



WESTOVER
HILLS
neighborhood
association

WESTOVER HILLS RAG

It's a beautiful fall in Westover Hills!

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS TO BE JUDGED ON DECEMBER 18

By Sandra and Roger Wiley

One of the nicer things about living in Westover Hills and Westover Hills West is enjoying the annual effort our neighbors put into decorating their houses and yards for the December holiday season. The WHNA has rewarded these efforts by sponsoring a contest to recognize the best decorations in each of four daytime and four nighttime categories:

Daytime: Best Wreath, Best Door, Most Creative, Best Overall

Nighttime: Best Door, Best Tree, Most Creative, Best Overall

There are no hard and fast rules for producing a winning display, but usually repeat awards are not given to the previous year's winners. Some winners are whimsical and kid-oriented; others are more formal or artistic. Whether you celebrate Christmas,

Kwanzaa, Chanukah, or the arrival of Santa Claus, we welcome you to share in our neighborhood's collective celebration.

To give residents a full mid-December weekend to complete their decorating, judging of this year's contest will take place on Monday, December 18. Winners will be notified and given yard signs designating their winning categories the following day. Names of winners and photos of the winning efforts will also be posted on WHNA's website, followed by publication in the Winter issue of *The Rag*.

We've had the pleasure of serving as judges of the holiday decorations contest for the past two years—the first one working with long-time contest organizer and judge Robert Kelly, and last year on our own. We've agreed to take on this happy task again for the current year, but we would love to have someone to help us this year, to whom we could then pass the baton for 2024. If you are interested, please give us a call at 804.291.9049.

OFFICERS NEEDED FOR WHNA

Interested in participating in neighborhood activities? Consider joining the WHNA board as president, vice president, or secretary. If interested, send an email to westoverhillsna@gmail.com to let us know! If you're more comfortable sharing a job, consider going in as a co-president.

LEAF COLLECTION

It's that time of year again that leaves start accumulating. There are several options for disposal:

- Bagged collection started October 2, and allows for up to 10 bags on normal trash day be picked up. Biodegradable bags preferred.
- Unlimited bag collection will run in our sector between December 12 and 29th.
- Vacuum Service is available starting November 6 at \$30 per request. You can request this online at RA311.com or call 3-1-1.

Get more info at <https://rva.gov/public-works/leaf-collection> ■

CALENDAR

Nov 11
Richmond Marathon
7 am-2 pm
Be careful exiting neighborhood!

Nov 11
Tip O' the Season Makers Market
11 am-2 pm
Muse Me & O'Toole's

Nov 14
WHNA Meeting
7:00 pm
Westover Hills United Methodist Church

Nov 18
The Great RVA Bake Off at Tablespoons
12-2 pm

Dec 12
WHNA Meeting
7:00pm
Westover Hills United Methodist Church

Dec 16
Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, Jr.
6 pm at WHUMC



Median Sales Price
\$702,500

Median Days on Market
7

Median Price per Square Foot
\$287

Homes Sold in 3rd Quarter
10

I am delighted to deliver this information from the third quarter of 2023. If you are considering a move, I would love to share my intimate knowledge of this great neighborhood.

**Sales Recorded in CVRMLS July 1 - September 30, 2023*



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Bike Lanes on Westover Hills Boulevard

By Val Murphey

The city's plan for bike lanes on Westover Hills Boulevard is now in its last stages of development, and is scheduled to be finalized in the next few months. According to the city's website, construction could begin sometime in 2024.

The plan calls for a bike lane closest to the curb, then a parking lane, and one lane of traffic closest to the median. The bike and parking lanes will be protected with 3-foot plastic posts called "bollards." There'll be only one lane of vehicular traffic in each direction. You can see similar configurations along Patterson and Malvern Avenues and downtown on Franklin Street.

The city first proposed bike lanes for Westover Hills Boulevard in 2017, but the plan was put on hold until recently. Earlier this year, the city conducted two online surveys about their proposed plan, aimed at the bicycling community. In late May, at a meeting in Westover Hills Elementary School, city officials explained the plan to Westover Hills and Fourth District residents.

"Group for Sensible Bike Lanes" (GSBL), an informal group of Westover Hills residents, formed in late May to study the city's bike lanes plan. After six months of research, the group presented its alternative bike lanes options to the city but was told the original plan would proceed.

Through a Freedom of Information Act request, GSBL obtained background documents such as crash data, traffic studies, bike counts, and VDOT comments. Those documents revealed that:

While the city hopes reducing traffic lanes will help slow down speeders, it will

also cause more traffic congestion. Data from a city consultant's study shows that traffic flow on Westover Hills Boulevard will—at some times of day—increase to a level that is called "intolerable delay."

