



The Victoria Voice

Victoria Community News & Information

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The Victoria Voice

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by the residents of The
Victoria Condominium
Community.

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The residents of
The Victoria

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President's Report

By: Art Casanova


The Board wishes a Happy New Year to all The Victoria owners, residents and commercial tenants. The holidays are a time to celebrate the year behind us, and the time to look ahead. Resolutions are a good way to start the New Year and the Board has a few to share with you. If anyone has something to add, please let us know. They are:

- Fixing the remaining moisture penetrations on the top floor apartments; mainly in the Eastern exposure.
- Plan the first round of concrete restoration and patching repairs for early 2005 to the garage G1 Soffit.
- Improve Security Awareness by the Residents.
- Review the indoctrination procedure or check list for new residents.
- Continue to participate with Rocknet and their endeavors for a Wireless Rockville; Let's hope that we can piggyback The Victoria on such development.
- Investigate possibilities for instant hot water delivery for all apartments that may experience long delays.
- Explore Satellite TV Service for the building and competition to Com-Cast.
- Explore Speed Pass access to the building without compromise to its security.
- Plaza Breezeway access gate design exploration.
- Keep heavy trucks from parking in the Breezeway.
- Keep reminding the City of its commitment to noise level abatement and dust and mud control during Town Center Construction.

Again, looking ahead! Thirteen acres are under development across Middle Lane. In the first quarter of this year we will begin to see demolition work and, soon after, construction will start that will last approximately three years. A full tally of new construction for the next decade will include a total of 60 acres of property in the surrounding Town Center area as reported in the Rockville Reports newspaper. All this work in the next several years means the start of a vibrant Town Center with a prominent Town Square,

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large public library, many small scale retail stores and many more condominiums and rental residences. We expect this activity to be a harbinger of good things to our neighborhood and to all of Rockville's Residents.

Opinions abound on the impact of all this construction. To have a better feel for the impact, I spoke to a realtor that has a considerable vested interest in Rockville Real Estate to obtain a professional opinion. The Board of Directors believes the following to be realistic:

What can we expect respective to property sales at The Victoria? Sales may slow down initially as there will be a glut of apartments for rent and sale. This is expected to be short term, say the next several years. As a test, we already have very new rental luxury apartments next to the Giant food store with no recognizable impact to our property.

Property values? The Victoria properties values have increased approximately fifty percent in the last two to three years. This is partly because of the unique location to businesses and Metro as well as a lifting of Real Estate values in general. During the glut of new living units, values will probably stagnate, but not lower. The long-term forecast is that property values will stay very healthy.

The Victoria has several advantages with respect to the future Town Center. It is an established building with an overall high margin of safety at its core of operation and functionality. It is constructed primarily of concrete, masonry, and steel wall studding. It is considered a very fire resistant building because of the structural materials. As such, new construction nearby probably will not match the structural character of these materials. It is also a secure building with perimeter controlled key and electronic access and has residents that are mindful of restricting access to legitimate visitors.

Will property values stay competitive at The Victoria? Maintenance is a key factor in keeping property values up. The Owners and the Board of Directors are committed to maintaining reserves funds to match professionally predicted estimates of future building maintenance and repairs. The Reserves Plan is updated every five years to assure adequate funding for future repairs. The Victoria building will continue to operate at peak efficiency and its overall appearance will be preserved as a result of timely maintenance. This maintenance is not dependent on special assessment and the year-to-year struggle to achieve the necessary votes to increase monthly costs.

What assurances are there that the Association has the resolve to continue current practices? The building is managed professionally. Although non-compensated volunteers staff the Board of Directors and various Committees, to date these people have always been Owners with a personal interest in their property and are very receptive to the recommendation of their neighbors. Our contract staffs are professionals with a vested interest in their field of property management. These are Magnolia Baez, Site Manager, Tony Martella, Property Manager, Tony DiMarco, Maintenance Contractor, and CMI for finances and property oversight. Contractors to do the work are chosen through a process of competing bids.

We have the Owners will, the funds, the people on the Board of Directors and the staff to sustain this building operating at top form. Happy and Prosperous New Year. For the Board of Directors, Art Casanova.



