



# NETWORK



## ORIGINAL NORTHWOOD ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

It is hard to believe that this is my last *President's Corner* before I leave office. The existence of term limits in our by-laws is a wonderful thing. Having met with many community groups during my tenure, I am amazed at the longevity. The foresight to have these limits ensures that we have fresh ideas and leadership to preserve our neighborhood's unique character.

As you will learn as you read the Newsletter, the Board has been quite busy. We increased our annual voluntary dues this year. As of this writing, we have collected dues from 29% of homes. This is impressive! We are well on our way to surpassing 40% of homes. The dues have allowed us to tackle some important maintenance projects and to plan some exciting social events.

You will also read more about the exciting changes that are happening at the GNCA through the hard work of our own neighbors Dana Andrusik (President) and Chris Youngston Gray (Vice President). We have corrected the way voting is tallied, allocated administrative expenses based on proportion of votes, and are working hard to reduce the administrative overhead while, at the same time, improving the transparency of our mandatory annual assessments. (*Cont'd on page 5*)

### SPRING TOIL FOR A HAPPY SUMMER



**Taking out the trash:** On April 23rd, neighbors came together for the Mayor's Spring Cleanup. We worked to rid our streets and alleys of trash, broken glass, leaves, weeds, and debris. Thanks to everyone who came out! — *J.P. Rigilano, ONA Maintenance Chair*

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Have newsletter feedback or want to write an article about our neighborhood?

Send a note to:

[communications@](mailto:communications@originalnorthwood.org)

[originalnorthwood.org](http://originalnorthwood.org)

## BOARD DOES OUTREACH TO RAISE COVENANT AWARENESS

*Reaching out to new homeowners, Realtors; exploring CHAP designation*

*By Mary Stevenson, Covenant Chair*

With the arrival of warm weather, there has been an uptick in applications and we have received eight applications since May 1st. We are also resolving some long standing violations with properties, specifically 4033 Deepwood and 1307 Northview.

In the Spring Newsletter we discussed the ONA Covenant Committee and Boards efforts on enforcement of the Covenants. Since that time we have issued Violation Letters to five homeowners and are in the process of retaining legal counsel to pursue action against the homeowners who do not comply with our requests to bring their homes into compliance with the Architectural Guidelines.

We frequently hear from non-compliant homeowners that they did not know about our covenants and guidelines and that they were not provided this information at settlement as it should have been. In order to prevent this from continuing and to be proactive about compliance, the Board has initiated a practice of monitoring the real estate listings for houses in ON and sending out Welcome Kits with the Deed, Covenants, Architectural Guidelines and Application for Exterior Alterations to listing agents

Another initiative the board is considering to protect the historic nature of our neighborhood is ONA becoming a CHAP (Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation District). This would provide us enforcement powers that we currently do not have by linking the ONA Application for Exterior Improvements process to the Baltimore City Building Permit process. In order for a building permit to be approved, it would have to have been reviewed and approved by CHAP. *(Cont'd on Page 3)*

## HOW TO RENOVATE YOUR HOME WITH 20% TAX CREDIT

*This neighbor did it; you can, too*

*Jill Lemke, Northview Road*

Did you know that owner-occupied homes in Original Northwood are eligible for Historic Tax Credits from the State of Maryland? It's true. Homeowners can earn a state income tax credit of up to 20% of eligible rehabilitation costs, because we're a National Register Historic District. Eligible repairs can include: roof repair/replacement; chimney repair; window restoration; new storm doors/windows; masonry repointing; floor refinishing; and even installation of central air conditioning.

So when my slate roof began to show its age and the cheap (non-covenant approved) vinyl replacement windows began to crack and warp, I decided it was time to make an investment. Since I knew about historic tax credits, and our covenants have strict architectural standards anyway, I decided to apply. Who doesn't want a 20% "rebate" on home repair projects!?

To maximize the tax credit's value, I also decided to repair damaged ceiling plaster, refinish the original bathtub, and install central air conditioning. I admit that the application process seemed intimidating at first. It is a three-step process, although Parts I and II can be done concurrently (which they recommend).

Part I requires documentation of your property's eligibility, which meant summarizing the Northwood Historic District designation and printing out a map of the neighborhood with the property outlined. Then I researched contractors, got estimates and signed contracts for the major projects before completing Part II of the application, which required documenting current conditions (including features not being renovated), the proposed work, and estimated costs.

