

# WEST END CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Rockville, Maryland



May 2022

## YOU ARE INVITED!

To the West End Citizens Association  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Thursday, May 12, 2022

7:00 PM at Rockville Presbyterian Church

### **Historic Preservation: Its Role in Saving the West End**

#### **Guest Speakers:**

Eileen McGuckian, "Rockville's Historian"

Lynn Wagman, West Montgomery Avenue resident

Nancy Pickard, Executive Director, Peerless Rockville

### **Annual Election of WECA Officers** - This year's candidate slate:

President: Brian Shipley

Vice President: Noreen Bryan

Vice President, Outreach: Ellen Childs

Treasurer: Jen Timmick

Corresponding Secretary: Jane Pontius

Recording Secretary: Margaret Magner

### **We hope to see you there!**

Any resident of the West End who is over 18 years of age is a member of the West End Citizens Association (WECA). If this newsletter was delivered to your door, YOU ARE A MEMBER OF WECA.

## SpringFest – a West End Community Gathering

Saturday, May 21 – Noon - 3PM – Monument Park

**Hamburgers, Hotdogs & Fixings Provided | Kids' Entertainment: Balloon Twisting**



Bring a side dish, chips, or dessert to share and a beverage of your choice.

Bathroom facilities will be available.



This newsletter was delivered by \_\_\_\_\_, your WECA Block Captain.

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

-Brian Shipley  
shipley.brian@gmail.com



Happy Spring! As I walk around our wonderful neighborhood, I am thrilled to see beautiful signs of spring – daffodils in bloom and trees full of green buds – and watch our community climb out of our winter hibernation and come back to life!

The WECA Executive Board accomplished a lot this year including the launch of a design guidelines committee to preserve the character of the West End, interim zoning changes to fight the encroachment of commercial properties into our neighborhoods, and recommendations on behalf of the West End for Capital Improvement Projects and proposed “Road Diets”. Please join us to keep up to date on issues affecting the West End.

**Our General Membership Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2022, at 7 PM at the Rockville Presbyterian Church.** We will elect next year’s officers and hear two dynamic talks on historic preservation. Eileen McGuckian, Rockville’s historian, and Lynn Wagman, a long-time West End resident, will talk about their roles in the establishment of Rockville’s first Historic District along W. Montgomery Avenue. Nancy Pickard, the Executive Director of Peerless Rockville, will address the advantages of historic designation. Come early, enjoy some light snacks and celebratory beverages, and learn about historic preservation in the West End.

**WECA is hosting a SpringFest social on Saturday, May 21, from 12 to 3 PM at Monument Park.** Come meet new neighbors and catch up with folks you haven’t seen over the last two plus years. I’m looking forward to a great day of fun, food, and friendship. WECA will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, and fixings and a balloon twister for the kids! Parking is limited so please walk if you can.

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## ROCKVILLE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

The Rockville Environment Commission is a nine-member body of Rockville residents that recommends policies and programs to the Mayor and Council and city staff relating to the environment and sustainability.

The Environment Commission had a busy and successful year in 2021. In addition to weighing in on many state, county, and city environmental initiatives, significant accomplishments included:

- Active involvement in the development of Rockville’s new Climate Action Plan, which outlines the city’s approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing the community to adapt to a changing climate.
- Hosted a booth at the Rockville farmer’s market to promote a solar panel co-op. More than 90 Rockville households took advantage of this program to add solar panels to their house!
- Finally, in addition to weighing in on many state, county, and city environmental initiatives, the Commission assisted with the city’s recertification by Sustainable Maryland 2021.

Here are just a few of the opportunities for West End residents to get involved and volunteer at an environmental event or service project:

### Weed Warrior Workdays.

Join Rockville Weed Warrior Leaders for a non-native, invasive plant removal workday. Student Service Learning (SSL) hours available. Space is limited. Find upcoming events and register at [www.rockvilled.gov/weedwarriors](http://www.rockvilled.gov/weedwarriors).

### Upcoming EV Co-op.

Look for the Commission again this summer at the farmer’s market. This year we will be promoting a co-op designed to assist Rockville

residents in the purchase of an electric vehicle and EV charging equipment.

### Earth Month at Croydon Creek Nature Center.

Croydon Creek Nature Center offers many fun events and projects throughout the year.

