



# B'more Central

May 2015

The Centre, pg. 7



BMA, pg. 8



The Motor House, pg. 6



## From North Avenue to Annapolis **CENTRAL BALTIMORE ON THE MOVE** Special Issue: First Quarter Recap, 2015

SB 199, pg. 4



3200 St. Paul, pg. 5



Where We Stand, pg. 2



Words and pictures by Edward Weiss (unless otherwise noted), Design & layout Keely Knopp, Copyright © 2015 Central Baltimore Partnership, All rights reserved.

**Central Baltimore Partnership**  
1800 N Charles St, Suite 810, Baltimore, MD 21201  
[www.centralbaltimore.org](http://www.centralbaltimore.org)



## Where We Stand on Baltimore's Future

**I**t did not take Central Baltimore long to respond to the events of Monday April 27, the night that shook Baltimore, and, indeed, the world. Before dawn broke, organizations (including this one) were filtering through the bewildering spam on newsfeeds and posting useful information for neighbors dealing with the State of Emergency. As the morning sun climbed over the row houses of Central Baltimore, cleanup crews were everywhere, dealing with the isolated incidents that had taken place in the area.

### Central Baltimoreans came to the aid of the rest of the city

With that work done, Central Baltimoreans came to the aid of the rest of the city. Doing everything from spur-of-the-moment free lunch programs for kids shut out from school, to sending clean-up crews to harder hit parts of the city. Starting on Tuesday and throughout the rest of the week, there were marches (and even dances) for peace and justice in the YNOT

Lot on North Avenue, and across Waverly, and Charles Village. Demonstrations that sought to bring people together for a common purpose, instead of dividing them. It would be hard to come up with a partner that did not contribute. But more than any organization, it was the people of Central Baltimore, who, without any prompting, came to the aid of each other and the city at large.

On Friday, May 1st, after witnessing the events of the previous week, Our Executive Director Joseph B. McNeely was moved to write the following letter to our partners.

### Letter from Executive Director McNeely

This is a pivotal day, in a pivotal time, for Baltimore and I wanted to reach out on behalf of myself, and the Central Baltimore Partnership, to express our commitment to the city, our confidence in the future, and our view of the challenges ahead.

I arrived in Baltimore nearly 45 years ago and I like to think that in the inter-

vening time I have grown to love the city as much as any native Baltimorean. But I also feel that being from somewhere else enabled me to appreciate something here that is easy for natives to take for granted – and that's the amazing spirit, resilience, strength, and love of community that makes Baltimore what it is. The city has faced many challenges over the years that I've been here and it's overcome every one of them. The Baltimore I know now is a far better place than the Baltimore I fell for years ago.

It's not news to anyone here that we've had some adversity lately. And it's also not news to anyone here (though it seems to have escaped the notice of many in the national news media), how much resilience, courage, and love have been displayed in such a brief time – from community members forming human barricades in front of the police to defuse potentially dangerous situations, to clean up crews that sprang up out of nowhere, to all the organizations that spontaneously opened up their doors to give kids a nice meal and somewhere to go when school was out.

### Community building by people who never use the term "community building,"

Leaders emerged from everywhere – not just community activists, but neighbors who leapt into action because they knew their community needed them. It was community building by people who never use the term "community building," not from the top down, but from the grass roots up. The foundation's been laid and we have to keep building it higher. Whether it's simply talking to each other, working together, or strengthening organizations (at the block, neighborhood, and congregation level) that are the backbone of the city, we have to keep this momentum going. We also need to harness that energy to fix larger, more systemic problems. The resurgence of economic opportunity in the city and region must not blind us to the frustrations of our fellow Baltimoreans, who due to prejudice, and geographic and employment barriers, are isolated from those economic opportunities and living in areas of concentrated poverty. The incredible effort our police force has made in recent days to maintain public safety must not cause us to forget the very real problems with police brutality revisited by the Freddy Gray case.

**“No man is an island” and neither are Baltimore communities with little economic opportunity**

These problems aren't new. They have been looked at before and (while there is no magic switch that you can turn on) there are approaches that have worked to change problematic policing tactics, and create access to opportunity. It can be done with a commitment of civic and political leadership, long term work, and the willingness to do things that are uncomfortable. While some solutions work at the neighborhood, or citywide, level,

others need a broader base – So, commitment must be regionwide. “No man is an island” and neither are Baltimore communities with little economic opportunity. As recent events have shown, the idea that we can stay comfortable and avoid their daily pain is ludicrous. We have to come together as one united city, enlist cooperation from the larger region, face these wrongs head on, and make them right.