With decisions made, I started by describing the work, taking pictures, printing actual photographs, and labeling each one. At times it seemed onerous, but really was easier than expected. It helped that my contractors knew the process and wrote detailed descriptions into the contract. *(Cont'd on Page 5)*

**Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:**

- Roof repair and replacement
- Chimney repair and lining
- Window restoration
- New storm doors/windows
- Masonry repointing
- Floor refinishing
- Structural repairs
- Plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems
- Architectural/ Engineering/ Consulting fees
- Tool/equipment rental
- Repair of historic outbuildings

*From MD Historical Trust website*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NORTHWOOD PLAZA?

*Interest high among prospective retailers*

*Richard Skolasky, ONA President*

In the past few weeks, NextDoor.com was awash in comments regarding the demise of Senator Joan Carter Conway's bill regarding the Northwood Commons redevelopment. With Governor Hogan's veto of the bill, the state removed itself from a local redevelopment issue and wrested the power from a single neighborhood to make decisions that affect us all. If it wasn't for the tension that the bill caused with our neighbors in the Hillen Road community, this would be a clear victory of us (both New and Original Northwood) and the shopping center. We must work to mend these bridges between our communities.

I have been in contact with the developer. He told me that there is much interest in the retail leasing of the shopping center. The university has released a request for applications to national booksellers to run the university bookstore on the site. A national coffee seller has expressed great interest in having a location both in the bookstore and in the shopping center. Several national restaurants have also indicated an interest in the space. The existing carry-out restaurant Sunny's Subs will return to the plaza, albeit in a nicer setting. There is considerably more interest than the available square footage will allow. A good place to be indeed!

Driving by the shopping center, there isn't much going on that meets the eye. I am told that there is considerable site planning and financing work being done. The developer has agreed to abide by Concept 2 - with the housing divided between the north and south retail strip and below-grade parking for residents accessible from Morgan's campus only. This design provides a more balanced aesthetic and will reduce traffic in the shopping center and residential streets.

With the other community leaders, I am in the process of setting up a meeting with the developer. Time to mend those bridges. As plans develop, I will ask the Board to invite the developer to the community quarterly or special meetings to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to stay informed on this important project.

## COVENANT OUTREACH

*Cont'd from Page 2*

CHAP review will be concurrent with ONA review, and CHAP will work with and be guided very heavily in its decisions by our own Covenant Committee's decisions. The turnaround would average 5 days, so the process would not add additional time. If alterations went forward without or inconsistent with a Permit, Baltimore City Code Enforcement would issue a stop work order and a Code Violation to the Owners.

CHAP Executive Director Eric Holcomb and key aide Caitlyn Audette were invited to address the 6/8/2016 Quarterly Meeting and answer questions. We had a good turnout (a few dozen showed up) and a lively discussion with residents asking critical questions.

There are currently 33 neighborhoods, including Otterbein (which is a covenant community like ON) in CHAP and we will be reaching out to these neighborhoods for their perspective on the CHAP experience.

Joining CHAP is a neighborhood decision, not a Board decision and the Board will be mailing out surveys to all ON addresses to gauge support prior to formally requesting the City to initiate the CHAP District process. If ONA does request the City to go forward with the CHAP, the City will send letters to all ON addresses with explanations and an opinion survey. There will be three Public Hearings and then the City Council must vote to approve.

The City process would take about 18 months. The Board will keep the community well informed via postings on Nextdoor and the quarterly Newsletters.

## CALENDAR

### EVERY THURS. TO LABOR DAY

POPSICLES/BEER FOR KIDS/PARENTS

HOSTS: ROTATING

TIME: 6:30 PM TO DUSK

\* LOCATION ANNOUNCED EACH WEEK  
ON NEXTDOOR.COM

### JULY 30

ONA SUMMER BLOCK PARTY

TIME: 2-6 PM

LOCATION: 1300 BLK SOUTHVIEW ROAD

(\* RSVP with your dessert (last names A-L)

or your side dish (names M-Z) and # of

people attending to: Lauren DeVine (530)

570-1764 OR email

[ONSocialChair@gmail.com](mailto:ONSocialChair@gmail.com))

### SEPTEMBER 14

ONA ANNUAL MEETING

MSU SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, RM 308

TIME: 7 PM

### SEPTEMBER 18

Bridging Our Islands: Community Workshop

For ONA residents - Creating

fellowship with other communities

For information: 443-386-4365

# ONA TREASURER'S UPDATE:

Jennie Spratt, ONA Treasurer

**Original Northwood Association Treasurer's Report, May 2016**

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**A. SUMMARY OF DUES PAYMENTS**

