

A Seton Hill President's Almost Spring Reflection

February in Baltimore was the warmest on record but winter's last gasp in March has been challenging. Spring arrives on 3/20/17. Many thanks to all of you who have actively participated in Seton Hill Association, Inc. (SHA) related events including restaurant night at West Madison Craft Bar and the Community Walk with the Baltimore Police Department, Councilman Costello, and other representatives from City Council as well as City agencies. Our numbers are increasing from the previous year for those attending our last two community association meetings. The SHA Executive Board has put a great deal of effort in getting the speakers out for the issues that most impact our lives and we continue to advocate for the safety and prosperity of our neighborhood.

If you're already a member of the SHA please continue to tell us what's on your mind and join with us in implementing changes that benefit all of us. Attached I've highlighted events/special requests. I'm your elected President of the SHA –Wayne Reed. You may reach me by sending an email to president@setonhill.org. Please go to our website (www.setonhill.org) and [Facebook page](#) often for regular updates on our events and advocacy. Last, we're a volunteer board with no source of revenue other than membership dues or donations so please consider joining or making a donation to the SHA. You can also sign up for membership or donate by credit card [online](#) or you may contact our Membership liaison to make arrangements for obtaining the membership form or paying by check/cash. The SHA is a 501 (c) 3 tax exempt neighborhood association. Volunteers are always welcomed.

1. Did you see the Seton Hill "shout out" in The Baltimore Sun recently

Closer to downtown, Seton Hill saw seven standard sales with a median price of \$210,000 in 2016, up from just two a year earlier with a median price of \$83,500.

The small neighborhood just west of Mount Vernon borders Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, allowing for easy access to the busy connecting road. Close to Mount Vernon Marketplace eateries, the light rail and the Howard Street Dog Park, Seton Hill is "a little neighborhood that packs a lot of amenities," Gondal said. The area also has a host of nearby arts and cultural attractions such as the Walters Art Museum and Maryland Historical Society and is within walking distance of such academic institutions as the University of Maryland, Baltimore, the Maryland Institute College of Art and the University of Baltimore.

Kate Barnhart, a real estate agent with Keller Williams Gateway, who has handled sales in Seton Hill, said that even though rowhouses along the tree-lined streets tend to be on the smaller side, it's an inexpensive neighborhood compared to Mount Vernon.

"It's smaller, but the location can't be beat. ... You're just a few blocks out of the hustle and bustle of downtown," Barnhart said.

2. Seton Hill Marketing Event on Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 2:30 pm at the St. Mary's Spiritual

Center. SHA has partnered with Midtown Development Corporation and the very experienced Maison Realty to highlight our community and many amenities. We'll be inviting Realtors and we want you to show up and mingle and brag about what you enjoy about living in Seton Hill. On my list is the ease of subway and light rail easy travel to the Thurgood Marshall BWI airport. We'll feature a tour of the St. Mary's site, the fountain area of St. Mary's Park, a historic house and business walk through, and end at the bustling Howard's Dog Park. Let's get the word out and attract new neighbors buying Seton Hill homes and encourage landlords with vacant properties to make improvements. All of us can take extra efforts to plant flowers or shrubs in front of our homes, pick up trash, pull weeds, and stimulate "buzz" by highlighting the many gifts of urban living. Participate in making a video clip describing what you enjoy about the Seton Hill neighborhood. **Maison Realty will provide home buying information as well as open homes for sale in Seton Hill on the day of the event.**

3. **Little Free Library** –According to the Baltimore Campaign for Grade Level Reading “1 in5 children in Baltimore have less than 10 books at home.” There are 36 Little Free Libraries and we have one in St. Mary's Park by the park building. This is a freestanding structure that allows anyone to come at any time to take a book. If you take a book and leave a book that would also be welcomed! If you'd like to donate books or make a monetary donation for books to restock our library please send an email to LFL@setonhill.org.
4. **4/11/17 General Meeting** – We've invited the Maryland Historical Society to provide some information about the history of the neighborhood. The meeting begins at 7pm at the St. Mary's Spiritual Center (600 N. Paca Street). Remaining SHA General Meetings will be held on 6/13, 8/8 & 10/10. **Have you plotted other Baltimore can't miss dates:**
 - ❖ What is Light City Baltimore –A free festival that transforms Baltimore with large scale installations, performances, music, and innovation. Central to Light City is the BGE Light Art Walk along Baltimore's Inner Harbor, featuring more than 50 attractions including illuminated sculptures, projections, interactive technologies, performances, concerts, food vendors and a children's area. It is held from 3/31 to 4/6. For more information please go to <http://lightcity.org/about-the-festival/>.
 - ❖ Mount Vernon Flowermart (May 5th & 6th 11 to 9)
 - ❖ Preakness (May 20th) Race begins at 6pm
 - ❖ Artscape (July 7,8th & 9th)
 - ❖ 8/1 National Night Out (Seton Hill will show love and appreciation to the Baltimore City Police Department)
 - ❖ Baltimore Book Festival (September 22, 23 & 24 11 to 7 at the Inner Harbor)
5. **College Fair sponsored by the Urban League – Saturday Leadership Program College Fair April 8, 2017 1 to 4 pm at the Greater Baltimore Urban League at 512 Orchard Street. For**

more information please go to www.gbul.org or call 410.523.8150. Parents and students welcome. RSVP to Estelle Young at eyoung@gbul.org.

