

# WEST END CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

September 2022



## YOU ARE INVITED!

To the West End Citizens Association

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, October 13, 2022

7:00 PM at Rockville Presbyterian Church and Zoom\*

### ***West End Design Guidelines Information Session***

*Survey Results and Initial Guidelines Draft*

Presented by

**City of Rockville:**

John Foreman, Development Services Manager, Community Planning and Development

**West End Citizens Association:**

Margaret Wagner and Noreen Bryan, Co-Chairs, West End Design Guidelines Committee

\*Zoom meeting link posted at <https://www.westendrockvillemd.org/>

*Any resident of the West End who is over 18 years of age is a member of the West End Citizens Association (WECA). If this newsletter was delivered to your door, YOU ARE A MEMBER OF WECA.*

## WECA FallFest

West End Community Gathering

Saturday, October 15 – Noon - 3PM – Monument Park

**Hamburgers, Hotdogs & Fixings Provided**

**Kids' Entertainment: Face painting**

Bring a side dish, chips, or dessert to share and a beverage of your choice.

Bathroom facilities will be available.

Parking on Monument, S. Van Buren, and Dale.

## West End Citizens Association

For more information, contact

Brian Shipley, President

[shipley.brian@gmail.com](mailto:shipley.brian@gmail.com)

Interested in getting more involved?  
Consider being a Block Captain! Contact  
Jane Pontius [jane.m.pontius@gmail.com](mailto:jane.m.pontius@gmail.com)

### **Join the WECA Listserv!**

Keep up with news related to the West  
End and join our email list. Use the QR  
code to sign up or email

[weca.outreach@gmail.com](mailto:weca.outreach@gmail.com)!



This newsletter was delivered by \_\_\_\_\_, your WECA Block Captain.

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

-Brian Shipley  
shipley.brian@gmail.com



What a wonderful time of the year as we transition into enjoying Fall flowers, crisp mornings and trees that provide an ever-changing landscape of colors. As you are out and about in the neighborhoods, please take the time to welcome new neighbors to the community, offer strangers a simple hello, and check in on those old friends you have not seen in a while. Let's each do our part to promote and grow a strong sense of community in the West End!

WECA's most significant ongoing effort continues to be the development of Design Guidelines to address potential adverse impacts of new construction on neighboring properties and preserve the character of the neighborhood. For the past year, a committee made up of West End residents has worked with the City to draft

West End guidelines. Their accomplishments will be presented at the **WECA General Membership Meeting, Thursday, October 13 at 7 PM at the Rockville Presbyterian Church**, where we will present the results of the Design Guidelines survey and present initial draft Design Guidelines for the West End (see Design Guidelines article for more details). Please join us and provide your feedback.

To support a sense of community, WECA is hosting a **FallFest on Saturday, October 15, from 12 to 3 PM at Monument Park**. Come join us for an afternoon of fun, food, and friendship. WECA will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, and fixings and activities for the kids! Bring a side dish and a chair and meet us in the picnic area next to the playground at Monument Park. Parking is available on Monument and South Van Buren Streets and Dale Drive.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the General Membership meeting and the FallFest!

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## DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Neighborhood Plan adopted last year into the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan recommends developing design guidelines to address potential adverse impacts of new construction on neighboring properties and preserving the character of the neighborhood. Recent West End Citizens Association newsletters and emails have covered the startup stages of the West End Design Guidelines initiative. Here is our progress update:

### Neighborhood Design Guidelines Survey

A survey was circulated to the West End community in the May 2022 West End Citizens Association newsletter, community emails, and a City of Rockville mailing to West End households. Thank you to all neighbors who completed the survey! Responses corroborated the results of the 2016 survey for the Neighborhood Plan, and showed that neighbors:

- Support allowing new construction while minimizing its impact on neighbors (e.g., stormwater runoff, solar access)
- Want to preserve the park-like quality of the neighborhood and its balance of open space to buildings
- Value trees and green space in front and back yards

Come and hear more about the views of your neighbors at the WECA October General Meeting.