Upcoming events include:

- Sunday, May 1: Invasive Species Pull, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, May 7: 20th Annual Spring Festival and Native Plant Sale, 10 a.m. - noon
- Learn more at <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/380/Croydon-Creek-Nature-Center>

To learn more about the Environment Commission and upcoming opportunities, sign up for the “Environment and Sustainability News” email newsletter to get event announcements, news about Rockville’s Climate Action Plan, and tips for living greener year-round. Visit

<https://www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters> and select “Environment and Sustainability”.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 29,  
5:30 P.M.**

**LOCATION: WOODLEY GARDENS PARK  
PAVILION ON NELSON STREET**

**Join your neighbors for a Meet & Greet  
to learn more about starting a village  
in West Rockville!**

**A village is a neighbor to neighbor  
volunteer network with the purpose of  
strengthening the community by helping  
one another.**

**Snacks will be provided.  
All are welcome!!**

**Let's get connected!**

**Questions? Contact  
240-314-8807 or  
pevans@rockvillemd.gov**

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

The newly adopted Neighborhood Plan covering the West End recommends developing design guidelines as a way of preserving the character of the neighborhood as it evolves. The Mayor and Council included funding for a West End Design Guidelines initiative in its FY22 budget.

Recent WECA newsletters and community list serv emails have covered the planning stages for West End Design Guidelines and suggestions for how residents could get involved. We're happy to report that the Design Guidelines Committee, made up of nine West End residents and a representative from Peerless Rockville, is now actively working with the Rockville Planning and Development Services team to develop a clear set of design guidelines and standards for construction of new infill homes and additions to existing properties. The aim is not to suppress development or change existing structures, but rather to ensure that newly-built homes or additions contribute positively to the character and environmental health of the neighborhood.

One of the first tasks completed by the West End Design Guidelines Committee was to define specific goals for the initiative. Drawing on goals published in East Rockville's Design Guidelines, and tailoring them for our community, the Committee identified the following Goals and Objectives:

- Preserve and enhance the character of the neighborhood by assuring that the critical elements of character are realized in specific requirements and guidelines for infill housing, additions to existing houses, accessory buildings and landscape revisions.
- Promote site design that preserves the natural features in the neighborhood, minimizes adverse impacts to the environment and enhances sustainability in the face of climate change.
- Maintain and enhance a walkable and pedestrian-friendly environment.

- Promote complementary and context-sensitive development between new and existing structures, while also allowing creative design.

This is a grass roots neighborhood effort. As the work progresses over the summer and fall of 2022, there will be multiple ways for West End residents to provide input and stay updated:

- This month, please share your views by answering the questions in the survey included as an insert on pages 5-8 in this newsletter. The survey consists of 28 questions and should take about 10 minutes to complete. It can be taken online or by mailing in the newsletter insert.
- Several virtual information sessions are planned for the summer months. Residents will be able to see brief updates on the project, ask questions and provide input to Committee members and the City Planning and Development Services team working on Design Guidelines.
- Two Community Meetings are planned for the fall, as specific Design Guidelines are being drafted, so that West End residents can provide feedback before the Guidelines are presented to the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council.

**Your input is critical to the success of this initiative and to ensuring the Guidelines reflect the values of the community!** Please take the enclosed survey this month and look for information on the WECA website [westendrockvillemd.org](http://westendrockvillemd.org) and list serv emails about upcoming virtual information sessions and Community Meetings.

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### West End Citizens Association

For more information, contact  
Brian Shipley, President [shipley.brian@gmail.com](mailto:shipley.brian@gmail.com)  
Interested in getting more involved? Consider being  
a Block Captain! Contact Jane Pontius  
[jane.m.pontius@gmail.com](mailto:jane.m.pontius@gmail.com)

# West End Neighborhood Design Guidelines Survey

To: For All Households in the West End Neighborhood  
From: West End Citizens Association Design Guidelines Committee

This survey is for residents of Rockville’s West End neighborhood. The neighborhood is roughly bounded as follows: North Washington Street on the East; Martins Lane, Mannakee Street and Owens Street on the North; Route I-270 on the West; and Maryland Avenue on the South. If you received this newsletter, you are a resident.