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), which manages the federal grant money the city got to construct bike lanes, commented that the plan presents major safety concerns for bicyclists and recommended changes to the plan.

GSBL volunteers also conducted several personal observations of traffic flow and bicycle riders on the Boulevard. On May 25, when the Boulevard was reduced to one lane of southbound traffic due to construction at the Forest Hill intersection, there were 42 cars waiting in line for the traffic light to change, and observers counted many of them turning right or left onto residential side streets.

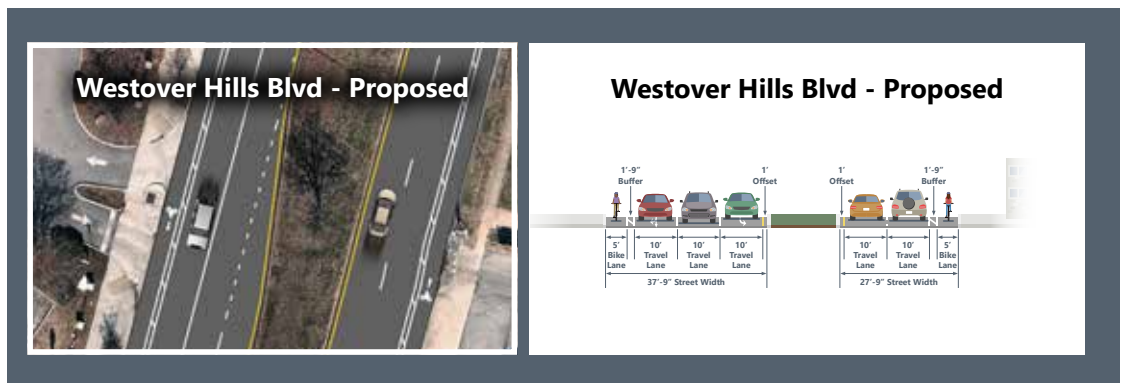
In September, volunteers from the group conducted a 12-hour bike count (from 7 am to 7 pm) on Westover Hills Boulevard at New Kent Road. They observed 35 cyclists going south and 49 cyclists going north.

NEIGHBORHOOD BIKE LANES SURVEY

GSBL didn't think Westover Hills folks had enough opportunity to weigh in on the bike lanes project, so it conducted a survey hand-delivered to each house in the neighborhood. Results revealed that Westover Hills is very bike friendly, with 53% saying they ride bikes and 8% of those saying they commute to work. Westover Hills residents also say (80%) they support bike lanes in general. However, most Westover Hills residents **OPPOSE** the city's current plan (84%).

The most common reason given for opposing the plan is that reducing traffic

Continued on page 18



Proposed bike lanes through the neighborhood. See online at https://www.rva.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/DPW_BikeProject_SR161_PhaseI.pdf or scan QR Code at right



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FOREST HILL PARK HAPPENINGS

CHRISTMAS AT THE STONE HOUSE

Saturday, Dec. 2, 1-4 pm

Join us for a free children's event with storytelling, light refreshments, and a visit from Santa!

DAVID RIDDERHOF DAY OF SERVICE

The David Ridderhof Memorial Day of Service was a huge success, with support from Richmond Parks and over 50 attendees. The remaining 2023 habitat restoration dates are: Nov. 18, Dec. 16, 10 am -12 pm Join us to see what's happening in Forest Hill Park! Email: chriscatanzaro3@gmail.com. ■



What if you could declutter your house, score some unique thrifted pieces and help animals all at the same time?

- * Furbish Thrift has donated more than \$30,000 in grants to support local animal welfare organizations and efforts since we opened in February, 2023.
- * Hundreds of pounds of pet food has been provided in our free pet food pantry.
- * More than 120 cats and kittens have been adopted in our dedicated pet adoption room so far this year.
- * Outstanding community support has made this happen.

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Furbish Thrift is a program of the William A. Harrison Jr. Foundation



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A large, stylized, light gray dragon logo is positioned in the background of the top half of the page. The dragon's head is on the left, facing right, with its wings and tail extending towards the right. The logo is composed of several overlapping, curved shapes that create a sense of movement and depth.

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YARDS of THE MONTH

Summer and fall have once again brought beauty to our neighborhood! Take a minute to enjoy the carefully groomed plantings and colorful flowers that this time of year graces us with! Thank you, as always, to the wonderful volunteers, Lauren Thorup and Katherine Whitehead, who canvass the neighborhood to find the most glorious gardens and yards!

