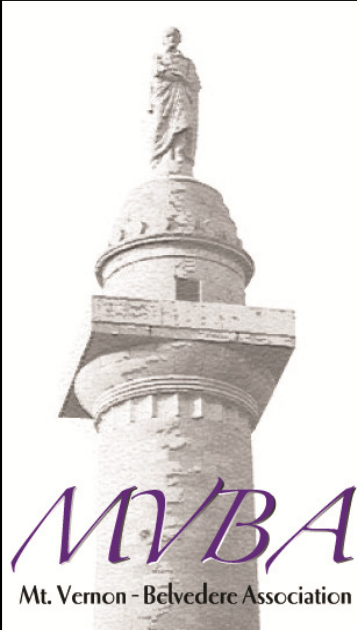


Mount Vernon - Belvedere Clarion



The next general membership meeting will be on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, beginning promptly at 7:30pm at The Belvedere Condominiums.

Our special guest will be Police Commissioner Kevin Davis.

October 2015, Volume 30, Number 10

Visit MVBA at www.mvba.org

October 24th Tree Planting & Maintenance Event - Sign Up Now!

Sign up now to join MVBA Trees for a volunteer tree planting and maintenance event on Saturday, October 24th. We'll be meeting up at Almack's Coffee at 1210 N Charles Street at 9:00am with coffee for volunteers and wrapping up at Iggy's Pizza at 818 N Calvert Street at 1:00pm with pizza for volunteers. Send an email to trees@mvba.org and let us know if you want to work on planting or maintenance (gator bag removal, re-staking and de-staking trees). Thanks to everyone who has already signed up. Also, save the date for November 14th, which will be our second tree planting of the Fall season—more details to come!

Owltoberfest Tap Takeover Fundraiser — Thanks!

Thanks to everyone who came out for the MVBA Trees Owltoberfest Tap Takeover at The Owl Bar. We had an awesome turnout, and we're up to almost \$600 raised from the silent auction and donations and raised \$1,000 in bar sales. Our special thanks to Belvedere & Co for generously providing us space and a percentage of the proceeds.

TreeKeepers in Mount Vernon! - Wed. Nov. 4th - Sat. Dec 12th.

We are excited to be hosting the Baltimore TreeKeepers tree education and certification program in Mount Vernon this fall! All courses will be held in the Reid Chapel space at First & Franklin Presbyterian (210 W Madison Street). Classes are free and include:

TK 101 - Trees & Baltimore - Wed. Nov. 4th, 6:00pm - 8:30pm
TK 102 - Science of Trees - Sat. Nov. 14th, 9:00am - noon
TK 201 - Planting Leadership Certification - Wed. Dec. 2nd, 6:00pm - 8:30pm
TK 202 - Tree Pruning Certification - Sat. Dec. 12th, 9:00am - noon

TreeKeepers certification is required for group leaders at tree planting and tree pruning events in Baltimore, and we are hoping to get many Mount Vernon residents and stakeholders certified in this fall's series of courses. Sign-up for the TreeKeepers series on the Baltimore Tree Trust's eventbrite website at this link!

MVBA Elections

MVBA elections this year involve all the officers of the board of directors and two directors. Officers serve two year terms where the current officers' terms expire on December 31, 2015. Directors serve three year terms, but only two directors' terms expire each year on a rotating basis.

After 14 years on the board, Jason Curtis will be stepping down from his role as President of the Association. In addition, Photini Sinnis as Secretary and Cheryl Paschall as a Director will also be departing. Our thanks to all three for their service to the Association and the community.

As part of the process and required by the Association's bylaws (viewable on our website), a nominating committee was created in July and chaired by Jason House who was tasked with filling the committee with additional members from the membership. Three individuals were willing to serve on the committee: Jenny Pena Dias, Jessica Schatra, and Steve Johnson.

Several officers and directors, whose terms were to expire, expressed a desire to continue serving on the board, leaving three out of seven seats to fill, which were Secretary, Vice President, and one Director.

