



BELMONT UNIVERSITY AND NEIGHBORS DEBATE TRAFFIC ISSUES BEFORE METRO

BY LINDSEY TRELLA MOFFAT

Belmont University has grown faster than neighbors (and perhaps the University) anticipated. A new College of Law is soon to be under construction near the southwest corner of 15th and Acklen, and other buildings are on the drawing board for the campus. This academic year Belmont has more than 5,900 students enrolled, and its goal is 7,000 by 2015. Increased enrollment means more traffic in our neighborhood. Residents already experience heavy traffic in the streets around the campus and on Belmont Boulevard (especially at Bernard and Blair), and they do not want expansion to further increase these pressures.

University development is currently under an Institutional Overlay, adopted by Metro Council in 2005 with the guidance of then Council Representative Ginger Hausser. From the neighborhood perspective, the Overlay serves as a guide to growth, protecting surrounding residential areas from negative consequences such as increased traffic, light and noise intrusion, and loss of residential amenities. As a condition of the Overlay, Belmont is required to fund a Traffic Impact Study Update every five years. This spring, Belmont engaged Bob Murphy, a nationally known traffic engineer, to do the traffic study update. His firm, RPM, has done automated and direct counts of traffic and pedestrians. Peak hours, not surprisingly, are 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. and 4:45 to 5:45 p.m.

The principal recommendations of the study are a traffic signal at Wedgewood and 15th, with left turn and pedestrian phases. Parking would be limited to the east side of 15th,

and the street would eventually be widened on the west or east side, depending on property acquisition by Belmont. Additionally, a traffic roundabout at 15th and Acklen is one proposed option to address traffic flow into campus parking. New parking structures are planned for west of 15th.

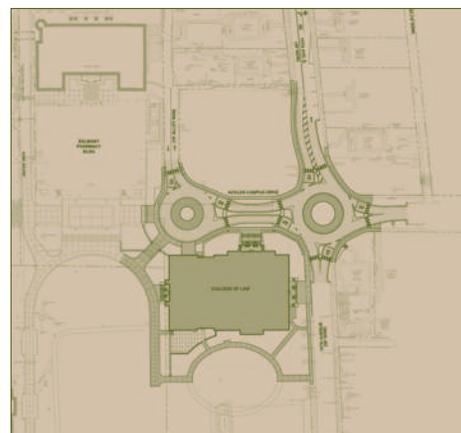
The Neighborhood Advisory Group, created under a provision in the Overlay and required to respond to the Metro Planning Commission on Belmont project plans, has been looking closely at the study and the plans. Their chief concern is the loss of parking spaces, and the implications of that to the neighborhood, as well as a loss of part of the residential buffer preserved by the Overlay in the creation of the roundabout. The plan put before the Planning Commission would eliminate more than 20 spaces, leaving only 4 or 8, depending on the chosen option, when most of the houses facing 15th have more than one dwelling unit. It would also require the tearing down of a residence in the residential buffer zone and the loss of a front yard on another home.

Council representative Kristine LaLonde has told neighbors that, while she is an employee of Belmont University, her function on the Council is to represent her constituents in the 18th District, and she has promised to hold public meetings to examine changes in the campus plan and traffic flow.

A major neighborhood concern has been on-street parking by students. Belmont has taken various mitigation measures - leafletting cars with a Belmont sticker reminding them to use on-campus parking, subsidizing of bus transportation, and making "Zip-cars" and bicycles available for short-term use. Such measures have not

been enough. Residents-only permit parking has been approved by residents on 18th Avenue South, and residents on other streets are considering it.

The Steering Committee of Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors voted on August 9th to send a letter to the Planning Commission staff expressing concerns about, and objection to, the elimination of any of the available on-street parking on 15th Avenue South. On September 8th, the Committee voted to send another letter to the Planning Commissioners and staff. This letter objects to proposed changes by the plan to the "residential buffer zone," as defined by the Institutional Overlay, by the addition of the roundabout at 15th and Acklen which would require a home be torn down and residential property within the buffer zone converted to roadway use. The Steering Committee strongly requested compliance with the IO, and that any ambiguities be weighted toward the neighborhood the IO was designed to protect. A hearing on the matter by the Metro Planning Commission is set for September 14th.