In 2021 the City of Rockville adopted a new Neighborhood Plan as part of Rockville’s Comprehensive Plan. To view a copy of the Neighborhood Plan for the West End, go to page 284 of the Comprehensive Plan document: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/42694/>. As a follow-on effort the West End Citizens Association is working with the city to develop design guidelines. The goal is to preserve the character of the neighborhood when new houses are built or additions are made to existing properties. **We need your help to accurately reflect the values of the community!** Please share your views by answering the questions in the survey which follows. The survey consists of 28 questions and should take about 10 minutes to complete.

## Help preserve the best of the West End!

We hope you will make this survey a household project. At the end there is an opportunity to share, unprompted, your views of the best aspects of West End that are worthy of preservation.

	<p>We strongly encourage you to complete this survey online! Just use this QR code or go to <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X3N3NK6">https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X3N3NK6</a> If you prefer, you may remove and complete these survey insert pages and mail the paper survey to: WECA c/o Margaret Magner, 115 Forest Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850 Please do not do both; only one survey per household!</p>
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Please complete the survey by **May 27, 2022**. With your help, we can build a better West End neighborhood and a better City of Rockville. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Margaret Magner at [margaretmagner@gmail.com](mailto:margaretmagner@gmail.com).

*Thank you for your participation in this important effort!*

### WECA Design Guidelines Committee

Noreen Bryan	Maggie Hadley	Nancy Pickard
Chris Clarke	Margaret Magner	Rev. Jane Wood
Don Hadley	Caitlin Olson	Patrick L. Woodward

## West End Neighborhood Design Guidelines Survey, continued

\*Indicates a required answer

### \*Q-1 Please check the answer that best describes your location:

- I live in the West End neighborhood.
- I live in another Rockville neighborhood.
- I am not a Rockville resident.

### \*Q-2 Please check if you live in:

- a historically designated house
- an area governed by a Homeowner's Association (HOA)
- neither of the above

### \*Q-3 This survey is available in online and paper formats. Have you already completed this survey?

- Yes       No      *If yes, we appreciate that you have taken this survey! Please do not complete the survey more than once. Thank you!*

## Section I. Friendliness and Walkability

### Q-4 In a few words, what makes it a joy for you to live in the West End?

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### Q-5 What elements of the streetscape are important to facilitate walking and interaction with neighbors? Check all that apply.

- a. Front entries       b. Front porches and stoops
- c. Sidewalks       d. Front yards
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_       f. None of the above

### Q-6 How important are street trees along roads and sidewalks?

- Very important       Somewhat important
- Not so important       Not important at all

## Section II. Park-like Environment *Please choose one answer per question.*

### Q-7 Is it important that backyards are mostly comprised of trees and green space that can support gardens, recreation, quiet space, privacy?

- Very important       Somewhat important
- Not so important       Not important at all

### Q-8 How important are additional limits on the amount of driveway or other paved area in front yards?

- Very important       Somewhat important
- Not so important       Not important at all

### Q-9 How important are limits on the amount of paved area in back yards? (e.g., parking areas or patios)

- Very important       Somewhat important
- Not so important       Not important at all

## West End Neighborhood Design Guidelines Survey, *continued*

**Q-10 Is it important that the neighborhood's existing balance of open space to buildings be preserved?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-11 The neighborhood is known for its canopy of mature trees. Is it important to preserve this?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

### **Section III. Architecture/Spatial Relationships/Scale** *Please choose one answer per question.*

**Q-12 Is it important that the height and mass of new construction not overshadow houses on neighboring lots?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-13 How important is it that new construction does not adversely impact neighboring properties (e.g., loss of privacy or solar access, erosion, stormwater runoff)?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-14 Is the topography of a lot (e.g., hilly, flat, uphill, downhill) important to the size and placement of the structure(s) to be built on it?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-15 Is it important that the design of new homes, additions and accessory buildings preserve existing mature trees on the lot?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-16 Is it important that a garage be set back from the front façade of the house?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-17 Is it important that the entryway and main living space of new construction houses be at street level (i.e., not elevated or designed one story above ground level)?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-18 Is it important that the front door of a new home face the street?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