Street	# of Houses	DUES PAID 2015 (year end)		DUES PAID 2016 (to date)		
		Cumulative	%	Cumulative	%	Current
Argonne	49	22	45%	18	37%	1
Deepwood	37	16	43%	13	35%	1
Eastview	10	4	40%	2	20%	
Havenwood	19	8	42%	8	42%	1
Kelway	16	5	31%	3	19%	
Loch Raven	14	3	21%	3	21%	
Northview	70	24	34%	15	21%	
Roundhill	33	23	70%	14	42%	1
Roundtop	8	2	25%	2	25%	
Southview	39	18	46%	12	31%	2
The Alameda	33	5	15%	2	6%	
Westview	41	25	61%	14	34%	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>6</b>

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**B. CURRENT MONTH BANK RECONCILIATION**

Bank beginning balance :					\$22,959.25
<b>Revenues</b>		2015 dues	\$35.00		<b>\$22,959.25</b> (Confirmed)
		2016 dues	\$240.00		
		2017 dues	\$40.00		
		Admin - Bank adjustment	\$4.80		
		Social - Wine and Cheese	\$380.00		
		<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b>\$699.80</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>		Administrative	\$178.00	Annapolis parking; Live Baltimore display	
		Communications			
		Covenant	\$33.70	Certified letters to noncompliant homes	
		Maintenance	\$443.13	Spring Cleanup; Landscaping	
		Safety			
		Social			
		Other			
		<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$654.83</b>	
Ending balance :					\$23,004.22
<b>Bank ending balance :</b>					<b>\$23,004.22</b> (Confirmed)

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**C. YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGET ANALYSIS**

Category	Budget	ACTUAL TO DATE			Balance
		Expenses	Revenues	Difference	
Dues	\$6,125.00	- - -	\$4,270.00	\$4,270.00	(\$1,855.00)
Administrative	(\$250.00)	(\$289.03)	\$4.80	(\$284.23)	(\$34.23)
Communications	(\$1,750.00)	(\$354.05)	\$250.00	(\$104.05)	\$1,645.95
Covenant	(\$1,000.00)	(\$33.70)	\$0.00	(\$33.70)	\$966.30
Maintenance	(\$6,000.00)	(\$1,963.13)	\$0.00	(\$1,963.13)	\$4,036.87
Safety	(\$200.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
Social	(\$3,800.00)	(\$163.78)	\$380.00	\$216.22	\$4,016.22
Contingency	(\$500.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>(\$7,375.00)</b>	<b>(\$2,803.69)</b>	<b>\$4,904.80</b>	<b>\$2,101.11</b>	<b>\$9,476.11</b>

To join the ONA: You can pay your voluntary 2016 membership dues of \$40 via credit card or Square Cash, using payment instructions provided on the ONA website. ([www.originalnorthwood.org/dues](http://www.originalnorthwood.org/dues)).

You may also write a check to "Original Northwood Association" and mail it to:

ONA Treasurer  
1310 Arqonne Drive Baltimore, MD 21218

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*Cont'd from Page 1*

Please continue to lend your support to them as they continue this hard work.

As I look to step down, I realize that 4 other Board members will be rotating off because of term limits. I have discussed this with the Board and am concerned about the loss of institutional knowledge. To this end, we are undertaking several tasks.

First, I have asked each Board member to commit to attend the October meeting to connect with the incoming Board.

Second, each Board member is preparing a section of a neighborhood standard operating procedures to ensure that our regular tasks continue.

Third, and finally, I have suggested that we install a non-voting one-year position of Past President. The Past President would serve as a source of information and counsel to the incoming President. The Past President could attend Board meetings, at the discretion of the incoming President and Board. This position will be on the ballot this September.

It would be an understatement to say how much I have enjoyed serving as your President these last two years. I have had the pleasure to work with a tremendously talented Board, to meet many new neighbors, and to affect positive change within our neighborhood and surrounding area. I look forward to these remaining months to prepare ONA for the transition to a new President and Board. I hope that you will provide them with the same strong support that you have provided me.

— Richard Skolasky



*ONA board members represented our neighborhood at the annual Live Baltimore home-buying event on May 14 at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute.*

## RENOVATING HOME WITH TAX CREDIT

*(Cont'd from Page 2)*

I submitted Parts I and II to the Maryland Historical Trust in November 2015, at which point you (and the contractors) must wait for written certification that the property is eligible and the proposed work meets the Secretary's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation, before any work can begin. My certification came in April, with a few conditions that my contractor was able to meet without added cost or complaint (the holidays and an unusual MHT staffing shortage caused a longer than normal timeline). If you venture down Northview regularly, you probably noticed the crews working, and maybe even the finished results.

