

# Bolton Hill

## Community Association

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## The Relaunch

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/the-relaunch/>



I became the editor of the Bolton Hill Bulletin in January 2015 when we were still first-class mailing printed newsletters to subscribers in the neighborhood. That summer Jean Lee Cole and I hatched the idea of moving the Bulletin online and did so in January 2016.

From the start, we conceived of an integrated site that would both serve as the website for the association and the platform for publishing the Bulletin. It just took a little longer than we expected. Five years in the making, it gives me great pleasure to applaud the relaunch of the BHCA website and the new improved Bulletin. In concert with the BHCA Facebook page and an occasional glance at the Nextdoor.com Bolton Hill section, it's easier than ever to stay up to date on the neighborhood.

BHCA President David Nyweide spearheaded this effort, but Mia Jordan and Valentia McVey of FatCat Studios handled the real heavy lifting. Mia made the site look great and function just as planned. Says Valentia, "FatCat Studios is a boutique group of talented creatives who realize it's not just about how great the work is, it's also about how great we are to work with. ... What we are really (and proudly) known for is offering our clients 'design without the drama.' Simply put, drama is not one of the services we offer."

Bill Hamilton ranks as a third hero for taking over the editorship of the Bulletin from Jean Lee Cole and

me. Both of us are looking forward to being avid readers and sometimes contributors. Kylie Perrotti took charge of the design and technical side of getting this issue out. Other volunteers are welcome to contribute to future issues of the Bulletin.

Obviously, it is a big site with lots of pieces. The team has tried to catch all the mistakes, but there surely are some still there for viewers to find. Please let us know when you do, and we will reward you by fixing them. Send any feedback or new ideas about the website to [webmaster@boltonhillmd.org](mailto:webmaster@boltonhillmd.org) and Bulletin story ideas to [bulletin@boltonhillmd.org](mailto:bulletin@boltonhillmd.org).

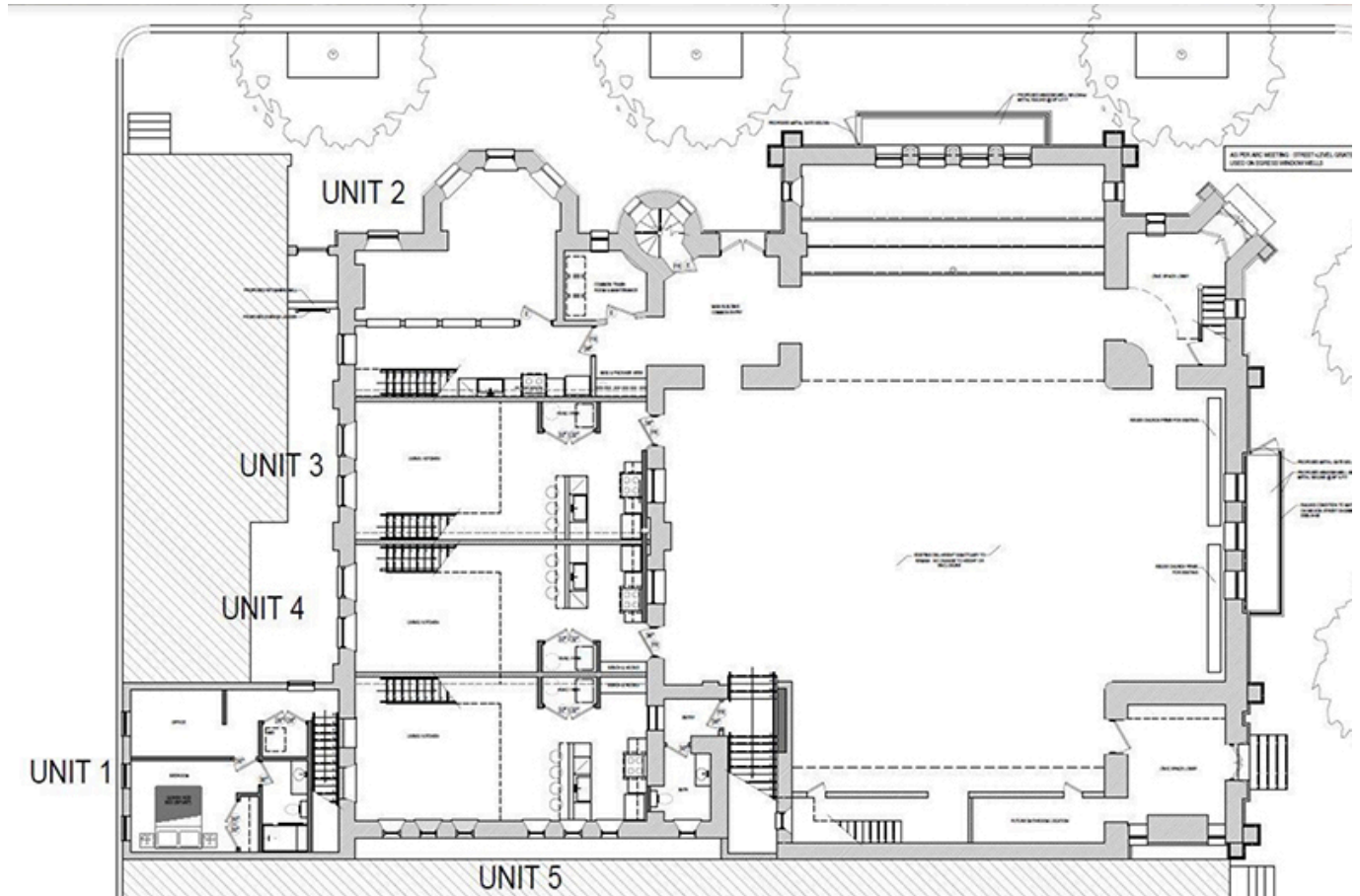
It's great to have you back.

