

# Kensington Around Town February 2025



Rona Siskind | 'Snow at the Station'

## The 2025 Kensington Historical Society Calendar

The Kensington Historical Society (KHS) was founded in June 1977 to safeguard and promote the cultural and architectural heritage of the Town of Kensington. The Society presents educational programs on various aspects of local history, encourages the maintenance and restoration of Kensington's historic structures, hosts social events in historic venues, sponsors the Saturday Concert Series and publishes a yearly calendar to honor an important feature of historic Kensington, in addition to other initiatives.

The 2025 calendar celebrates the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department 100th year anniversary with many wonderful pictures reflecting KVFD history. The KHS Journal article on page 5 has information on how you can acquire one of these calendar keepsakes.



*Celebrating the Centenary of the  
Kensington Volunteer Fire Department*

# Proposed Sale of Joseph's Park

**To: Kensington Residents**

**Date: January 17, 2025**

**From: Town Staff**

**RE: The Proposed Sale of Joseph's Park**

The Mayor and Town Council introduced Ordinance No. O-01-2025, at the January 8, 2025, Town Council Meeting, which proposes the sale of 3420 Plyers Mill Road (Joseph's Park). The Public Hearing has been scheduled for Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 7:00 pm.

The Town began the public discussion for the proposed sale of Joseph's Park with an on-site community meeting March 1, 2023, and the Mayor and Town Council look forward to hearing from our residents at the Wednesday, February 12, 2025, Public Hearing. If you wish to comment, but are not available to attend the Public Hearing, please email your comments to the Mayor and Council directly at the following email: [Mayor.Council@tok.md.gov](mailto:Mayor.Council@tok.md.gov).



## **Background:**

The Town acquired 3420 Plyers Mill Road on October 31, 1956, for \$10. The acquisition of the property was directly due to an action taken by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) within the 1955 Kensington and Vicinity Master Plan, in which the Planning Commission dedicated 100' of the property located at 3420 Plyers Mill Road for public use. The 100' dedication was issued by the Planning Commission with the understanding that the land would be needed in order to widen Plyers Mill Road sometime in the future.

The owner of the property at the time, Arthur C. Hyde, acquired 3420 Plyers Mill Road in May 1953, with the intent of building a single-family home, per the zoning regulations at the time. Upon filing an application to build a single-family home on the lot in 1956, Mr. Hyde was denied application by the Town due to the 100' dedication within the 1955 Kensington and Vicinity Master Plan, which reduced the overall size of the lot below the minimum building requirements of the R60 zone (6,000 square feet).

Mr. Hyde appealed the 100' dedication before the Montgomery County Appeals Board; however, records provided by the Board of Appeals to the Town indicate that the Hearing was canceled, since Montgomery County was not authorized to waive the imposed dedication within the 1955 Kensington and Vicinity Master Plan. The Town's Meeting Minutes from July 25, 1956, support the information that the Town was able to find, by stating the following:

*July 25, 1956 – The Mayor made a report to the Council relative to the Arthur C. Hyde lot on the southwest corner of Plyers Mill Road and Wheatley Street. It was reported that Mr. Hyde purchased this lot in May 1953; that the Maryland Park and Planning Commission has taken one-half of the lot or a one-hundred-foot right of way, leaving a lot with less than the required area to build a dwelling thereon. Mr. Hyde has filed an appeal with the Montgomery County Appeals Board to waive this restriction. The County can not by law waive this restriction except in hardship cases. It was cited that the cost of said property with improvements thereon would be great if road construction would necessitate condemnation.*

While Plyers Mill Road was eventually widened by the Town, the 100' dedication outlined within the 1955 Kensington and Vicinity Master Plan was not fully necessary to complete this roadway project; however, the 100' dedication remained until 1986, when Kensington's Historic District was expanded to include certain properties along the 10500 and 10600 blocks of St. Paul Street. The expansion of the Historic District removed the 100' dedication from St. Paul Park (10564 St. Paul Street), 10549 St. Paul Street, and 3420 Plyers Mill Road, which subsequently reverted 3420 Plyers Mill Road back into a buildable, R60, parcel.

Within the current Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPHT), Montgomery Planning recommends that the existing right-of-way along Plyers Mill Road, east of Lexington Street, be expanded from a 75' right-of-way to an 80' right-of-way. While this plan recommends the potential dedication of an additional five feet (5') from 3420 Plyers Mill Road, the property would still be a buildable lot.

The property at 3420 Plyers Mill Road has remained in the Town's possession since 1956, in which the Town has made no significant improvements. However, sometime around 2003, Mayor Raufaste and the Kensington Council decided to honor the original Joseph's Park Plat by dedicating 3420 Plyers Mill Road as Joseph's Park. Aside from this designation, the planting of a few yews, and adding a formal sign dedicating the property as a park, the lot has remained mostly untouched for the last 70 years.

