

THE GEORGETOWN CURRENT

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Serving Burleith, Foxhall, Georgetown, Georgetown Reservoir & Glover Park

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GEORGETOWN GRILLING



Brian Kapur/The Current

The 23rd annual Taste of Georgetown featured more than 60 signature dishes from over 30 of Georgetown's top restaurants on Saturday. Event proceeds will benefit the Georgetown Ministry Center's homeless assistance efforts.

Burleith puts off landmark request

■ **Preservation:** Association still mulling historic district

By **BRADY HOLT**
Current Staff Writer

The Burleith Citizens Association has put off consideration of applying for the neighborhood to become a historic district until the beginning of next year, according to president Eric Langenbacher.

The association began discussing the possibility of filing an application — which, if approved by the city, would control the demolition of homes and certain types of renovations in the community — earlier this year. Though the group had originally planned to discuss historic designation at multiple public meetings this fall and host a community vote in January, it announced last week that formal discussions will be on

hold for at least a few months before the process resumes.

“This gives us more time to plan things correctly and involve more people,” Langenbacher said in an interview yesterday. “There are some folks that aren't happy with the way things have gone so far. This gives us a chance to take everything under consideration.”

Association board members have gotten busy with other projects. See **Burleith**/Page 15

Transfer cleared for Walter Reed school

By **MARK LIEBERMAN**
Current Staff Writer

The District of Columbia International School has awaited construction of its new home — Delano Hall on the former Walter Reed campus — for several years. The original plan was to open the school, a composite of five public charters, in the new facility this fall. But delays in the Walter Reed development process removed that option and put the school's future plans in doubt.

Once D.C. International secured zoning approval for its project earlier this year, executive director Mary Shaffner hoped construction could begin in July and finish in time for the 2017-18 school year. When there had been no progress as of last month, Shaffner, staff members and parents launched a three-day social media campaign with the hashtag #DeliverDelano, with the goal of reminding city

See **Delano**/Page 18



Photo by Rodney Choico

The D.C. International School intends to operate in Delano Hall near 16th and Aspen streets NW starting in the 2017-18 school year.

During trail's closure, looking to the future

By **MARK LIEBERMAN**
Current Staff Writer

A three-mile trail from Galena Place NW in the Palisades to Georgetown University has long been the subject of community discussion. Some residents want to turn the former trolley route into a bike trail, while others would prefer to see the area preserved as it is. As those debates continue, safety concerns have demanded renewed attention to the trail, a part of which is now closed to the public.

The National Park Service, which controls Glover Archbold Park, announced in August that portions of an existing north-to-south park trail that pass under an elevated trolley trestle had been temporarily closed due to the safety threat of falling debris. However, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, which owns the trolley right-of-way itself,



Brian Kapur/Current file photo

The National Park Service has closed the trail under the abandoned trolley trestle until debris hazards are addressed.

committed to designing a protected, covered walkway for the closed portion of the trail, according to agency spokesperson Richard Jordan.

The transit authority expects to complete that project by spring 2017, at which point the park trail will reopen, according to Jordan. He said details about the materials and costs won't be available until designs See **Trail**/Page 5

Cathedral Commons diner plan earns zoning approval

■ **Business:** Deal includes community parking benefits

By **MARK LIEBERMAN**
Current Staff Writer

The all-day diner Silver is expected to open in the Cathedral Commons complex next summer, having secured hard-fought final approval from the Zoning Commission last week.

Build-out is planned to begin in November at the space on the 3400 block of Wisconsin Avenue NW between SunTrust Bank and Allure Spa, Silver co-owner Bob

Giaimo told The Current Monday. The restaurant — a more upscale, urban spin on the Silver Diner chain — is currently waiting on final building permits, Giaimo said.

Adding Silver to Cathedral Commons required zoning relief because the agreement for the mixed-use complex limits the developer to using 20 percent of the streetfront space for restaurants. With the addition of Silver, the complex will exceed that restaurant limit by 3.4 percentage points.