*by Peter Van Buren*

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## Construction Plans Moving Forward for Old Strawbridge Church Apartments

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/construction-plans-moving-forward-for-old-strawbridge-church-apartments/>



Renovation is about to get underway at the former Strawbridge Methodist Church at 201 Wilson Street at Park Avenue.

Bolton Hill Belfry, LLC, the building’s owner and developer, announced that major structural repairs in the sanctuary are completed. The project has recently won competitive historic tax credits from the Maryland Historic Trust. The owners also have applied for national historic tax credits. The early English Gothic-style church was constructed in 1889 and designed by renowned architect Charles L. Carson. The building has been vacant since 2009.

The church and rectory will be converted into 11 luxury rental apartments. The developer has also proposed a free art gallery in the sanctuary which will be open to the public. Maryland Institute College of Art has expressed interest in occupying the space.

The developers are finalizing the design and hope to pull permits in Spring of 2020. Construction timeline is estimated at less than 12 months.





## Early Efforts Underway to Transform Lot at Park and North Avenues

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/early-efforts-underway-to-transform-lot-at-park-and-north-avenues/>



Despite its prominent location at the north end of the neighborhood, the corner of Park Avenue and North Avenue is a neglected piece of Bolton Hill. It's mostly covered in sterile concrete. The facing row house wall is bleached and speckled with grime.

Two raised brick planters could give the space more life but only weeds grow in them. One of the planters was bashed and broken by a car accident that ran well onto the sidewalk. An overgrown tree at the other end of the planters obscures a pair of benches beneath it. And at the bus stop bordering North Avenue, awaiting bus riders are more focused on the next bus than paying the space much attention.

Since the lot is not a park and isn't privately owned, the Bolton Hill Community Association is working with Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development and Midtown Community Benefits District to rehabilitate it. First, the City will assist in ascertaining the boundaries where various entities may have jurisdiction. In addition to the Baltimore Department of Transportation, the Maryland Transit Authority bus stop may be responsible for a portion of the lot; same with Baltimore Gas and Electric. We've also confirmed that the [North Avenue Rising](#) streetscaping project is not planning to touch the lot.

Concurrently, we are exploring the possibility of obtaining sketches of ideas from landscape architecture firms of what the space could look like, which can be used, in turn, to apply for grants to reanimate the lot with less concrete and more native foliage. The owner of the bordering row house is interested in eventually painting a new mural on the row house wall, as is the prospective owner of the other row house across Park Avenue. As plans for the lot and murals develop, we'll want to elicit input from our Reservoir Hill neighbors as well as MICA, which owns property just east of the lot. The hope is that the space will be transformed into an attractive gateway to the neighborhood.

