



Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

COMMUNICATOR

Bi-Monthly Publication of the Communications Committee

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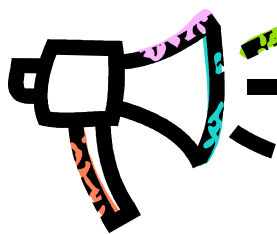
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GREENBELTERS SPEAK OUT ON THE KOJO NNAMDI SHOW

BY ANNA SOCRATES

On April 21, Greenbelt was the star of "Kojo in Your Community," part of *The Kojo Nnamdi Show*, a lively program of news, political issues and social trends that airs weekdays on WAMU 88.5 FM American University radio. The event, was broadcast from the Community Center to a full house of Greenbelters and others from the community on who spoke up and spoke out.

The first hour explored Greenbelt's creation, the federal government's New Deal-era experiment in building a "healthy" livable community for moderate-income residents. Present-day GHI members, beneficiaries of that legacy, praised our walkability, forest preserves and hiking trails, common green spaces, diverse housing, cooperative ownership, and civic-mindedness. Shirley Middleton described reading about GHI in *Mother Jones* and informing her husband that "we're moving here" – from Austin, Texas. Sylvia Lewis recalled how protected pathways gave her young children a gift no money could buy – independence.



But, Kojo asked, has Greenbelt lived up to its promise? The conversation u-turned to our growing pains and the city's bisection by major highways into isolated and disparate neighborhoods – Old Greenbelt, Greenbelt East, and Greenbelt West – a disconnect exacerbated by racial and economic divisions. Transit, a possible key to reconnection, faces service cuts and fare hikes dictated by Metro's budget woes and the state's misplaced priorities.

More importantly, residents of the city's newer areas countered the GHI experience. Eulalie Lucas of Greenbelt East, vice chair of the Greenbelt Community Foundation and one of the evening's "facilitators," suggested that although Greenbelt has come a long way [from its whites-only founding] and racism isn't overt, the issue is still here – unspoken, but ever present. Other residents added that while the city's geography doesn't necessarily facilitate civic engagement, residents in Greenbelt East and West have much talent and energy to offer. One man, a recent Philadelphia transplant, asked, "what about involving our young people?" Greenbelt West resident Brian Gibbons, another "facilitator," warned of becoming blinded by our founding myth. And Fred Tutman, CEO of Patuxent Riverkeepers, addressed the need for a social justice component in our environmental activism.

IDENTITY THEFT is a serious crime.

The Federal Trade Commission provided an excellent brochure on ways to fight back against identity theft, which we have included for all GHI members with this issue. Please keep it with your household's important papers. Be sure to visit www.ftc.gov/idtheft for other publications they offer.

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MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEES TEAM UP FOR THE WEB

BY EILEEN BOSWELL

In January, the Marketing and Communications Committees held a joint meeting to discuss redeveloping GHI's websites. GHI currently has two sites: one at www.ghi.coop that offers information and resources for current members, and one at www.greenbelthomes.net that caters primarily to prospective members. As a result of the joint meeting, the content of both sites will be combined into one redeveloped site, and representatives from both committees as well as additional volunteers formed the GHI Web Workgroup.

The workgroup acts under the direction of the GHI Board of Directors. The group's goal is to make it easier for members and prospective members to find GHI information on its website by improving ease of navigation, structure, and design. The group has been meeting since February to develop a timeline and specifications for the new site in preparation for selecting a design contractor. Steps include taking a comprehensive inventory of all content and functionality on the current sites; administering a survey to gain input on users' priorities for the site (see Web Survey Results in box at right); developing a technical requirements document; selecting a content management system; and planning a series of usability and accessibility checks to be completed before the new site goes live. The target date for unveiling the new site is January 2011.