The nominating committee interviewed interested parties, and assembled a slate of talented candidates who also have a demonstrated track record and commitment of volunteering their time for Mount Vernon. The following candidates will be presented to the general membership at the October 20 meeting:

President—Brian Levy
Vice President—Michele Richter
Secretary—Matthew Muir
Treasurer—Steve Johnson
Corresponding Secretary—Jane Polanka
Director—Steve Shen
Director—Scott Brillman

Short bios for each candidate follow below. At the October general membership meeting, nominations from the floor will also be entertained. These candidates must be nominated and seconded by someone other than themselves. All individuals must be members in good standing. If additional nominations come forth and are accepted, then at the November meeting, elections for those contested seats will take place using secret ballots.

BIOS:

President—Brian Levy (current board member)

When asked by the nominating committee if I would consider running for president, I took seriously not only the question of whether I was interested, but whether I am capable of assuming this large responsibility. I am a relatively new member of this community, having moved back to this neighborhood with my fiancée after graduating from law school. I am also a fairly new member of the MVBA, having joined the board as an appointed director just last year. If elected president, I recognize that there will be a steep learning curve and that I will have some huge shoes to fill. However, after careful consideration, I believe that I have the time, the temperament, and, most importantly, the passion to take on this challenge.

I want to help make the MVBA an even more welcoming, transparent, and active organization. If elected I plan on reaching out to the membership at large and asking people to join committees, to volunteer their time, and to be active participants in all decision making processes. This is our community, and I truly believe that the MVBA will best serve everyone when everyone is truly an active and respected part of the association.

These are lofty ambitions. I know for a fact that the current and past leadership of this association have tried hard to boost member participation and attendance at meetings, and they have done their best to serve this neighborhood we all call home. All I can promise is that I will do my best as well, and that if I am elected, I will count on you all for your input and active participation. Together, we can continue to make Mount Vernon one of the greatest neighborhoods in our city.

P.S. For those of you who do not know me, or who I have only briefly met, please feel free to reach out to me. If elected, I want to do my best to know everyone's feelings about how the MVBA is being run, what we are doing well, and how we can improve.

Vice President—Michele Richter

I am a wife, a mother of two boys, and have worked in the clinical research industry since the early 1990s and hold a B.S. in Biology. Currently, I work as a decentralized Manager within clinical operations, managing 21 clinical staff. In addition, I owned and operated a large antiques business in Baltimore for 14 years. In fact, a good number of customers living in Mount Vernon purchased items that are now beautifully decorating their magnificent homes here in the community. Having a love for architecture and antiques along with loving persistence from Larry Peterson (one of our customers from the antique business), my husband, Dennis, and I along with our sons moved to Mount Vernon in 2010. We currently live at 13 W. Mount Vernon Place following our 3-year restoration of the building.

Growing up in Baltimore, Mount Vernon has always been special to me. I remember as a young girl looking at these gorgeous buildings hoping that I would one day live in such a home. I never tire in viewing these homes and seeing the amazing craftsmanship that went into making each of these buildings so special. I would love the opportunity to serve this community on the MVBA board and hope to make great contributions in the beauty and function of Mount Vernon while maintaining its historical importance. It would be an honor to be part of a fantastic group of individuals who give so much of themselves in making this community shine. Currently, I assist the Architectural Review Committee with the paint color selection for owners looking to improve their building exteriors.

I would like to see Mount Vernon continue to be a destination for people of all ages while continuing to improve the visual appearance and function of the community. There are so many great additions and improvements that can be made to make this an even more incredible place to reside and work. I believe that Mount Vernon encompasses the best of Baltimore both historically and presently, and I would like to put my passion for this community and my years of managerial and business experience to showcase Mount Vernon so others can see how valuable and truly special this neighborhood is. Thank you for your consideration in electing me to a board position.

Secretary— Matthew Muir

Matt hopes to engage the Mount Vernon area's businesses and residents, increase the membership of the MVBA and with that represent our community the best we can. A resident of Preston Street, Matt enjoys partaking in Yoga and Rock Climbing. The outdoors have always been a passion of his and it was the MVBA's TreeKeepers tree planting program that initially brought his attention to the organization.

