

# MVSNA



# MOUNT VERNON SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

[www.mvsna.org](http://www.mvsna.org)

July 2009

## Next MVSNA Meeting

**Tuesday, July 21st**

**7:30 pm**

**Yale Steam Laundry  
437 New York Ave NW**

*New York Ave between 4th & 5th  
in the Common Room*

### Agenda

- Public Safety Report - 1st & 3rd District Police invited
- Vote on 1208 3rd Street NW addition - 3rd Street Church of God
- Discussion - Next Vacant Property Survey & Community Picnic

### Community Calendar

- Jul 21 - MVSNA Mtg, Yale Laundry, 437 NY Ave NW, 7:30pm
- Jul 28 - CCCA, Kennedy Rec., 1401 7th Street NW, 7pm
- Aug 2 - National Night Out Community Walk, meet in front of Safeway at 5th & L NW, 7:30pm
- Community meetings break for August*
- Aug 30 - United House of Prayer baptism by fire hose, 600 block of M, 11am, *expect street closures*
- Sep 2 - ANC 6C Planning & Zoning, NPR, 635 Mass. Ave NW, 7pm
- Sep 2 - ANC 2C Mtg., Kennedy Rec., 1401 7th Street NW, 6:30pm
- Sep 8 - DNA/PSA 101, Calvary Church, 8th & H Sts. NW, 7pm
- Sep 9 - ANC 6C Mtg. Heritage Foundation 214 Mass Ave NE, 7pm
- Sep 10 - PSA 308 Mtg., Kennedy Rec., 1401 7th Street NW, 6:30pm
- Sep 15 - MVSNA Mtg, Yale Laundry, 437 NY Ave NW, 7:30pm
- Sep 28 - CCCA, Kennedy Rec., 1401 7th Street NW, 7pm

*Keep up to date with community news & events!*

Post on Your Public Neighborhood Blog: [lifein.mvsna.org](http://lifein.mvsna.org)

Subscribe to the Neighborhood Listserve:

[groups.yahoo.com/group/mvsna/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mvsna/)

Read the Latest Triangle News: [MVTriangle.blogspot.com](http://MVTriangle.blogspot.com)

### Message From the President

In 2002, Mayor Anthony Williams began the Home Again Initiative, a program that would take vacant properties that had fallen into the D.C. government's ownership, often because they were abandoned, collapsed, or subject to a fire, and turn many of them into affordable housing opportunities. The program would operate by placing groups of properties (usually between 5 and 8) in "bundles" and selling them at a discount to qualified developers who would then put some into market rate housing, but set aside a number of the properties to sell to low to moderate-income individuals. Several properties in our area entered the program. There have been some successes, but more miserable failures.

A recent success is the construction currently underway on the corner of 4th and Ridge Streets NW. The multi unit project will ultimately result in mixed income condos. It was not easy, however, to get to where we are today. Due to the lots being in the possession of various DC government agencies, it took about three years of advocacy by a committed developer, MVSNA, and, ultimately, two acts of the DC Council to make it happen. Another positive example, which came without the headache, is 1134 6th Street NW. The historic rowhouse was recently restored and sold by MiCasa, Inc.

Then, there are the many failures. Those in our immediate area include 460 Ridge Street NW (the property which collapsed after being ignored by DC for years and was recently subject of an Examiner report on our government essentially abandoning its vacant properties). Another is 454 N Street NW. When I mentioned that this vacant shell was likely to collapse ala 460 Ridge at a DC Council hearing about two years ago, the government responded not by developing or selling the property, but by boarding the windows and door and erecting a chain link fence around it. It continues to sit in that condition today even while similar houses along the same block have been restored, sold, and occupied. The final Home Again property is 1031 4th Street NW, in the Mount Vernon Triangle area. I recently learned that because the developer slated to fix that property has not taken action in so many years, the DC government will seek return of the property. There are dozens more "Home Again" properties concentrated in the greater Shaw area.

But is anyone Home? When I tried to find more information on the status of these DC-owned properties last week, I found that the District's Home Again website has not been updated since April 2004 and many of the links are dead. The listed phone number for the program immediately goes to a messaging system that appears to be a wrong number. There was no e-mail contact listed on the website, nor is there even so much as the name of a person to contact. Finally, I found a number for Home Again on a 2006 press release that led to the Department of Housing and Community Development's Property "Acquisition Disposition Division" (try saying that fast!). When I finally reached a live person, imagine my surprise when her response was "Well, there really isn't a Home Again program." Apparently, responsibility for the properties now lies with the Acquisition Disposition Division.