The current workgroup members are Jo-Anne Fournier, Ryan McClelland, Eileen Boswell, Cynthia Newcomer, Tom Jones, and Errol Mazursky. Christine Gyemfi is staff liaison. The group meets approximately every two weeks and welcomes more volunteers. For more information, please email cgyemfi@greenbelthomes.net

Web Survey Results

Thanks to all 154 people who took the GHI Web Survey and ranked priorities for the most important content on the new site that is being planned by a volunteer workgroup. People were asked to specify the top 5 items they wanted to see on GHI's website, and to rank their importance by assigning each a number from 1 to 5 (the highest rank). A 5 was counted in the results as five "votes," a four ranking as four, etc. Here are the top ten items:

1. GHI member rules (Member Handbook) (170)
2. Alerts on important issues from GHI (158)
3. Calendar of meetings and activities (155)
4. Submission of a maintenance request online (151)
5. Use of online form to ask questions of GHI staff (119)
6. Staff contact information (87)
7. Services provided by GHI (81)
8. Check status of a maintenance request (76)
9. Chart of member vs. GHI vs. city of Greenbelt responsibilities (62)
10. Homes currently on the market (61)

Checking the status of a maintenance request (item # 8) is not feasible at this time, due to

-continued on page 6

BOARD MEETING AND HIGHLIGHTS

The GHI Board meetings are held in the Board Room of the GHI Administration Building. Meetings are usually held twice a month on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm, except during the summer when meetings are held once a month. Please check the calendar on page 8 or the GHI website for details. With the exception of executive sessions, all meetings are open to the membership.

During March and April 2010, the Board took the following actions:

Policies

- Disapproved rules change to allow for security bars on windows and entry doors of GHI homes (Sections X.N.2 and X.N.3 of Members' Handbook). See insert with this issue.
- Approved rules change regarding insulation in GHI homes (Section X.D.4 of the Member's Handbook). See insert with this issue.

Committee Reports, Referrals and Expenditures

- Approved a \$1 million loan to Greenbelt Development Corporation for the purchase of the Lawrence Apartments, with a return rate to GHI of 6.5 percent (See article on page 7).
- Authorized the hiring of Chesapeake Financial Advisors to evaluate GHI's investment policy for a flat \$500 fee.
- Authorized up to \$50,000 to perform data collection proposed by the Buildings Committee for the first phase of a pilot project in connection with GHI's energy efficiency upgrade.
- Referred the study of vinyl siding options for frame and block homes to the Architectural Review Committee as part of the energy efficiency upgrade pilot project.

Exceptions to Regulations

- Approved removal of a tree at 2C Northway Road.
- Allowed a satellite dish at 8A Crescent Road to remain until October 2010 or until FIOS becomes available, whichever is earlier.
- Approved a two-year sublease at 18L Ridge Road without prior lender approval.

New Contracts Entered Into

- Slate roof replacement (Hearn Insulation & Improvement Company, \$457,488).
- Purchase of two used pick-up trucks not to exceed \$12,141 each, or one new pick-up truck at a cost not to exceed \$17,500 (CarMax).
- Sidewalk Repairs at 45 sites (Choice Concrete Construction, \$28,669).

Other Items

- Recommended changes to the bylaws as proposed by the N&E Committee for ratification by the membership at the 2010 annual meeting.
- Approved yard plats at 1 and 2 Northway.
- Approved door prizes totaling \$500 for the Annual Meeting.
- Approved Monument Bank as a recognized lender of share loan financing.
- Established a snow removal task force.
- Approved 26 new memberships.



Have an idea for a story?
Send GHI your story ideas. See page 8 for submission information.

BZZZZ! (THEY'RE BACK!)

BY MATT BERRES

Summer is here and so are the bugs! One especially unfriendly pest is the Asian tiger mosquito. This aggressive mosquito that bites during the day, named for its black and white striped legs, severely affects our quality of life in summer and fall.



Unlike other mosquitoes, the Asian tiger breeds *only* in contained areas of water where it can lay its eggs on nonporous surfaces such as plastic, rubber, glass, metal, concrete, or wood. It does *not* breed in creeks, puddles, or marshes. Once hatched, all mosquitoes rarely fly more than a hundred yards from their birthplace. If you have mosquitoes, they are breeding nearby, likely even in your yard.