6. **Message from our St. Mary’s Park Steward** –Mr. Hollis Albert is our Park Steward. He has been keeping our park beautiful for the last 9 months. He is a part -time employee of Baltimore City. He’s making a special appeal for folks to volunteer or make monetary donations in the St. Mary’s Park on 4/22 at 11:30 am to 1pm for a park clean up. **He’d also like to thank Gaver Nichols, Architect, A1 Deli & Grocery, and Kool Beans Coffee Shop for donating funds for the 4/22 11:00 in St. Mary’s Park volunteer Love Your Park/Earth Day event.** If you’d like to volunteer or make arrangements for a monetary donation please send an email to president@setonill.org by 4/15/17. **VOLUNTEERS- See you at 11:30 am at the fountain.**

Special Request from the Park Steward) and Seton Hill Association – Please *do not* use park trash receptacles for your household garbage and avoid the hefty City fine that can be levied. This is attracting rodents/pests and detracts from the overall goal of placing trash receptacles in the park. The receptacles in the park are for park users to dispose of their waste so that our Park Steward can spend the bulk of his time on other tasks that beautify the park. If you see someone misusing/abusing the park please call x911 with a simultaneous notification (pictures would also be great) to president@setonhill.org.

7. **Saturday, 4/22 Breakfast at New America Café & Earth Day/Love your Park volunteer to plant flowers in the St. Mary’s Park event** –Join us, invite your neighbors, and let’s have breakfast and welcome the New America Café (429 N. Eutaw Street) to the Seton Hill area. Tell your neighbors that you’d like to see them there. Share as little or as much as you’d like to but get to know your neighbors and let’s celebrate living in the Seton Hill neighborhood. **Breakfast is at 10am.** RSVP to president@setonhill.org by 4/15/17.
8. **Residential Parking Permit changes update** –At the 2/14/17 General Meeting members voted for sweeping parking changes due to creeping development around Seton Hill impacting Seton Hill resident’s ability to park close to their homes. **We voted for the following:**

Now	Proposed
Monday through Friday 7am to 7pm with a 2 hour allowance for non-permit vehicles	-Seven days a week from 7am to 7pm with a 2 hour allowance for non-permit vehicles. -Permit parking only 7pm to 7am, seven days a week -Expanded permitted areas to areas that are not currently restricted

SHA is working diligently with the Parking Authority to change the current RPP hours. The process to change the RPP hours requires Parking Authority and City Council approval and may take between 6 to 8 months. So, we are asking residents to be patient. SHA members will be kept abreast of other steps required to complete these changes.

9. We're seeking volunteers for the Friends of St. Mary's Park. Getting a part-time steward hired for St. Mary's park is just the latest success of the SHA Friends of St. Mary's Park group. Now that Hollis is doing such a great job in park upkeep, please consider joining the friends group to help plan park improvements, come up with fun programming and things to do in the park, and to help organize a few volunteer days a year to help Hollis. Please email president@setonhill.org with subject "Friends" to let us know we can count you in!

10. Saturday, April 1, 2017 – Please join Seton Hill in a neighborhood greening event from 9:30 am to 12N. Please meet at the park building for gloves and tools. We will be sprucing up tree wells around the neighborhood, and planting flowers in container pots. Please let SHA know if you would like to be part of this and have a flower pot in front of your house. You can send an email to president@setonhill.org.

11. Increasing safety reminders –History tells us when the weather rises so does crime so please remember to follow these guidelines:

- 1. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, stay in well-lit, well-traveled and familiar areas; exercise caution when approached by strangers; leave an area or situation that makes you feel uncomfortable.**
- 2. Keep your car secured at all times with doors locked and windows closed, valuable should be removed and nothing visible to be construed as something valuable.**
- 3. Secure your home with solid wood exterior doors, 1 inch deadbolt locks, and an activated burglary alarm system with visible branding on your windows, doors, or on placards in potted shrubs in your yard.**
- 4. Report suspicious activity to x911 such as anyone forcing entrance, person running while carrying something valuable or a vehicle cruising.**
- 5. Report what, when and where incident is occurring; subjects' sex, age, height, weight, complexion and unique characteristics (e.g. facial hair) including footwear details; and vehicle's make, model, visible damage and direction of travel. When circumstances allow send a notification to president@setonhill.org for advocacy in law enforcement practices in Seton Hill.**

12. Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) – The Seton Hill Historic District dates to 1968 and was one of the first designated historic districts in Baltimore City. As such, much of the neighborhood's unique character remains and adds to the vitality and strength of the area. However, the reality of being a historic district within the city center means that crime deterrents are a necessary part of the built environment. Foremost among

these are security doors and cameras. As with all exterior alterations in the historic district, the installation of both features must be approved by CHAP staff through an Authorization to Proceed (ATP) application, available on our website at chap.baltimorecity.gov.

CHAP recommends the use of simple black metal security doors, or tempered glass storm doors as they have the least amount of visual disruption to the building's historic façade. Security cameras should be small, located in the least obtrusive location possible and installed at mortar joints so as not to damage this historic brick. The ATP application should include information on the proposed feature as well as a current image of your property.

Though an application is required, approvals for these minor alterations can be issued quickly when the necessary information is provided. If a resident has already installed any security feature without CHAP approval, staff is happy to work with Seton Hill residents to issue retro-active ATPs so that no citations or notices are issued. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at Caitlin.audette@baltimorecity.gov or 410-396-8354.