### Drafting the Guidelines

The West End Design Guidelines committee, which formed last year after several rounds of outreach to the neighborhood, has met throughout 2022 to draft West End Design Guidelines. The drafting process uses the Neighborhood Plan and the feedback from the 2022 neighborhood survey as primary sources. The group reviews the East Rockville Design Guidelines document (which was approved by the Mayor and Council in 2021) as a precedent for format, updating it for West End neighborhood concerns and feedback. The

drafted guidelines are reviewed by the City's Department of Community Planning and Development Services, and by the architectural and landscape architectural consultants supporting the project.

### Applicability

The aim of Design Guidelines is not to suppress development or change existing structures, but to ensure that newly built homes or additions contribute positively to the character and environmental health of the neighborhood, and to promote complementary and context-sensitive development between new and existing structures while also allowing creative design.

### Opportunities for Feedback

In addition to the neighborhood survey, we are conducting ongoing sessions for West End residents to provide feedback and ask questions.

- Two Public Outreach Sessions were held in August and September. Thank you to all who participated!
- The Fall General WECA Meeting on October 13 at 7 p.m. will include a Community Information Session on the Design Guidelines. We will share the neighborhood survey responses and draft Design Guidelines for comment and questions.
- An additional Public Open House will be held in December or January, where updated draft Guidelines will be presented for comment.
- Residents can visit the City of Rockville's West End Design Guidelines website at [engagerockville.com/west-end](http://engagerockville.com/west-end) to see more information about the project and upcoming meetings, provide feedback, and link to additional resources.

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## WEST ROCKVILLE CONNECTS VILLAGE DEVELOPING RAPIDLY

It has been just under a year since the first informational West Rockville village meeting occurred. Since that time, the leadership of one of Rockville’s newest villages is busy recruiting, planning, and strategizing the path forward.

Villages are grassroots, neighbor-governed support organizations that help people of all ages thrive in their communities. Villages offer a variety of services ranging from transportation to errands and social connectedness opportunities. Each village is unique and reflective of the ethos of the community they serve. Although there have been other attempts to form a functioning village in West Rockville, this new group has broadened the service area to include the neighborhoods of West End, Woodley Gardens, College Gardens, Plymouth Woods. Within the West End, the villages will reach out to embedded neighborhoods including

Haiti and Rose Hill Falls. So far, there has been a coffee meeting at the Swim & Fitness Center, a meet & greet at Woodley Gardens Park, National Night Out campaigns and many planning meetings. Be sure to stay tuned for some upcoming events “pop-up” events in the works!

Rockville villages have been forming for many years. Today, King Farm has a fully operational village. Other villages are being formed across the city. It is important to note that the city neither dictates nor governs villages. They are independent entities. The Villages Facilitator, Trish Evans, offers resources and support of all types to assist in the development phases.

**Complete the community questionnaire to help identify needs and resources!**

A mail-in survey is on the opposite page, on online version is at

<https://srvy.pro/2FT8MVP/> or

scan the QR code. For more information, contact: [tevans@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:tevans@rockvillemd.gov), 240-907-9133, or [wrcvillage@gmail.com](mailto:wrcvillage@gmail.com).



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# West Rockville Connects Village Survey

(<https://srvy.pro/2FT8MVP/>)

A group of volunteers is organizing a village to give Neighbor-to-Neighbor support for all ages. We are asking about activities and services neighbors think might be needed and what kinds of volunteer activities they might be willing to provide (given privacy, confidentiality, and liability protections).

**Mail survey to:**  
Rockville Senior Center, Attn: Trish Evans  
1150 Carnation Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850

**1) What do you think are important activities of a village? (choose all that apply):**

- Welcome new neighbors (e.g., share a cookie welcome plate)
- Help with outside chores
- Help with household chores
- Pick up groceries, prescriptions, supplies
- Provide transportation to activities or appointments
- Provide social contact (e.g., daily check-in calls)
- Help with emergencies (e.g., damage from fire, water main break, etc.)
- Hold community events (e.g., get to know your neighbor party)
- Provide network for small group activities (e.g., walking club)
- Share information about local services and special events
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**2) Do you think you would make use of any of the listed activities?**

- Yes  No  Don't Know

**3) Are you interested and willing to volunteer for activities for the village?**

- Yes  No  Don't Know

**4) What section of West Rockville do you live in?**

- College Gardens
- Haiti
- Plymouth Woods
- Regents Square condos, Woodley Gardens coop
- Welsh Park area (Nelson Street, College Square)
- West End (including Rose Hill Falls)
- Woodley Gardens
- Woodley Gardens West
- Other, please specify nearest intersection: \_\_\_\_\_

