



# RNA Community Meeting Agenda

**October 28, 2024**

**7:00 p.m. at Salem Lutheran/Riverside Third Space (Hybrid: in-person via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83025276168?pwd=WUIZZXZKKys1aEdCTlQ1ZEtlEo0dz09>)

Board Members in attendance: Rich Badmington (President), Jeff Brown, (Vice President), Becca Charlton (Secretary), Connor Eagleson (Treasurer), Jeff Dewberry, Jackson Fisher, Rachel Wagner

## Welcome

RNA President Rich Badmington called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., welcomed residents and on-line participants, and introduced the RNA Board members.

## Our agenda:

1. Reports of our standing committees (Public Safety, the Park, Parking, Development)
2. Calendar items
3. Reports from our ad hoc committees (Placemaking, Nominating)
4. New business

## Friends of Riverside Park committee report (Jackson)

Jackson shared that Saturday was the annual Halloween Bash where there was a good neighborhood turnout and families had a fun time. He noted our next RNA-sponsored event is our annual Gazebo Lighting which is planned for Sunday, Dec. 8.

The latest park cleanup with St. Ignatius students was today, where 6th graders were mulching the new trees around improved sports fields. There is a tree planting scheduled for this weekend, Nov. 2, organized by the SoBo Green neighborhood group. Anyone interested can meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Battery/Gittings intersection.

The work at the "Red House" is ongoing. It's currently beige and we're not aware of what the final color will be.

Question: Will there be lighting on the south side of new fields?

Answer: We expect there will be stanchions installed to light the pathway.

Jeff Dewberry also noted that new mats will be ordered shortly to be installed under the swings at the playground. These will be covered under one of the grants RNA received from South Baltimore Gateway Partnership.



Rich shared that a pool renaming bill is working its way through city government, sponsored by 13 of 15 councilmembers, to honor the legacy of Elijah Cummings:

“Elijah E. Cummings, the longtime United States Representative for much of Baltimore City, grew up in Sharp-Leadenhall in South Baltimore. As a child, Cummings would join other youths playing in the wading pool at the Sharp Street Community Center. The small pool was not sufficient for the community it was serving. One day in 1962 the center’s recreation leader, Jim Smith, gathered up some two dozen Black youth including Cummings and walked down to Riverside Park Pool. In the wake of 1954’s Brown v. Board of Education, both Maryland Governor Theodore McKeldin and Baltimore City Mayor Tommy D’Alessandro issued executive orders integrating public facilities, but in practice, the Riverside Park Pool was whites only. As the Sharp Street swimmers used Riverside Park’s pool over several days, as many as 1,000 white protestors flooded the area, hurling insults, rocks, and bottles. One of those bottles hit the young Elijah, resulting in a scar he would carry with him for the rest of his life. Other Black youth were also injured during these visits, as was Juanita Jackson Mitchell, a lawyer with the NAACP who was the first Black woman to practice law in the state of Maryland. Mitchell and the NAACP sought a blue ribbon commission to investigate the series of incidents, which was refused by then Governor John Millard Tawes.

“The Baltimore City Council seeks to honor the dedicated service of Cummings, as well as his, Mitchell’s, and the other community member’s participation in the integration of the Riverside Park Pool. By renaming the pool for Congressman Cummings, we recognize the event as part of the larger Civil Rights Movement and Maryland’s role in it. The integration of the pool stands alongside the 1960 Morgan State College student sit-ins at Baltimore department stores, the Congress of Racial Equality and Freedom Rider sit-ins of 1961, the 1962 Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee demonstrations on the Eastern Shore, and Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous “I Have A Dream” speech delivered in August 1963, a year after the scenes at Riverside Park. The City of Baltimore and its longtime champion Elijah E. Cummings are essential elements of the Civil Rights Movement.

“SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the name of Riverside Park Pool, located at 1800 Covington Street..., is changed to the Congressman Elijah E. Cummings Community Pool.”

A motion to support the bill was made and unanimously approved. Rich took the action to provide a letter in support of the bill to the Planning Commission and City Council on RNA’s behalf.

## Public Safety/Police Update (Rachel)

Rachel welcomed Sgt. Rivera from the NCO Unit as well as three other officers who were in attendance. Sgt. Rivera shared that Riverside is “looking good overall” for reported criminal activity for this time in the year. We are up 1 commercial robbery over last year (3 vs. 2) while auto larcenies are down 77 percent compared to last year. He noted that they are tracking an uptick in



package theft/larcenies around E. Randall, Belt, and Jackson Streets and asked residents to report any thefts and provide evidence as this will allow police to resource this activity.

