

ECA News www.eastportcivic.org

Newsletter of the Eastport Civic Association

August 2007

2007 ECA Board

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Message from ECA President Vic Pascoe

We are off to a great start of the summer. Many exciting events have already occurred and more will be coming in the weeks and months ahead. Our Home and Garden tour was a great success and many thanks go out to those who were involved in this great event. Special thanks go to the homeowners who allowed us to use their beautiful homes and gardens for the tour. The proceeds will benefit the many charities that the Eastport Civic Association supports.

The next big ECA event is the annual picnic scheduled for August 16th at Mears Marina. We hope you and your family will attend this popular event.

July is a typically slow month for the ECA. Your Board of Directors has its regular meetings and the Architectural and Zoning Committee will also meet regularly in late July. This is a good time to thank the many volunteers that help out everyday.

You might note that the Long and Foster office has removed their large illuminated sign facing the bridge and replaced it with a much smaller sign. Thanks goes to Ross Arnett and Chris Ledoux for helping make this happen. We appreciate the folks at Long and Foster for working with the community to make this change for the better. You might also note that there are flower baskets on the bridge. This was due to the efforts of Jean McCoy and Phyllis Emmett.

Cont'd on next page

Inside: Ruling on Rooftop Dining, Annual Picnic, House Tour Proceeds, Say No to Speeding

Pascoe, Cont'd

We hope that you enjoy the way things are looking in Eastport. Thanks also go to Phyllis for a job well done chairing the Home & Garden Tour!!

Be sure to check out our new and revised web site complete with a newly designed logo. The web site is packed with information and soon will include pictures from various events. It is also a good place to look for information about the association. Thanks to Board member Elizabeth Foscue for her work on the web site.

We had some leftover plants from Greenscape and Board member Hugh Bernard arranged with the city to place them in other areas throughout the city. Hugh also arranged to have the dead tree removed from the park across from Davis's Pub. This was a large tree and had to be professionally removed. Thanks Hugh!!

This newsletter is prepared by our wonderful Secretary Jane Lawrence. She also keeps me on schedule with keeping our agenda from meeting to meeting and also taking the minutes of all meetings. Dretta Peterson makes sure our space is available for every meeting and coordinates the annual picnic. Thanks Jane and Dretta.

Vice-President Lee Finney helps out in many ways, often attending meetings on my behalf and representing the ECA. She is always there to help when I need her. She is also working on the Safety committee and will report to us soon about crime in Eastport. Cory Bonney is putting together a survey of the membership to help steer the Board to areas of most concern. Cory also has been providing coffee at our meetings.....thank you!!

Jean McCoy handles our membership information and the financial responsibilities of the ECA. She has done a great job of keeping everything up to date and on track. Our

association is solvent and running on all cylinders. Thanks Jean!!

A thanks also goes out to the Architectural and Zoning Committee of the ECA. This committee is chaired by Chris Ledoux and has reviewed many plans and projects to be sure that they comply with the established guidelines and city ordinances. The folks on this committee meet monthly to discuss projects and brief the Board at our Board meetings. Thank you to all who have served on this committee this year.

Upcoming items that may be important to you include development plans for the Hopkins warehouse, the rooftop dining at the Rockfish restaurant and the proposed canopy at the Shell Gas Station. Stay tuned for more information and watch the web site and blast e-mails for specific information. We intend to have interesting speakers at future meetings including the Chief of Police, elected officials, and leaders from other community groups such as EBA and MRE. You won't want to miss any upcoming meetings. As always, we need more volunteers. If you want to get involved, get in touch with me. We need you!!

If you have neighbors that might not know about the ECA, bring them to a meeting!!

Say No to Speeding

At its July meeting, the ECA board agreed to focus more attention on the problem of speeding in Eastport. Many families with small children are moving to Eastport and many pedestrians use our streets. We hope to raise awareness of the need to slow down and obey the posted limits. They are there for a reason. Let's all stay safe.

Want to Eat Outside? You May Be Needing the City Council's Help

By C. Chris Ledoux, Chair, A&Z Committee

In April 2006, Jerry's Seafood applied for rooftop dining for its restaurant at 4 Dock Street, which is located in the C2 zoning district. The application was reviewed under the Special Exception process, which requires a Planning Commission hearing and recommendations, and final approval by the city's Board of Appeals. In May 2006, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended that the rooftop dining not be approved. Despite this, in December of last year, the city's Board of Appeals approved the rooftop dining and the Ward One Citizens Association appealed to the Circuit Court.

On June 29, 2007, Judge Philip Caroom ruled in favor of the Ward One Citizens Association and overturned the Board of Appeals' approval. In his decision, Judge Caroom ruled that rooftop dining is not permitted in the C2 zoning district because Zoning Code Section 21.42.080(D)(1), which provides: "All business, servicing or processing in the C2 district, except for off-street parking or loading, shall be conducted within completely enclosed buildings." Though the ruling is limited to the C2 zone, this same restriction is found in the B1, B2, and B3 district regulations, which are Eastport's commercial districts. As a result, the court's ruling could be construed to apply not only to the C2 district, but also the B commercial districts, and any other districts throughout the city with similar prohibitive provisions.

