

**College Gardens Civic Association  
Spring Meeting  
May 25, 2011  
Minutes**

Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 p.m.

**Treasurer's Report:** Don Mann reported that the CGCA spent \$50 since its fall meeting and has a balance of \$10,994.

**Listserv:** CGCA President Tom Miner reminded residents to sign up for the CGCA email list and Yahoo group.

1. To make sure you get our College Gardens emails, send a message to [webmaster@collegedgardens.org](mailto:webmaster@collegedgardens.org). We will add you and you will only get "official messages" from CGCA Executives.
2. To join the Yahoo Group, *which is like an online community bulletin board*, simply send an email to [collegedgardens-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:collegedgardens-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). You'll get a return email requiring you to reply to confirm your subscription. To manage your online membership, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/collegedgardens> and create a Yahoo ID.

**Aluminum wiring:** Tom said there has been some discussion on the Yahoo group about aluminum wiring in neighborhood homes, so he invited Jeff Smith of Electrical Wiring Ltd. in Kensington to address the group.

Mr. Smith handed out a booklet produced by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), which is scanned and attached here, explaining that homes built between 1965 and 1973 may contain aluminum wiring, which was used during an apparent copper shortage during the Vietnam War years. He noted that houses next door to each other may have different wiring depending on what was available to the builder at the time construction began on each house. According to research by the CPSC, a home wired with aluminum wire manufactured before 1972 is 55 times more likely to have one or more connections reach "fire hazard conditions" than is a home wired with copper wire.

Mr. Smith said signs of trouble in aluminum wire systems include warm-to-the-touch face plates on outlets or switches, flickering lights, circuits that don't work or the smell of burning plastic at outlets or switches.

He explained the "pig-tailing" process he uses to repair existing aluminum wire circuits. Also called a crimp connector repair using a metal sleeve called a COPALUM parallel splice connector, he says this process is the one endorsed by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Mr. Smith said the cost is roughly \$56 per outlet, and \$5,500 to do the whole house. The Consumer Product Safety Commission's toll-free hotline is 800-638-2772.

**Garden Club of College Gardens:** Co-president Cathy Davis said the club meets the second Thursday of the month and its big fundraisers include the spring plant sale and the fall bulb sale. The club is part of the National Capital Area Garden Club and is open to anyone who lives in College Gardens or has an interesting joining. The club's activities include helping with weeding and landscaping at Strathmore Hall and decorating a staircase there at Christmas time, as well as landscaping and weeding for Habitat for Humanity projects in the area.

A Garden Club membership flyer is attached to this message.

**National Night Out:** Susan VanGrack said this year's event will be Tuesday, August 2, and she is eager to get young families involved in the planning. Last year's NNO was a big success, with the civic association providing hot dogs, hamburgers and Carmen's ice, and neighbors bringing side dishes to share. She is especially looking for people to help organize activities for children and to "work" at the event.

**College Gardens Park Sign:** Don Mann explained that the glass-enclosed sign board in the park is available to the neighborhood and asked for suggestions for rotating entries. Suggestions included projects by neighborhood scout troops, information from the Garden Club, a history of College Gardens, information from our resident bird-watchers, and information about the pond's flora and fauna. Anyone with other suggestions can send them to Don at [DonMann@gmail.com](mailto:DonMann@gmail.com).

**Tree Pruning:** Tom Miner said the recent removal of several cherry blossom trees along the end of College Parkway near Nelson Street was done by Columbia Gas to maintain access to their underground gas lines. The pipeline also goes under property on Clemson Court, and the gas company is ordering the removal of 12 trees on the Reuthers' property. The catalyst for the removals was the gas line explosion in California, which resulted in increased federal pressure on the gas companies to be safe, according to Ted Reuther.

Tom Miner said the city of Rockville has excellent resources for tree management and for finding an arborist to assist in disputes between neighbors over the condition or safety of a tree. See <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/parks-facilities/forestry/index.html>

City Council Member Mark Pierzchala said the council has asked the city manager to check with Montgomery College about new screening plants between the college and Clemson Court homes.

**Princeton Place path:** Tom Miner and Mark Pierzchala said there is no news on the dispute over the now-closed pedestrian path to Montgomery College, at the top of Princeton Place, but that there are discussions going on behind the scenes and the issue is not forgotten.

**Rockville Neighborhood Resource Coordinator** Orlando Heyliger listened to concerns from residents, including the large number of cars and residents at a rental home on College Parkway, and requests for both more and less enforcement of

speeding. He noted that the city investigated complaints about liquid seepage near the College Gardens Elementary School playground and found it is not sewage, but is continuing to investigate. Planning is beginning for the Watts Branch Upper Stream restoration project, and the city's senior services program offers a list of contractors who are vetted by the city and a city employee who will come wait at your house with you for the workman to arrive. For more information on the Rockville Senior Support Services' Home Maintenance Repair and Safety program, contact Lorraine Schack at [lschack@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:lschack@rockvillemd.gov) and review the attached brochure.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

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