At a meeting last Monday, the See **Silver**/Page 7

NEWS

Library renovation

Cleveland Park plans receive general support at last meeting before project begins / Page 3

SPORTS

Costly gamble

St. John's falls to DeMatha 14-13 when risky late-game play comes up empty on the gridiron / Page 11



PASSAGES

DC Design House

Annual fundraiser decks out Foxhall Road NW home with varied interior decor / Page 20

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ZONING: City planners respond to objections to PUDs for small row-house properties

From Page 5

asked the Zoning Commission to lower the minimum lot size standard to 10,000 square feet city-wide, then for the commission to use its waiver authority for its

2715 Pennsylvania Ave. NW site. Members of ANC 1C are particularly concerned about reducing the lot size requirement amid the clash over pop-ups, where developers add a floor or two to a row house.

"This [is] particularly objec-

tionable to rowhouse dominated blocks that would, under the proposed new rules, be potentially open to PUDs on a rowhouse," their resolution reads.

ANC 1C member Alan Gambrell said at a Sept. 7 meeting that

the proposal allows PUDs to be "way too lax." His colleague, Jon-Marc Buffa, said the proposal is a "backdoor revision to the zoning rules." After nearly a decade of discussions surrounding an overhaul of land-use regulations, which

went into effect this month, Buffa said for this to come up now subverts the public comment process.

"This is not a technical correction," as the Office of Planning suggests, Buffa said. "This is a wholesale change."

BURLEITH: Citizens group puts off historic designation request

From Page 1

ects and want to make sure they have adequate time to conduct research into issues that concern the neighborhood, including the economic ramifications of historic designation, Langenbacher said.

"It's more about information-gathering and listening to voices in the community before we make any kind of choices moving forward," he said.

At its most recent meeting, the association invited state preservation officer David Maloney to discuss what restrictions would likely apply in Burleith.

"There are some things that would not be allowed if this were a historic district," Maloney, who had recently participated in a walk-through of the neighborhood, said at the Sept. 14 meeting. "Most of them seemed OK, generally; many of them would have been approved clearly outright if the area were a historic district. Some of them, we would have tried to revise some of the aspects of the design."

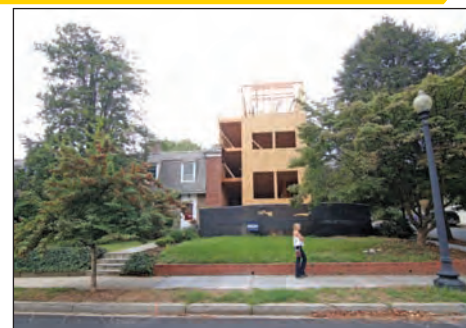
Burleith is a primarily residential area just north of Georgetown with blocks of 1920s row houses, some of which have been

targeted for redevelopment into multifamily construction. City zoning rules include limits on height and density, but unlike in a historic district, projects aren't subject to review of the planned architecture.

Maloney said the theoretical Burleith historic district would make it impossible to tear down a house in most cases, and would require an architectural review for additions and other alterations. However, unlike the federal protections found in Georgetown, the historic district for Burleith would wave through most applications as part of a simple building permit review without a full public hearing process.

A few projects, though, would likely be turned down, Maloney said; besides tear-downs, major alterations to front facades of houses would likely be deemed incompatible with the historic district. That would include third-story additions that visibly stick out above the original facade, roof decks visible from the street and the removal of original porches.

But outside of those constraints, Maloney said, residents would still have free rein to change their homes. Notably, rear additions that don't substantially alter the view



Brian Kapur/The Current

Residents have had mixed reactions to the prospect of becoming a historic district as a way to establish design review.

from the street would likely be approved without fuss, despite some residents' concerns about big modern structures visible in many neighborhood alleys. "On the back of the house, we don't take any position on style," Maloney said.

Several homeowners at the Sept. 14 meeting expressed concerns that a historic district would restrict key property rights and that reduced redevelopment potential would harm their property values. "In my view, the only way to make these family homes is to make bedrooms that are of a size that people want in 2016 — and the only way to accomplish that is to go up," one woman said.

Lenore Rubino, a real estate agent and former president of the citizens association, said that in her own experience, historic districts appeal to buyers who appreciate that the house next door won't be torn down or wildly altered. "They like to be able to know that this is what the community looks like," she said.

If the association does ultimately support a Burleith historic district, the Historic Preservation Review Board would need to approve its application, based on the neighborhood's historic merits and community support.

Staff writer Mark Lieberman contributed to this report.

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