**Honing in on Zoning: How Georgetown Could Be Affected**

The November 22 CAG meeting will focus on proposed DC zoning changes that may significantly affect our neighborhood. As proposed, the regulations encourage increased development and density. This increase could lead to more institutional and commercial uses as well as loss of green space on individual lots, substantially impacting our business and residential streets.

CAG’s Historic Preservation and Zoning Committee has been following the proposed “Zoning Rewrite” by the DC Office of Planning and wants to alert and inform residents about the critical issues. The Rewrite will be issued as proposed regulations over the course of the next several months.

CAG has invited two experts, Travis Parker and Nancy MacWood, to present the pros and cons on the issues. Parker is the DC Office of Planning’s “Zoning Rewrite point person” and MacWood is both an ANC commissioner in Cleveland Park and the zoning specialist from the prestigious Committee of 100 on the Federal City. CAG’s Legal Counsel, Richard Hinds, will moderate the exchange.

The program will take place at the Letelier Theater, a “hidden gem in the upper courtyard of Georgetown Court”—an intimate theater with excellent acoustics and state of the art media presentation facilities. Usually offering programs such as French and Italian films and specialty food seminars, Letelier Theater (3251 Prospect Street NW) is an intriguing venue for the CAG meeting. You can enter from Prospect Street and use the staircase to the upper level, or enter on N street (beside Neyla’s) directly onto the upper level. (For more information check out letelietheater.com)

CAG Historic Preservation and Zoning committee Chair, Pamla Moore, promises a lively discussion. So do come and hear this critical exchange of ideas and views and pose your own questions or concerns. The reception begins at 7 o’clock with the program from 7:30 until 8:30.

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**Georgetown Gets Down at the Gala at the Russian Embassy** (see story and more photos on page 6)

Awardees Anna Fuhrman and Barbara Downs are introduced by Jennifer Altemus

Tonya and Lincoln Blunt of MRP Realty, Washington Harbour with Nancy Taylor-Bubes

Outerbridge and Georgina Horsey
I love Halloween in Georgetown. People go all out. The houses look like they have been decorated by Alfred Hitchcock or Martha Stewart. The kids’ costumes have been in preparations for weeks and when they finally debut, they all look adorable. And the scene on M Street is super fun. Thanks to all those who make this holiday so wonderful, including the police who keep the streets safe.

There is nothing new to report on the Georgetown University Campus Plan. After three serious work sessions between GU and community representatives (ANC2E, CAG, and the Burleith Citizens Association) on core issues of concern regarding GU’s draft 10-year campus plan for 2010-2020, discussions have been suspended. At some point in the future, the parties may resume meeting. GU is required to file their plan by the end of the year and we look forward to presenting our views to the Zoning Commission. Our newsletter next month will focus exclusively on Campus Plan issues. It is important for the neighbors to know the issues and be involved in the process. We plan to join Burleith in putting out lawn signs to help raise awareness. And we will host another public forum once GU has filed its plan.

The 2010 Georgetown Gala was a tremendous success. The Russian Ambassador, His Excellency Sergey Kisylak, hosted us for a glamorous evening complete with Russian vodka, caviar, and the Right On Band. I felt like all of Georgetown turned out to honor Barbara Downs and Anna Fuhrman. The silent auction rocked! So many local businesses donated fabulous items and the bidding was extremely enthusiastic. The night was truly spectacular. I thank everyone who attended and all of the sponsors and donors who contributed. And I am particularly grateful to Gala chairs Nancy Taylor Bubes and Lesley Lee and their planning committee who made everything happen. Annie Lou Bayly Berman and Erika Donohue coordinated the very labor intensive but extremely profitable auction. I know they couldn’t have done it without all the help they received, particularly from Patti Cumming, Kathleen Long, Shaun Murphy, Beth Solomon and Jenny Zador. Brooke Carnot persuaded the society “it” band, Right On, to perform. Constance Chatfield Taylor, Colleen Girourd and Amy Tercek took on the decorations making the embassy even that much more stunning. Robin Jones put the gorgeous invitation together. Cookie Cruse checked everyone in—no small task! And our executive director, Betsy Cooley, together with Elizabeth Maloy managed to finalize the millions of details that go into a function like this. It was certainly a group effort and these ladies deserve a huge round of applause. The Gala is CAG’s primary fundraiser and its profits allow us to further CAG’s mission.