## **Why is the Town Staff Proposing that the Council Consider the Sale of 3420 Plyers Mill Road (Joseph's Park):**

The primary reason for the proposed sale of 3420 Plyers Mill Road (Joseph's Park) is due to the property's limitations with respect to activation as a park compared to other Town greenspaces. Joseph's Park is 7,500 square feet (0.17



# Proposed Sale of Joseph's Park



acres), which is a standard residential (R60) lot size within the Town. However, when compared to other greenspaces, Joseph's Park is small, as the most comparable greenspace is Ernest Memorial Park at 12,100 square feet (0.28 acres); conversely, Ernest Memorial Park is also adjacent to 30,800 square feet (0.71 acres) of Town-owned greenspace. Flinn Park (0.37 acres) would be comparable as well due to its proximity to residential properties, but is also twice the size of Joseph's Park, and located in a mixed-use area and across from the Kensington Post Office.

The proposed sale of Joseph's Park has been a long-discussed option by the Town, specifically by the Town staff, to evaluate all of our assets and determine how best to improve Kensington for today, tomorrow, and the future. The Town staff has determined that Joseph's Park's limitations with regards to activation and topography, along with the fact that the property has remained essentially without improvements (furnishings or plantings) for 70 years, indicates that selling the property would allow the Town to purchase a different parcel that would better serve the community.

More specifically, the Town has identified additional land for public greenspace, including a portion of the Kensington Crossing HOA property (1.1 acres) west of Silver Creek, along with 10800 St. Paul Street (0.14 acres), both of which would allow the Town to expand upon our current parkland for not only recreational purposes,

but also provide more greenspace to plant larger trees and replenish our tree canopy. In addition, both properties have unique advantages compared to Joseph's Park, as they are both partially located within the County's floodplain zone, which would allow the Town to include them within our stormwater management improvement plans.

## How Would the Funds Received from the Sale of Joseph's Park be Used:

While the Town is actively engaged in conversations to acquire the Kensington Crossing HOA property west of Silver Creek, the anticipated revenues from the sale of Joseph's Park would be beneficial beyond the proposed acquisitions of 10800 St. Paul Street and the Kensington Crossing HOA parcel. Appraised in 2023 for \$450,000, the sale of Joseph's Park would allow the Town to allocate monies into our Land Acquisition fund within the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The Town has made a commitment to improve our infrastructure and overall health by making more strategic decisions, such as targeted investments in stormwater management, land acquisition, and expanding uses within our public facilities and greenspaces. The Town is actively planning four upcoming stormwater management projects: 1) Carroll and Hadley Place; 2) Armory Avenue and Baltimore Street; 3) St. Paul Street; and 4) Farragut Avenue. We have also taken the initiative to acquire the property located at 10528 St. Paul Street (formally the ServPro property) for a future Public Works building, in anticipation of the Summit Avenue Extension project being completed in FY32. The Town is also looking to acquire the adjacent property at 10526 St. Paul Street, which would allow us to position the future Public Works building in a way that would allow additional amenities to be added to St. Paul Park.

In addition, the Town has an agreement in place to acquire the M&T Bank drive-thru property (10415 Montgomery Avenue) on July 1, 2025, which will be used for public parking to address both commercial and residential parking concerns within our Business District.

Currently, the Land Acquisition fund has \$447,996.40, following the acquisition of 10528 St. Paul Street (\$1,010,000.00) on November 1, 2024. The Town has estimated that our proposed future land acquisitions will cost at least an estimated \$1,525,000; and include the following: 10526 St. Paul Street (est. \$475,000); 10415 Montgomery Avenue (\$930,000); 10800 St. Paul Street (est. \$60,000); and the Kensington Crossing HOA property, which we believe will be appraised for around \$60,000. However, the estimated and proposed sale prices do not include closing costs, administrative costs (mandatory referral requirement), land improvements, or subdivision costs, which would apply to the Kensington Crossing HOA property.

The above-mentioned properties, if acquired, would serve multiple purposes to benefit the Town as a whole, including expanding greenspace that far exceeds what would be lost with the sale of Joseph's Park. The Town is an ever changing and growing community, and with resources already scarce, it is imperative that the Town take strategic steps to make sure that we are able to address our current and future needs and responsibilities. Sometimes these decisions are difficult and require the evaluation of existing assets, in which case, Town staff believes that the sale of Joseph's Park would provide a monetary return to the Town, which would help to acquire lands to address stormwater management, increase the amount of accessible greenspace for recreational use and the planting of additional trees, add facilities to existing parks, increase public parking options within our Business District, and to continually invest within our Town through infrastructure projects.

The Town Staff believes that the history and context provided above will serve to better solicit public feedback and decision making by the Mayor and Council.

# Kensington Historical Society



Happy New Year to all. Kensington Historical Society (KHS) is looking forward to 2025 which will have a great mix of programming (speaker series), music (think Summer Concert Series) and social. KHS will also be embarking on several projects designed to feature Kensington history throughout the Town as well as continue our collaboration with the Kensington Town Archives.