Sgt. Rivera suggested residents register their cameras with the Citywatch Camera network program so police know who has cameras they might access when crimes are reported nearby. Rachel noted there is also a South Baltimore Camera Network run by neighbors to facilitate police access to footage from neighbors willing to share it. Sgt. Rivera said footage has helped close recent cases.

Rachel voiced residents' concerns about the recent double shooting in Federal Hill. Sgt. Rivera confirmed they were investigating and that the incident was between two cars that came from outside the neighborhood. They also discussed a recent "discharge" (shooting that didn't hit anyone) from Rash Field recently.

Rachel shared that there was a Public Safety brunch yesterday between local Neighborhood Associations and local BPD officers and suggested others engage with BPD as well if these are offered again. She also reminded residents that she represents us at the BPD Community Relations Council, first Tuesdays, also on Zoom. Reach out with any concerns.

Jackson also raised the issue of regular/ongoing burglaries at Harborview Liquors and Hat Mart (formerly Luckys). BPD confirmed that few, if any, police reports have been filed but they will try to get teams to stop by the businesses to check in. Businesses are urged always to report crimes.

Questions or more information can be requested at [RNABaltimore@gmail.com](mailto:RNABaltimore@gmail.com) or [Raul.Rivera@baltimorepolice.org](mailto:Raul.Rivera@baltimorepolice.org).

There was one question about a tower-type installation at Webster/Fort. It was noted that this is a cellular network tower and not related to BPD.

## Parking (Jeff Brown)

Jeff shared that the holdup in implementing the Residential Permit Parking for the 1600 block of Johnson is that residents are awaiting signs from DoT. We have heard that the work order is in and approved and expect signage to be installed soon. Additional blocks can petition to join the RPP.

## Development (Rich)

**1921 Light St.** - We will hear from Pat Grace, the project developer, at our January meeting.

**MAG Partners/Baltimore Peninsula/Port Covington** – At Del. Mark Edelson's invitation, Rich and Jeff Dewberry met with representatives of MAG Partners. They are seeking a grant to study the best ways to connect their development with Riverside and the rest of South Baltimore. They have agreed to regular meetings, probably quarterly or semi-annually, to share updates on both sides of the tracks. RNA's priority is some kind of walkway or bridge to connect the neighborhoods. In the meantime, it was noted that the Charm City Circulator bus goes from Riverside to Port Covington/Baltimore Peninsula.



## Calendar Items (Rich)

- Our November and December meetings both fall on holidays, so we combine them into our mid-December social which will include a cookie contest and recognition of neighbors for their contributions to our community. The event is on Monday, Dec. 9, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Cookies and adult beverages will be provided.
- Gazebo Lighting - Dec. 8; 5:00-6:30 p.m. (lighting at 6:00pm); music, light refreshments
- Our Jan. 29 business meeting is actually now our Annual Community Meeting. It will include:
  - Nominations for Board (elections in Feb.)
  - Annual Financial (Treasurer's) Report
  - Annual President's Report
  - Regular business

## Placemaking (Becca)

We are delivering our commitments under a \$5,000 SBGP grant, including:

- Street banners - We have identified locations, selected a vendor, and are now completing the City's permit. Based on final cost estimates, the grant will allow us to install 8 banners largely in locations on the perimeter of the neighborhood. We think we can find grant money to install more at a later time.
- Brochure - The brochure is at the printer. It is designed and written to be shared with folks from outside the neighborhood—e.g., for use at an event like the farmers market or the TJEMS enrollment open house. We are reaching out to neighborhood restaurants and businesses to include coupons so folks can sample Riverside.
- Website – The brochure, including procurement of images, and agreement on messages is informing our work to redevelop our website. This work continues.

## Nominating Committee (Rich)

There will be three openings on the Board to be filled in our February election—the two seats now open plus the seat Rich occupies, as he plans to step off the Board. Nominations will be closed and announced at our January meeting.

Three people have expressed interest in the roles, so there is room for more. If you would like to nominate someone, including yourself, please be in touch with Becca, Jeff Brown or Rich directly or via email at [rnabaltimore@gmail.com](mailto:rnabaltimore@gmail.com).

## Adjournment

As there was no new business noted, the meeting was adjourned early at 7:45pm.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Rebecca Charlton, RNA Secretary*  
*October 29, 2024*