August



Tom and Deborah Rhoads
5308 Caledonia Road



Greg and Denise Cappel
5005 Caledonia Road



Rudy and Debbie Kerver
5032 Sylvan Road

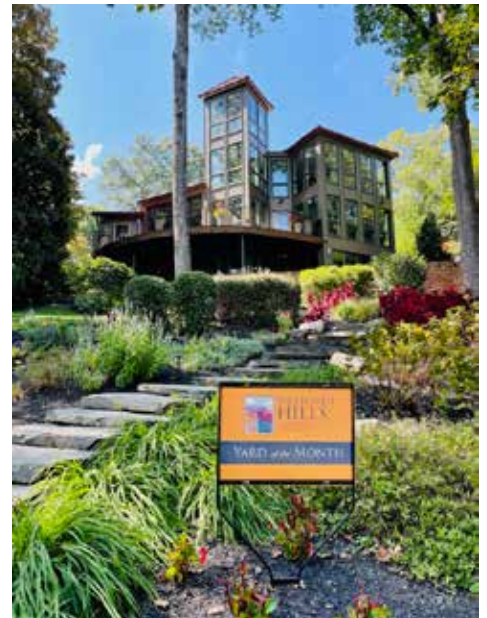
September



Karen and John Guidon
5205 New Kent Road



Alex and Conrad Rickers
5306 Dorchester Road



Tim Schoenman and Jeff Walker
4902 Riverside Drive



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MESSAGE FROM KRISTEN NYE

Fourth District City Council Member

DEAR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS OF WESTOVER HILLS

Happy Fall, y'all! Whether you're excitedly working on Halloween costumes, enjoying a pumpkin spice latte or two (or three or four – no judgment!), or just happy for cooler temperatures, I hope you're taking advantage of everything this wonderful, beautiful season has to offer!

As a reminder, my office is always available to assist with any needs you have related to City services, but I wanted to highlight some of the topics my office is seeing most frequently:

LEAF COLLECTION

'Tis the season for leaves – and inquiries to our office about leaf collection! DPW sent a media advisory on September 24th with details about this season's collection program, but the details germane to Westover Hills are:

At-home collection: beginning on October 2nd, residents can put up to 10 bags of leaves out on their regular trash collection day. Residents receiving trash pickup on Tuesdays (so all of Westover Hills) can put an unlimited number of bags out from December 12th through December 29th.

VACUUM COLLECTION

begins on November 6th – there is a \$30 fee and requests and payments must be made through 311.

ONGOING DO-IT-YOURSELF

Residents can drop off leaves either loosely or in biodegradable bags to the East Richmond Road Convenience Center (3800 East Richmond Road) or Maury Street Leaf Drop-Off (2900 Maury Street); residents can also drop off bagged leaves only at the transfer station at 3506 N. Hopkins Rd.

If anybody would like the full information electronically, please email my office and we'll be happy to provide it.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS (STRS) AND ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)

This much-discussed legislation passed Council at our meeting on September 25th. Please rest assured that the primary residency requirement was maintained for STRs, though we did expand the legislation to be allowed in commercial mixed-used zoning, which will hopefully reduce the burden on residential districts. Additionally, ADUs are now permitted by-right (as long as they conform to all other zoning regulations), which will hopefully allow residents more flexibility with their own properties while also reducing some of the bureaucratic hurdle for owners.

MEDIA ATTENTION IN THE 4TH DISTRICT

Since my last update, I had two incredible opportunities to highlight the 4th District at high profile media events. I was honored to speak at the press conference/ribbon cutting from the Reedy Creek Trail Bypass, which was an incredibly unique partnership between the Department of Parks & Recreation and Friends of JRPS. This bypass offers significant safety improvements for users and I was so happy to see many runners and cyclists using it during the press conference. I also spoke alongside Mayor Stoney and Council President Jones at a press conference highlighting the City's leadership on environmental issues, many of which are occurring right in the 4th District!

UPCOMING CITY OFFICE CLOSURES

With the holidays approaching there are several closures of City Offices, including our 4th District Council Office. Please be aware of the following closure days and look out for impacts on City Services: November 7th (Election Day), November 10th (Veteran's Day Observed), November 22nd-24th (Thanksgiving), December 22nd and December 25th (Winter Holiday)

FINAL CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The final two City Council meetings of the year are Monday, November 13th and Monday, December 11th at 6 pm at City Hall. As always, I encourage you all to attend!

Thank you to each of you for making Westover Hills such a wonderful place – it remains my highest honor to represent you on City Council and I'm looking forward to another great year in 2024!