## West End Neighborhood Design Guidelines Survey, continued

### Section IV. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change *Please choose one answer per question.*

**Q-19 Is it important that new construction include trees to enhance and/or restore the neighborhood canopy?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-20 Is it important that existing houses be protected from stormwater runoff and erosion resulting from new construction (infill houses and/or additions)?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-21 Is it important that our neighborhood encourage a healthy environment for birds, and that the plants needed to sustain birds are available?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-22 Is it important that plants are available to support bees and other pollinators?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-23 Is it important that neighbors' access to sunlight be preserved when new construction (infill houses and/or additions) occurs?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

**Q-24 Is it important that new construction (infill houses and/or additions) does not negatively impact trees and plants on neighboring lots?**

- Very important                       Somewhat important  
 Not so important                       Not important at all

### Section V. Optional Information

*If you would like, please share any of the following information:*

**Q-25 Please expand on any of your survey answers here, and/or share your thoughts on preserving the best aspects of the West End.** *(Optional question. Please attach an additional sheet of paper if desired.*

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**Q-26 Your name (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-27 Your address (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-28 How long have you lived in the West End neighborhood? (optional)**

- Less than 2 years                       2 – 10 years  
 11 – 20 years                       More than 20 years

## New Tourism Website, Explore Rockville, to Launch

Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI) is excited to announce the upcoming launch of Rockville's new tourism website - Explore Rockville - in the coming weeks. Developed in collaboration with Visit Montgomery and the City of Rockville, Explore Rockville seeks to:

- Promote and support Rockville's tourism, hospitality, and retail industries
- Establish Rockville as a regional destination for arts, culture, and international cuisine
- Support the attraction and retention of businesses, workforce and residents

The Explore Rockville website will feature events, things to do, curated itineraries, and, of course, Rockville's myriad of restaurants. The website will also highlight the city's unique commercial neighborhoods such as Rockville Town Center, King

Farm, and Rock East District, all of which have their own history and vibe.

Stay tuned for the launch of Explore Rockville!

*REDI works to identify and develop economic opportunities to help Rockville prosper. If you need business assistance or more information on Rockville, please visit: [www.rockvilleredi.org](http://www.rockvilleredi.org)*

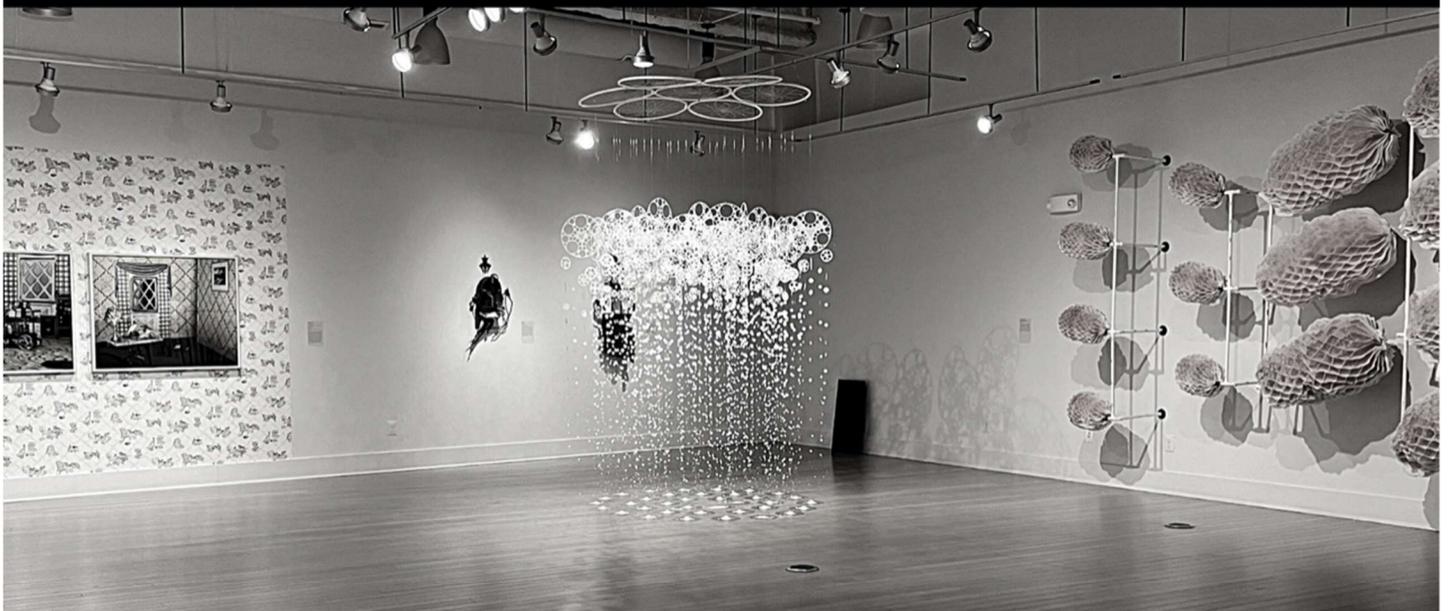
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## ROAD DIETS FOR NORTH WASHINGTON STREET AND EAST MIDDLE LANE