The most effective means of controlling this pest is to check your yard for standing water. Any container – no matter how small – that can hold water for a week can provide a breeding area for hundreds of tiger mosquitoes. Please check your yard for water-holding containers such as:

- Flower pots, particularly the saucers under pots
- Tarps where water can puddle
- Bird baths
- Children's toys and kiddie pools
- Trash cans, buckets, watering cans, tires, and wheelbarrows
- Broken bamboo or tree stumps with holes (these can be filled with sand)

Empty and store, or rinse out, these containers weekly. If you take a summer vacation, ask a neighbor to empty containers in your absence. Place Mosquito Dunks® or mosquito-eating fish in back yard ponds. (Note: Dunks will prevent the Asian tiger species from hatching, but are not effective against all breeds of mosquitoes.) These simple efforts can make a big difference in our yards – and our enjoyment of summer!

SCOOP THE POOP AND HELP THE PLANET!

BY CAM MCQUEEN, COMPANION ANIMAL COMMITTEE

With the advent of summer, more members will be spending time outdoors. This is also the time of year when children are more active outdoors and likely to be playing in common areas. So please remember to carry something with you on your walks to clean up after your dog.

You can reuse plastic bags that newspapers are delivered in. Grocery bags work, too. You can also buy bags in rolls small enough to keep in your pocket. (Some people even reuse coffee cups with lids for this purpose). But the best (and most environmentally conscientious) solution is the biodegradable bag. Animal waste degrades quickly, whereas plastic bags take decades.



Most animal supply stores now carry bags specially designed for this purpose, and they're available on the Internet as well.

It's easy to use a bag. Simply turn the bag inside out and place your hand inside the *reversed* bag. Then use the bag like a glove to pick up the waste without soiling your hands. Invert the bag again so it encloses the waste as you remove it from your hand, and seal it with a knot before disposing it in a trash receptacle. If your dog tends to defecate at the same time during a walk, you can plan your walk to be near a trash receptacle at that time.

As a GHI member you are required to clean up your companion animal's waste wherever it is deposited. You are also responsible for daily removal of animal waste in your own yard. (These rules apply to both dogs and cats. And keep in mind, both GHI rules and County law forbid letting cats roam freely outdoors).

Animal waste is not just unpleasant to smell and unhealthy to touch. Rainfall can wash it into area waterways, contaminating them with disease-causing organisms. Help save the bay and be a good neighbor--remember to Scoop the Poop!

2010 ANNUAL MEETING WRAP-UP

BY: JO-ANNE FOURNIER AND SYLVIA LEWIS

Over 200 memberships were represented at GHI's Annual Membership Meeting on May 19, one of the largest turnouts in recent years.

President Suzette Agans discussed the embezzlement of \$35,943 by a former staff member. She explained what had happened and outlined steps taken to see the problem does not happen again. Insurance covered all but \$5,000 of the loss.

Irv Wartell was elected to the Board of Directors, as were incumbents Ed James, Diana McFadden, and David Morse. Outgoing board member Errol Mazurki was presented with a plaque in appreciation of his service.

Frank DeBernardo, Robin Everly, Kathleen Gallagher, and Ann Landry Lombardi were elected to the Nominations and Elections Committee. Special thanks were expressed to Kathleen and outgoing N&E members Ginny Jones and Marat Moore for their year-long effort preparing for the Annual Meeting. Chuck Hess and Dianne Wilkerson (incumbent) were elected to the Audit Committee.



Three proposed amendments to the Bylaws, all concerning GHI elections, were introduced. The amendment that generated the most discussion required that no more than one person in a jointly held membership could run for or hold elective office at the same time. Ultimately, it was tabled until the next annual meeting. The same fate met the amendment changing the deadline for the N&E Committee to turn in its list of candidates prior to Annual Meetings. The third amendment was approved. It required that bylaws amendments changing membership meeting procedures, election procedures, or terms of elective offices take effect only after the adjournment of the meeting at which they were approved.

Jim Cohen, chair of the Buildings Committee, reported on progress in developing recommendations for a GHI-wide community energy efficiency upgrade. The committee is also working on recommendations for a pilot program to evaluate the performance of measures under consideration for the upgrade. There is as yet no estimate of costs or the timing of the pilot program's implementation. (To learn more about the project visit the GHI website at <http://ghi.coop/bldgs/communityupgrade05192010.doc>.)