*by David Nyweide and Chris Kingsley*

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## Keep an Eye on Your General Assembly and Our Representatives

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/keep-an-eye-on-your-general-assembly-and-our-representatives/>



Maryland's General assembly is midway through its 438th session in Annapolis, with big issues like funding school construction, the Kirwan Commission school reform legislation, the future of the Pimlico race track, a death with dignity bill and support for fighting crime in Baltimore on an expanding agenda.

Most of Bolton Hill is part of Legislative District 40, represented by Sen. Antonio Hayes and three delegates, Frank Conaway Jr., Nick Mosby and Melissa Hayes. All are Democrats. A small piece of the neighborhood falls into Legislative District 40, which in addition to West Baltimore reaches into Baltimore County. That senator is Charles Snyder III and the General Assembly Delegate for the city's portion of the district is Keith Haynes, also both Democrats.

Not sure which is your district? Enter your address [here](#).

Here is how to reach your senators and delegates during the session.

**Sen. Antonio Hayes:** Room 222, 11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401  
(410) 841-3656, (301) 858-3656. e-mail: [antonio.hayes@senate.state.md.us](mailto:antonio.hayes@senate.state.md.us)

**Del. Frank Conaway Jr.** 6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

(410) 841-3189, (301) 858-3189 e-mail: [frank.conaway@house.state.md.us](mailto:frank.conaway@house.state.md.us)

**Del. Nick Mosby:** Room 205, 6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

(410) 841-3520, (301) 858-3520 e-mail: [nick.mosby@house.state.md.us](mailto:nick.mosby@house.state.md.us)

**Del. Melissa Wells:** Room 315, 6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

(410) 841-3545, (301) 858-3545 e-mail: [melissa.wells@house.state.md.us](mailto:melissa.wells@house.state.md.us)

**Sen. Charles Snyder III:** Room 216, 11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

(410) 841-3612, (301) 858-3612 e-mail: [charles.sydnor@senate.state.md.us](mailto:charles.sydnor@senate.state.md.us)

**Del. Keith Haynes:** Room 362, 6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

(410) 841-3801, (301) 858-3801 e-mail: [keith.haynes@house.state.md.us](mailto:keith.haynes@house.state.md.us)

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## NEWS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/news-from-the-neighborhood/>



### *All you need to know about composting*

**Christina Garrrahan and Compost Crew** are working on bringing composting to the city and setting up pickup and processing sustainable systems. Have a question about composting? Want to set up a community or household composting pickup? Reach out. Or sign up online and use Chris G 10 off to get \$10 off your first month. [chrisgnaomi@gmail.com](mailto:chrisgnaomi@gmail.com) or <http://compostcrew.com/signup/>

### *Bolton Hill has a police post officer*

***This is new:*** a police officer specifically assigned to our neighborhood. Contact him with non-emergency neighborhood questions or issues but if you need immediate attention call 911 or, for less urgent police issues, 311. He is Officer Thomas Gross J594 Baltimore Police Department, 410-452-1100, phone or text. Email is [thomas.gross@baltimorepolice.org](mailto:thomas.gross@baltimorepolice.org). He says that when he is at work, he is in Bolton Hill. Contact him as needed.

***Volunteer for a neighborhood urban garden***

[Sassascapes](#), a non-profit urban gardening group, is starting a community garden at Pedestal Gardens in Madison park that focuses on youth development through service. Volunteers have planted 50 bulbs of tulips, crocuses and Irises, along with perennial flowers, local herbs, green onions and one rose bush. 3 weeks ago, we planted 4 blueberry bushes and 2 raspberry bushes. The youth are excited about their secret bulb garden that is going to pop up in the spring and the adults are happy to see the youth doing positive things in their community. Lend your support. More at <http://pedestalgardensbaltimore.blogspot.com/p/pedestal-gardens-security.html>

***THREAD needs volunteers to work with high schoolers***

Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year, [Thread](#) connects university students, community-based volunteers and collaborating professionals to high school freshman students at risk of dropping out of school based on their academic performance (bottom 25% of their class) and an abundance of challenges outside the classroom. It surrounds them with support for the remainder of their high school years and beyond, hoping to show them a path to career and personal success. In doing so, Thread hopes to change the fabric of Baltimore and build lasting relationships that transcend the barriers that prevent the city from moving forward. Several Bolton Hill residents already are volunteers. More information: [billhamilton@mail.com](mailto:billhamilton@mail.com)

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## Looking Ahead: Creating a Strategic Plan for Bolton Hill

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/looking-ahead-creating-a-strategic-plan-for-bolton-hill/>



Bolton Hill Community Association recently put together a group of residents to update the neighborhood's Strategic Plan. We began this effort in the 1980s and periodically over the years have updated the plan. Issues that were once important (e.g buses on Park Avenue, the building of the MICA Commons on McMechen Street) have been resolved and new issues have arisen.

