



The Porch Light

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Pics From Blizzard 2016



The Creative Rise of Baltimore



While Baltimore's prosperous nodes – Inner Harbor, Canton, Federal Hill, Fells Point and that "another world" Key Highway side of the Inner Harbor – are self-contained minority prosperity zones benignly buffered from the City's distant majority zones of festering poverty, the Freddie Gray death on April 12, 2015 exposed Baltimore to itself. Unknowingly or knowingly, local policy made Baltimore two.

The prosperity zones in Baltimore are a result of local government policy. But every city needs prosperous zones. Glitz attracts citizens, casual travelers, tourists and creates opportunities for local commerce. For a city to thrive, commerce is vital.

Former Mayor William Donald Schaefer touched fire to Baltimore's imagination with the Inner Harbor pavilions along that dank Pratt Street waterfront. Building on the work of his predecessor, the former Mayor Thomas D'Alessandro III, Schaefer used the Inner Harbor to light the imagination of Baltimore's citizenry, pulling them along, kicking and screaming, to open their eyes to see the possibility that, yes, Baltimore could be renewed.

Baltimore's local policy over the past 20 to 40 years, unknowingly and knowingly, has created a divided city. Just follow where the money invested has made sustained improvements. Ray Charles could see the divide.

Local policy "tilted" Baltimore toward an emphasis on bricks and mortar development, not a local economy that generates jobs for locals. The Amazon distribution center is a start. For the new demographics in the 21st century, all three are needed – a job-generating local economy, human capital development and bricks and mortar glitz.

In city after city, the "tilt" toward prosperity zones "happens" and the removal of the poor or working poor for gentrification "happens." No one speaks up for those "not at the table." In Baltimore, the "tilt" creates blindness to what's missing – jobs and job-generating projects for locally-born citizens of Baltimore.

People residing in prosperity zones have wealth, connections, jobs and a sophisticated understanding of how government works, or does not work. This is not a criticism, only an acknowledgement that local policy "tilts" toward the perceived strengths of a prosperity zone, while stumbling blind around the sores oozing poverty pus on the other side of Baltimore's Berlin walls of prosperity.

Calendar of Events

Thursday, February 11 @ 7 pm
CHMCC Community Meeting

Monday, February 1 @ 7 PM
How to Prevent Crime in Your Community With Councilman Brandon Scott, HARBEL, and the Northeast Police District
Northeast Police District
1900 Argonne Drive

Thursday, February 4
anytime between 11:00 AM and 9:00 PM. HARBEL invites you to join us at Bertucci's of White Marsh at 8130 Corporate Place, Baltimore, MD 21236

Wednesday, February 17 @ 7pm
Northeast District Community Relations Council Meeting
1900 Argonne Drive

Tuesday, February 23 @ 5pm
43rd District's Delegation Night in Annapolis
Thomas V. Miller Senate Building—11 Bladen Street
President's Conference

Monday, February 1
Collection of scheduled bulk trash will resume Bulk items should be left in front of houses if possible to help crews get to the trash.

Street sweeping has been suspended for the week of Feb. 1

Healthy Neighborhoods PURCHASE/REHAB OR REFINANCE/REHAB

- NO PRIVATE MORTGAGE INSURANCE!
- Below-market rate. Permanent interest rate will be Prime minus 1%, but in no event less than 4%.
- Borrow as much as 110% of the after-rehab appraised value (after contributing 3% of the purchase price from their own funds).
- Properties located on Healthy Neighborhoods target blocks. Foreclosed or vacant houses can be located anywhere within a Healthy Neighborhood boundary.
- For new home buyers who will make improvements to the property in conjunction with the purchase.
- The free services of an architect are available to help buyers plan improvements and to review contractors' proposals.
- Borrowers must include visible exterior improvements in their rehabilitation plans.