**From The Management Desk
Magnolia Baez/On-Site Manager
Important Reminders**

Management requests that all unit owners, residents and tenants remain mindful of the following:

- **Plaza Parking**

During the past few weeks this office has noticed that many guests of the Victoria are being towed by G&C towing. This is primarily because the residents and commercial tenants are not informing their guests of the parking policy. You, the residents/tenants are responsible for informing your guests what they need to do in order to avoid their vehicles from being towed.

Aside from being an inconvenience to your guest's, it can be expensive. The price for retrieving the vehicle from the towing company can range from \$95.00 to \$115.00. These prices do not include storage fees or any other fees they may have. Remember, that towing is taking place 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Management does not need advance notice from G&G prior to removing a vehicle in violation from the property. Furthermore, management cannot be responsible for keeping track of all vehicles visiting or working at the Victoria.

Please remember to inform your guests, cleaning staff, realtor agents, and contractors that they need a permit to park on the courtyard.

- **Kitchen Back Ups**

In the past, we have had many kitchen back ups, because the kitchen pipes are very small and are not able to digest all the waste from the different floors at one time. We have been trying to reduce or better yet, stop all kitchen back ups in the community by hydro jetting (cleaning) the pipes more frequently. However, we need everyone to help prevent backups by following some of the suggestions mentioned below; otherwise, the next backup could be in your unit.

- Do not put grease or oil into any of the drains. Place your grease into a container or use paper towels to remove the grease from your kitchen utensils and dispose of it with your regular trash.
- Minimize the amount of soap that you use in your dishwasher and washing machine.
- Do not dispose of diapers or feminine products through the plumbing systems even if they are advertised as being flushable.
- Please bag cat litter and dispose of it with your regular trash rather than flushing it.
- Do not dispose of rice, coffee beans, eggshells, potato peels, cucumber peels, vegetable peels of skin, onion skins or other foreign object through any of the drains.

Unscheduled Deliveries, Contractors and Trucks on the Plaza

As per the Rules and Regulations of The Victoria Condominium, trucks are not allowed on the Plaza at anytime. Many residents schedule deliveries or invite contractors to the community and fail to inform them that the Plaza is not equipped for heavy trucks or available for contractors. Please remember in the future to inform your delivery drivers or contractors that they must park on Courthouse Square or Middle Lane.

In addition, residents need to remember that deliveries are not allowed on Weekends without prior approval from Management. Any trucks or vans belonging to residents, contractors or delivery companies will be towed from the property without further notice and at the owner's expense.



CIVIC AFFAIRS NOTES
A New Town Center Begins To Take Shape
By Martin Heilman

With a lot of hemming and hawing and last minute lobbying, the County Council finally approved the Counties \$12-million dollar commitment to Rockville's new Town Center. This was the final act that was needed to begin the redevelopment of the area between Middle Lane, Beall Avenue, North Washington Street and Rockville Pike.

The tentative start date is April 1, 2004.

The first actions will not be very visible. This is the disconnecting of gas and electric utilities from the vacated stores in the shopping plaza. Utilities are notoriously slow in carrying out these connect/disconnect activities.

Magruder's will be the last to close. By contract, this will occur near June 1st.

The first visible construction activity will be the newly relocated condominiums, over street level retail, on the site between the extended Maryland Avenue and the Foulger- Pratt property. These units were originally planned to be in the corner where the Amoco gas station is located. The combined noise from 355 traffic and the fire house was the catalyst for this relocation. In about 30-day increments, construction will begin in the sequence of blocks going clock wise around the library site.

The construction of the new library is the responsibility of the county, while Federal Realty and its partners are constructing the balance of the block.

The residential component has a goal of half rental and half owner occupied units. The condominiums will number between 600 and 650 units. They will consist of 1 and 2 bedroom units with no efficiencies. The size of the units will vary from 750 to 1500 square feet. If the market demand warrants, three bedroom units can be incorporated at a later date.

In another related matter, Blackridge Company, the new owners of the parking lot in front of the Regal Cinema, have come up with a new proposal for that site. Instead of two massive office buildings, they are proposing a somewhat smaller project that will be a mix of residential and office with street level retail/entertainment/restaurants.

