

## THE BROOKDALE DIRECTORY

It is time again to update our neighborhood directory. Many of us find the directory valuable in reaching neighbors for reasons ranging from "Who are the parents of little Andy whom we met at the playground?" to "What is the phone number of that couple who asked us to watch their house?" The directory will not be used for any commercial purpose. Please cooperate with your block captain, who is checking your data. In particular, if you were not here in 1996 or have changes since the last directory, be sure you provide the right information. If no one has updated your entry by February 9, please call me.

## THE SECTOR PLAN

On January 27, the County Council took final action on the Friendship Heights Sector Plan. Debate ended on a relatively positive note. The Plan calls for two open spaces on the GEICO site, about 1.8 acres next to the existing Brookdale Park and about 1.5 acres near Western Avenue. "A ballfield for youths 12 and under, or other active recreational uses, may be appropriate for one or both sites." [Note the permissive "may." ] The uses and the "dedication" of the spaces ultimately will be decided by the Planning Board. Requiring the two spaces means, at this

point, roughly 35 fewer townhouses on the site. The final language also added this: "The design, orientation, and height of structures along the border with Brookdale should be sensitive to views from that community. The maximum building heights along the border should be 35 feet to ensure compatibility." The Plan assures a "greenway" along the border, dedicated to the public. There is also wording to encourage a park-like atmosphere along Western Avenue.

Of course, we still might have 810,000 square feet of office development in three buildings along Friendship Blvd. Height restrictions on those buildings are 9, 8, and 5 stories respectively. And they could house "ground floor street-front retail" along Friendship (convenience retail such as sandwich shops). The total number of "dwelling units" (townhouses and apartments) on the GEICO site could still be 500.

The next step in the process is rezoning. Many decisions remain for the approval of site plans.

#### POLITICAL ACTION BY BROOKDALE

At the December meeting of the Brookdale Citizens Association, a number of people expressed interest in acting jointly to affect the County elections this fall. There was support for action based on unhappiness with the position certain officials took on

the Friendship Heights Sector Plan; e.g., Council members Potter and Subin may run this year for "at-large" seats, and County Executive Duncan will be up for re-election.

At the same time, we are sensing concern county-wide over excessive development. Groups now exist in order to influence the electoral process and to affect policy county-wide.

After considering alternatives for action, your Executive Committee believes, fundamentally, that the most effective impact Association members can make -- if they are so inclined -- is to join forces with existing groups.

From all the possibilities, we can name a few groups, as examples, that are unrelated to the political parties and would welcome your participation. Some groups are more "political" than others, and some environmental groups have political wings; e.g., the Sierra Club has a transportation committee (contact Mike Stark 301-879-0644). I have literature on the following groups and describe them briefly here without any official endorsement. We will continue to watch for appropriate avenues for your participation in the political process and community affairs.

Citizens United for Responsible Building (CURB) - Formed originally to oppose the "Pay and Go" legislation, CURB has

a large organization that will probably continue to work against "over-development" in Montgomery County.

More

information: Bill O'Neil (co-chair), 301-916-4823.

CITPAC - A Political Action Committee that endorses candidates in the County who will represent the PAC's goals,

including "responsible growth" and "vigorous defense of our

environment." Information and/or to make contributions to

their operation: Jenny Sue Dunner, 301-657-3568.

Maryland Public Assembly - Organized to endorse and support

"public interest" candidates throughout the State, it

creates its own platform separate from the parties.

(Web

site - [www.wdn.com/trust/mpa](http://www.wdn.com/trust/mpa)) More information and/or to

make contributions: Lee Havis (chairperson), 301-589-0733.

#### CITIZENS' INPUT ON TRANSPORTATION

With the cooperation of the County, the Chamber of Commerce hosts

"Bethesda Action Group Meetings" on the first Friday of each

month at 8:00 a.m. [Yes, the morning.] These give "an opportunity for citizens and community leaders to present public

works and transportation issues directly to senior department

staff." Place:

B-CC Chamber of Commerce, 7910 Woodmont Avenue. More information: Sandra Kaiser, 301-217-2170.

#### RELATED CONFERENCE

On January 31, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., a conference on "unblocking gridlock" is scheduled for the hearing room of the County Council Building in Rockville. It is sponsored by the Montgomery County Civic Federation. Speakers include Council President Ike Leggett, Planning Board Chairman Bill Hussman, planning consultants, representatives of citizen groups, and many others.

Dave Montgomery  
President