**5) How many people live in your home? (Include yourself) \_\_\_\_\_**

**6) What age groups live in your home? (Check all that apply)**

- Under 5 years old
- 5-12 years old
- 13-18 years old
- 19-24 years old
- 25-54 years old
- 55-70 years old
- Over 70 years old

**7) Are you interested and willing to volunteer for any leadership activity?**

- Yes  No  Depends on the Activity

**8) Would you be willing and interested in volunteering for any other activity? Specify: \_\_\_\_\_**

**9) Please provide other comments: \_\_\_\_\_**

**10) Provide your contact information (name, phone number, email address) \_\_\_\_\_**

**11) Preferred method of contact: \_\_\_ Email \_\_\_ Phone**

Have questions, want to volunteer? - Contact [wrcvillage@gmail.com](mailto:wrcvillage@gmail.com) or call 240-314-8807.  
Information collected will only be used for Rockville Villages and will not be used for any other purposes.

## Radon: Be Safe, Test Your Home

Radon is a radioactive gas that can cause lung cancer. It naturally exists in the atmosphere but can become trapped indoors. To protect yourself and your family, it is important to **test your house for radon and mitigate the problem if radon levels are high.**

Radon is the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers in the United States and can exacerbate lung cancer in smokers. The longer the duration of exposure, the greater the risk.

Radon gas is the product of uranium decomposing in the ground soil. This is a natural, ongoing process. The gas is detectable only through testing; it is silent, odorless, invisible to us, and cannot be felt. It permeates your house by leaking through crevices and cracks. The Montgomery County website has information, including maps, videos, and illustrations at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/air/radon.html>.

**High levels of radon have been found in homes in Rockville** but mitigation can reduce the level of radon significantly. The City of Rockville agreed to develop an awareness campaign and published "Rockville Urges Radon Awareness for Homeowners" in *Rockville Reports*, May/June 2022). Visit the city's designated webpage:

<https://www.rockvillemd.gov/2418/Radon>. The mayor and council adopted energy disclosure and radon laws. The Rockville Housing Enterprises, the city's public housing agency, secured \$157,870 to support radon testing and mitigation demonstrations (see *Rockville Reports*, September 2022 issue).

Radon test kits are available in hardware stores and online from \$20 to \$100 and Rockville's radon webpage includes a link to order a \$3 test kit. It is best to test at a time of the year when your house has the least amount of ventilation, when windows are kept shut. Be safe, test your house for radon!

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## Neighborhood Items of Interest

**Road Diets:** The City’s plans to implement “Road Diets” is out for bid and includes reducing traffic lanes along North Washington Street and Middle Lane to a single lane in both directions and adds bike lanes and parallel parking spaces. The goal is to make these streets more business-friendly and safer/accessible to walkers and cyclists. We received the following update from the City regarding our concerns expressed last Spring:

**Vehicular Travel** WECA raised parallel parking as a potential contributor to congestion as traffic will have to wait for cars to maneuver into and out of spaces. City’s Response: “City staff has asked the consultant to review the proposed parking spaces and minimize potential operational and safety impacts related to parking vehicles. Some on-street parking spaces might be eliminated, if needed, to ensure smooth traffic operations and safety along N. Washington Street and E. Middle Lane.”

**Reduced Safety** The plan presented to WECA last Spring did not include adequate space at all bus stops for buses to pull out of the traffic lane, which may result in frustrated drivers pulling around buses into on-coming traffic. City’s Response: “In general, buses will be able to pull over to the curb, leaving enough space leaving enough space for cars to go around them while stopping at bus stops.”

**Bicycle Path Barriers** WECA is concerned about achieving the best balance of bicycles, vehicles and pedestrians. While it is important to protect the safety of cyclists, WECA has questioned the use of concrete barriers between bike and car lanes; they are not used in other areas of the city. City’s Response: “The Rockville Bicycle Advocacy Committee has recommended the barriers for the safety of bikers. The design consultant is proposing precast concrete barriers wherever it is necessary to ensure bikers’ safety.”

WECA continues to support the development of this area to be more business-friendly and safer/accessible to walkers and cyclists.

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and  
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