I should note that I did not use the cheapest contractors. I chose Fick Brothers based on recommendations, quality and professionalism. As a result, I probably paid about 7% more than I might have otherwise. The tax credit allowed me to buy that peace of mind.

My tax credit saga is still in progress, as the bathtub still needs refinishing, and Part III of the application process (documenting final results) remains. The bottom line – my estimated tax credit will be approximately \$14,000, which comes in the form of a tax refund less a small fee, and any outstanding income tax liability – a good return on the investment in my book.

If neighbors are interested, I'll share the Part 3 experience in a future newsletter. In the meantime, here is a link to the Maryland Historic Trust website for more information: [https://mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits\\_homeowner.shtml](https://mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits_homeowner.shtml)

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE ON CHAP EXPLORATION

*Richard Skolasky, ONA President*

As you know, one of the responsibilities that the Board holds as most important is the enforcement of our deed covenants that maintain the historic charm of our neighborhood. Over the years, the Board has worked hard to enforce these by educating new owners about the covenants, by efficiently processing applications for exterior alterations, and by keeping a watchful eye on property owners who make unapproved changes.

It is this last action that we feel could be strengthened as we have had to rely on neighborhood attorneys to file civil lawsuits against scofflaw property owners after changes have been made. Even when judgements have been awarded in our favor, this is a multi-year process. In May, the Board invited Eric Holcomb, Executive Director of the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) to discuss how his organization could benefit our mission.

At our recent quarterly meeting, the Board invited Eric Holcomb and Caitlin Audette, Historic Preservation Planner, from CHAP (<http://chap.baltimorecity.gov>). The purpose of this meeting was to answer questions from the Board and the neighborhood regarding CHAP and Original Northwood with enforcement of the deed covenants. *(Cont'd on Page 6)*

## CHANGES, UPDATES AND MORE FROM GNCA

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### *2 O.N. residents now on GNCA Board*

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*Chris Youngston Gray, Vice President, GNCA*

**LEADERSHIP:** This winter, Ms. Rebecca Hackett (Perring Loch community) stepped down as President of the Greater Northwood Covenant Association (GNCA), which is the umbrella organization that holds the covenants for Original Northwood and other area neighborhoods. During her approximately five years of service, Ms. Hackett formalized job responsibilities for our small staff and board, hired an accounting firm to manage dues collections and facilitated the continued improvement of the organization and our sister communities. Following in her footsteps is newly-elected President Dana Andrusik (Original Northwood) and Chris Youngston Gray (Original Northwood).

**COMMUNICATION:** In an effort to improve communication about the activities of the GNCA board, the GNCA has created a Facebook page through which residents can stay informed, find contact information and reach out to the GNCA leadership. (<http://www.facebook.com/GreaterNorthwoodCovenantAssociation>) We will also be developing a Wikipedia page with the history of the organization and communities as current activities.

**EFFICIENCY:** In order to further reduce administrative expenses the GNCA have also launched a free GoogleVoice telephone number for the organization ((443) 461-GNCA); a free gmail address ([GNCAVicePresident@gmail.com](mailto:GNCAVicePresident@gmail.com)); are changing bank accounts to avoid maintenance fees; and are seeking free storage space at Morgan State University to be able to cancel our storage unit expense. More cost-saving measures soon to come

**TRANSPARENCY:** The GNCA is currently working to improve the efficiency and transparency of how we request and process our annual mandatory dues. Thanks to Richard Skolasky's (Original Northwood President) efforts, we will soon be signing on with SNAP Collections, a company versed in providing excellent customer service, various methods of payment options and transparency for each resident through their online tool which allows homeowners to log in to see past payments and amount due. Through this professional company, we expect to see compliance with mandatory dues collections increase dramatically across all six sister neighborhoods, resulting in a better payment experience for the residents and more mandatory money returned to respective communities for community improvement projects. What are the dues used for? After minimal administrative expenses, our voluntary board of directors and trustees distributes the dues back to the neighborhood from which it was collected to pay for neighborhood maintenance projects, such as our newly renovated neighborhood sign on The Alameda.