“Road Diets” is a short way of saying reducing motorized vehicles in favor of other modes of travel—foot, bicycle, and bus. Rockville is engaged in designing “Road Diets” for North Washington Street and East Middle Lane. The goal is to make them more business-friendly and safer/accessible to walkers and cyclists. WECA supports these worthy goals.

The city’s design for Road Diets is well underway. As proposed, two lanes of vehicular traffic will be eliminated, leaving one travel lane in each direction. Bike lanes would be added to both sides of the street with concrete barriers between bike and vehicular lanes. Parallel parking will be added at a few locations. No improvements are planned for sidewalks along North Washington Street.

Rockville’s Chief of Traffic and Transportation presented the proposed design to WECA’s Executive Board in December 2021. After discussions, WECA concluded that the design does not strike the right balance amongst vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and buses. WECA’s concerns were sent to the Mayor/Council and City staff:

**Vehicular Travel** - WECA believes that reducing travel lanes from two to one in each direction will cause traffic back-ups and congestion. The businesses and government services in Rockville’s Town Center - the Post Office, Social Security Offices, restaurants, gas stations, banks, and the shops of Town Square – all depend on North Washington Street for delivery of goods and access by customers. For West End residents, North Washington Street is essentially the only way to head north on MD 355. If North Washington Street successfully redevelops, significantly more motorized vehicles will be traveling to new businesses.

**Bicycle Travel** - WECA supports traveling by bicycle and providing safe passage for cyclists. However, the Road Diets design devotes nearly half of the roadway to bicycles, even though they comprise only a tiny fraction of travelers.

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*Gloria & Randy*

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Paul Hillstrom, Broker



**Reduced safety-** Buses, when loading and discharging passengers, often may stop in the travel lane halting vehicular travel and thus, creating a safety hazard as frustrated drivers pull around buses into on-coming traffic. The bus stops along North Washington Street are essential to Town Center; eliminating bus stops to improve vehicular travel would not be a solution.

**Overflow Traffic into the West End-** WECA is concerned that drivers caught in gridlock will cut through the neighborhood. This would exacerbate an already dangerous problem of cut-through traffic that exists today.

**Sidewalks along North Washington Street -** Walkability is a top priority for West End residents. The sidewalks along North Washington Street north of Dawson Street are narrow and dangerous. Increasing the width of sidewalks and installing street trees are critically needed.

**WECA believes that a better balance between motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and buses is needed.** Before the city commits to a Road Diets

design, it is essential to understand whether Town Center will be enhanced or harmed by traffic jams that discourage redevelopment. Will the roadway have the capacity to accommodate the added vehicles and new customers that will come with redevelopment? Are improved streetscapes and sidewalks essential to attract new businesses? Of the motorized vehicles on North Washington Street today, how many could be realistically replaced by bicycles or walking? Does the design optimize demand amongst all travelers?

Learn more about this important issue. The plan for Road Diets is part of the Vision Zero initiative, <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/2312/Vision-Zero>.

Share your opinion with the Mayor and Council at [mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov). If you are willing to share your views with WECA, please forward your email to Brian Shipley, WECA President, at [shipley.brian@gmail.com](mailto:shipley.brian@gmail.com).

**CHECK OUT**

**Jazz Brunch**  
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\$8.99/kids 4-10  
kids 3 and under eat free

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**Best Private School (Lower School)**  
and  
**Best Preschool/Daycare**



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