As always, please reach out to my office any time we can be helpful. You can call us at 804-646-5646 or reach us via email – kristen.nye@rva.gov and/or timmy.siverd@rva.gov (Liaison Timmy Siverd).

All my best,
Kristen Nye
Richmond City Council Vice President



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Fran Enckenrode

Fall is here and the Holiday Season is almost upon us. It's time to unpack decorations and get ready! WHNA has completed a full year of activity following the COVID slow down. Our activities are almost too numerous to list, but I will give it a try anyway.

WHNA ACTIVITIES

Spring brought us the annual yard sale and the annual beautification project on Westover Hills Boulevard. "Yard of the Month" has been ongoing and we see the signs pop up in beautifully landscaped yards throughout Westover Hills. The Homes Tour was an amazing success this year as several gracious residents opened their homes and gardens for others to enjoy.

Then came the Annual Picnic. We enjoyed food from O'Toole's, liquid refreshments, a bouncy house, balloons, and temporary tattoos. Following soon after was the 4th of July Kids' Parade. Although it was not possible to close Riverside Drive for fireworks, a friendly police presence at Riverside and the Boulevard calmed traffic and facilitated a safer environment to enjoy the evening. Early August brought a celebration of Neighbors Night Out with ice cream and other attractions (in partnership with city council person Kristen Nye and Westover Hills United Methodist Church).

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

From the Community Involvement Committee perspective, WHNA and several partners funded the annual beautification project on the Boulevard. WHNA funded a "Music in

the Park" Sunday afternoon at Forest Hill Park and is a supporting partner of the November "Tip O' the Season Market" on November 11 from 11 am-4 pm. Profits from the Homes Tour supported an attendance initiative at Westover Hills Elementary School to help address the alarming increase in missed school days. A collaboration of the WHNA Community Involvement and Homes Tour Committees is ongoing to identify additional ways to support our neighborhood.

DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the year we have followed plans that will affect our neighborhood. Commercial development is taking place along Forest Hill Avenue that will bring more apartments and retail. City road plans relating to bike lanes and traffic calming have been a topic of high interest. The Jahnke Road project addresses bike lanes and student safety. Bike lanes and parking lanes are planned for Westover Hills Blvd. The plans for Westover Hills Boulevard are concerning to many based on the visual and functional changes and the

potential for increased cut-through traffic in the neighborhood.

BOARD NOMINATIONS

The call will soon go out for nominations for 2024 board members; specifically president, vice president, and secretary. If you are inclined, partner with a friend to volunteer as Co-Presidents or Co-Vice Presidents. Serving on the WHNA board is a great way to support our neighborhood, stay current on neighborhood issues, and have fun interacting with neighbors.

PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!

I would like to acknowledge every neighbor for their contributions this year, but that number is too large to list. I will settle by sending out a huge THANK YOU!!! to all. Our neighborhood is a wonderful place to live because of YOU! ■

Get neighborhood news through email!

Sign up for occasional emails from the Westover Hills Neighborhood Association. We'll never share your address, and we promise not to spam your inbox!
www.westover-hills.org/updates





WESTOVER HILLS LIBRARY EVENTS

GRADES K-5

Westover Hills Crafts
December 13, 4 pm

Bring out your inner artist at Westover Hill's crafting program. Supplies are provided, just bring your creativity! Design your own snowman with this winter-themed craft.

GRADES 6-12 TAKE HOME KITS

Clothespin Snowmen
December 1

Visit Westover Hill's young adult section

to check out our take and make kits! This month's kit is clothespin snowmen. Kits will be available starting the first of the month while supplies last.

A SPECIAL PROGRAM THIS FALL:

A CHRISTMAS CAROL OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE EXTRAVAGANZA

December 2, 10 am

Join us for this 30 minute outdoor performance extravaganza as two actors attempt the grueling and stage defying act of recreating Charles Dickens's

classic tale of redemption. The actors will transform themselves into multiple characters of all ages, gender and spectral variety. Audiences will be able to gather around this outdoor stage to share in this intimate marvel of stagecraft with full production values. ■



Westover Hills Homes to Be Featured April 24 During Historic Garden Week

This spring, Westover Hills will once again be part of Virginia's Historic Garden Week. On April 24, 2024, five homes and one garden in the River Hills area of Westover Hills will be open for the tour.

River Hills was developed in tandem with the completion of the Nickel Bridge in 1925. It sits on a bluff overlooking the James River east of the boulevard, and includes the area bounded by Riverside Drive and Evelyn Byrd Road.