The article in the last issue of the Journal highlighted all the activities that KHS brought to the Town in 2024. We closed out the year in December with a fabulous Holiday Party for KHS members and guests. The new year promises to be just as enjoyable and informative. Here is a short preview of what is to come in the near future.

## Next in the Speaker Series:

Kensington Historical Society presents:

### ***"The Early History of Fire Service in Kensington"***

Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 7 pm

Join us for a special treat to learn about the early history of fire service in Kensington. Juan Bofill from the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department's Historical Committee will share his knowledge about how fire service started in our town. The presentation will include events prior to and up to the incorporation of the fire department in October 1925.

KHS's calendar this year honors our dedicated fire department as it celebrates its 100th anniversary. This presentation about its origins will be a special kick-off to this year recognizing KVFD's many contributions to our community. KVFD plans to host a separate celebration and presentation on the 100 years of the department later in the year.

Refreshments will be served after the presentation.

Speaker: Juan Bofill, Historical Committee Chair,  
Kensington Volunteer Fire Department

Two ways to attend:

1. In-person: Drill Hall, Kensington Town Hall, 3710 Mitchell Street
2. Virtual: Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88442796267?pwd=dCGMEElgmylV3250tZn2H2fFwsGHPf.1>

This program will be taped by our partner Montgomery Municipal Cable and will be available at [KensingtonHistory.org/videos-playlist](https://KensingtonHistory.org/videos-playlist) if you miss seeing it live.

## SAVE THE DATE – Speaker Series:

On April 8, KHS will be bringing in speakers from the National Capital Trolley Museum to inform us about the history of the Trolley line and its impact on Kensington. Details to come.

Both these programs promise to be informative and fun. Who doesn't love fire trucks and trolleys! Join us!

## GET INVOLVED IN KHS

There are many ways you can enjoy being involved with KHS. More specific information will be presented in the next Journal issue. In the meantime, think about what KHS events you enjoyed in 2024 and let us know how you would like to be engaged in 2025. Contact us through [KensingtonHistory.org](https://KensingtonHistory.org) or by reaching out to a board member directly.

# KHS 2025 Calendar

## KHS 2025 Calendar is available!

This year's calendar is truly special with many historic and original picture of the KVFD throughout its 100 years in FULL COLOR! It is truly a keepsake. We had record support from Sponsors this year which enabled KHS to expand the calendar significantly. Information on our Sponsors is also available at [KensingtonHistory.org](http://KensingtonHistory.org). When you shop local and patronize one of our Sponsors, let them know you appreciate their support in bringing this publication to the Town.

You can have your own calendar in one of several ways:

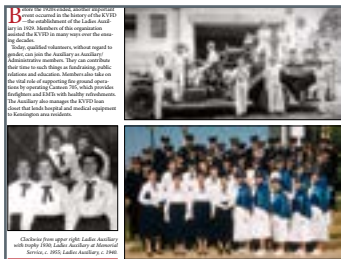
- Join or renew your membership for 2025 and you will receive a calendar as a member benefit
- Attend the January 28 KFVD speaker event and purchase one (\$10)
- Calendars can be purchased (\$10) at several of our Sponsor locations:
  - [Kensington Row Bookshop](#) | [Goldsborough & Glynn](#) | [Tyler Whitmore Interiors](#)

The following illustrations are excerpted from the 2025 Calendar:

February 2025



March 2025



September 2025



December 2025



# Donate Blood to NIH

The recent inclement weather across the Maryland/DC/Virginia metro area has caused a significant disruption to blood and platelet donations, and we are reaching out with an urgent appeal for your help! Your blood and platelet donations are vital to ensuring we can meet the needs of patients at the NIH Clinical Center.

**Why Your Donation is Needed Now:** Severe weather has led to canceled appointments and lower donor turnout, creating a critical shortage. The need for blood and platelets remains constant for our patients, including those battling cancer, rare blood disorders, and undergoing life-saving surgeries.

**Blood or Platelets | Group 0, A, B- Donors | Platelet & AB Plasma Donors**

Schedule your Donation: Call 301-496-1048, email [GiveBlood@cc.nih.gov](mailto:GiveBlood@cc.nih.gov), or visit [CC.NIH.gov/bloodbank/appointment](http://CC.NIH.gov/bloodbank/appointment) to book your appointment today. Walk-ins are also welcome during operating hours.

NIH BLOOD BANK Building 10, Clinical Center, Bethesda, MD Mon-Fri from 7:30 to 4pm.

HIS Donor Center 5625 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD | Mon-Thurs from 7:30-4pm, with select Fridays & Saturdays from 7:30-12pm.