Example: how you save with no PMI:

	With PMI	Without PMI
Purchase Price:	\$139,900	\$139,900
3% Down Payment:	\$ 4,197	\$ 4,197
Loan Amount:	\$135,703	\$135,703
Terms:	4%, 30-year fixed	4%, 30-year fixed
PMI:	\$968/mo	\$968/mo
Total Payment:	\$1,109/mo	\$968/mo

A savings of \$141/mo or \$1,692/year

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- The borrower must intend to occupy the property in one of the target blocks of a participating neighborhood.
- Housing expenses should not exceed 30% of the buyer's income and total debt should not exceed 40% of the buyer's income.
- Borrower must have a minimum 620 credit score.

For more information: Contact Rahm Barnes
Healthy Neighborhoods, Inc.
2 E. Read Street, 2nd Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202
410-332-0387 ext. 154
www.healthyneighborhoods.org

April 1, 2014

Healthy Neighborhoods HOME IMPROVEMENT LOAN

- For homes located within a "Healthy Neighborhood."
- Minimum loan amount is \$5,000. Maximum loan amount is \$20,000. Maximum aggregate loan amount secured by the property shall not exceed 105% of after-renovation value, as established by an appraisal.
- Homeowners will make improvements to the property, including visible exterior improvements.
- The free services of an architect are available to help homeowners plan improvements and to review contractors' proposals.
- No owner financial investment is required.
- Depending on household income, the borrower may be eligible for a matching grant.
- Construction terms will be six or 12 months. The maximum permanent term will be 10 years.
- The loan interest rate during rehab will be fixed on the date of application until home renovations and the construction term are complete, at which time the loan must be refinanced to permanent status at the current program loan rate.
- Permanent interest rate will be Prime minus 1%, but in no event less than 4%.
- The borrower may not own rental property

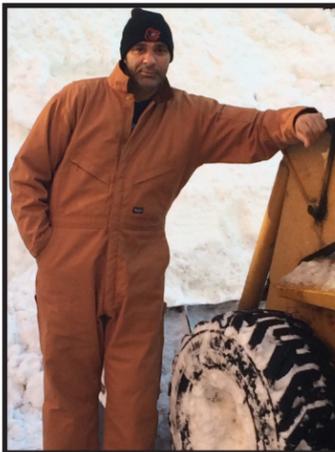
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- The borrower must be the owner-occupant of the property.
- Housing expenses should not exceed 30% of the buyer's income and total debt should not exceed 40% of the buyer's income.
- Borrower must have a minimum 700 credit score.

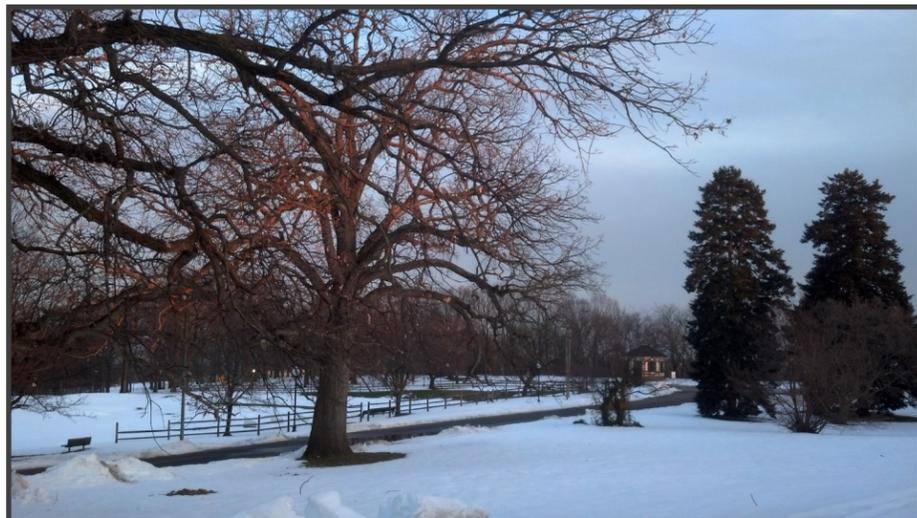
For more information: www.healthyneighborhoods.org/Buy&Renovate

Healthy Neighborhoods
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Baltimore, MD 21202
410-332-0387
www.healthyneighborhoods.org

January 23, 2014



Too Soon?