So -- the moral of this story is to say that we would like to see more success stories in developing the vacant properties in our neighborhood. There is no excuse for them staying vacant and becoming public nuisances, particularly when they are owned by the D.C. government. We expect to receive more information on the status of the Home Again properties in our neighborhood next week and push for progress. Meanwhile, Si Kaillian is preparing an updated and expanded comprehensive survey of all vacant properties in our area in order to ensure that the government is applying the appropriate, higher tax rate to the properties to encourage the owners to restore, rent, or sell them in the near future.

**Police Contacts**

**PSA 308**

Lt. Micah Pate - (202) 506-0743

[Micah.Pate@dc.gov](mailto:micah.pate@dc.gov)

**PSA 101**

Lt. Gary Durand - (202) 698-0377

[Gary.Durand@dc.gov](mailto:gary.durand@dc.gov)

Lt. James "Bart" Dykes - (202) 904-6484

[James.dykes@dc.gov](mailto:james.dykes@dc.gov)

**Police Yahoo Groups**

[groups.yahoo.com/group/MPD-3D/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MPD-3D/)

[groups.yahoo.com/group/MPD-1D/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MPD-1D/)

[MPDC.dc.gov](http://MPDC.dc.gov)

**Feel like blogging about the neighborhood, but don't want the commitment of your very own blog? Post your musings at the *public* MVSNA blog! Just go to [lifein.mvsna.org](http://lifein.mvsna.org) and click the right side link to contribute!**

**Report all Crime!  
Dial 911 for ALL Crime**

**Need City Services?  
Call 311 for all City Services!**

**2009 Board of Directors**

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**News in Brief**

**3rd Street Church of God Office Addition**

ANC 6C approved an addition to 1208 3rd Street NW. 3rd Street Church of God will be re-presenting the project to MVSNA for a vote at our July 21st meeting in advance of their July 23rd appearance before the Historic Preservation Review Board. The brick addition is to be constructed to the side of the building, set back from the façade. There are some concerns regarding the stairwell located in the front of the addition and the lack of windows facing the street. The improvement of this building and the surrounding parking lot is welcomed.

**City Vista Fills Space!**

As the MVTriangle blog reported: Busboys & Poets is planning to expand to the adjoining bay on K street. Also Kushi, new Japanese restaurant serving sushi and tapas w/ outdoor seating, is applying for a liquor license. And lastly, Taylor Gourmet Deli is bringing their Philly hoagie/Italian deli goodness that they have established on H Street NE to our neck of the woods.

**OPM Willing to Compromise on Bundy Lot**

Following a presentation to MVSNA and a vote to support the Friends of Bundy Park application to install a dog park at the vacant lot on the 400 block of P Street NW, the DC Office of Property management decreed that the entire parcel was to become a massive surface parking lot for Safe Shores. Safe Shores is the organization which is moving into the Bundy School on the 400 Block of O Street NW. After substantial community discussion & outcry, OPM is now examining their actual parking needs for Safe Shores and is open to splitting the usage to hopefully incorporate a more community oriented green space. The Bundy School will have approximately 60 employees and the site already has 18 parking spaces. The adjoining lot in question is large enough for 100 cars. Keep up to date on this issue, sign the petition! [FriendsofBundy.net](http://FriendsofBundy.net)



**FRIENDSOFBUNDYPARK**  
Join the Friends of Bundy Park and help make local parks in Shaw a great place for all residents.  
[FriendsOfBundy.net](http://FriendsOfBundy.net)

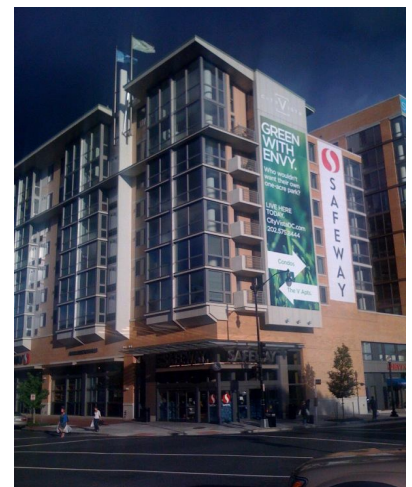
**National Night Out - Community Walk**

Come out & have a stroll around your community with your friendly neighbors to deter crime!

**Sunday August 2, 2009**

**Meet HERE ----->>>>>>>**

In front of Safeway at 5th & L Streets NW  
at **7:30 pm**



**FRINGE FRINGE FRINGE!**

**The 2009 Capital Fringe Festival is going on now through July 26th! Go see awesome performances, attend workshops & visit the Gypsy Tent Bar right here in our neighborhood!**

Visit [capfringe.org](http://capfringe.org) for showtimes & ticket info!