**The Content of Baltimore's Character**

We have to and we will. Dr King ad-

vised us to judge a person by the content of their character. I feel that you can do the same thing with cities. I have learned a lot about the character of my adopted city over the years, and that's why I can state (not with faith, but with confidence) that thanks to its character, Baltimore's renaissance will continue to move forward and the best is yet to come!

Sincerely, Joe

*Joseph B. McNeely, Executive Director,  
writing to you on behalf of the Central  
Baltimore Partnership*



Pictures from Central Baltimore taken between April 28th and May 1st, 2015.

“Starting on Tuesday and throughout the rest of the week, there were marches (and even dances) for peace and justice in the YNOT Lot on North Avenue, and across Waverly, and Charles Village. Demonstrations that sought to bring people together for a common purpose, instead of dividing them.”

# SB 199 Wins Unanimous Vote in Senate

**T**hough it did not come up for a vote before the Maryland House of Delegates went on recess on April 13th, it would not be hyperbola to use the word “monumental” in describing both the achievement (and the effort) of CBP’s Saturation of Metropolitan Service Agencies (SMSA) task force in support of Senate Bill 199 (sponsored by Senator Joan Carter Conway), which won a unanimous vote in the Senate.

SB 199 would require an assessment of local needs (by Zip Code) for new opioid (methadone) treatment clinics. And it was designed to A) prevent the clusters that occur without regulation and B) make more clinics available in underserved areas. It would have a direct and positive effect on the efforts of CBP’s SMSA Task Force, which concerns itself with the high concentration of methadone clinics, and other social service providers located in pockets of the Old Goucher, Charles North, and Charles Village neighborhoods. That saturation has resulted in open-air drug markets which have opened up outside the clinics to prey upon the large population of recovering addicts that are drawn to the area. These markets are an impediment to their recovery, as well as a hardship for neighbors.

## Documentation was the first step in long term effort

One way to combat the problems, (the Task Force believed) was to document the effects of saturation in order to make its case to elected officials, and anyone else with the power to change the status quo. So the hard work that would result in their SB 199 testimony began months ago, when three task force members (Co Chair Alan Mlinarchik, Rob Mara and Peter Duvall) began to comb through everything from police blotters, to health department records, in order to document the problems that resulted. Problems that included increased street crime and poor treatment outcomes for recovering addicts. That long, hard, work led to a series of documents that formed the backbone for the Task Force’s efforts in Annapolis, when after meeting with Senator Joan Carter Conway’s they realized they could come to the aid of her bill SB 199.

But that was just the beginning of the effort. CBP’s Task Force liaison Shacara Waithe ended up spending so much time in Annapolis that she got on a first name



basis with many legislators. She was often aided in her lobbying quest by Rob Mara, Alan Milarchanik and other task force members. Then came the hearings. The task force members that went to Annapolis to testify before the House and/or the Senate (in addition to Alan, Rob, and Peter) included Co-Chairs Carl Stokes and Jeanne Knight, Linda Johnson, and Don Donahue. They were joined by community members who took time off from work to show their support at the hearings.

## Destiny Durso’s brave testimony

In addition, by the time it was all done, every CBP staff member had contributed a substantial amount of hours to the cause. But it was a contribution of conscience, not of time, from CBP executive assistant,

Destiny Durso, that was the most memorable. Destiny bravely volunteered to testify from her own experience as a recovering addict and speak to how difficult it is to be in recovery and have to walk through the open air drug markets that have sprung up around the clinic clusters.

Her testimony asked: “how many lives have been lost? How many addicts didn’t recover because they didn’t get the chance? ...Didn’t get the chance to get treatment without walking through an open-air drug market on the way...I would like to ask the Senators and the clinic representatives here – are you serious about recovery? Are you serious about treatment? Because if you are, you won’t allow this situation to continue.”

Through this combined effort, the



Task Force, who composed the sole panel testifying in favor of the bill in the Senate, triumphed over an onslaught of lobbyists from multi-billion dollar drug treatment industry. Most legislation does not make it through both houses of the Maryland Legislature (which is only in session for 3 months a year) the first time round. So rather than experiencing a setback by not getting voted into law this time, the unanimous vote in the Senate means the effort to pass the bill is off to a great start.