Our association’s Beautification Committee new chairs, Patrick Clawson and David Dunning, hosted the CAG/GU Fall Clean Up day to spruce up both the East and West Villages. Together with Ray Danieli, students from the university, and dozens of neighbors, they raked, shoveled, and bagged truckloads of trash. Red “Save the World” wagons were provided for kids to collect bottles and cans. The weather was spectacular as everyone gathered for coffee and muffins and to collect their gear. The morning ended with lunch provided by the GU Grilling Society. It was a great way to spend a Saturday morning—meeting neighbors, cleaning our streets, and eating good grub! Thanks to everyone who turned out to make our village a little bit prettier.

Slowly but surely, the work on the O & P Streets trolley tracks is moving forward. Construction is expected to start by the end of the year and will take about two years to complete. We will keep you posted on the process through our website.

See you at the “Zoning” meeting on November 22.

—Jennifer Altemus
It seems that we have a reputation for style. We are pleased, of course, and such an accolade makes us feel good, but let’s examine whether it’s deserved.

There used to be an event called the Washington Antiques Show; it was held at the Omni Shoreham and it was a big deal. It endured for 55 years and it was fun, enjoyable. Now that event has morphed into the Washington Winter Show, held at the Katzen Arts Center at American University in January. With many of the same exhibitors, easy parking and great space it definitely continues to be enjoyable and fun. This year the theme of the show is Georgetown.

Continuity is something Georgetown has going for it too: our history, our longevity. Isn’t that what antiques shows are all about, style that endures, style from the past? We have the patina of age, like good antiques. Our streetscape was built a long time ago. We have layers and layers of history here. Some of the houses have played major roles in our past and they have the stories to go with them.

We are good on the details. Our frequently handsome front doors have sidelights (narrow windows on either side of a door to let light in). We have fanlights or demilunes above the door for the same reason and also because they are often so decorative. And they even have that chic French name. We have some remaining gaslights here and there and mounting blocks, historic accessories from a bygone era.

In Georgetown houses you might find nine-spindle Windsor chairs and furniture with claw and ball feet and girandole mirrors, butler’s tables even though we don’t have butlers. And lolling chairs and gate leg tables and tavern tables even though we don’t live in taverns. Lolling chairs sound so wonderfully decadent and disreputable even though they are just a kind of armchair. We might have sugar chests and linen presses with neither sugar nor linens in them. And architectural garden ornaments! The Washington Winter Show may well have these things too and we can look at them, sometimes covet them and enjoy ourselves enormously while doing it.

It’s about design and décor—one thinks “this will look good with this but not with that.” Play with it; it’s all about pleasing the eye. Indulge it. Those glorious glowing oriental rugs, this beautiful and unusual objet for the center of the table, the fabulous pair of Chinese vases for the mantelpiece, these things have more than passed the test of time.

In so far as we have self-confidence about this, it comes from our continuity, our links to taste and style from the past. So to answer the question asked in the first sentence, yes, we deserve it.

—Edith Schafer

Why Does It Take So Long To Replace a Bridge?

The project to replace the three bridges over the C&O Canal is near its midway point. The 30th Street bridge is completed, and the contractor is making good progress on the Thomas Jefferson Street bridge, which will likely be finished before next spring. The contractor will then move to the 29th Street bridge. This last bridge will take the most time because of the major utility lines that use the structure to cross the canal.

What is so complicated about replacing these small bridges that it takes many months of construction before they re-open? The answer is that the contractor is, in effect, building a completely new bridge. The bridges, nearly a century old, were designed and built in an era when a wagon’s weight of goods was the heaviest vehicle to cross. The stone walls of the canal supported the bridge girders and, over the decades, had to bear the increasingly heavy buses and trucks of the modern era.