# MCPS Boundary Study



## MCPS Announces Comprehensive High School Boundary Study

By: Councilmember Conor D. Crimmins

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Superintendent Thomas Taylor recently announced a comprehensive boundary study to review school attendance zones for 19 of the county's 25 public high schools. The study is necessitated by three major capital projects scheduled for completion in the 2027-2028 school year: the opening of Crown High School in Gaithersburg, the reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School in Rockville, and the expansion of Damascus High School.

On December 5, the county school board approved a \$1.3 million contract with FLO Analytics and Bloom Planning to conduct the boundary study. FLO Analytics, an employee-owned consulting company with offices in Oregon, Washington, and Massachusetts, will work alongside Pennsylvania-based Bloom Planning to analyze the distribution and equitable access to districtwide programs.

"Because of this expansion, we will need to adjust our student attendance boundaries for high schools," explained Superintendent Taylor in a recently released video. "I recognize that this can be pretty intense and an emotional experience. Many of your family decisions may have been tied to planning where your children were going to be assigned to go to school."

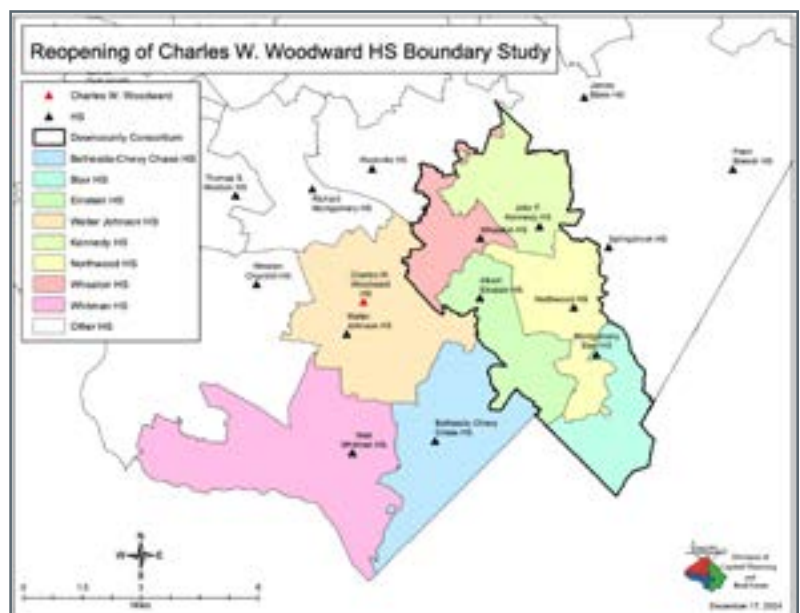
The study will be guided by four key priorities established by the school board: diversity, proximity, stability, and fiscal responsibility. Taylor noted that the new attendance zones will likely have a "domino impact" across the county and may affect schools that don't directly border Crown, Woodward, or Damascus.

MCPS has announced plans to engage with the community throughout the process. The district will reach out to students, staff, parents, and community members through various channels, including surveys, focus groups, and online forums. A dedicated MCPS webpage will be created to share important updates about the boundary study.

While Superintendent Thomas Taylor stated that this boundary study will not affect elementary school attendance zones, it will include 31 of the 40 middle schools across the county. According to MCPS Spokesperson Liliana Lopez, the timeline for implementation cannot be changed due to the planned opening of the new schools in August 2027.

Residents interested in learning more about the boundary study process or participating in upcoming community engagement opportunities should monitor MCPS communications for updates and opportunities to provide feedback.

Visit: [MontgomerySchoolsMD.org/departments/facilities/boundary-study](https://MontgomerySchoolsMD.org/departments/facilities/boundary-study).



# Call for Pause on Proposal



## County Councilmembers Call for Pause on Proposed Housing Changes

By: Councilmember Conor D. Crimmins

Two Montgomery County Councilmembers have recently voiced opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI), a proposal that would allow duplexes, triplexes, and smaller apartment buildings in areas currently zoned for single-family homes.

Council Vice President Will Jawando was first to announce his position on January 7, calling for a pause in consideration of the Planning Board's recommendations. In his statement, Jawando cited residents' concerns about impacts on schools, infrastructure, utilities, and the environment as key factors in his decision.

"After studying the AHSI recommendations in detail, and hearing the outpouring of concern from the community regarding the recommendations - through listening sessions, correspondence, neighborhood visits, and one-on-one conversations all around the County - I believe we should pause consideration of these recommendations at this time," Jawando stated.

Councilmember Kristin Mink (District 5) followed with her own statement expressing similar reservations. Mink referenced a 2022 Arlington County study showing that even multi-unit developments might not achieve desired affordability levels, with estimates for duplex units exceeding \$1 million and one- to two-bedroom 6-plexes and 8-plexes ranging from \$520,000 to \$670,000 per unit.

"It's quite clear that this is not where residents want us focusing our energy at this time, and it's also not the best tool at our disposal," Mink wrote.

