assign leaders to each of the groups. Their job will be to coordinate with ONA about what needs to be done in their area, and what tools might be required to do it.
- Coordinate with the city for pickup of trash and other detritus.

Event details

Saturday, April 26, from 9 AM – 1 PM. Lunch (provided by ONA) to follow.

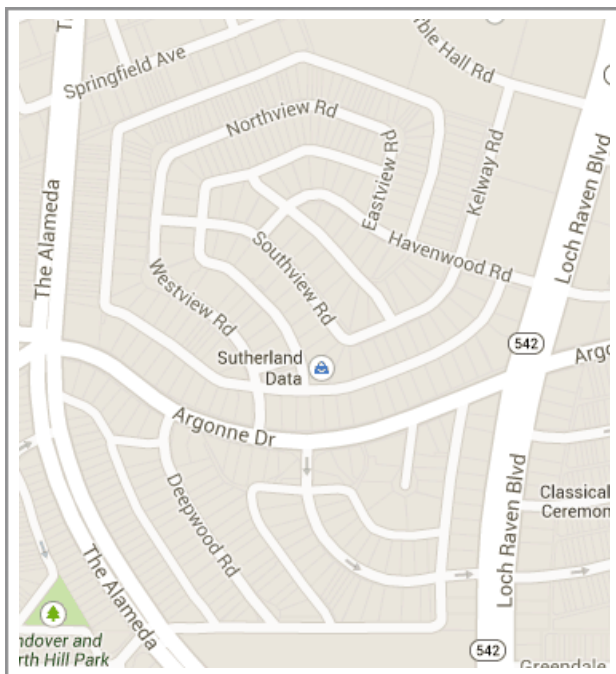
Will you participate?

This can't work without participation from the neighborhood!

If you would like to participate, please get ahold of Matt Post (email on the next page; phone number (585) 355-0058).

We are also looking for people to help plan and organize.

More information will follow once we are further into our planning.



Highlights from Nextdoor

Of sorts...

A Neighborhood Crime

This message is to the new residents. We weren't warned about this when we moved to the community, so I would like to take this opportunity to inform you. Sometime around early to mid November, we saw a MURDER. A murder of crows. They were everywhere. Millions of them. It seemed to be some kind of phenomena, it happened all of a sudden. One evening, we noticed them, all over the tree tops, the decibel level as deafening and the poop...oooh the poop was everywhere. And it was everyday, usually around 4:30pm we began to see them, they were here all night and just as suddenly as they appeared every evening - every morning they were gone. This lasted throughout the cold weather months and one day, they were gone. We've talked to neighbors that tell us that this has been happening in the community for many years now, but we were certainly taken by surprise.

■ *Lynnette Dodson*

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

2013-2014

Email: position@originalnorthwood.org

Officers

President	Eric Lapointe
Vice President	Dana Andrusik
Treasurer	Susanna Bauder
Secretary	Emily Weber

Members-at-large

Communications	Matt Post
Covenant	Richard Skolasky
Maintenance	John Lehman
Social	Lynette Dodson

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