The new bridges no longer rely on the stone walls to support the bridge deck. Rather, to provide this support, a set of subsurface pilings anchored to bedrock, with a concrete abutment cap, are being built. Once the abutments are formed, steel girders will be attached, and these girders will ‘float’ the new bridge over the old stone walls. For the Thomas Jefferson Street bridge, the girders should arrive from the steel fabricator in mid-November.

The picture shows the two rows of steel-capped micropiling that form the north-side support for the bridge abutment on Thomas Jefferson Street.

—Walter Groszyk
Meet the Men Behind the Flashing Lights: CAG Public Safety Guards

Tesfaye Terefe’s name (pronounced tess FIE uh tare EF uh) means “too much hope” in his native language, but to those of us on CAG’s Public Safety committee who want our neighborhood to be a safer place, there’s no such thing. Tesfaye is one of the private guards hired by CAG from the security firm Securitas to patrol our neighborhood’s residential streets at night. He’s been on the job for two years and is now supervising the CAG team. His partner is Donovan Carmichael, an Arlington native, who joined the security detail last November.

The two men are serious, intelligent, soft-spoken, and eager to do what they can to protect the people. They know every street and alleyway of our neighborhood, and know where — and when — to station themselves when the bars close to encourage the groups of students (and others) to make their way through the residential streets quietly and without incident. They recognize the students don’t always welcome their presence, but some are beginning to learn that the guards are keeping them safe too.

Tesfaye came to the United States from Ethiopia in 2004, after studying accounting and then getting his carpenter’s license. He first worked for a company that builds apartment and condominium buildings in the district, but soon realized he’d rather work in a job where he could connect with people and help them on a daily basis.

Donovan served in the U.S. Air Force for four years, working as an F15 maintenance crew chief in England and Qatar. In his first years out of the service he worked in a hardware store and as a cable contractor, and in both jobs he found that what he did best for his customers was troubleshooting. Even now, working for...
CAG, he sees his skills as a troubleshooter paying off; for example, he’s worked hard to get neighbors with noise disputes to communicate better with each other and head off problems before they occur. Donovan, like Tesfaye, says the thing he likes best about his work for CAG is the feeling of being useful, though he joked that “If we do our jobs TOO well, nothing happens and then we don’t feel we’re being useful!”

Donovan and Tesfaye are on duty five nights a week; Wednesday and Sunday from 6pm to 1am and Thursday through Saturday from 6pm to 3am. Contributors to the CAG Public Safety program have the guards’ individual cell phone numbers and are welcome to call when they are on duty to get an escort within the neighborhood, to have the guards keep a close eye on their house when they are away, or for any other public-safety-related issue.

The guards are in regular contact with our neighborhood’s police officers and with those assigned to the extra “reimbursable detail” that CAG pays MPD to provide on the weekends. They check in with each other by cell phone during each shift and keep each other informed about trouble spots and possible crime threats.

— Diane Colasanto
CAG Public Safety Committee & Block Captain

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Alessi Arives in Georgetown

You know the whistling tea kettle that Michael Graves created for the Italian design company Alessi? It’s the one with the little red bird about to fly out of the spout. You can boil water in it — or you can set it on a shelf and simply admire it. Or both.

The same can be said for almost all the housewares and tabletop products made by the design-driven Milanese firm — the famous spidery juicer from the 1980s by French wunderkind Philippe Starck; the tall, cone-shaped cheese grater by Richard Sapper (used at Cafe Milano); the iconic Anna G corkscrew. We don’t always know their names, but they’re all instant classics of the design world (and contemporary households), ready to work hard and look good doing it.

Now those wares are available at the cheery new Alessi shop in Cady’s Alley, below M Street. The shop opened October 21 under the aegis of Deborah Kalkstein, owner of the nearby Contemporaria store. Alessi CEO, Alessio Alessi, as handsome as his housewares, was in town to launch the shop, Washington’s first. “We had to find the right partner—that’s the most important thing for us. The person [who runs the local business] has to have a real passion for design.” He and Paolo Cravedi, managing director for Alessi North America, found that partner in Kalkstein.

