

Mount Vernon Square

Neighborhood Association

Uniting our historic community since the 1970s

Feb. 2006

Next MVSNA Meeting

Tuesday, February 21, 7:30 pm
Metropolitan Community Church
(Corner of 5th and Ridge Streets, NW)

Agenda: Election of 2006 MVSNA officers; Discuss traffic concerns with a representative from the D.C. Department of Transportation; Crime Report

Contact Information for 2005 MVSNA Officers:

President Tim Downey: timothydowney@yahoo.com
First Vice President Si Kailian: niello8@yahoo.com
Second Vice President Eric Easter: ericeaster@comcast.net
Treasurer Jeff Parke: jeffersonparke@hotmail.com
Recording Secretary Larry Matheson: larryella@hotmail.com
Corresponding Secretary Camille Bonta:
Camille_Bonta@yahoo.com

AV Restaurant Site Slated for Development

At the January MVSNA meeting, representatives from Shalom Baranes and Trammell Crowe were on hand to discuss plans for development of the current parcel of land occupied by AV Restaurant. Plans for the property, bordered by New York Avenue, and 6th and L Streets, include 130-150 residential units with street-level retail space. The AV Restaurant building will be preserved. The development will include three buildings, the tallest being 12 stories. Once variances are obtained, completion of the project is expected in 2 ½ - 3 years. The developers told residents that it is unlikely the development will include rental units and that parking will be a one-to-one ratio. It was also explained that because they do not believe there is a market for retail in our neighborhood that they will seek a variance allowing residential units to substitute most of the required retail space on the street level. The developers said that the only retail upon completion of the project is expected to be the street-level space bordered by New York Avenue and 6th Street. Residents at the January meeting expressed their frustration at the lack of retail establishments in the immediate neighborhood and urged the developers to reconsider their plans to forgo retail space for additional residential units.

Neighborhood News

MVSNA Officer Elections February 21

At the February 21 MVSNA meeting, elections will be held for the 2006 MVSNA officers. Nominations were held at the January meeting. The following is the slate of candidates. Nominations are still being sought for recording secretary.

President: Cary Silverman – Cary moved to the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood in 2004 where he is a homeowner. He previously served as president of the Logan Circle Community Association and as Chair of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2F. Cary moved to D.C. in 1997 and is an attorney in the public policy group of a private law firm.

First Vice President: Si Kailian – Si is seeking reappointment to the position of First Vice President. She is a 12-year D.C. resident and moved to Mount Vernon Square in 2002 where she is a homeowner.

Second Vice President: Sam Farmer – Sam is a nine-year resident of D.C. and moved to the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood in 2003 where he is a homeowner.

Treasurer: Jeff Parke – Jeff is seeking reappointment to the position of Treasurer. He is a life-long resident of D.C. and moved to the neighborhood in 2002.

Corresponding Secretary: Camille Bonta – Camille is seeking reappointment to the position of Corresponding Secretary. She is a 14-year resident of D.C. and moved to the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood in 2003 where she is a homeowner.

Join MVSNA Listserve

Residents are encouraged to join the MVSNA group listserv, which is designed to serve the community and promote discussion about neighborhood issues. To join go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mvsna/>. Questions should be directed to niello8@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Events

February 21 MVSNA Meeting
7:30 pm; Metropolitan Community Church

March 21 MVSNA Meeting

March 20 Street Sweep Resumes
Street cleaning parking restrictions enforced.

Mount Vernon Square Residents Ask Yale Laundry Developer to Help Combat Drug Problem

In a letter (*printed below*) to IBG Partners, LLC, signed by 27 residents of the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood, the developer of the Yale Laundry site was asked to join in an effort being led by many in the community to shut down a known drug house at 1103 5th Street, NW. Concerns with the growing problem of drug trafficking at 1103 5th Street were shared with Third District Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Officer Chris Downs at the January MVSNA meeting. Since the meeting, there has been increased police attention to the property. Residents are encouraged to report all suspicious activity to 311 or the MPD Third District at 202-673-6815.

February 15, 2006

Mr. Scott Fuller
IBG Partners, LLC
1717 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Suite 630
Washington, DC 20006

Mr. Fuller:

As residents of the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood, we welcome the preservation and development of the former Yale Laundry. We are also pleased that the Yale Laundry Condominium sales office will take up residence at 1101 5th Street, NW.

We would like to bring to your attention a long-standing and worsening problem at 1103 5th Street, NW – the adjoining property to your sales office. It is well known by both the community and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) that drugs are being distributed out of this townhouse. This townhouse is frequented by dozens of people on a daily basis at all hours of the day and night. Many of the individuals who frequent this house have been seen coming and going in vehicles with out-of-state tags. We have even witnessed customers arriving by taxi.

The drug trafficking that is occurring out of this house has coincided with an increased number of break-ins and thefts from cars in our neighborhood and a growing occurrence of drug use in the alley that joins 4th and 5th Streets and which runs behind the Yale Laundry. There has been at least one known incidence of a verbal assault on a female resident of 5th Street by a person who is known to frequent 1103 5th Street. If nothing is done to shutter this house, we fear that it is simply a matter of time before the crime situation in our neighborhood worsens. There are a number of children who live in this neighborhood and who play in the alleys and sidewalks. Unless something is done to control the drug problem in this neighborhood stemming from this house, their safety is unquestionably at risk.

The MPD has been summoned by neighborhood residents to 1103 5th Street on numerous occasions. MPD officers are utilizing their best resources to address the drug trafficking occurring at 1103 5th Street, but have told members of the community that the best chance for shutting down this house would be the discovery of fire code violations. As such, we are calling for an immediate inspection of the townhouse by the District of Columbia fire marshal. Although this request has not been voted on by the Mount Vernon Square Neighborhood Association (MVSNA), the undersigned residents strongly believe this is an important matter that concerns the entire community.

Our community is committed to shuttering this house for good, and we hope that we can count on your support and partnership in this effort. We have reached out to city officials and believe our efforts would be bolstered by your active involvement. We welcome the opportunity to sit down and discuss this problem and steps that would lead to action by the city. Please contact Camille Bonta, corresponding secretary for the Mount Vernon Square Neighborhood Association, at (202) 737-0543 or camille_bonta@yahoo.com with questions or to arrange a meeting.

Working together, we can make the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood a welcoming and safe environment for its residents and visitors.

cc: Mayor Anthony Williams
DC City Councilmember Jack Evans, Chair Pro Tempore, Ward Two
Lt. Ralph Neal, MPD Third District
Chief Richard Fleming, DC Fire Marshal
Officer Chris Downs, MPD Third District
Carlson Klapthor, Neighborhood Services Coordinator Ward Two
DC City Council Chair Linda Cropp
DC City Councilmember Carol Schwartz, At Large
DC City Councilmember David Catania, At Large
DC City Councilmember Phil Mendelson, At Large
DC City Councilmember Kwame R. Brown, At Large

Police Contacts

PSA 308 – Lt. Ralph Neal; (202) 673-6821

PSA 501 – Lt. George Caldwell; (202) 727-4503

PSA 101 – Lt. Lofton and Lt. McCoy; (202) 727-4610