The statements have drawn mixed reactions from other officials and community organizations. Councilmember Natali Fani-González responded on social media, stating that "Calling for a pause on reform is detrimental to those who live here and just as importantly for those who want to live in MoCo."

County Executive Marc Elrich supported the pause, calling it "common sense" and describing the Planning Board's proposal as "a disaster."

The Planning Board's initiative aims to provide more housing options for middle-income residents, according to Planning Director Jason Sartori. The proposal sparked significant community interest during listening sessions held in September and October 2024, with hundreds of residents attending to voice their opinions. As of the January 14 County Council meeting, no legislation related to the attainable housing proposal has been introduced, and the topic is not scheduled for discussion at the upcoming Council session.

Visit: [MontgomeryPlanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative](https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative)

## Attainable Housing Strategies initiative

# Woman's Club of Kensington



## Club History 1930's through 1960's

For the Woman's Club of Kensington these decades were dominated by World War II and the impact it had globally and locally. As they did in WW I, the women of WCK worked tirelessly to support the war effort both at home and abroad.

During the War years members of the Club worked for the Red Cross and also donated items and funds to relief organizations in Britain, China, Korea, Ethiopia, France and the Jewish Relief. The Club supported the USO in Bethesda as well. The most personal effort was the contact with Kensington servicemen and women at the holidays. Candy, newsletters and Christmas Cards were sent to those stationed in the US and abroad. These cards and newsletters provided a touchstone to those who hadn't been home in years with news from Town. The status of those serving was gathered and recorded so that everyone would know what was going on with their neighbors during this time. The WCK Collection in the Kensington Town Archives has many of these newsletters and cards to and from servicemen and women. WCK and the Town Archivist, Lisa Carney, are working on plans to share these poignant items with the Town.

The WCK contributed to the War Memorial in Ernest Park and raised so much money for the War effort through the sale of war bonds that they had a P-51 Mustang named in their honor. How many women's clubs (or clubs of any kind) can claim that?! During this time the Club started supporting a traveling nurse who served a large rural community in England. This continued for many years after the war as England rebuilt.

Life during the war years included working within the rationing system and growing victory gardens. While supporting the war effort, WCK continued to give supplies to the KenGar school and provide enrichment for the students there. They also advocated for housing for the poor as well as other causes to support those less fortunate. WCK remained dedicated to the Noyes Library throughout this time. During the 1950's the Club replaced the failed heating plant as well as served as voluntary librarians. When the Manor Care Nursing Home opened in the Warner Mansion, WCK was very active and engaged with the residents who lived there.

Not all was serious war-related work though. The Club continued to host a variety of parties, receptions, banquets, concerts and plays. They also continued to stay up on world events by having speakers from such organizations as the Pan-American Union, UN-sponsored Dunbarton Oaks Conference, the wife of the Polish Ambassador and the wife of the military governor of a district in Japan speaking on the life of Japanese women. In the late 30's/early 40's the idea of fingerprinting Club members was also discussed (no outcome reported in the minutes on this matter -?). During this time the Club determined that there was so much to work on that the Club would start meeting once a month rather than twice a month.

The Club also continued their emphasis on cultural activities with many visits to museums and galleries and the reading of plays and books.

During the fifties, the Club had speakers from countries that were behind the Iron Curtain who shared their Cold War experiences. The Club visited the White House and met with Mamie Eisenhower and presented her with a book "Know your Real Abilities" – one wonders if Mamie spent much time reading that!

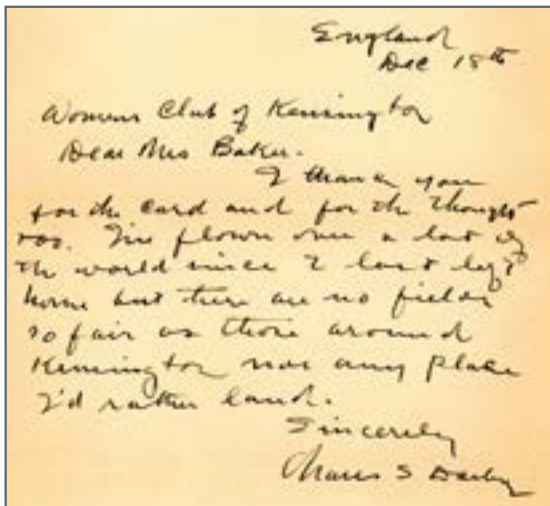
After the war period WCK continued to advocate for an elementary school for Kensington and improvements for the KenGar school as well as health services for Kensington. They established a loan closet of supplies for the sick and created a clinic for new mothers and their babies. The post-war years provided other challenges for the Club to take on. They worked hard to supply relief organizations in war-torn Europe and Japan with food and supplies and support for refugee hospitals.



# Woman's Club of Kensington

As life began to return to normal after the war and the post-war years, WCK was able to focus primarily on issues affecting our local community. The Club also addressed changes in our society and topical issues that warranted attention. The role of women in society changed with many women entering the workforce so the Club needed to begin to change with the times.