The shop owner “must also be able to sell art,” Alessi said. Good point: Some of the tea and coffee sets the company produces cost in the thousands. But useful, and oftentimes whimsical, objects at the store start around $20. (Check out the brand-new line of pet products, including a hefty resin-and-stainless-steel dog bowl with a “bone” handle, for $85.) The 800-square-foot shop doesn’t have all 3,000 items in the Alessi line, but it carries the main selection. From Alessi’s point of view, the Georgetown store means the company can showcase its new products immediately. From Georgetowners’ point of view, it means we no longer have to trek across town to the National Building Museum to satisfy our Alessi fix. The shop is at 3319A Cady’s Alley; 202-298-0404.

If the new Alessi store inspires you, know that the Philadelphia Museum of Art will feature an exhibition of the firm’s iconic objects November 21 through April 10, 2011.

— Nancy McKeon
What an evening! The 2010 Georgetown Gala, chaired by Jennifer Altemus, Nancy Taylor Bubes, and Lesley Lee, provided guests with a glamorous evening dancing, chatting with friends, and bidding on intriguing auction items at the Embassy of the Russian Federation on Friday evening October 15. For the second year in a row, His Excellency Sergey Kislyak hosted almost four hundred Georgetowners for dinner and dancing, along with Russian vodka and caviar. Unfortunately, the Capitals had a hockey game the evening of the Gala so Alexander Ovechkin and Alexander Semin did not make a repeat appearance but many notable Georgetowners attended the VIP reception.

Jennifer Altemus welcomed Georgetowners and led the festivities by recognizing Barbara Downs and Anna Fuhrman for their great contributions to the community. Councilmember Jack Evans also welcomed the crowd. Numerous local officials were also on hand for the event. The special neighborhood relationship between Georgetown and Moscow’s historic district, the Arbat, which was initiated at last year’s gala, was also celebrated at the event. The Georgetown and the Arbat neighborhoods are the historic cradles of their two national capitals, they are home to many writers and artists, feature vibrant restaurants, galleries, and boutiques, and both are popular tourist destinations. A pen-pal system has been established between local schools and the communities are developing more ways to establish partnerships for cultural, business, and youth interaction.
Real estate on the dance floor was limited as many guests showed off their dance moves as the Right On band played that funky music of the 1970s. With gold glitter platform shoes and go-go dancers, guests couldn’t help but join in the “Love Train” conga line that snaked through the elaborate rooms of the Embassy. The fabulous silent auction was put together by Annie Lou Berman and Erika Donohue along with their hard working committee. Many local businesses donated attractive items and the bidding was highly competitive thanks to the new electronic system of hand-held bidding devices from BidPal.

A big thank you to our lead sponsors—Georgetown Park—Angelo Gordon/Vornado Realty Trust; Nancy Taylor Babes—Washington Fine Properties; MRP Realty; EagleBank; EastBanc Technologies; Georgetown University Hospital; Gregg Busch—First Savings Mortgage; John and Colleen Girouard—Capital Asset Management; Mimsy and Rusty Lindner—Colonial Parking; M.C. Dean, Inc.; PNC Bank; Securitas Security Services USA; Clyde’s Restaurant Group; Julia Diaz-Asper at TTR Sotheby’s International Realty; Georgetown Business Association; The Georgetown Current; The Georgetown Dish; The Georgetowner; Washington Fine Properties; Jean Smith at ReMax.

Photos can be found on several media sites including:
http://www.thegeorgetowndish.com/thescene/ready-set-gala-russia-love#comment-1758,
http://www.revamp.com/story.php?StoryID=685,
http://snarkinfested.com/,
http://georgetown.patch.com/articles/groovin-georgetown-gala,

—Elizabeth Maloy
It’s that Time of Year Again

They are lime green, have a bumpy surface like the human brain, are sometimes mistaken (from a distance) for a tennis ball—and the grapefruit-size globes are starting their annual drop all over Georgetown. These curiosities are called many names: Osage oranges, Bois d’Arc, or hedge apples. You don’t want to eat them (they apparently contain hydrochloric acid—not good!), but you may very well want to use them as a seasonal display heaped in a bowl.

