



Your help is needed to make the 23rd Annual Cookie Tour a success, see the back for details.

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NOVEMBER 2008

Important Dates:

- Next General Meeting Wednesday, November 5th at 7pm, 1401 Hollins St., Baltimore, MD 21223
- Recycle Pick-up, Friday, November 14th and 28th
- 23rd Annual Cookie Tour, Sunday, December 14th, noon to 5pm. Tickets on sale now contact

2007 Board Members

Christopher Taylor
President

Andelson Merisca
Vice President

Tonya Osborne
Treasurer

Megan Schulze
Recording Secretary

Jocelyn Merisca
Corresponding Secretary

Fran Rahl
Director of Historic Preservation

Bill Adler
Director at Large

Kimberly Crichlow
Director at Large

Message from the President

By Chris Taylor

Friends & Neighbors,

Greetings! Last month, we were unable to get out a formal newsletter to the neighborhood due to some very busy schedules. However, we did send out an email with my monthly letter included. Since this did not reach everyone, I am going to reprint an adapted version of it in this month's newsletter.

In the last couple of months, we have had a lot of great publicity to help spread the word that we are truly the hidden gem of Baltimore. On October 2nd, we were featured in the *Baltimore Examiner* in their "Great Neighborhoods" section, one of only a few Baltimore City neighborhoods to be featured. That article was just the tip of the iceberg—the *Baltimore Examiner* also featured a green renovation on the 1700 block of Hollins on September 18th and Fox 45 nightly news devoted a cover story to the same house on September 3rd. In addition, *Style* magazine will run a story about our annual Cookie Tour in the next couple of months and the *Baltimore Sun* did a feature article about our neighborhood in the Sunday real estate section on October 19 entitled "Historic District in City Rising Fast."

Hopefully at this point you are patting yourself on the back for the wisdom that you exhibited when you chose to call Union Square home and are feeling a little pride in your neighborhood. I would like to believe that you are also asking yourself how you can help maintain the momentum and get involved to help return Union Square to its rightful place as one of the premier neighborhoods in Baltimore. Well-- the number one thing that you can do to increase your property value and the quality of life in Union Square is join and become an active

participant in the Union Square Association. Hands down this is the single biggest contribution you can make to lasting prosperity in your neighborhood. The best part is that it also the easiest step that you can take. We meet about 7-8 months out of the year for only two hours a meeting. If you join a committee, you set your own schedule and it usually revolves around eating and drinking while working and creating lasting friendships. When you weigh other options like buying, renovating and then selling a vacant house on your block or attending endless meetings with the city bureaucracy just to get a street light fixed, the first option sounds pretty easy. For the uninitiated, your first chance is this Wednesday at 7 pm at 1401 Hollins St. If you cannot make it, give me a call at 443-415-0554 to see how you can get involved.

The Presidential Challenge!!!

I am asking anyone that is already a member to try to sign up as many new people from their block as possible. Even if these people cannot attend meetings regularly, they can still be a part of the association by paying their \$5 membership fee and providing the association with a name, address, email and contact information. We are offering 2 incentives: one, this \$5 membership fee will count toward next year's dues so they are getting these last two months free, and the block with the most members by the end of the year will receive the next set of large corner planters next spring. And of course, you will also have the bragging rights of having the most involved and politically conscious block in all of Union Square. (Continued on back)

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Please remember, the size of our association membership directly correlates with our ability to affect positive outcomes with the city concerning our neighborhood.

*The block must have dedicated volunteers willing to fill and maintain the planters.

Special Tax Treatment for Historic Preservation Expenses By Fran Rahl

If you own or rent property in the area, the property is likely to be in the Union Square-Hollins Market National Register Historic District. The district is roughly bounded by W. Baltimore St., W. Pratt St., S. Schroeder St., and S. Fulton Ave. Buildings on both sides of the perimeter streets are also in the district. Properties on the odd side of the 1000, 1100, and 1200 blocks of West Lombard and all properties on those blocks of West Pratt are not in the district.

Owners of buildings in the district can benefit from some special tax treatments relating to preservation/restoration expenses. But of more importance is maintaining or bringing back the historic look and charm of the area.

Regardless of your motivation, please be aware that the district falls under regulations of CHAP (Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation). CHAP is the city agency which sets the standards for the appearances, materials, and processes related to work on the exterior of your historic building. The Union Square Association, in cooperation with the Hollins Market/Roundhouse Association, works with CHAP on the application and enforcement of the design standards.

More details are currently available from Fran Rahl, Director of Historic Preservation for the Union Square Association, Inc., and from CHAP. Fran can be reached at 410-945-1497 or francis.rahl@verizon.net. The CHAP web site is <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/historic/>.

Note that all exterior work must be covered by a CHAP Authorization to Proceed and usually a city building permit. This includes everything from replacing windows and doors to painting, although painting does not require a construction permit. Please comply with these requirements to avoid potential stop work notices, fines, and even redoing unpermitted work. Sadly, this has happened in a number of cases over the past few years. The Director of Historic Preservation will gladly meet with property owners/builders before construction begins to discuss the CHAP requirements and assist in the preparation of the Application for Notice to Proceed.

Call to Action: 23rd Annual Cookie Tour

By Megan Schulze

It's that time of year again and the cookie tour committee is asking for your help. As many of you know, the Union Square Cookie Tour is our biggest fundraiser and in order to make the 2008 Cookie Tour as big of a success as last year, we need volunteers! The tour will take place on Sunday, December 14th from 12pm-5pm.

The following is a list of ways you can help:

1. Open your house or part of your house for touring (this is the biggest way to make the tour a hit!)
2. Bake cookies or another treat for someone else to use at their house.
3. Join the committee and help with the planning of the tour.
4. Be a day-of volunteer to help with the money collection, etc.
5. Buy an ad, make a donation, or help find ads from businesses around the city.
6. Give the committee information/help in finding ways to get publicity.
7. Find businesses willing to donate prizes, gifts, etc. for the day of.

Another great tour this year could make the association close to \$5,000! Please consider opening your home, or helping out in some other way. As someone who has opened my house for the past two years, I can say that it's a great day and a lot of fun to show off what makes our neighborhood/houses special... If you are new to the neighborhood and need more information about what the cookie tour is, please email Megan at schulzemegan@gmail.com.

Advertise your business in the 2008 Cookie Tour Booklet

The ads are placed in the cookie tour booklet which goes out to all the tour attendees. Each person who places an ad gets a copy of the booklet as well.

Pricing is as follows: 1/4 page - \$75; 1/2 page - \$150; Full page- \$300; Special Thanks (a two-three line greeting for individual purchase only) - \$25.

Act Fast - Union Square T-Shirts Available for Purchase for only \$20!!!
Men & Women shirts sizes S-XXL
Contact schulzemegan@gmail.com to order!