

BALTIMORE MESSENGER.com

Bellona-Gittings · Cedarcroft · Cold Spring Newtown · Cross Keys · Guilford · Hampden · Homeland · Mt. Washington · Roland Park · Tuscany-Canterbury

December 03,
2007

[Home](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Advertising Rates](#)

[News](#)

[2007 Primary Voters](#)

[Guide](#) [Download](#)
[Opinion](#)

[Sports](#)

[Community](#)

[Local Business](#)

[Education](#)

[Regional](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Auctions and Public](#)
[Notices](#)
[Movies, Arts and](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[E-Games](#) **Fun!**

[Archives](#)

[Searchable Ads](#)
[Online](#)
[Find a Home!](#)

[Weather](#)

[Stocks](#)

[Other Publications](#)

[The Chorus](#)

[LifeShots](#) **New!**

[Balt. Co. Commission](#)
[on Disabilities](#)
[Camp Guide](#) **New!**

Severe Weather Alert!

 **37°F** **9**
mph

[Forecast Radar](#)
[Cameras](#)



ads online
Searchable ads & comprehensive business listings

Naysayers rail against trolley line

Online site spells trouble for plans to start service

11/28/07

By Adam Bednar

[Email this story to a friend](#)

A trolley running primarily along Charles and St. Paul streets between Harborplace and University Parkway would be great, right?

Not according to Ed Hopkins, of Remington, and Pamela Wilson, of Peabody Heights.

Wilson and Hopkins oppose the Charles Street Development Corp.'s proposed \$150 million trolley line -- and they've started a Web site to try to put the brakes on the plan.

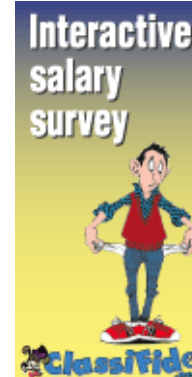
The Web site, www.trolleytrouble.org, isn't supposed to be a trolley-bashing forum but a way to further community conversation on the project, said Hopkins, a member of the Remington Neighborhood Alliance.

"Make any argument you want. We want to have a conversation," Hopkins said.

He said he and his neighbors are upset about a proposed property surtax on houses and businesses within a quarter mile of the proposed route to finance maintenance of the line.

A so-called "working group" of community, civic and business leaders, in conjunction with the Charles Street Development Corp., last month was presented with a preliminary trolley line financing plan that would include a tax of \$50 per \$100,000 of assessed value on private property, and \$20 per \$100,000 of assessed value on tax-exempt property.

The line would be modeled after one in Portland, Ore. Depending on the route, the tax could affect home and business owners in Abell, Charles Village, Oakenshawe,



Search

[Search tips](#) |
[Advanced](#)

Search Google

Local Poll

Do you think Steve McNair or Kyle Boller should be the Ravens starting quarterback?

McNair

Boller

Features

[Local TV Listings](#)

Guilford and Remington.

Hopkins said residents shouldn't have to foot the bill for a trolley -- he referred to it as a streetcar -- that he said would benefit only tourists and students and staff of Johns Hopkins University.

Hopkins and Wilson said many residents, especially seniors on limited incomes, could be forced out of their homes because they would be hard-pressed to pay the new tax on top of regular Baltimore property taxes and the additional tax paid by residents in the Charles Village benefits district.

Hopkins is also upset by the way the meetings of the working group have been run. In an e-mail Nov. 13, he asked members of the group to choose a chairman and use Robert's Rules of Order, a parliamentary process. The group next meets Dec. 3.

Wilson, vice chairwoman of the Peabody Heights Residents and Homeowners Alliance, said supporters of a trolley line have misrepresented its potential impact.

Supporters are being disingenuous in using the Portland streetcar system as an example of the improvements a trolley system could bring to Baltimore, Wilson said. The route in Portland connected two areas of redevelopment through 70 acres of abandoned rail yard, contaminated brownfields and 128 acres of vacant industrial land, whereas Charles Street is a heavily populated corridor, she said.

"This is a whole different situation than Portland," Wilson said.

The pair also argue that the Charles Street corridor has the most intensive schedule of Maryland Transit Administration buses and that trolley transportation wouldn't cut the use of cars in the area or better serve their neighborhoods.

Karen Stokes, executive director of the Greater Homewood Community Corp. and organizer of the working group, said a feasibility study for the trolley hasn't been completed, so it would be premature for residents to make up their minds either way.

"This is exactly the time to be asking the hard questions about whether this is right for Baltimore City and the area," Stokes said, adding that Greater Homewood still has not decided whether or not to support a trolley line.

Stokes, of Oakenshawe, said that she doesn't think the anti-trolley Web site will have a major impact on public opinion.

"I'm not overly concerned about what appears to be a small group starting a Web site," she said.

She also said it would be inappropriate for the working group to adopt Robert's Rules of Order.

"That's not the nature of the group," she said. "It's not meant to be a parliamentary process."

David Funk, chairman of the development corporation's trolley

Ads by Google

[Classifieds](#)

Search 1000's of local classifieds. Find cars, jobs, apts, pets & more!
www.oodle.com

[Post a Resume - Get a Job](#)

Find Pennsylvania Job Classifieds Free Career Tools - Get Hired Now!
www.Beyond.com/Career

[Free Classified Ads](#)

Create Classified Listings Free! Autos, Boats, RV's, Aircraft, Ext.
www.upillar.com

[Local Classifieds](#)

See Your Local Classifieds Listings Jobs, Cars, Pets, Personals & More!
www.Kijiji.com



FUN FLICKS

RECEIVE \$100 A MONTH IN MANUFACTURER'S COUPONS

FREE SINGLE OF THE WEEK



Download on iTunes

committee, a separate group, said he welcomes public discourse on the proposal.

The development corporation doesn't want to force a project on the community that the community finds objectionable, Funk said.

"You're never going to get unanimity, but I believe in building consensus," he said.

Right now, the committee is just trying to find out if there's grass- roots support for a trolley line, Funk said. And, he said, the project has its share of supporters.

"Some people intensely believe that a trolley would increase urban livability," he said.

E-mail Adam Bednar at Adam.Bednar@patuxent.com



[\[Get RSS Feed\]](#)

Copyright 1998-2007 MyWebPal.com. All rights reserved.

Contact us at webmaster@mywebpal.com

All other trademarks and Registered trademarks are property of their respective owners.