The tragic death of Freddie Gray while in police custody exposed Baltimore to see that, perhaps, something is missing in Baltimore's way of seeing itself. Maybe, authenticity? Maybe, the courage to be authentic? Maybe, 20-20 vision?

For all the glee about neighborhoods like Station North, Remington, Federal Hill, Canton, Bolton Hill, Reservoir Hill, Hampden and Fells Point, that "glee" is a commitment to blindness. Invisible neighborhoods along other corridors – Druid Hill Ave–McCulloh Street; Edmondson Ave; Park Heights Ave–Reisterstown Rd; Milton Ave; North Ave; Wolf St-Washington St north of Johns Hopkins Hospital's prosperity zone; Greenmount Ave; Franklin-town Rd between Franklin St and Frederick Ave; West Pratt St near Westside Shopping Center; Wilkens Ave in southwest Baltimore; Fulton Ave–Monroe St; West Baltimore St west of University of Maryland Hospital's prosperity zone; and Harford Rd between Bonaparte Ave and The Alameda – are all elephants in the Baltimore room.

But for the tragic, public death, of Freddie Gray, Baltimore would still be blind.

To protect ourselves from ourselves, we need to be better human beings. Both White people and Black people need to be admonished for blindness. Authentic progress in Baltimore cannot only mean White, young and hip or expensive coffee shops or White people eating outside along Charles Street. Or gentrification and displacement of the Black poor or working poor people. Or going "to the city" only to see the O's or Ravens. That's blindness.

Baltimore's road system allows county-folk easy access to employment opportunities and amenities in Baltimore City, which is good for the regional economy. Long overdue is the time for the MTA public bus system to stop being a 'mass containment system' that confines the poor and car-less, like some weird science fiction transportation-apartheid, to the confines of Baltimore City.

What's missing are regular public bus transportation routes that travel further out Route 40 east, Route 40 west, upper Belair Rd and upper Harford Rd so that city-folk can access jobs in commercial nodes and industrial parks located in Howard, Baltimore and Harford counties.

What's missing is creative leadership that can articulate solutions, organize Baltimore's human capital and take on the hard, hard, extremely hard work of creating intelligent solutions able to unpack joblessness.

Go back to the future. Return to Baltimore an aggressive network of neighborhood-hub centers that are work referral engines that prep and send job seekers to employers who are authentic partners in Baltimore's recover after the Freddie Gray riots.

For Baltimore to rise, creative leadership must be nimble, quick and willing to stand for the poor and the working poor. Just beyond the glitz, Baltimore's dominate population is either poor, working poor or one paycheck from foreclosure. Tantamount to Baltimore's creative rise is leadership's ability to sell the business community and developers on the idea that an employed Black Baltimore is good for business. This will not be easy.

The politics of not offending people has divided Baltimore into two Baltimores, one of prospering affluence, the other of festering poverty. Both suffer blindness. And the answer is not gentrification. Gentrification is a ticking time bomb. For Baltimore to rise in the 21st century, the prosperity must spread beyond its waterfront glitz and gentrified neighborhoods. To do less is to be normal, that same old festering blind Baltimore normal.

Baltimore's creative rise will come from creating jobs, winning job engines to set-up shop in Baltimore and expanding public transportation routes to go further east, west and north to reach those commercial and industrial nodes in the regional counties. Jobs reduce a riot's chance. Jobs reduce crime. Jobs increase commerce. A job increases a person's thinking to see what's possible in their individual life, their neighborhood, their city and their region.



Bill Curtis is a citizen of Baltimore, MD. Email: billcurtis@billcurtisinfo.com

Do We Need To Riot?

As an organization we have been trying for years to get the City of Baltimore to work with us on addressing systemic issues long facing our community.

A case in point. 1749 Garsuch Avenue. In 2003 Civic Works and CHM proposed repurposing the facility for a community workforce development center. A proposal that at the time garnered administration support. Improvements to the facility had made it a cost effective proposition.

Those plans were scuttled by a change in administrations. The result was 1749 Garsuch Avenue sitting vacant and neglected, creating a blighting influence on the neighboring community. An unintended consequence of a city's short sightedness and indifference to a neighborhood.

