

## **Minutes of Parkwood Residents Association Meeting, October 21, 2019**

Kira Lueders, PRA President, opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thirty-eight members were present. They introduced themselves.

### Villages of Kensington

Kira introduced Jennifer Gaegler, Membership Coordinator for the Villages of Kensington (VoK), an organization whose mission is building a supportive, diverse, and intergenerational network of neighbors helping neighbors. Persons who wish to age in place are supported as they remain in their homes and engage in the community. Jennifer reminded us that age expectancy is rising and older adults often need services and a way to connect with the community. Members of the Villages of Kensington provide help and social networking for residents of Kensington and the Bethesda Parkwood community. Volunteer services may include running errands, providing transportation, and helping with technology, light yard work, or shopping. Volunteers also make friendly visits to ward off loneliness, and they may provide meals, child care or pet walking. The Villages vets all volunteers.

A sliding membership fee is based on age and circumstances. Membership is free to those over 90 years of age. There are two categories of membership: Full Membership with members paying an annual fee based on age and income, and Social Membership with a separate fee that includes restaurant lunches and outings with Temple Emmanuel.

Anyone wanting more information can call Margaret at 301-509-0191 or visit the VoK website at [www.VillagesofKensington.org](http://www.VillagesofKensington.org).

### Safety in the Neighborhood

Four Parkwood residents, Jill Lipton, Gabrielle Prandoni, Paul Ferrari, and Angela Long volunteered to form a safety committee for Parkwood. The newly-formed safety committee was made an official PRA committee; co-chairs Jill and Gabrielle will become members of the PRA executive committee as a result.

The safety committee met with Community Liaison Police Officer Dana Stroman and presented a report on that meeting. According to Officer Stroman, the best way to prevent crime is to make the neighborhood unappealing to criminals. By far the most common crime in Parkwood and neighboring communities is thefts from unlocked cars. Officer Stroman's first piece of advice: Lock your Car Doors.

The safety committee repeated Officer Stroman's advice: Ask to see a permit of any solicitor who comes to your door. Do not hesitate to call police if you are concerned. The police want to be called; the more calls police get from a neighborhood, the more resources they get.

The safety committee also reminded Parkwood residents that they can request a Home Security Survey from the MCPD. The police can suggest needed security modifications, often requiring minor expenditures.

The presenters recommended that residents scan their property during the day and again at night, noting what can be seen inside your home, which would be different in daylight and after dark. Other suggestions include: leave a light on outside at night or install motion sensitive lights. Secure sliding glass

doors. If you have an alarm system—use it. Call police if you hear or see something suspicious. Make plans for package delivery pick-up. Holiday packages are prime targets of “porch pirates.”

Bailey Condrey presented a number of low-cost security ideas, some of which were in slides prepared by Gerald Sharp. These included installing deadbolt locks on all doors leading into the house. A brass plate installed behind the lock makes it more secure. Consider the need for improved lighting around your home. A number of high- and low-tech security devices such as doorbell cameras connected to a cell phone, and motion-sensitive lights, (including motion-sensitive LED light bulbs available at Strosnidors) were suggested. One easy safety device is the car alarm on your car keys. If the keys are kept nearby, you can activate the car alarm if you hear something suspicious. Signs warning of surveillance can also be an effective deterrence to thieves. Additional safety measures are listed in the current fall newsletter.

MCPD safety brochures and a Home Security Survey are available on the PRA website.

Kira addressed residents’ concerns regarding a young man who has been seen walking in the local Rock Creek Park and making women uncomfortable with his actions and/or comments. This individual is known to park police who are monitoring the situation.

#### Montgomery County Government Activities

Clare Murphy reported that the county is addressing the issue of overcrowding in schools. It will impose a moratorium on residential building if the high school serving the area is 120% over capacity. Walter Johnson HS meets that overcrowding criteria as do Albert Einstein and Montgomery Blair High Schools.

Jeffrey Griffith reported on developments in the Kensington area, such as the Planning Board’s approval of the Solera senior housing/memory care project. See the Fall PRA newsletter for more information on this and other development projects.

The Montgomery County Planning Department is soliciting citizen input as it develops plans for the future of Montgomery County. To weigh in with your opinion, you can go to [Montgomeryplanning.org](http://Montgomeryplanning.org) and scroll to Thrive Montgomery 2050, then click on [Thrive-quiz 2050](#). You only need to identify your zip code.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Dighe, PRA secretary