The start date for the rebuilding of Richard Montgomery High School will depend on the availability of state funding. However, the development plan is now virtually set. The plan involves building the new structures on the site of the present athletic fields. After the new buildings are complete and occupied, the present structures will be demolished and the new fields will be reestablished on the cleared site. Thus, unlike other school renovations, the students will not have to be reassigned during the construction.



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A number of businesses have made or announced plans to relocate and/or return to Town Center.

- There will eventually be three Chevy Chase banks to serve us. First, there is the existing branch in the new Giant. Second, the new 355 branch that is now under construction on the East side of 355 next to the Market Tire store. Finally, a new location will be selected in the Town Center proper.
- Magruders, by contract will stay open until June 1st. It will be the last to close. Magruders now operates a new store in the College Plaza shopping center, 3 miles north of the store that will be closed. They have signed a commitment to return when the construction is complete.
- CVS and possibly one more tenant will operate temporarily out of the former Mack's Hardware site. Their new permanent site eventually will be located where the Amoco gas station now stands. They selected this site because they can incorporate a drive thru facility in this location.
- Both CVS. Chevy Chase Bank, and a Federal Realty site office will operate out of trailer facilities on the lot just east of the Victoria for a short period of time.
- Sir Speedy printing has relocated across North Washington Street between Chop Stix and Temptations Ice Cream (the long vacant Signet Bank site).
- The UPS Store/Mail Boxes will be relocated at 451 Hungerford Drive.
- Giuseppe's Pizza and the Barber Shop by Center Cleaners will relocate to the former Benito's Restaurant next to the Regal Theater. This will finally completely fill all of the street level retail space in that building. The Public Defenders Office and other commercial tenants will fill the second floor.
- The Waygoose will relocate to Bethesda, continuing as a tenant of Federal Realty, and they plan to return by opening a second location in Town Center.
- The Tiger Deli, has relocated to the annex of 401 North Washington Street. It faces the parking of the former Giant.

It is not readily apparent from the street, but sections of the residential development next to the new Giant have been occupied since late October.



**Quality Assurance Notes—
Trash Disposal at the Victoria
By: Phyllis Feldman**

This is a quality of life issue that must be addressed on a daily basis. With this in mind, our management and janitorial staff have been very aggressive in their inspections and constant cleaning of areas of the property where trash may be left, i.e. recycling bins at the Middle Lane entrance, and the large loading dock container.

In addition, as a service to our community, management has implemented a plan whereby large items are picked up for disposal twice a year. This is working out quite well, and we would like to commend all the residents who have cooperated in this endeavor and who are following all our rules for disposing of trash.

However, on the weekend of February 28-29, nine large bags of trash were left at the Middle Lane entrance. It is this kind of flagrant violation that places an extra burden upon staff, exposes residents to an unsightly view of waste, and raises the possibility of insect and rodent infestations.

With our help we know that this can be avoided. Therefore, we ask that you do not place trash or boxes on the garage floor surrounding the recycling bins.

All boxes should be disposed of in the large trash container that sits near the loading dock at the East end of the G1 level in the garage. Kindly use the trash chute on your floor for all other items.

Please do not walk your dogs in our planter beds, or leave paper cups, cans, or tobacco items in these areas of the condominium.

Be aware that management may levy a fine of up to **\$200** for any violations of our rules. If you are unsure of how and where to dispose of an item, call the management office at (301) 294-0303. Again, we thank all residents for their cooperation and support in helping to keep the Victoria clean and beautiful.



For Your Information

Neighborhood Watch (Citizens Involved for Community Safety)

The Victoria Condominium participates in Rockville's Neighborhood Watch Program.

**Information and pertinent observations should be reported to the
Rockville City Police at:
240-314-8900**

Victoria Board Meetings

These are the remaining dates for Board meetings for 2004. As you know, the meetings will be held at the Red Brick Courthouse Building in Room 105.

**March 10
April 14
May 12
June 9
July 14
August 11
September 8
October 13
November 10
December 8, 2004**