Homes included on the tour are 4915 Evelyn Byrd Road, 4906 Evelyn Byrd Road, 4902 Riverside Drive, 2019 Westover Hills Boulevard, 2009 Westover Hills Boulevard, and 2005 Westover Hills Boulevard (garden only)

The tour will run from 10 am to 4 pm, and tickets cost \$50 per person in advance or \$60 per person on the day of the tour. Tickets go on sale on February 14, 2024. You can purchase tickets online at vagardenweek.org.

Homes in Westover Hills were also featured during Historic Garden Week in 2017.

The Garden Club of Virginia's Historic Garden Week this upcoming year runs from April 20 to April 27, 2024, and features homes and gardens throughout Virginia. ■



4915 Evelyn Byrd Road



4906 Evelyn Byrd Road



2019 Westover Hills Boulevard



2009 Westover Hills Boulevard



4902 Riverside Drive

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Sarah Kate Shepherd 804.921.8889



MEG TRAYNHAM
HOMES TEAM



“Definitely part of the city now”: The annexation of Westover Hills

By John M. Coski

In June 1924, a handful of people had bought lots in Westover Hills, but no one yet lived in the new Chesterfield County subdivision. Nevertheless, the chairman of Richmond City Council’s Street Committee predicted confidently that “it would not be long” before Westover Hills was annexed to the city.

Richmond grew to its current boundaries through a series of 12 annexations between 1793 and 1970. The city crossed the James River for the first time in 1910 when it annexed the independent city of Manchester. Four years later, a major annexation extended the city in all directions, including westward from Manchester in a zigzag pattern from just north of Belt Boulevard at Broad Rock Road to Roanoke Street to Taylor and 45th streets to New Kent Avenue at Warwick (now Southcliff) Road, to a tiny beachhead on the west side of what became Westover Hills Boulevard. The land to the west lay in Chesterfield County – but not for long. So certain was further annexation that the city government issued an annexation report in 1925 (including the area encompassing Westover Hills) and extended some city services to the new county neighbors even before they arrived, beginning with city sewer connections in August 1924. Judging by the anticipated growth of homes and businesses, “the day is not far distant when consolidation of the community with the city is affected, it is believed,” summarized the Times-Dispatch.

Westover Hills pioneers certainly believed and encouraged consolidation. In early 1931, Attorney T. Nelson Parker (a resident of 5005 Evelyn Byrd) announced that 51% of eligible Westover Hills voters favored annexation, primarily for access to better fire and police protection and more adequate schools. He would soon present an annexation petition to the Chesterfield County Circuit Court.

Access to city schools was a particular concern. The city school board in 1928 had denied permission for county

students to attend John Marshall or George Wythe high school (then located downtown), citing overcrowding. High School students had to attend Manchester High School (a building that later became Elkhart Middle at 6300 Hull Street). The city agreed to admit a limited number of Westover Hills primary school students and Chesterfield County, admitting “the inadequate school facilities in this area,” decided that subsidizing students’ expenses was less expensive than building a new four-room school near the subdivision. (The closest county primary schools were in Bon Air and on Hopkins Road.) By 1934, Chesterfield County paid the tuition of 66 Westover

Hills elementary students attending city schools, primarily the recently enlarged Patrick Henry School.

The petitioners touted the assets they would bring to the city: 155 houses, 550 people, approximately seven miles of sidewalks, three miles of macadamized, graveled, or oiled streets, and sewer and water connections “constructed in accordance with plans and specifications furnished by the City.”

As Attorney Parker pressed the case for annexation with the Chesterfield County government, the Richmond City government threw a spanner into the works. Not surprisingly, the issue was taxes.

Instead of retaining the lower Chesterfield County real estate tax for five years and spending the amount collected on improvements within the neighborhood, the city opted to take advantage of an alternative provided in the annexation laws: issue bonds in the amount of 12 per cent of the assessed valuation of real estate in the territory proposed for annexation and expend that amount in improvements – and begin imposing the higher city

WHAT EXACTLY CONSTITUTES “WESTOVER HILLS”?

For purposes of this history series, “Westover Hills” consists of the streets shown in the map that adorns the back page of most RAG issues. The neighborhood’s boundaries have expanded from the original mid-1920s plat (boundaries written into the January 1978 WHNA Articles of Organization) to include the small sections of Riverside Drive, Evelyn Byrd Road, and the east side of Westover Hills Boulevard that lay within the 1914 annexation and developed separately in the 1920s as River Hill(s), and the area west of the Atlantic Coast Line tracks developed in the early 1980s as “Westover Hills West” (which will be the subject of a future article). In 1980, a small group of WHNA leaders met at a house on New Kent to “annex” to the neighborhood association Breckenridge Road and the part of Riverside Drive west of the ACL trestle that had been excluded from the neighborhood.