Next up - The Club years 1960 - 1990



# Building & Town Permits

Please be reminded that both a Town and County permit are needed for any interior or exterior structural changes, with the exception of landscaping and general repairs. Historic District properties will also require a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP). Please contact the Town staff at 301-949-2424 with any questions.

- 10003 Kensington Parkway - Pepco
- 10619 Connecticut Avenue - Alteration
- 10613 Concord Street - Alteration
- 10730 Connecticut Avenue - Limited Duration Sign
- 3502 Kensington Court - Addition

- 3608 Decatur Avenue - Alteration
- 3519 Plyers Mill Court - Fence
- 10310 Freeman Place - Alteration
- 10310 Freeman Place - Addition
- 10010 Frederick Avenue - Driveway
- 10314 Fawcett Street - Fence
- 10318 Fawcett Street - Fence
- 10417 Kensington Parkway - Alteration
- 3401 Ferndale Street - Alteration
- 10701 St. Paul Street - Solar Panels
- 3600 Decatur Avenue - New Residential

# Cover Art & Compass Art Center



Rona Siskind is a representational artist, focusing on landscape, plein air, and portrait painting. Whether working in oils or charcoal, she strives to create realistic paintings and drawings, infusing her own sense of color and emotion. This painting is based on a photo from an early morning outing during a February snow several years ago. You can find and follow Rona's work on Instagram [@ronaleesiskind](https://www.instagram.com/ronaleesiskind).

We reached out to Glen Kessler, Founder and Director of The Compass Art Center, and asked if he could supply a painting of a snowy scene in Kensington for this journal. Glen has an extensive knowledge of

local art and artists and was able to connect us with Rona Siskind.

Glen would like to invite you to attend the incredible art exhibits that rotate in the gallery every month. The best time to visit is during one of their art receptions where the exhibiting gallery artists, the Compass Studios resident artists, and The Compass Atelier teachers will all be present to provide a full evening of artful programming. Or, sign up for a class, where you will find the top art instruction in the area for adults, teens, and kids. Visit [TheCompassAtelier.com](http://TheCompassAtelier.com) to discover more.

## Town Archives



### On the Street Where You Live

The residence at 10549 St. Paul's Street was originally a church building, first occupied by the Methodist congregation. Built under the guidance of William H. Wheatley (Apr. 21, 1826 - Dec. 6, 1900), a devout Methodist and a founder of the St. Paul's congregation, the church served as a central gathering place for worship. Wheatley held early congregation meetings in his stables before the church building was constructed. The neighboring houses at 10537, 10543, and 10547 St. Paul's Street— referred to as "Wheatley Row"— were later built in 1883 by Wheatley for the families of his three daughters: Helen G. (Harry K. Corrick) at 10537, Annie D. (Edgar Moore) at 10543, and Laura K. (William E. Dulin) at 10547.

The church building at 10549 St. Paul Street, as depicted on a postcard sold by Trowbridge's Drug Store.

Kensington Historical Society Collection, Kensington Town Archives.





# St. Paul Park Playground

## St. Paul Park Playground Upgrades Begin This Spring

By: Councilmember Conor D. Crimmins

Beginning this spring, the Town of Kensington will begin a three-phase project to upgrade the playground at St. Paul Park. This project will create a safer and more inclusive play area for all children, including those with and without disabilities. The improvements will replace the mulch ground cover underneath the playground and swing set areas with a new, level rubberized play surface, add new, inclusive pieces of play equipment, and expand the play area.

This multi-year project involves the Mayor, the Town Council, and Town Staff working together with neighborhood parents of children living with disabilities to enhance the play area at St. Paul Park so that it promotes safe and inclusive play for all children.

The three-phase project begins this spring with Phase 1, which involves removing the mulch under the swing sets, adding the new rubberized play surface under the swings, and extending it to the current playground mulch area to create a surface connection between the two play areas. Phase 1 will also include adding new playground equipment that promotes inclusive play. This phase, funded by a Maryland Department of Natural Resources FY25 Community Parks and Playgrounds grant, will take several weeks to complete.

Phase 2 will enhance the playground area by removing the mulch ground cover and replacing it with the same rubberized play surface used in Phase 1. This will create a continuous and level play surface connecting the entire playground and swing set play areas. Phase 2 is scheduled for FY26 as part of the Town's Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) budget.

Finally, Phase 3 will see the addition of a new, inclusive play area across from the current playground and located on the interior of the park's walking path. This new area will add several pieces of play equipment, including a multi-person swing and a rocking 'pirate ship' that allow access for all children and caregivers alike. Phase 3 is scheduled for FY27 as part of the Town's CIP budget.

Additional images, renderings, and a video concept of the playground upgrades are posted to the Town's website, which is accessible via the QR code below. The Town will also post this QR code around the playground at St. Paul Park so visitors can learn more about the upcoming upgrades to the park.