2015 was a year of turmoil for Baltimore. The death of Freddie Gray ripped a scab off a wound that seemed unlikely to heal on its own. While it is heartening that the death of Freddie Gray will not be in vain, what is disheartening is that it took a loss of life for those chosen to serve to see what has been painfully obvious to those who live in the shadows of Baltimore.

With the commitment of \$700 million in state funding to help eliminate the chasm that exists within the Baltimore communities where those dollars go, how the money will be administered and what change will be realized will determine if the investment was wise or just another failed attempt of urban renewal.

For the CHM community, which remained calm in the face of unrest, we are left to wonder if our demonstrated ability to bring about beneficial change in a challenged community is enough to warrant a more comprehensive investment approach by the city.

While CHM did not experience the effects of a riot and the glare of the media spotlight, the conditions that led to that unrest remain prevalent in CHM. It is our hope that we have learned that civil unrest is not necessary to bring about beneficial change.

Which takes us back to 2003, thirteen years ago, when a challenged community stressed the need for a proactive approach to systemic ills that still remain unaddressed to this day.

Partial lineup announced for Light City Baltimore festival



The Light City Baltimore festival early next year will feature an animatronic peacock, hundreds of illuminated sculptures resembling a flotilla of paper boats, "lighted" cotton candy and a free concert by Baltimore musician Dan Deacon. Early details of the festival organized by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts — billed as the first large-scale, international light festival in the U.S. — were announced Tuesday.

"Light City will be nothing that Baltimore has ever seen before," Kathy Hornig, BOPA's festivals director, said in a phone interview. "People's imaginations will be sparked, and kids and families will make memories together that will last forever."

The weeklong event is modeled after Australia's 18-day "Vivid Sydney" festival, which drew roughly 1.4 million visitors in 2014. Local tourism officials estimate that the inaugural Baltimore event could attract about 350,000 visitors, and hope to raise about \$4 million through private donations. The city's tourism arm, Visit Baltimore, will contribute about \$250,000 annually.

Light City Baltimore will run after dark from March 28 through April 3 along a 1.2-mile art walk in the Inner Harbor. The lineup will include 29 original works of light art, more than 50 concerts and 100 performances of dance, theater and puppetry. A ticketed event known as LightCityU will bring together thinkers from education, public health and other fields to brainstorm ideas for social change at the Columbus Center* at the Inner Harbor.

"Baltimore is a diverse city," Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake said in a news release. "Although we have challenges, our city is filled with talented people living and working here every day. Light City Baltimore will showcase the reach and depth of Baltimore's creative communities." The festival will include Neighborhood Lights, a program awarding \$10,000 to five communities to create public art projects in collaboration with artists-in-residence.

"This program is in direct response to the community meetings we went to," Hornig said. "Folks wanted to know how Light City could extend beyond the Inner Harbor." The neighborhoods participating are Coldstream Homestead Montebello, Hampden, Greater Mondawmin, Little Italy and the Station North Arts & Entertainment District.



The participants announced Tuesday come from the U.S., England and Australia and were selected by a panel of jurors from more than 200 entries.

The remaining 25 percent of the festival's lineup, including music headliners and featured speakers for LightCityU, are still to be announced.

Deacon, who founded the Wham City artist collective and who is known nationally for his innovative performances, will put on a free concert April 2. The venue has not been announced.

Among the light installations is "Voyage," the flotilla of paper-like boats attached to underwater LED lights by the British artistic collective known as Aether & Hemera. "Festival-goers can manipulate the colors and patterns of the rainbow lights with their cellphones," Hornig said.

"Peacock" by Baltimore artists Tim Scofield and Kyle Miller will be a 20-foot animatronic steel sculpture that will open and close a 40-foot-wide lighted "tail." As for the lighted cotton candy? "It's completely safe to eat," Hornig said. "I think the LED light is in the cone."



mary.mccauley@baltsun.com

CHMCC Is Proud To Welcome CHM Resident and Renowned Baltimore Artist Shawn James To The CHM Team as our new Healthy Neighborhoods Coordinator.