Advertisers, developers, and realtors occasionally use “Westover Hills” to include a larger area, but the adjacent neighborhoods across Forest Hill Avenue from Westover Hills – specifically Forest Hill Terrace and Forest View (east and west of Westover Hills Boulevard, respectively) – were distinct neighborhoods developed in the mid-1920s only a few years after Westover Hills. By 1930, the opening of the Boulevard Bridge and the paving of Forest Hill Avenue, Midlothian Turnpike, Hull Street, and Broad Rock Road into Chesterfield County facilitated the southside suburban growth that continues a century later.



This street sign map from the 1926 city annual report shows the city/county line between 1914 and 1942.

real estate tax immediately. Real estate executive J. Guthrie Smith, of Dorchester Road, representing the residents who sought annexation, asked that the petition be held in abeyance.

Perhaps not coincidentally, several months after learning about this decision, Westover Hills residents held a mass meeting at the Church of the Good Shepherd to form a civic association. Attorney and Riverside Drive resident Murray McGuire and writer Eudora Ramsay Richardson (featured in an earlier issue of The RAG) were the principal speakers and addressed questions of school facilities, streets, and garbage disposal. (An earlier Community Association formed early in 1927, but was moribund by the following year.)

Hesitancy about the proposed annexation plan turned into outright opposition, and the new civic association became the primary force working to stop it. Civic Association president Ravee Norris (a South Boulevard resident who was also head of a real estate company

selling property in the neighborhood) declared in 1935 that “as far as I know there is no one in Westover Hills in favor of annexation.... We beg you not to annex us at this time. We do not see where we have anything to gain by having to pay additional taxes if annexed, and we feel sure it is your desire to make this annexation of mutual benefit to the city and the residents of any section annexed.”

Over the next several years, the Civic Association circulated and submitted petitions, raised money to retain an attorney, and sponsored a written survey to gauge neighborhood opinion (96% against annexation in the early returns). The association held a meeting in April 1938 at the Stone House in

Forest Hill Park to plan the next steps for their opposition. Mayor Fulmer Bright, who was growing weary of the opposition to annexation, noted that it was “the height of humor” that the citizens who so desperately wanted to remain in Chesterfield County chose to meet in a city-owned building. Subsequent meetings were held at Church of the Good Shepherd.

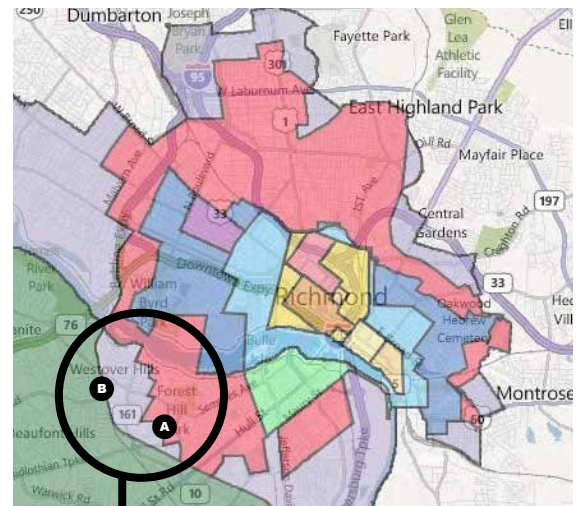
Westover Hills gained a reprieve in late 1939 when the city first focused its legal resources on annexing Windsor Farms and other sections of Henrico County. In October 1941, the city presented its legal case for annexation of Chesterfield territory. Harland Bartholomew, a nationally-renowned city planning expert from St. Louis, made the city’s case. Westover Hills and Forest Hill Terrace “are definitely part of the city now,” he explained. “They enjoy many city services without cost.” The city must annex them “in order to control

the population development and prevent over-decentralization of the city. Those subdivisions now are predominantly single-family residences. But already one big apartment and some stores have broken in promiscuously, because of the lack of zoning control. If those areas are not controlled by zoning, they will soon develop into areas of high population density and ultimately into blighted areas.”

Before 1970, when Richmond annexed Chesterfield’s adjoining white suburbs in order to dilute the African-American electorate (to which the General Assembly responded by making future annexations all but impossible), cities could annex territory even against county opposition. Such was the annexation of Chesterfield and Henrico neighborhoods that consummated on January 1, 1942.