After growing up in New York Matt discovered he felt at home in Baltimore while attending Goucher College where he graduated with a Dual Major in Peace & Conflicts study and History with a concentration in Pre-law studies. Matt currently acts as a Conflicts and Ethics analyst in D.C. for Hogan Lovells - an internationally renowned law firm. Additionally he engages in a consulting role as a media strategist for an affiliate organization in the space/satellite industry, where his real career passion lies. He is also a certified Community Mediator and has worked in several different neighborhoods in Baltimore.... But not even a terrible commute can keep him from living in a city he loves.

Corresponding Secretary—Jane Polanka (current board member)

Jane Polanka brings to the board both marketing and graphics design skills. While serving on the MVBA board, Jane implemented a number of marketing projects. Jane designed the 5 large MVBA promotional window posters on the N. Charles Street

CITY OF BALTIMORE
BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL



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facade of the PMI-Belvedere parking garage (south of Chase Street) as well as the promotional MVBA 3-panel display.

In addition, Jane designed the MVBA Trees' t-shirts, sidewalk stencil, gator bag stencil, informational business cards, and name tags. Jane is active and concerned about MVBA trash issues, tree support, and responsible development.

Treasurer—Steve Johnson (current board member)

Steve has lived in Mount Vernon since 1972 and has participated in the Association for many years, both on and off the board. Steve chairs the Liquor Committee and has done so for many years. His experience with all things liquor helped to shepherd the process that eventually closed the problematic Museum Restaurant. In addition, Steve serves as the Area 28 parking coordinator for the City's residential permit parking program, and has done so since its beginnings in Mount Vernon. He also serves on the Parking Authority's Advisory Board that provides input and guidance to the Executive Board.

Steve also serves as treasurer for three organizations (MVBA, Midtown District, his Co-Op,) and manages his departmental budget at his place of employment. At Midtown Benefits, Steve developed Midtown's service ticket and tracking program. In addition, Steve has taken on the role of managing the administrative functions of the Association which includes membership, website maintenance, communications management, and Newsletter publishing.

Director—Scott Brillman (current board member)

Scott and his wife Olga recently purchased their dream home on Calvert Street and have made Mount Vernon their home. Scott has been a public safety leader with the City of Baltimore since 2003 and has managed the City's response to many of the historic disasters in past years, including multiple hurricanes, snow storms, mass evacuations, active shooter incidents, and the recent catastrophic derecho. Scott currently directs the City's 911 center, the busiest in Maryland, and is challenged with taking the center into the future. Scott loves Baltimore and wants to see Mount Vernon become a neighborhood where his family can live, grow, walk, play, ride, and learn safely and peacefully. Scott is a graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and the Johns Hopkins University.

Director—Steve Shen (current board member)

Since moving to Baltimore in 2002, Steve has volunteered over 17,750 hours and raised over \$450,000 in grant funding for Mount Vernon initiatives. As a member and/or chair of the MVBA architectural review, development, zoning, stewardship, and liquor committees, he has helped review or advise on approximately 2,700 projects with investments totaling an estimated \$720 million. As Mount Vernon's at-large elected representative to Midtown District since 2006, former board vice chair, and eight-year chair of the operations committee (with clean, green, and safety subcommittees), Steve initiated and led a successful five-year long effort to raise funds, design, and install high definition safety cameras in the Charles Street and W Read Street commercial corridors of Mount Vernon in the city's first public-private partnership with the Baltimore Police Department's CitiWatch program. He also initiated, raised funding, and led efforts to acquire Segways and hire off-duty police officers for the successful safety patrol program. Other projects included logistical studies which led to improvements in Midtown cleaning efficiency by up to 500%, construction of the water tanker and new stake bed

trucks, increased mechanical street sweeping, acquiring over 100 corner baskets, collaborative code enforcement with the city for illegal dumping, and overhead cost reductions. At Midtown he also pioneered service requests/tracking, graffiti tracking (leading to the arrest and conviction of a prolific vandal), bag removal from trees, targeted snow removal, and six ton bulk purchases of magnesium chloride de-icer. From 2011-2014, Steve was a member of the steering committee for the Mount Vernon Area Master Plan and working member of the development, transportation, and open space committees, which culminated in a 141 page comprehensive plan document. Steve has also served since 2009 as MVBA's representative to the Charles Street Development Corporation board, serving on the executive committee and as co-chair of the transportation, infrastructure, and public safety committee. Some examples of CSDC-led projects include successful removal and re-planting of over 50 large caliber matched-species trees on Charles Street and corridor-wide safety initiatives.