Peter Blank, co-chair of the Woodlands Committee, expressed concern about free-roaming cats. In addition, member Tom Jones questioned variances in certain 2009 budget figures. Treasurer Sylvia Lewis responded that explanations would be provided to the membership.

John Henry Jones drew numbers from a hat for the door prizes of \$100 off a month's co-op fees and gift certificates to the Co-op grocery store and New Deal Cafe. See the list of winners on page 8.

Afterwards, members visited committee booths of Woodlands, Member and Community Relations, Buildings, Companion Animal, Communications, and the Web Workgroup to learn about their activities.

2010/2011 GHI Board



Seated: Tokey Boswell, V.P., Ed James, Secretary, Suzette Agans, President, Sylvia Lewis, Treasurer

Standing: Irwin Wartell, Ed Hickey, Diana McFadden, David Morse, Patricia Novinski and General Manager, Gretchen Overdurff

Greenbelters Speak Out *Continued from Page 1*

My takeaway from the evening: our challenge is to use the best from our past to create a better future. Perhaps Kojo's greatest gift is to spark an ongoing conversation among all residents about our city's direction. Out of that, something remarkable – to rival our unique beginning – may come.

Editor's note: The Greenbelt broadcast is available for listening on the WAMU website:

<http://thekojonnamdishow.org/shows/2010-04-21/kojo-your-community-greenbelt>.

Did you know?

You met purchasing agent Melvin Williams in the last issue of the *Communicator*.

Melvin wants you to know that GHI membership has its privileges. The following items from the GHI Warehouse are available to members:

Free

- Smoke detectors
- DampRid® (save empty container for refills)
- White exterior paint
- Green exterior paint
- Chestnut brown exterior paint
- Medium grey exterior paint
- Straw

For Loan

- Pole extension brush
- Garden weasel (a tool for loosening soil)
- Salt/seed spreader
- Ladder (requires a form for you to fill out from the Maintenance Department)

For Purchase

Grass seed (\$2 per bag)

Web survey

continued from page 2

Programming complexity and staff time required to maintain it. However, we are working to implement the other new items, including #5, #7, and #9. If you have questions or expertise to share with the volunteer workgroup, please contact Errol Mazursky, the Web Work Group Chair, at eflynn23@yahoo.com.

REMINDER TO MEMBERS: GHI PARKING POLICY

Visitor spaces are to be rotated among members living in the court and their guests. GHI enforces reserved parking spaces at the request of members. Any abuse of parking privileges by a member or members should be brought to the attention of the General Manager, who has authority to have the vehicles of the offending members towed at their risk and expense.



GENERAL PARKING REGULATIONS

- Parking will be allowed only in designated parking spaces.
- Only operative and currently licensed motor vehicles are allowed in parking spaces and ramps to garages. Inoperable vehicles, or boats, trailers, and campers may not be parked anywhere on GHI-owned property, except where specifically designated.
- No vehicles, including trailers, campers, and boats may be parked in yards or open spaces owned by GHI. The boat and trailer park is available for storage of such vehicles and boats. However, members may have one hand-carriable watercraft in their yards when adequately screened.

Bluebird Volunteers Needed!

The Woodlands Committee has built and installed five bluebird houses around the community. The bird boxes are already attracting new feathered friends. to help monitor the boxes throughout the year. Contact Matt Berres at mberres@ghi.coop for details.

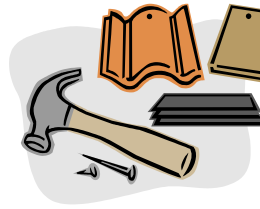


LAWRENCE APARTMENTS PURCHASE UPDATE

In April GHI entered into a contract to purchase the Lawrence Apartments on Crescent Road across from Greenbelt Library. Staff has just completed the study period, during which a thorough review of the property and pertinent documents was conducted. Unfortunately, a number of serious concerns came up that could not be resolved at this time. The purpose of this purchase was to acquire an asset that would benefit members similarly to Greenbelt Development Corporation's (a GHI-owned subsidiary) holdings of Parkway Apartments. The Board decided to terminate the purchase contract upon the expiration of the due diligence period. The Board hopes to find other opportunities to acquire assets in the future.