Ultimately, the city softened the blow of involuntary annexation in several ways, including lower rates for gas and water and a three-month postponement in collecting the automobile license tax. More importantly the city real estate tax would not be imposed until the city spent 12 per cent of prospective tax (based on city assessment) on permanent improvements in the annexed area. U.S. entry into World War II brought shortages of materials for such public

Continued on page 16



This map shows how the City of Richmond grew by successive annexations. The jagged line (A) to the left of Forest Hill Park shows the border between Richmond and Chesterfield County as of 1914 and the vertical line (B) bisecting “Westover” demarcates the area (including Westover Hills) annexed in 1942.

improvements, giving Westover Hills residents a real estate tax holiday, after all.

By 1950, however, residents of Westover Hills felt the sting of increasing real estate assessments and taxes. Anticipating a familiar complaint that followed the 1970 annexation, new city residents noted that they had received few of the promised benefits of becoming city residents while their real estate assessments had “been jacked ‘way up’.” Some citizens rattled sabers about seeking “reannexation” back to Chesterfield County.

When Richmond annexed Westover Hills in 1942, the neighborhood commercial district was small, but growing. The next installment will introduce the business pioneers of Westover Hills. ■

A HISTORICAL VIEW

This is the fifth installment in a serialized history commemorating the centennial of Westover Hills. The generally chronological articles will cover such topics as first residents, racial segregation, annexation, and the Boulevard Bridge. These articles are not meant to be the final word, but only a stage in compiling a fuller neighborhood history. If you have corrections, additional information, or photographs about these topics, please contact the author at (804) 233-0705 or jmcoski1@gmail.com.

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Welcome to our new neighbors who have chosen Westover Hills (aka “Bestover Hills”) as their new home! We look forward to meeting and getting to know each and every one of you. If you haven't already, we hope that you'll have the opportunity to meet some of your great neighbors next door, on your street, and throughout the neighborhood this Fall!

Calling volunteers! If you're interested in lending a hand with the welcoming committee and meeting your new neighbors, please reach out to Lucy Kost: lucyjackson.coleman@gmail.com

NEW NEIGHBORS (SINCE 5/22/2023):

Ellen Matthews & Alex Chumbley
5416 New Kent Road

Kelly & Peter Wilbanks
5110 Riverside Dr

Chelsea Yaw & Cameron Vaile
5408 Dorchester Road

Betty Schutte Box & Elizabeth Gillis
5304 New Kent Road

James & Cynthia Wallace
5302 New Kent Road

Polly Stadt & Sean Brooks
5109 New Kent Road

Molly Golski & Caleb Picou
5215 King William Road

Brandy Hart & Jefferson Knighton
5209 Sylvan Road

Angel Marie & Michael George
5202 Sylvan Ct

Meghan Richards & Aaron Michael White
5217 Devonshire Road

Diana Carol Dominquez & Nathaniel James Wygal
5115 Sylvan Road

Elizabeth & William Torrey
5018 Caledonia Road

David Marshall St. John & Anna Elizabeth Journey
5030 Sylvan Road

Barbara Anne Bailey & James Howard Heims
1509 Westover Hills Blvd

Thomas McConnel & Brennan Long
5418 Dorchester Road



Children's Fourth of July

Thank you to Josh and Carrie Rogers for organizing and hosting the children's parade again this year! And thanks to the volunteers who helped set up, tear down and cheer on the kids! Photos by Dick Bragg.

Holiday Happenings

In partnership with Arts to All, led by Brendan Kennedy, a super fun team of teachers and artists will offer a rehearsal and performance class culminating in the show, *Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, Jr.* on December 16th, 2023.

Come join the cast in singing, simple choreography, line memorization, theatrical games and warm ups, costumes and more!

Classes will be on Tuesdays from 4-5:30 pm at Westover Hills United Methodist Church.

Classes/rehearsals will meet Sept. 19 – Dec. 12, Thurs. Dec. 14, Friday Dec. 15, show on Dec. 16.

In addition to the class, WHUMC is excited to offer a Pancake Lunch/ Dinner with Santa on Saturday Dec. 16th prior to the performance. Families will have the opportunity to sign up for a seating and use their own cameras to take a picture with Santa! Proceeds from this event will support Scout Troop #425.

We will also be seeking high school age counselors to support both the classes and the weekend of the show. This is an excellent opportunity to earn community service hours for educational requirement and resumes.

Space will be limited. For registration information please visit www.westoverhillsumc.org. ■



Laura Dysart, former parade host, and Debra McClane enjoy the Children's Parade.



Continued from page 3

to one lane in each direction will create congestion that will lead to cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets.

The most common suggestion for change was to put the bike lane next to the curb, eliminate parking along the Boulevard (with exceptions for the church and Tablespoons), and keep two lanes of traffic.