Community Struggles with Destructive Vagrant

Residents and business in the eastern half of Mount Vernon have been struggling with a destructive vagrant over the past several months. The person was believed to have been living at homeless encampments along the Jones Falls Expressway and most recently was living in the wooded area behind the Fallsway Monument in the 1100 block of Guilford Avenue.

His destructive behavior began in early July when a number of newly planted trees were snapped in half along Guilford Avenue, E Centre Street, and Saint Paul Street. He was identified on Peabody Conservatory's surveillance cameras immediately after one of the trees was destroyed and he typically wore a cloth wrapped around his head. Around the same time that the trees were destroyed, the Waterloo Apartments had flowers around its grounds ripped out, presumably by the same man.

In September, this man relocated to the Fallsway Monument at Guilford and Biddle, and his typical destructive behavior soon began there. The man was often observed at the Fallsway Monument area yelling angrily at passing cars, bikes, and pedestrians. He began ripping out flowers planted by neighbors at the Fallsway Monument and also began regularly placing graffiti (including some hate speech) on the Fallsway Monument and other properties in the vicinity. In one particularly destructive night, many of the planters along the 200 block of East Biddle Street were tipped and had their flowers ripped out, and several tree branches were snapped. This man also cut cables and wires accessible from the alley in a number of locations, and one resident of E Biddle Street had his cable wire disconnected and cut multiple times, incurring significant expense each time Comcast had to come to make a repair.

During this time, residents in the area sought assistance from the City's Department of Homeless Services and Baltimore Police Department. Homeless services came out and sought the man, but could not find him. One homeless services staff member asked neighbors to try to get a picture of him close up so that they could identify him more easily. In a particularly disturbing incident, a city police officer detained the man but then let him go due to a miscommunication with command staff.

The man also set a number of fires in the wooded area between Guilford Avenue and the Jones Falls Expressway. Fortunately, none of the fires got too large and caused significant damage. When the Police Department and Homeless Services learned of the fires, the neighbors finally seemed to get some traction with the City. An order for an emergency petition was issued, and he was finally apprehended on October 13th and taken to the hospital for much needed mental health services.



Mount Vernon - Belvedere Clarion

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Baltimore, MD 21202

To contact members by phone, call MVBA's main number 410-528-1919 and select the desired extension from the menu.

Officers 2015

President..... Jason Curtis president@mvba.org
 Vice President..... vicepresident@mvba.org
 Treasurer..... Steve Johnson treasurer@mvba.org
 Secretary..... Photini Sinnis..... secretary@mvba.org
 Corr. Secretary..... Jane Polanka corrsecretary@mvba.org

Committees

Architectural Review..... Steven Shen..... arc@mvba.org
 Sanitation..... Sandy Lawler sanitation@mvba.org
 Property Stewardship..... Stephen Ruckman . stewardship@mvba.org
 Liquor..... Steve Johnson..... liquor@mvba.org
 Zoning..... Brian Levy zoning@mvba.org
 Development..... Brian Levy development@mvba.org
 Safety..... Jason Curtis..... safety@mvba.org
 Membership..... membership@mvba.org
 Parking, Area 28..... Steve Johnson..... parking@mvba.org
 Trees & Green Andy Smith trees@mvba.org
 Dog Park..... Samantha Braun
 Geoffrey Hart dogpark@mvba.org

Visit MVBA at www.mvba.org

Board Members 2015

Cheryl Paschall
 Steven Shen
 Antonio Rivera
 MJ Dame
 Stephen Ruckman
 Jason House

Appointed Members:

Brian Levy
 Scott Brillman

Ex-officio Members

Jack Dana

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Our guest will be the newly appointed Police Commissioner Kevin Davis