[TOK.md.gov/st-paul-park-playground-upgrades-begin-this-spring](https://TOK.md.gov/st-paul-park-playground-upgrades-begin-this-spring)



# Sustainable Kensington



## Townwide Food Waste Program Set to Start in March

Over the past year, members of the Town's Sustainable Kensington (SK) team have invested considerable time in exploring options for food waste removal, including both traditional composting with the Compost Crew and also food waste conversion to bioenergy. Some members of the team, which is led by Council members Nate Engle and Ann Lichter, took a field trip to the BioEnergy Devco facility in Jessup, Maryland, to obtain a first-hand look at the bioenergy process.

Ultimately, after careful review, the SK team recommended to the Town Council that the Town should pursue the food waste to bioenergy process. This involves conversion of the food waste using anaerobic digestion technology to Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) and Digestate.

Renewable Natural Gas is non-fossil fuel that can be used interchangeably with conventional natural gas. Digestate is a soil amendment that is highly concentrated in organic matter and plant nutrients, and can be used for agricultural and other land use purposes.

The prime reason for recommending the food waste conversion over traditional composting was the lower cost to the Town, with the added benefit of creating renewable energy and soil nutrients as by-products of processing the food waste.

In December, the Mayor and Town Council approved a Food Waste Collection Program for all residential homes in the Town starting in March 2025.

The Town is working with BioEnergy Devco and Ecology Services Refuse & Recycling (the latter is the Town's current waste and recycling collector) to implement the program. Together with town officials and SK team members, they will develop a range of literature and explanatory information for residents about all aspects of the program.

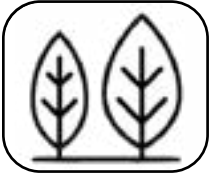
A direct mailer will be sent to all households in February with more details. New 13-gallon food waste bins will also be delivered—one per household—prior to the start of the food waste collection program in March.

Please note that the Town will continue to make the Community Compost Shed available at Town Hall for residents to drop off compost for pick up by the Compost Crew and also that residents are, of course, free to continue their own service with Compost Crew. Visit [TOK.md.gov/trash-brush-recycling-composting](https://www.tok.md.gov/trash-brush-recycling-composting).



*Sustainable Kensington's visit to the Maryland BioEnergy facility on May 31, 2024*

# Greenscape Committee



Kensington is lucky to have a delightful stream, Silver Creek, that runs north-south from Wheaton emptying into Rock Creek at Beach Drive. The stream meanders through the Kensington Parkway Stream Valley Park which is managed by Montgomery County Parks. Upstream of Frederick Ave, the stream was channelized by lining with concrete sometime in the 1950s to control flooding, a practice that is now understood to be detrimental to watersheds. The water that flows downstream from the bridge crossing at Frederick Avenue, is moving quickly, is very hot in summer, and has high levels of silt and pollutants. Very little can live in water of this poor quality. A healthy riparian zone (the area either side of the stream itself), is one proven method to dramatically improve water quality as it heads first to Rock Creek then on into the Potomac River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. Healthy trees along the stream bank provide cooling shade, soil stabilization and filtration to capture silt and remove pollutants and prevent further erosion. Native trees support the many butterflies, insects, and other critters native to Maryland.

Unfortunately, our stream valley has been taken over by non-native invasive vines, and other non-native plants, that are destroying this vital watershed region. Our valuable trees get covered with these vines that choke out sunlight, steal nutrients, and lead to branch breakage and trees falling due to the excess weight of the vines. English Ivy and Porcelain Berry are the worst culprits.

But Weed Warriors are saving the day! Thanks to a team of dedicated volunteers, Silver Creek is on the mend. By working for an hour or two at a time there are now numerous huge trees reaching their prime, freed of choking invasive vines. Not only that, but there are many young native trees now flourishing in the understory, like box elder, native holly and spice bush which are all highly prized trees that support native insects. With ground areas cleared of vines, Montgomery County Parks were able to provide us with seeds for native plants so we are looking forward to seeing how well they bloom in spring and fall.

We always need more help! No training is necessary and we are provided tools and gloves from Montgomery County and a supervisor works alongside you. You may sit and work on a single tree removing ivy, or have a real workout lifting roots and clipping the vines overhead. Check out the dates for 2025 and join us at one or more! Please text me, Katherine, at 240-383-7164 or email to [woodyoule@gmail.com](mailto:woodyoule@gmail.com) if you plan on attending a session. Weed Warrior dates through March include: Thursday, February 6 at 10am; Saturday, February 15 at 10am; Sunday, February 23 at 2pm; Thursday, March 6 at 10am; Saturday, March 15 at 10am; and Sunday, March 23 at 2pm. For a full list of 2025 dates visit [TOK.md.gov/event/weed-warrior-events-2025](https://TOK.md.gov/event/weed-warrior-events-2025). Thank you!