**WE NEED YOU:** The GNCA is seeking a volunteer Treasurer to serve alongside Dana, Chris and the Trustees. With our annual dues being managed by SNAP Collections, we need a numbers-oriented person to oversee and manage the other fiscal responsibilities of the organization. The responsibilities of this position include: 1.) maintain financial records of the organization's income/expenses and present quarterly fiscal reports to the board and trustees, 2.) manage the organization's checkbook and expenses, 3.) prepare and submit annual nonprofit reporting requirements, and 4.) work closely with the organization's attorney, board and trustees, as needed. Volunteer and help us improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the GNCA!

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE ON CHAP EXPLORATION

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*Cont'd from Page 5*

At the meeting, we learned that CHAP works closely with the permitting and the housing code enforcement offices to ensure that all exterior work in a community has been authorized. CHAP would work in concert with our Covenant Committee to review and approve applications for exterior alterations. The Board would learn of many large projects before they begin, through notification from the permitting office. CHAP has worked with another deed covenant community, Otterbein. The Board will reach out to them to learn of their experience.

There are many questions that still remain to be answered: Can the CHAP guidelines be made consistent with our Architectural Guidelines? Will CHAP respect the determinations of our Covenant Committee? Does CHAP review slow down our review and approval process? Does CHAP designation preserve and improve our property values? We look forward to answering these and many more questions.

The Board, in conjunction with CHAP, will hold an additional information session, will circulate written information to the community, and will survey our neighbors for their support. As was stated at the meeting, the decision to become a CHAP designated community is not for the Board to make - but for all of us. We need to be sure that there as many arrows in our quiver to preserve the historic character of our wonderful neighborhood!

## Original Northwood Summer Safety Series

*As the weather heats up, so does our programming! Come out and join some neighbors, enjoy each other's company, and help us maintain visibility in the community! All are welcome and we hope to see you there!*

### Monday Meanders

*Stroll around the neighborhood, enjoy the sights & sounds, and accompany a Baltimore City police officer while he/she points out things of interest and gives tips for personal safety.:*

*South side:*

*June 27- Meet at Argonne/Roundhill intersection, 6:45pm*

### Turn-on Tuesdays

*All summer long, let's try to light up as many porches and front entrances as possible!*

*\*\* The more homes on the block/areas with lights on, the better the chances are for prizes!*

### Wednesday Walks

*Much like Mondays, Wednesdays are a chance for neighbors to enjoy the fresh air, socialize with neighbors, meet an officer or two, look out for anything out of the ordinary.*

*North side:*

*July 13- Meet at Southview/Westview intersection, 6:45pm*

*South side:*

*July 27- Meet at Deepwood/Argonne intersection, 6:45pm*

### Thirsty Thursdays

*What's better than stoop sitting and relaxing on the porch on a nice summer night? Not much! Popsicle nights will also take place on Thursdays, but we know not everyone can get to those. We encourage you to step out on Thursdays and enjoy your favorite beverage out front between 7-8 and meet some neighbors, socialize, and more!*

### Super Safety Day- Still in the works... Date TBA

*Whether you're 6 or 106, safety is always important! We're hoping to have folks come out and meet with emergency service personnel, bike safety groups, and more. We will keep people posted as the planning progresses. Keep an eye out on NextDoor and for flyers.*

\*Later this week, there will be a google form posted on NextDoor for neighbors to input interest/ideas/feedback for the safety group and some other program/conversation ideas. There will also be a place to sign up for email communications, etc. You're not on NextDoor? No problem! Email [jesskupper@gmail.com](mailto:jesskupper@gmail.com) if you would like us to send a link to the form and/or send you emails about upcoming safety meet-ups.

*By Jess Kupper  
ONA Safety Chair*

## ONA Board Members 2015-16

President

*Richard Skolasky*  
[president@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:president@originalnorthwood.org)

Vice President

*Dana Andrusik*  
[vicepresident@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:vicepresident@originalnorthwood.org)

Treasurer

*Jennie Spratt*  
[treasurer@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:treasurer@originalnorthwood.org)

Secretary

*Emily Weber*  
[secretary@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:secretary@originalnorthwood.org)

Covenant Chair

*Mary Stevenson*  
[covenant@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:covenant@originalnorthwood.org)

Social Chair

*Lauren DeVine*  
[social@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:social@originalnorthwood.org)

Safety Chair

*Jess Kupper*  
[safety@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:safety@originalnorthwood.org)

Maintenance Chair

*J.P. Rigilano*  
[maintenance@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:maintenance@originalnorthwood.org)

Communications Chair

*Gus Sentementes*  
[communications@originalnorthwood.org](mailto:communications@originalnorthwood.org)

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