COMPLETION OF REPAIRS OF SNOW-DAMAGED ROOFS/GUTTERS



The February snow storms damaged copper gutters and slate tiles on over 300 building units. Subsequently, GHI hired RRH Associates to undertake the necessary repairs at a cost of \$104,000. Work began in mid-April and was completed during the first week of June. GHI will recover the entire cost of the repairs from our insurance company after the \$5,000 deductible charge is met. Staff appreciate your patience with the process of completing the repairs.

And the winners are...

The members of 2 Court Eastway were selected as winners of the 2009 Community Beautification "Best Court" Award. GHI Staff presented the court with a \$100 Behnke Nursery Gift Certificate that they will use to buy flowering trees for their court's common area.



Member and Community Relations Committee Announcement

The Spring House and Garden Tour, normally held in June, was cancelled and may be rescheduled in the fall. Further information will be provided as it is available.

It's a Date: July/August 2010

Jul 6	Pre-Purchase Orientation	7:15 pm
Jul 12	Member Activities Committee	7:00 pm
Jul 14	Architectural Review Committee	7:30 pm
Jul 15	Board Meeting	7:30 pm
Jul 19	Communications Committee	7:00 pm
Jul 20	Yard Line Committee	8:30 am
Jul 21	Woodlands Committee	7:00 pm
Jul 22	Investment Committee Finance Committee	6:45 pm 7:30 pm
Jul 28	Buildings Committee Companion Animal Committee	7:00 pm 7:30 pm
Aug 3	Member Activities Committee	7:00 pm
Aug 10	Yard Line Committee	8:30 am
Aug 11	Architectural Review Committee	7:30 pm
Aug 16	Communications Committee	7:00 pm
Aug 18	Woodlands Committee	7:00 pm
Aug 19	Board Meeting	7:30 pm
Aug 22	Investment Committee Finance Committee	6:45 pm 7:30 pm
Aug 25	Buildings Committee Companion Animal Committee	7:00 pm 7:30 pm
Aug 31	Yard Line Committee	8:30 am

2010 GHI Maintenance Schedule

Jan-Sep	Verizon FiOS installation
May-Sep	Community beautification inspections
May-Aug	Trim painting
May-Aug	Replace frame home porches
Jun-Sep	Slate roofs, copper gutters and downspouts
Jun-Jul	Addition roof repairs
Jun-Jul	Attached garage roof repairs
Jul-Aug	Underground Utility Repairs
Jul-Sep	Parking lot repairs
Sept-Oct	GDC garage door replacement
Oct-Nov	Fall concrete repairs
Nov-Dec	Fall gutter cleaning
2011	
(Tentative)	WSSC water line replacement
May-Jun	Spring gutter cleaning
May-Jun	Spring concrete repairs

Annual Meeting Door Prize Winners

\$100 off June Co-op Fee

Claude Aubert and Catherine Hall, Ridge Road, and Michael Hartman, Gardenway.

\$25 Gift Certificates to Co-op Grocery Store or New Deal Café

Amy Alford, Doris Kirschbaum, Michael Reinsel, Daniel Kahn, Richard Menis and Jane Jaworski Menis, Karen Kilborn, Ridge Road; Beverly Dzduduch, Frank DeBernardo, Laurel Hill.

COMMUNICATOR SUBMISSIONS

Please submit information for the next issue to Brenda Lewis at blewis@greenbelthomes.net (do not submit to individual committee members).

July 20 is the due date for articles for the September/October 2010 issue.

Maintenance Department Notice:

Maintenance reception desk is **CLOSED** for lunch between noon and 1 pm daily.

You can reach the main front desk reception for emergency service during that time.



Handbook Inserts

Included with this newsletter are recent changes to the rules and regulations for your Members' Handbook. Changes to Section X.D.4 (insulation) brings GHI rules in compliance with the local law and building code. Changes to Sections X.N.2 and X.N.3 prohibits the installation of security bars on windows and entry or storm doors.

Replace current page 59-90/60-05 with new revised page 59-10/60-05.

Replace page 63ki-07/63l-07 with new page 63k-10/63l-10.