Katherine Wood | [Greenscapes Committee](#)



1/25 - Trees are visible now & vines are gone!

## Silver Creek



Weed Warrior event in 2024.



# Town Minutes Summary



## Wednesday, January 8, 2025, Town Council Meeting Summary

- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2024.
- Motioned to make a \$40,000 contribution to the Noyes Children's Library Foundation from the FY25 Budget, which will be transferred from the Community Art Murals Program.
- A formal Resolution will be presented at the February 12, 2025, Town Council Meeting.
- Approved **Resolution No. R-01-2025** – Approving a Variance at 10609 Wheatley Street to allow a driveway width of 17 feet, 8.5 inches in accordance with Section 5-107, “Driveways and Parking Surfaces - Single Family Residential Zones”, of the Town Code.
- Introduced **Ordinance No. O-01-2025** - Authorizing the Sale of Certain Real Property located at 3420 Plyers Mill Road, Kensington, Maryland, that is no longer needed for a public purpose.
- The Public Hearing has been scheduled for Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 7:00 pm.

## Wednesday, December 18, 2024, Town Council Meeting Summary

- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024.
- Approved the Closed Session Town Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2024.
- Held a Variance Hearing for 10609 Wheatley Street to allow a driveway width of 17 feet, 8.5 inches in accordance with Section 5-107, “Driveways and Parking Surfaces - Single Family Residential Zones”, of the Town Code.
- A Resolution in support of the Variance will be prepared for the January 8, 2025, Council Meeting.
- Approved **Resolution No. R-23-2024** – A resolution to change the project that would receive up to \$800,000 funding from State Bond Bills 23-458 and 23-706 from the Flats at Knowles Station development project to the acquisition of 10415 Montgomery Avenue for public use as a parking lot, and to authorize the Town Manager to submit a Prior Authorization Request to the Maryland General Assembly to request this change.
- Approved **Resolution No. R-24-2024** - Authorizing a Contract with Ecology Services Refuse & Recycling, LLC, for the term of ten months, beginning March 1, 2025, and for three additional one-year options, to provide weekly residential, curbside, food waste collection within the Town subject to review by the Town Attorney.
- Approved **Resolution No. R-25-2024** - Authorizing a Contract with WASTEQUIP (Toter) for the purchase of 600, 13-gallon food waste bins.

## Wednesday, November 13, 2024, Town Council Meeting Summary

- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes of October 10, 2024.
- Approved the Closed Session Town Meeting Minutes of October 10, 2024.
- Approved the Closed Session Town Meeting Minutes of October 21, 2024.
- Held a Public Comment session with regard to the possible sale of Joseph Park (3420 Plyers Mill Road).
- Acknowledged receipt of the Audit Committee's Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024 (FY24).
- Approved **Resolution No. R-22-2024** Proclaiming November to be Municipal Government Works Month in the Town.



# KTown Ladies



Congratulations to the winners of the fourth annual Light Up KTown Holiday Decorating Contest! Thank you to everyone who added some extra sparkle and joy to the Town of Kensington this year! The winners received festive custom trophies and our appreciation for making Kensington even more special during the holidays. We loved everyone's enthusiasm and town spirit!



**Trophies**

Dan Martin outdid himself with multi-colored lights covering the entire façade of his home at 10310 Freeman Place to win the grand prize "Griswold" award. The Hartman's home with moving, dripping icicle lights at 3703 Dupont Avenue won the "Winter Wonderland" award. The Frazier family at 3942 Washington Street won the "Traffic Stopper" award for their traffic stopping decorations! When we stopped to take their photo, there were two cars stopping to look at their light display! The Stablow's home with gorgeous light color choices at 3942 Washington Street won the "It's A Wonderful Life" award.

Thank you to sponsors Kyle Richards of Compass Real Estate and the KTown Ladies. Follow the KTown Ladies on social media: FB [@KTownLadiesGuild](#); Insta [@ktownladies](#).

## 2024 Holiday Decorating Winners



**The Griswold Award**



**The Winter Wonderland Award**



**The Traffic Stopper Award**



**It's A Wonderful Life Award**

# Kensington Around Town

## February 2025



3710 Mitchell Street Office: 301.949.2424  
Kensington, MD 20895 [TOK.md.gov](http://TOK.md.gov)

To:

**KENSINGTON**  
  
**FARMERS' MARKET**



**Finalist**  
— 2025 —

Bethesda Magazine's  
**'Best of Bethesda'**  
Readers Picks Finalist 2025!  
Kensington Farmers' Market  
**VOTED #2 out of 21**  
Farmers' Markets  
in Montgomery County!

**KENSINGTON FARMERS' MARKET**  
**OPEN YEAR ROUND | SATURDAYS • 9AM - 1PM**  
**HOWARD AVENUE TRAIN STATION**

[EXPLOREKENSINGTON.COM/FARMERS-MARKET](http://EXPLOREKENSINGTON.COM/FARMERS-MARKET)