**"We must all hang together
or most assuredly we will hang
separately." ~ Benjamin Franklin**



BELMONT-HILLSBORO TREE CANOPY

BY GILL GELDREICH

The Belmont-Hillsboro Tree Canopy Fund has had an incredibly successful first year. In the past year, the Fund raised about \$5,500, and with additional money provided by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, the Fund was able to purchase and plant 55 shade trees in our neighborhood.

All the trees planted by this grant project are large shade trees expected to grow at least 40 feet tall at maturity, and the species planted include Valley Forge American Elm, Northern Red Oak, Shumard Oak, Blackgum, and Yellowwood. In addition to these large shade trees, the Fund has purchased and planted approximately 30 ornamental Serviceberry trees, which are more appropriate to place underneath power lines.

This year, the Fund has again applied for a grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to plant 55 more large shade trees. Many thanks to residents and sponsors who have generously contributed time and money to the Tree Canopy Fund, especially neighborhood resident Thomas Solinsky and Soundforest.org.

FALL CLEAN-UP DAY SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 25 8 AM TO NOON

BY GENE TESELLE

Now is the time to clean-out your basement, garage and alleyways. Come help make our neighborhood look it's best. Rolloffs to collect trash will be behind Helios Artglassworks and Osborne Bi-Rite. Instead of just

tossing your junk in the alley why not dispose of your trash responsibly. Volunteers are always welcome and needed; those with pick-up trucks to help assist our neighbors with their trash removal, people willing to unload at the rolloffs, and anyone who has a half an hour to walk the neighborhood streets picking up litter. Gloves, bags, and bright-hue safety vests will be available. Goodwill will also be at the sight and have a truck ready to receive "gently used" items.

Hot coffee and doughnuts will be ready first thing in front of Helio's.

PROJECT READY TO BEGIN

BY GENE TESELLE

Back in 1994, when St. Bernard Convent closed and sold its land, the Metropolitan Government bought the tract on the corner of 21st Avenue South and Bernard Avenue. After many delays, work is soon to start on St. Bernard Park.

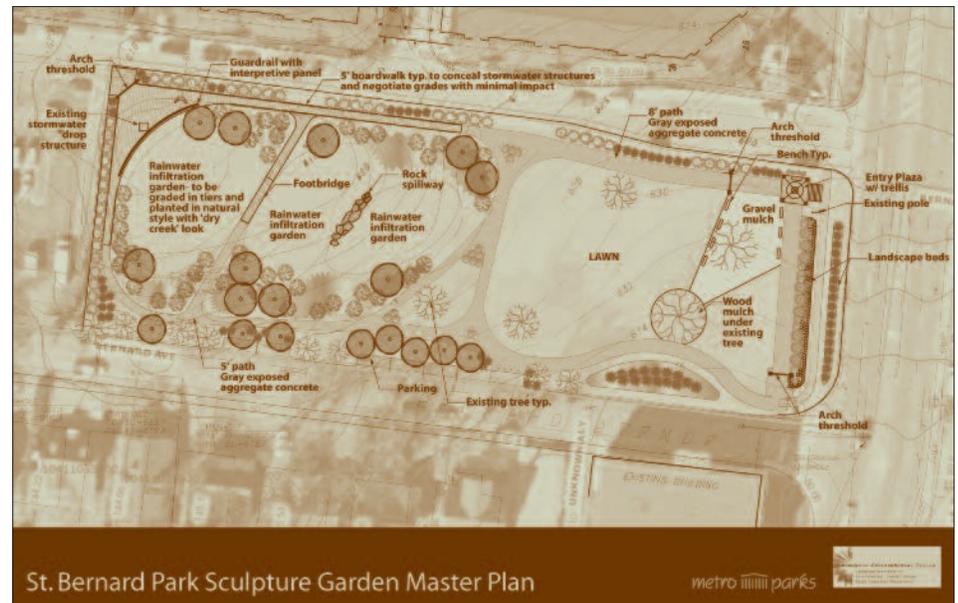
Former Council Representative Ginger Hausser also helped us get a grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation for "Gateway Corridor" improvements along 21st, from Blair through Hillsboro Village. (The grant is \$150,000, generous but still limited, and it deals with pedestrians, not traffic.) Hawkins Partners, landscape architects, were engaged to hear from the public and do the planning. There was a well-attended