**Efforts will continue beyond this session of the Legislature**

The work hasn't ended. Efforts will con-

tinue beyond this session of the Maryland Legislature. Chairman Pete Hammen, of the House Health and Government Operations Committee, who conducted hearings on SB 199, but did not put it up for a vote, has proposed a working group composed of members of the SMSA Task Force, representatives of the treatment industry, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), who are responsible for licensing and oversight of drug treatment clinics. CBP's SMSA Task Force is committed to pursuing the legislation, and doing whatever else they can to help solve the problems posed by opioid clinic saturation in pockets of Central Baltimore.



Photos of the SMSA Task Force members who testified at the Maryland Senate and House Hearings: Alan Mlinarchik, Rob Mara, Peter Duvall, Carl Stokes, Jeanne Knight, Linda Johnson, and Don Donahue; as well CBP staff: Shacara Waithe (the SMSA Task Force Liason), Jen Schmidt, and Destiny Durso; along with neighborhood residents who made the trek from Central Baltimore to Annapolis to show their support at the hearings.

## Breakthrough Development at 3200 St. Paul

**O**n March 26th, leaders of Johns Hopkins University, and Beatty Development Group (both CBP partners) along with Armada Hoffer Properties, held an official groundbreaking for a new mixed use building on the vacant lot at 3200 St. Paul Street, (the southwest intersection of St. Paul and 33rd streets in Charles Village). They were joined by stake holders involved in the 327,484-square-foot project. Included were everyone from representatives of other organizations directly involved in the new enterprise (such as new flagship tenant CVS), to community activists, such as Sandy Sparks of the Charles Village Civic Association, and office holders, such as City Council members Carl Stokes, Mary Pat Clark, and Baltimore City Council President Bernard C. "Jack" Young. Indeed, so many participants were wielding a shovel at the ground breaking that was it hard to fit them all in a camera frame.

**Developing the area's potential as a retail hub**

The collective energy was testimony to the potential impact of the development on the neighborhood. Though its residential space will be devoted to JHU students, the retail space of 3200 St. Paul Street will be open to the community and go a long way towards developing the area's potential as a retail hub. It will contain 31,000 square feet of commercial space that will include restaurants, services, and retailers. Construction is expected to be completed in August 2016.



Two of the speakers at the event, Bernard C. "Jack" Young, Baltimore City Council President (above) and Ron Daniels, President of Johns Hopkins. "So many participants were wielding a shovel at the ground breaking that was it hard to fit them all in a camera frame"

# Motor House Moves Forward at Full Throttle

**T**he Motor House, held a “construction party” on March 19, to announce various developments in a \$6.5 million makeover that will turn its 25,000 square feet into a cultural fulcrum on North Avenue. Speakers at the event- Joyce J. Scott, David Mitchell, Mac MacLure, Amy Bonitz, Leslie King Hammond- laid out the bright future of the building between Howard Street and Maryland Avenue. The Motor House will house nonprofit arts organizations such as: the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, Arts Everyday, Station North Arts and Entertainment, the Neighborhood Design Center, and Maryland Citizens for the Arts; and create cultural infrastructure for the Station North Arts and Entertainment District including: inexpensive artist “microstudios,” a senior artist in residence space (soon to be occupied by artist Joyce J. Scott), a gallery, a cafe, and a black-box performance space.

Move-in dates are scheduled for as early as November, 2015.

## “Where would this neighborhood be without the Central Baltimore Partnership?”

BARCO, the developer of the Motor House is a CBP partner, and at the event, its Managing Director, Mac MacLure gave a shout out to the other partners that had helped make his plans a reality, and noted help from the organization itself, adding “where would this neighborhood be without the Central Baltimore Partnership?” It’s not the kind of question we ask of ourselves. But we were happy that our efforts were recognized. CBP has long understood the importance of 120 W. North Avenue as an anchor for the neighborhood and we have fought tooth and nail to improve its fortunes ever since the structure was known as Load of Fun, and owned by artist and entrepreneur Sherwin Mark.

## CBP’s efforts on behalf of the building and its residents go back to Load of Fun Days

Back in the Load of Fun days (among other efforts on behalf of the building and its residents), the Central Baltimore Partnership applied for and received two (Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development) Community Legacy grants that resulted in funding to fix the windows, and the sprinkler system. This activity has continued to the present. Most recently, the Central Baltimore Partnership received a \$100,000 Community Legacy grant for the Motor House to go towards: the café, black box performance space, artist studios, and non-profit arts organization spaces. We’re proud of the effort we’ve made to help realize the potential of 120 West North Avenue and we look forward to the contributions the Motor House will make to its surrounding community.