Osage-orange trees can be found in Montrose Park, in Volta Park and elsewhere, and they have naturalized around the United States, but they are native to parts of Texas, Arkansas and Oklahoma, in the homeland of the Osage Indians, hence one of the tree’s names. Another of its names, Bois d’Arc, or bow-wood, derives from the use of the wood by some Native Americans in bow-making. The wood also excels when used as tool handles. The hedge-apple name comes from the windbreaks planted by Midwestern farmers to hem in their crops and animals. The thorny trees form practically impenetrable hedges when planted close together.

One of the stories surrounding Osage oranges seems to be true: in March 1804, explorer Meriwether Lewis sent slips and clippings from the thorny tree back to President Jefferson as a curiosity (in his journals, Lewis called it an Osage apple tree). Jefferson, ever the enthusiastic planter, tried and failed to keep them going. But, like wine grapes, which also failed for Jefferson but later thrived in this region, the Osage-orange tree has made a home here.

Folk wisdom advises setting the large globes around the basement and in cupboards to get rid of camel crickets and spiders, but such experiments are likely to be disappointing, although some research conducted by the Department of Agriculture confirms the slightly repellent property of the Osage orange’s essential oil on mosquitoes.

Botanists point out that birds don’t feed on these large, seed-filled fruit, surmising that the animals that fed on them have long been extinct. So you’re not depriving any creatures if you decide that a few of these otherworldly-looking giants might look better on your mantelpiece than on the ground in Montrose Park.

—Nancy McKeon

The kind of excitement we don’t like on our corner: An armed truck delivering money to the BB+T bank directly below the CAG office at Wisconsin and O Street was robbed by masked men in broad daylight.
Additional Donors to the CAG Public Safety Program
(from June 18, 2010 through October 27, 2010)

Thanks to the generosity of the following people, CAG has raised over two-thirds of the required revenue for the 2010 Public Safety Program. We urge everyone else to contribute soon. All donations are tax deductible.

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Georgetown Sparkles on Cleanup Day

Saturday October 23, the Citizens Association of Georgetown (CAG) and Georgetown University teamed up to clean up. It was the annual neighborhood event to spruce up parks, sidewalks, and tree boxes. Students and neighbors alike swept, weeded and mulched and then returned to Volta Park for a barbecue with the Georgetown University Grilling Society.

From left, Beautification Committee Co-Chair Dave Dunning, Bill Skelsey, Betsy Cooley, Co-Chair Patrick Clawson, Brenda Moorman, Carla Bicks, Tom Birch, Sydney Lawrence and (in front) Freddie Skelsey

Thompson with Westsiders Milton and Anne Thompson—cleanup day stalwarts

GU students go to work at cleanup day
Ray Danieli and Jeff Jones hauled the trash
Clean up tools at the ready
Over 140 Georgetowners attended CAG’s October 25 reception at the newly renovated Georgetown public library. Closed three and a half years ago after a devastating fire, the library has finally opened—with style! The restored building has a unique blend of modern and historic architecture with lots of ambient light—perfect for reading during the daylight hours. Guests were free to tour through the many levels of the building, including the stunning innovative third floor that houses the Peabody Collection and Reading Room. Many guests congregated on the new outdoor reading terrace overlooking Book Hill Park to catch the sunset. TD Bank provided refreshments for the occasion.

Brad Gray, CAG board member and Co-President of the Friends of the Georgetown Library, welcomed neighbors and introduced the board members and staff from the DC Public Library. Library board member Richard Levy, a Georgetown native and businessman, spoke of how little the library had changed since he was a child, until the unfortunate fire forced the renovation and upgrade. The assembled crowd applauded Director of Library Services Nancy Davenport, who was instrumental in calling in the freezer trucks to immediately preserve—and ultimately save—water-damaged books and historic papers.