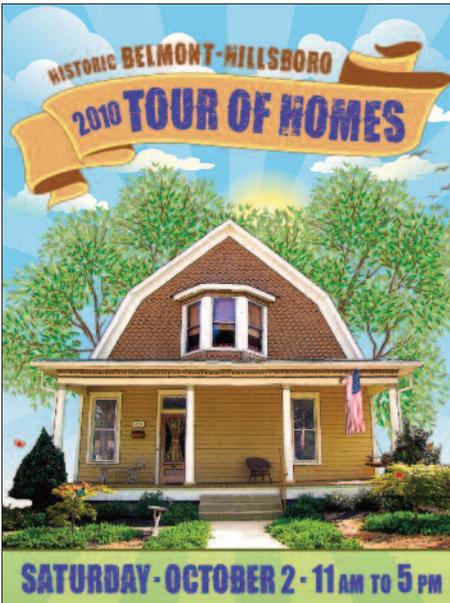
public meeting on July 22. Then the firm went to the drawing board and prepared tentative plans, which were presented on August 15, once again in the Community Center at the Belmont United Methodist Church (our thanks to the church for making this great gathering place available). The plan looks at three areas. The frontage of St. Bernard Park facing 21st Avenue will receive shade trees in the planting strip.

The intersection where Magnolia splits off from 21st will get the most attention. The vacant lots between Portland and Magnolia will become a park, with a walkway leading to the crosswalk and on into the Village. The lawn will be kept, but framed with trees, plantings, and low stone walls. The design will signal to drivers that they are getting into pedestrian territory when they turn into Magnolia.

And the Village will get sidewalk repair, healthier sites for trees, pedestrian crossings, bike racks, and several solar trash compactors with recycling bins.

There were plenty of reactions to the plan, mostly fine-tuning its ideas, and a revised plan will be put before the public at another meeting in late October. In the meantime, the project manager for Metro Public Works is John Gregor and can be reached at John.Gregor@nashville.gov, or 880-1661.





**2010 TOUR OF HOMES,
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2**

The 2010 Home Tour is slated for Saturday, October 2. Homes have been selected this year to make it a totally walkable tour, including Paris Avenue, Cedar Lane, Oakland Avenue, and Belmont Boulevard. The tour will highlight the diverse architectural styles in our neighborhood and the diverse ways people have restored and renovated historic homes or built new ones.

This year's home tour committee is co-chaired by Glenn Swann (swann.glenn@gmail.com) and Van Pond (vpondjr@bellsouth.net). Rita Frizzel designed this year's tour poster. The tour booklet, prepared by a skilled team and designed by Susie Champion, will feature photographs and descriptions of all the homes on the tour. Gary Bynum and Ann Roberts have lined up the advertisers and sponsors who are making it all possible.

Volunteers are still needed to staff the homes, in two shifts (11 to 2, and 2 to 5). Volunteers as well as homeowners and sponsors are invited to the breakfast before the tour and the after party at the end of the tour.

Contact Emily Douglas at 292-2751; emily.a.douglas@gmail.com if you can volunteer.

On the day of the tour, tickets will be sold on Belmont Boulevard at Dallas Avenue. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Hillsboro Hardware and Helios Artglassworks.

**BRAVO! TO NEIGHBORHOOD CHEF
ARNOLD MYINT**

BY JOHN RAY CLEMMONS

Our neighborhood was well represented on national television by neighborhood resident and restaurateur Arnold Myint on Bravo's Emmy winning reality show Top Chef.

Arnold competed in Washington, DC in some of the show's most creative and inventive cooking challenges yet against 16 other talented chefs from around the nation. Arnold successfully defeated all other contestants in an outdoor grilling challenge before departing the show.

Congratulations to Arnold for his outstanding performance and adding a little flavor to our neighborhood

CRIME WATCH

BY GENE TESELLE

To keep track of crime and petty theft in the neighborhood, you can receive regular messages on our list-serv. Contact info@belmont-hillsboro.org.

Recently there have been reports of thefts from cars, mostly with unlocked doors. Several thieves have been bold enough to do their work during daylight. Some are on bicycles; one apparently uses a golf cart to cruise alleys and streets.

You are urged to report all suspicious behavior to the police, (615) 862 8600 no matter how minor it seems. This will fill out their picture of what is happening and focus their patrol activities. If you see anyone or any-

thing suspicious, pull out your cell phone and take some pictures; these could be very helpful to the police.



**GO GREEN DISTRICT 18
UPDATE**

BY LINDSEY TRELLA MOFFIT

Go Green, District 18 is a campaign to lower the neighborhood's energy usage by 5% by the end of this year. To do so, the campaign has set a goal of having 360 residential homes undergo NES In-Home Energy Evaluations and make necessary retrofits to their home to lower their carbon footprint.