We are in the process of defining the issues to be explored with the entire community. Traffic, safety, State Center and relationships with adjoining neighborhoods are just part of the mix. One new idea has surfaced: whether or not we are doing enough as a neighborhood to foster a sense of community. Newcomers to Bolton Hill note from the outset the strong sense of community among the people they meet, but could we do more? With many neighborhoods competing for the limited supply of people who wish to live in the City, are we doing enough to attract new neighbors or retain the ones who already live here?

The Strategic Planning Committee consists of Neal Friedlander (Chair), Kendra Parlock, Bill Hamilton, Charlie Duff, Jim Proust, Amy Sheridan, Patrice Kingsley, Lauren Snyder, Gavin Schmidt and Joanne Bennett. The membership runs the gamut between neighbors of long standing, new homeowners, a renter and a resident in one of our senior buildings.

Next steps include conversations with our stakeholders (both institutions and individuals) to further define the issues, a survey of residents through Survey Monkey ( the latter recently used by the nursery Sshool in their strategic planning process with excellent results) and eventually for the neighborhood to hold a retreat to explore all of these issues in depth.

*by Neal Friedlander*

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## Time to Renew Your Residential Parking Permit

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/time-to-renew-your-residential-parking-permit/>



It's time to renew your residential parking permit for 2020. If you have one now, it can be done online [here](#). New residents and those applying for the first time have to do so in person at the Parking Authority office at 200 W. Lombard Street.

If you have applied online you can retrieve your new permit from BHCA. Pickup will be available on Friday, Feb. 21 and again on Feb. 28 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Bring your vehicle registration with you.

You can renew your BHCA membership and pay dues at the same time.

Volunteers are needed to hand out the parking permits. If you are willing, contact Patsy Andrews, [pandrewsmd@yahoo.com](mailto:pandrewsmd@yahoo.com).

## Walking Distance: Bolton Hill Dining Scene is Looking Up

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/walking-distance-bolton-hill-dining-scene-is-looking-up/>



When last we published, the number of places to go for food, drink and cheerfulness in the neighborhood were in decline.

Although old lite-fare favorites like [On the Hill Cafe](#) and [Park Cafe](#) have been around, along with the newer craft beer bar [Brass Tap](#) and its dive bar neighbor *Mt. Vernon Tavern* were there on Mt. Royal Avenue, the vacancy at the old *B Bistro*, on Bolton Street, the closing of the Barnes & Noble bookstore with its small coffee shop at the Fitzgerald Apartments and the shutdown not so far away of *The Elephant* in Mt. Vernon were disconcerting.

But while The Bulletin was away, good things have happened.

[Noona's](#), which had only just opened on Mt. Royal Avenue near the Brass Tap, has become a fine place for pizza, light dining and good drinks from 5 to 9 p.m. and, starting recently, will feature happy hour drink and food prices after 9 until midnight Thursdays through Saturdays. Owner Phil Han says that the extended hours are working well and that if they continue to do so, he may add live music to the venue on these evenings come summer weather.

[The Tilted Row](#), a still-shiny and full-service restaurant on the ground floor of the new apartment

building at McMechen Street and Eutaw Place, has an attractive “Blue Plate Special” and daily “Chef’s Choice” \$20 entrée and dessert features. The Sun called it an “elegant, welcoming” brasserie that features half-price bottle wines mid-week.

And finally! After months of anxious anticipation, [CookHouse](#) is at last open in the old B Bistro site, with a new look, a full bar and a dinner menu that tips toward Old Europe. Neighborhood resident and owner George Dailey, who also operates *On the Hill*, plans eventually to offer all-day service, outdoor seating, a full bar, and a thoughtful carry-out program.

Things are looking up.

*by Bill Hamilton*

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