As many of you may know, the Rockfish restaurant (corner of Sixth St. and Severn Ave.) has a rooftop dining application currently pending with the city. The ECA's Architecture and Zoning Committee and the ECA's Board have been working with the owner, the city, and nearby neighbors on a number of issues related to the application. Rooftop dining was far from a done deal. But in light of the court's ruling, because the Rockfish is in the B2 district, it appears likely that the Rockfish's application will either be denied or put on hold (or perhaps withdrawn) until either

the Circuit Court's opinion is reversed on appeal, or the City Council passes legislation to allow dining outside of buildings. For the time being at least, rooftop dining in Eastport is up in the air.

Still, there may still be more unintended consequences to come from the Circuit Court's decision. The zoning code's prohibition on conducting business outside of enclosed buildings is not limited to rooftop dining. It prohibits any outside business activity. That would mean, at least in Eastport, that several B district establishments might be affected:

- Boatyard Bar & Grill's outdoor deck dining
- Ruth's Chris' outdoor patio dining
- Davis's Pub's outdoor sidewalk dining
- Café Guru's outdoor picnic table dining
- Wild Orchid's patio dining
- Mercedes Benz's outdoor showroom
- Carrol's Creek and EYC are in the maritime zone and appear to be unaffected.

To allay any concerns about the legality of the outdoor activities of some of our Eastport businesses, one would hope that the City Council will act quickly to amend the city code to clarify whether outdoor business activity is indeed permitted, even if it only legalizes outdoor seated dining and not the more controversial rooftop dining.

2007 Membership Meetings

Sept. 27, 2007**

Nov. 15, 2007 – Annual Meeting

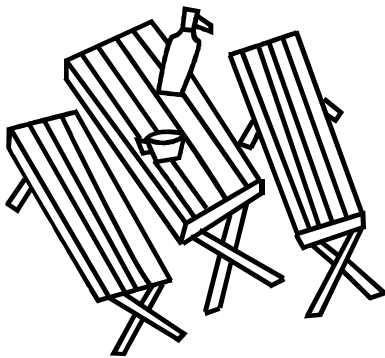
**** (Please note new date for Sept. meeting)**

Hope We See You at the ECA Annual Picnic—Aug. 16th

In lieu of a summer membership meeting, ECA will again hold its annual picnic on Thursday, August 16th at the Mears Marina Pavilion from 6 pm to 9 p.m.

The picnic is catered by Adam's Ribs and will feature a variety of delicious picnic fare. Water, beer, soda, and wine are also provided. The cost is \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Children under 12 are free. So come join your neighbors and catch up on their summer news.

See the back page of this newsletter for the form to pay in advance. (To pay in advance, please mail payment by Aug. 10th.) For more information, contact Dretta Peterson at 443-482-9055 or dpetersod@aol.com.



**The Alderman's Notebook
will return in the fall.**

Sun Shines on 2nd Annual Home and Garden Tour

Unlike last year, the sun managed to make an appearance for this year's Eastport Home & Garden Tour. A good time was had by all. ECA wishes to again thank the wonderful folks who opened their homes and gardens: Deb Smith, Adam Gifford, John Cutting, Patsy Helmetag, Linda and Bill Hughes, Bernie and Eric Schultz, Katie and Tom Tolman, Tricia Kirk, Pat Frese, and Deborah Schwab. A special thanks goes to Deb Smith, who in addition to opening her home, allowed the Tour to make its headquarters at Sarles Marina on the day of the tour.

The 40 plus volunteers are too numerous to name but our thanks to all. And we want to congratulate Linda Fiesta on winning the door prize drawing for a Claire Murray hand-hooked nautical design rug—it pays to participate! Last, but not least, we want to thank our wonderful program advertisers, whose support allows ECA to use every dollar from ticket sales for worthy causes in the Eastport community. This year's tour raised a net profit of \$4,657 to go toward one or more worthy community causes selected by the ECA Board. If you have suggestions, please let someone on the board know.

One question the ECA board often hears is,

“Where Do the Tour Proceeds Go?”

Last year ECA donated \$3,000 from tour profits to the Eastport Elementary School to enable eight students to attend summer camp. We wanted to share with you the handwritten thank-you note ECA received from Principal Linda Evans. (See the opposite page.). These programs make a difference in children's lives and ECA is thrilled to be able to provide support to our local school.

ECA Picnic/Aug. 16th at Mears

6 p.m. to 9 p.m.—Rain or Shine

\$15 per person in advance or \$20 per person at the door

Member Name _____

Number Attending @ \$15 paid in advance _____ Total paid _____
(Children under 12 are free)

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Make your check payable to Eastport Civic Association and mail by August 10th to: Eastport Civic Association, P.O. Box 3539, Annapolis, MD 21403

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