The campaign is still working towards the goal of 360 homes, and are over halfway there! To help get more homes signed up for an evaluation, the campaign is working with the Mayor's Office and Hands on Nashville to hold a volunteer day. On Saturday, October 2 from 9:30-12:30, volunteers will be going door to door to share information about the program, financial incentives, and the value of retrofitting your home. Answer your door that day and you'll get a Go Green, District 18 t-shirt! Questions or want to volunteer? Contact Erica Tober at Village Real Estate at 615-383-6964. Learn more **21st AVENUE "ROADSCAPE"** at www.GoGreenDistrict18.com.

Did You Know?

More than 40% of America's carbon emissions come from heating, cooling, lighting and operating buildings.

While the spirit of neighborliness was important on the frontier because neighbors were so few, it is even more important now because our neighbors are so many." ~ Lady Bird Johnson



PO BOX 120712
NASHVILLE, TN 37212

Police
862 8600

Public Works
862 8750

EVENTS CALENDAR
September 25 -
FALL CLEAN-UP
EVENT CANCELED!!! WILL
INFORM OF NEW DATE SOON!

October 2 -
14th ANNUAL HOME TOUR
Saturday, 11 am - 5 pm

Oct 1, 2, 3 -
FINE ART SHOW & SALE
Christ The King Church

October 18 -
BHN ANNUAL MEETING
Monday, 7 pm
Christ The King Church

November 2nd -
ELECTION DAY
ELECTIONS ARE COMING:
BY JOHN RAY CLEMMONS
Congratulations on surviving the primary elections this year. Now that they have finally ended, it is time to focus on November. Regardless of your political persuasion, this year's elections require your full attention and participation. The lines of legislative districts may be redrawn, a new Governor will be elected, and various other legislative seats are up for grabs. Free and fair elections form the foundation on which this republic stands so remember to take the time out of your busy schedule to vote on November 2, 2010.

BHN STEERING COMMITTEE WANTS YOU!
BY LINDSEY TRELLA MOFFAT

Belmont Hillsboro is a vibrant historic neighborhood, a fabulous place to live, work, and play. We enjoy our wonderful porches, visiting with passing neighbors or relaxing with a book. We have a network of sidewalks to stroll and bike lanes to travel. Locally owned businesses add to the urban vibe and offer great places to dine and shop, all within walking distance.

The BHN Steering Committee works hard to protect and improve upon the many amenities of our neighborhood. Among many activities, we plant trees through the ongoing Tree Canopy Project, provide two annual neighborhood cleanup days, monitor crime and look for lost pets. We host the annual Tour of Homes, an event attended by people from all over Nashville, as a way to celebrate our neighborhood and raise funds to support our activities on the neighborhood's behalf. Perhaps most importantly, we advocate on behalf of our neighborhood to uphold local ordinances and laws, and seek policies to preserve our historic residential character.

As an example, this July, the Tennessee Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal of a case challenging the legality and validity of our conservation overlay. The Court of Appeals ruling, issued last December, declared the Belmont-Hillsboro conservation overlay legal and valid. Many neighbors worked hard to put our overlay in place and were pleased that it met this legal challenge successfully. The overlay, while not

perfect, does protect and preserve the historic aspects of our neighborhood through oversight of the Metro Historic Zoning Commission.

There are several ways you can participate as a Belmont Hillsboro neighbor. First, join the listserv through our webpage, www.belmonthillsboro.org.

At the very least, you can keep abreast of lost pets, the Metro crime report, emergency issues, and news of neighborhood events. Second, support the neighborhood with annual membership dues, again through our website. This money helps our organization function on your behalf. Third, attend the Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors Annual Membership Meeting, October 18th, at Christ the King, 7:00 PM. We will elect new members to the BHN Steering Committee for the coming year, and we will vote on amendments to the current bylaws, adopted in 1971 and last amended in 1976. The Bylaws Committee, chaired by John Ray Clemmons, found the old bylaws generally useful, but it also found places where they needed serious updating.

At the Annual Meeting, you can pay your dues, (\$10 individual - \$15 household) learn about all ongoing initiatives, meet other neighbors actively involved in these projects, and volunteer for a committee. Your talents are needed, be they professional (design, legal, organizational) or avocational. Refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you!