Speakers at the The Motor House Construction Party  
 Top Row: Leslie King Hammond, Mac MacLure  
 Bottom row from left to right: David Mitchell, Amy Bonitz, Joyce J. Scott





From left to right in foreground: Ron Daniels (President of Johns Hopkins), Charlie Duff (President of Jubilee Baltimore), Tim Armbruster (Chair of the Central Baltimore Partnership), and Sammy Hoi (President of MICA), assembled before the giant lighting switch for The Centre.



“Charlie Duff said ‘let there be light... and there was light!’”



## The Centre Lights the Way for North Avenue

**P**resident of Jubilee Baltimore, Charlie Duff said “let there be light” (or something to that effect) and there was light. But not right away. The marquee remained dark, and tension filled the night air as a cold, blustery, wind swept rain down North Avenue. It was March 3rd, and a festive crowd had emerged from inside The Centre (formerly known as the Centre Theater) to see the building’s exterior lit for the first time since 1959. Tim Armbruster, Chair of the Central Baltimore Partnership, Ron Daniels President of Johns Hopkins, and Sammy Hoi, President of MICA (who were all honored for their organizations’ contributions to the \$19 million renovation) were helping Charlie throw the giant lighting switch and when luminous results were

not forthcoming, they employed what appeared to be every ounce of body English available to get the electrons flowing. The collective will of Central Baltimoreans is indeed a force to be reckoned with, and sure enough, in a matter of seconds, light shot out of the marquee, flooding down on the awe-struck crowd gathered below.

### **Dramatic turnaround for The Centre which once had a large tree growing through it**

It was a fitting climax to the dramatic turnaround of the building which only a couple of years ago had a large tree growing through it. Now thanks to the work of our partner Jubilee Baltimore, the seemingly moribund building has come back from the dead and is about to be livelier than ever. The Centre is partially

complete and already has most of its tenants lined up. The third floor has been leased to Sparkypants, a computer gaming company moving from Hunt Valley. (The first such migration of a computer gaming firm to the city from the area that is considered Greater Baltimore’s “Silicone Valley.”) Other tenants include MICA and JHU (who have created a “Film Center” on the second Floor where they will share classrooms and a sound stage), the Baltimore Jewelry Center (a collaborative workspace and education organization); and in the Center for Neighborhoods there will be four organizations: Jubilee Baltimore itself, Telesis Corporation, Neighborhood Housing Services, and some outfit called the “Central Baltimore Partnership.”

# BMA's 100 Birthday Celebrates Community

**W**ith the giddy enthusiasm of a 21 year-old on a first legal bar hop, combined with the sophistication, sense of place, and love of community you'd expect from a 100-year old, the Baltimore Museum of Art celebrated its Centenary. The birthday festivities marked a mind-boggling series of accomplishments for (our partner) the BMA. Where to begin? You could start right at the Historic Merrick Entrance, which has been restored to all its former glory. Once again, visitors can walk up the front steps and through that magnificent doorway. That will lead you into Fox Court, which is flanked on two sides by the gorgeous makeover of the American Wing, while directly downstairs the Asian and African Galleries have received similar treatment.

## Restoration shares the stage with innovation

Restoration has been only part of story at the BMA over the past few months. For instance, there is the newly re-envisioned Contemporary Wing, new installations of the American, Asian and African collections, newly acquired works displayed, and new approaches have been taking to presenting the museum's treasures. One example – instead of standard chronological/regional presentations, the re-installation of the American Wing has juxtaposed work across time periods, thus allowing visitors to make connections between different eras in a way that was previously the province of art historians. The BMA has also found new interactive ways to increase understanding of, its 95,000 piece collection with everything

from a new mobile art guide <http://go-mobileartbma.org/>, to a 20-page comic book in its Asian Collection. By year's end, a new center for "art, creativity, and community" will take the innovations in visitor experience one step further.

## BMA's long term commitment to community

One thing that isn't new at the BMA is a commitment to community that is reflected in free admissions, support for local

artists, and a long series of programs and events aimed at bringing art to everyone. This is in no small part due to its director Doreen Bolger who has been a leader in arts development throughout Central Baltimore, and the city at large. She recently announced her retirement from the BMA. So we at CBP would like to take this opportunity to say: "Thank you, Doreen, for all that you've done for Central Baltimore, and see you at the next opening in Station North!"



BMA Director Doreen Bolger speaking at the American Wing reopening, and masterpieces from the American, Asian and African collections