Chris Wright, the renovation project manager, described how they searched for and found the original weather vane in the ashes (one of the few things they didn’t have the original drawing of) enabling an accurate reproduction for the cupola. And how they were able to increase the library square footage significantly within the original historic footprint of the 1932 building. Although he was onsite almost everyday for three years, he credited the successful design of the $17.9 million library renovation to the District-based firm Martinez & Johnson Architects in partnership with Hoshide Williams. Smoot Construction managed the project. Tracy Sumler, branch manager, was also on hand to talk with neighbors.

“This is a dream come true,” Jerry McCoy, the archivist in the Peabody Room, said of the library’s opening. McCoy maintains many detailed files on houses in Georgetown and asked residents to give him more information about their houses—photos, news clippings and other documents are welcome.

Brad Gray announced that the Friends of the Library has officially become part of CAG and will be increasingly active now that the library is back in service. Marcia Carter, former owner of Booked Up and long time volunteer with The Friends of the Georgetown Library, presented two antique and rare books to the Peabody Room. The American Gardner and Agricultural Essays are both early Georgetown imprints and were acquired by the Friends from Bartleby’s Books in Georgetown.

—Betsy Cooley
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Quality Homeownership Deserves Quality Service
The Duke Ellington Field (on the north side of Reservoir Road across from GU Hospital) is in the process of a large-scale landscaping and renovation project. Lots of old growth weed trees have been removed and Casey Trees is donating 30 trees to the Ellington Field and Gardens project. And The Friends of Ellington Field & Gardens, a neighborhood group spearheading the project, need all types of volunteers to help with the planting on Saturday morning, November 6, beginning at 8:45. There is a job for everyone from greeting and registering to digging and watering. Learn the right way to plant and maintain trees. And, enjoy a free breakfast and lunch while you are at it. The event is rain or shine. IMPORTANT: Please email them at ellington@burleith.org to let them know you are coming. Those under 18 need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Enter Ellington Field at 38th and R Streets NW.
Our Sixth Year as Proud Underwriter of CAG's Public Safety Program

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November Community Events and Calendar

Fri. Nov. 5  Step Up + Get Down; Hyde-Addison Elementary School auction and dance party fundraiser sponsored by the Parent Teacher Association; 7-10pm; Four Seasons, 2800 Pennsylvania Avenue; $50 for entry, cash for cocktails; www.hydeaddison.org.

Sat. Nov. 6  Neighborhood Tree Planting in Burleith; meet at 8:45am at the 38th and R Street gates; please email ellington@burleith.org to register; see p. 12 for details.

Sat. Nov. 6  Georgetown Girl Scout Day; 10-12 at Dumbarton House, 1-3pm at Tudor Place; first annual Girl Scout Day, become history and nature detective during interactive tours of historic houses; full day $20 per scout and $6 per adult, half day $10 per scout and $3 per adult; to register call 965-0400 x110 or email education@tudorplace.org.

Tues. Nov. 9  Festive Holiday Floral Designs; 7pm; workshop with designer Rance Goff on innovative centerpiece and home décor ideas; members $10, nonmembers $15; to register call 965-0400 x110 or email education@tudorplace.org.

Tues. Nov. 16  Dumbarton House Friday Morning Music Club Chamber Music Concert; 12-1pm; Belle Vue Room, Dumbarton House, 2715 Q Street; free; reservations suggested, email rsvp@DumbartonHouse.org or call 337-2288.

Mon. Nov. 22  CAG Meeting: Honing in on Zoning; join CAG Historic Preservation Committee to learn about the critical issues of DC's Zoning Rewrite and its influence on Georgetown; Letelier Theater, 3251 Prospect Street, Upper Courtyard; reception 7pm, program 7:30pm.


Sat. Dec. 11  St. John's Episcopal Church Annual Greens Sale; 10-3; holiday greens, wreaths, gifts, decorations, and baked goods; 3240 O Street, Blake Hall; call 338-1796 or visit www.stjohnsgeorgetown.org.