



November 9, 2009

Dear Roland Park residents:

Over the next eight months, the Roland Park Civic League, Community Foundation and Roads & Maintenance Corporation will partner with the Baltimore City Department of Planning on what may be one of the most important efforts our community has ever undertaken—the development of a Roland Park Master Plan. The result will likely influence the character of our neighborhood for many years to come.

We need you to be involved in this effort.

Why do we need a Master Plan? We are fortunate to live in a beautiful, well-designed neighborhood. Its beauty, which has remained largely unchanged for more than 100 years, is due largely to the vision of the Olmsted brothers and to the careful stewardship of residents. Design principles incorporated into the original plan for Roland Park still resonate: the effective organization of space that allows us to maintain such broad vistas as those along Roland Avenue; preservation of natural elements found in such features as the areas of open space, the winding paths that traverse our community and the trails along Stony Run. In response to changes in social behavior and lifestyle requirements, adjustments in communities occur some of which improve, and some of which diminish, the quality of life in the community. The master plan process is an attempt to identify current and future needs and solutions to guide Roland Park into the next several generations in a manner mindful of the qualities we wish to preserve and even strengthen in our community.

What will be the scope of the Master Plan? The scope will be determined by all of us who live in Roland Park, but we anticipate that certain issues will be considered, including maintaining the neighborhood's residential and historical character; protecting green space; linking areas of open space to allow movement by walking, biking and public transportation; partnering with schools to resolve difficult transportation problems; and improving city infrastructure (sewers, roads and sidewalks). All stakeholders, including residents, businesses, schools and religious institutions, as well as our elected officials, will be involved.

Why are we creating a Master Plan now? The timing coincides well with several ongoing citywide efforts, including the City's 2006 Comprehensive Master Plan—Live Earn Play Learn—the first in more than 35 years; and the 2008 Sustainability Plan, which provides a framework for livability and resource conservation. In addition, the City is currently going through a comprehensive zoning code revision. Our Master Plan will help inform the City's land use regulations and zoning as they pertain to Roland Park, and will identify the necessary City and community resources to achieve the vision formulated in our plan.

How do I participate? It is critical for all residents to participate since we need the cumulative knowledge and expertise of Roland Park residents in order to be successful. A neighborhood rich in history and varied experience is the greatest resource from which to plan for our future. Consequently, the Civic League intends to hold a series of workshops—or “charrettes”—to gather, organize and reflect on the collective thoughts and ideas of our community. The first will be held on Saturday, November 21st, at 9:30 a.m. at the Roland Park Elementary/Middle School (5207 Roland



Avenue). Please come prepared to share your thoughts on issues ranging from the long-term sustainability of the neighborhood, comprehensive zoning, green space and tree canopy, public infrastructure, potential development pressures, transportation and traffic concerns, and neighborhood resources, including education, retail and civic uses.

What happens next? The information gathered in this first charrette will be analyzed and developed through a series of “core group” work sessions. Two other public charrettes will occur in 2010, in January and in April. The goal of these workshops will be to prepare a “living” document to be presented to the community and the City in June 2010.

Please join us in this effort and attend the upcoming community charrettes. We have the opportunity to make a difference and to achieve something very good and important for our community and for our City.

Best wishes,

Philip J. Spevak
President, Civic League

Kenneth L. Rice
President, Community Foundation

Kathleen Truelove
President, Roads & Maintenance

Save these Dates for the Community Charrettes

Saturday, November 21st, 9:30 a.m. to noon at Roland Park
Elementary/Middle School

To gather information and identify areas of concern

Friday, January 8th, 7 to 9 p.m., and Saturday, January 9th, from 9 a.m. to 3
p.m. at Roland Park Elementary/Middle School

To refine strategies for addressing areas under study

Week of April 5th, time and site to be determined

To review progress with the community

Week of June 21st

To present the final area master plan to Roland Park