



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

SPRING 2014

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Outreach to—and engagement of—our neighborhood residents remains a priority of the Martha Jefferson Neighborhood Association.

If you are on the MJNA email list, you received a survey a few weeks back. We got over a hundred responses. Thanks to all those who responded! We sent the survey to identify neighbors who would accept delivery of the MJNA newsletters by email (everyone who responded said yes), to get updated contact information, and to find out what the neighborhood sees as the most important neighborhood issues. The responses received to date tell us you are concerned about traffic. About half of you checked “Speeding and Traffic” as a major concern. Your four other major concerns, clustered around one-fourth of respondents each, were, in decreasing order of concern, “No Parks or Trails in Neighborhood,” “Glamorous Streetlights,” “Lack of Sidewalks,” and “Crime.” (Results sum to more than 100% because respondents can check multiple concerns.)

We are happy to have heard from so many of you, but there are still so many neighbors we haven’t heard from. So if you haven’t responded, please look up that survey in your email. We also plan to go door-to-door to the non-responders and get input that way. What we learn is important evidence of community sentiment we will use in our dialogue with city hall. So, again, thanks for your responses.

We want your input on how to improve the neighborhood and also your help. Please consider joining one of our new MJNA teams: streets/traffic, zoning and development, communications, block captains, and community events. The last is especially short-handed: picnics, parties, hunts, and other means of community-building happen only when real people step forward for the ideas, planning, and logistics. Your time commitment can be as limited or as comprehensive as you wish. Tell us at info@mjna.org if you want to join one or more of our part-time teams.

Best to all! Bruce Odell, 2013–2014 MJNA President. Email me any time at: cvilleodell@gmail.com. ■

DARK SKIES LIGHTING

Most of the street lights in Charlottesville obscure the night sky, impinge unnecessarily on residential property, create glare for pedestrians and drivers, and shine into our homes. It is never dark in most of our homes. Your executive committee is exploring strategies to maintain the lighting we need for safety, while bringing back some semblance of night. The city is already committed to installing dark sky compliant LED lighting in new city-owned fixtures. To see them, take a night-time drive from 10th and Page Street to the intersection of Roosevelt-Brown and Cherry Street. Most city street lights, however, including all in our neighborhood, are owned and operated by Dominion Power and are not compliant. Working with the city, we are hoping to find a way to make all of our lighting dark-sky friendly. If you would like to work on this issue or have some ideas to share, contact Harry Holsinger at hholsinger@aol.com. ■

With lights and ever more lights, we drive the holiness and beauty of night back to the forests and the sea.—Henry Beston, “Night on the Great Beach” from *The Outermost House* (1928)

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPRING PICNIC and ANNUAL MEETING



Sunday, May 18

5 to 7 pm (rain date TBD)

On the grounds of Burnley-Moran Elementary School

Join us at our Spring Picnic. This is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors. Please bring a chair if you wish to sit and your favorite potluck dish to share. Pizza and drinks will be provided by MJNA. Every Spring picnic features a short general meeting of the MJNA membership to elect new Board members.

CFA OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, May 29, 4:30–7 pm

CFA Institute invites the neighborhood to see their new offices in the former Martha Jefferson Hospital. Come by for food, refreshments, and conversation. Please RSVP by emailing CFA258@CFAInstitute.org by May 22.

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

coming soon

MJNA will be ringing doorbells within the neighborhood at those households that did not respond to the emailed survey. You can still respond to the survey. If you didn’t get it, or want us to send it again, email info@mjna.org.



Spring on Locust Avenue

TRAFFIC CONCERNS

In a recent MJNA survey, traffic was by far the most frequently cited concern of MJN residents. Let us know if you want to join the newly formed MJNA traffic team by sending email to info@mjna.org.

We have asked Police Chief Longo for help with the speeding problem on Locust. The City installed temporary electronic speed signage during February. We plan to ask neighbors whether they favor an increased penalty speed zone on Locust and possibly other neighborhood streets. The problematic intersection at Lexington/West High is slated to be reconfigured. (See article below).

The City recently adopted new transportation guidelines which are based on what is called the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) approach, an integrated set of recommended practices intended to support bikers and walkers as well as motorists. (See www.ite.org/css/ for further information on CSS.) The new guidelines include "expanding traffic calming ... in collaboration with neighborhood input," and having developers "place emphasis on making streets less desirable for speeding and cut through traffic."

The CSS approach should help to solve neighborhood street, sidewalk, and bicycling issues in the long term, but our neighborhood involvement will continue to be essential to focus the City's plan on the specific traffic issues that concern us and to get response in a timely manner. Please continue to voice your concerns so we can bring them to the attention of the City. ■

INTERSECTION FIX PLANNED

Funding for the final plans for re-engineering the notorious Lexington/East High intersection near the Tarleton Oaks service station are in the city's capital improvement budget for next year. The angled access to and from Lexington will be converted to a more conventional T-intersection, with the goal of making pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle travel safer. This project is part of a larger initiative to bring "context-sensitive streetscaping" to the area south of East High, i.e., across from CFA Institute. Who knows, maybe we'll get some restaurants/food shops, too; several survey respondents want this. MJNA and the Little High neighborhood will have to remain vigilant and engaged with the city and developers to ensure that what emerges in "So-Hi" is community friendly. ■



MJNA IS ON FACEBOOK

Join 60 (and counting) of your neighbors in the MJNA Group on Facebook. Search Facebook for "Martha Jefferson Neighborhood Association" and click the "join group" button in the top right corner. We invite you to use the MJNA FB Group to post your own items of general interest, such as lost pets, household services or yard sales, upcoming community events, neighborhood-related questions or concerns, or simply to reach out to folks with similar interests. ■

MINI-PARK FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Is a mini-park coming to the Martha Jefferson community? According to a Parks & Recreation Department official, our neighborhood is the most underserved for parkland in the city. Parks & Recreation approached MJNA and asked for our help in identifying parcels of land and favored locations that might become small neighborhood parks. MJNA has looked at a lot of possibilities and is now focused on two: the Southwest corner of Locust and Sycamore streets, and along St. Clair Avenue. Much work remains to be done—finding a willing seller, gaining support from nearby residents, securing city financing—and nothing is assured. Meanwhile, we and the city remain on the lookout for other parkland options. Do you have any ideas on where we might create a mini-park? Please write to info@mjna.org. ■

JOIN US / UPDATE US

Our dues are \$10 for two years and we depend on them for our picnics, newsletter and other ongoing activities. If you are not sure if your dues are up to date, please email Harry Holsinger at hholsinger@aol.com or ask at the membership table at the picnic. If you want to join MJNA or want to be sure our contact information for you is current, please complete this form.

Name Family Members' Names

Street Address

Phone Numbers home cell Email

- Exclude me from the MJNA directory distributed to neighbors.
- I am content with an electronic copy of the newsletter, emailed to the email address above.

Bring to the membership table at the picnic or mail to Harry Holsinger, Treasurer, 709 Grove Avenue.