"It's clear that Westover Hills supports bike lanes, but it doesn't support this particular plan," said GSBL member Dick Bragg, "mostly because it could lead to commuters speeding through our side streets." He pointed out that Westover Hills residents have complained for years about commuter traffic cutting through our neighborhood to avoid backups at the New Kent and Forest Hill Avenue traffic lights, which is why the signs saying "No Turn Between 4 and 6 pm" were installed many years ago.

"Some drivers still cut through, despite the signs, and if there is ANY additional traffic backing up on Westover Hills Blvd, we can be sure that even more drivers will cut off onto residential streets to avoid the increasingly congested traffic," said Bragg.

OTHER OPTIONS FOR BIKE LANES

GSBL has developed several other options for the city's consideration that would create safe biking routes while preventing cut-through traffic on side streets. While there are pros and cons to each of these options, all would keep two lanes of vehicular traffic on the Boulevard.

Create bike lanes on WH Blvd but keep two traffic lanes. Under this option, the city would maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction on WH Blvd, eliminate parking on Westover Hills Boulevard (with certain exceptions such as for the church), and create painted bike lanes along the curbs.

This option calls for installing a brick crosswalk at Evelyn Byrd to be shared by pedestrians and northbound cyclists, who will be directed across Westover Hills Blvd to access the bridge. This will be safer for cyclists than the city's plan, which doesn't adequately address the Evelyn Byrd intersection.

In addition, this option calls for installation of additional brick crosswalks at selected side streets to provide additional safety for pedestrians (an issue not addressed in the city plan), and help provide traffic calming.

Other traffic calming measures such as flashing pedestrian crossing signs, additional speed limit signs, speed monitoring devices, etc. could be considered.

This approach has been proven to be successful for bicycle safety on an arterial road, and is already in use in Richmond in several areas (including along Forest Hill Avenue from Rettig Road west toward the commercial area)

Route bikers through the neighborhood. This option would create designated bike lanes through Westover Hills neighborhood, using Prince Arthur to allow cyclists to get from the bridge to Forest Hill Avenue. This street is wide, has no houses facing it and is used infrequently for parking.

Southbound cyclists would turn right after the bridge onto Riverside Drive or Evelyn Byrd, then left onto a marked bike path on Prince Arthur. Northbound cyclists would also use those streets to connect to the bridge access. "Bike Route" signs and street markings would be installed along the route.

The city currently has an existing sign at WH Blvd marking Bike Route 1 that directs southbound cyclists onto Evelyn Byrd, but there isn't currently any further signage or markings. Additional signage and street markings (like those used in other parts of the city) would improve safety for cyclists as they biked through the neighborhood.

If this approach were to be adopted, GSBL would want to consult with residents along the chosen bike path to get their feedback prior to implementation.

Share the road. This approach is already used throughout the city. In Westover Hills, the city has already designated a bikeway on Westover Hill Blvd between Riverside Drive and Evelyn Byrd with street markings indicating a shared vehicle/bicycling lane. These street markings could be continued along the curbs on WH Blvd to Forest Hill Avenue and beyond. "Share the Road" signs could be install along WH Blvd. A shared brick crosswalk at Evelyn Byrd would direct northbound cyclists across WH Blvd to access the bridge. In addition, brick crosswalks could be installed at selected intersections to calm traffic and boost safety for pedestrians. ■

Volunteer opportunities at WHES Through Communities in Schools – Richmond



FEED MORE FOOD BAGS

Pick up weekend food bags and deliver to WHES every Thursday morning between 8:30 am and 11:30 am and distribute weekend food bags to students' lockers on Thursdays after dismissal .

LUNCH BUDDY/MENTOR

Be paired with a student for social/emotional support through a 30 minute lunchtime check-in once a week.

Email Hannah Martin at: hmartin@cisofrichmond.org

Membership Form



WESTOVER
HILLS
neighborhood
association

Join or renew for 2024

(January 1 – December 31)

Membership is **STILL** just \$15 per household. Support the association's efforts to maintain and improve our wonderful neighborhood!

You can join or renew your WHNA membership online at www.westover-hills.org/join, or complete and return this form with your \$15 dues payment: (checks made payable to WHNA)

WHNA
P.O. Box 13421
Richmond, VA 23225

New Member

Renewing Member

Name(s): _____

Name(s) of other adult(s) in household: _____

Street Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address(es)*: _____

I am interested in receiving email updates about happenings in the neighborhood.

I am interested in receiving notifications for lost pets ("Stray Watch")

* Email addresses will remain confidential and will be used for internal neighborhood communication only.



WESTOVER
HILLS
neighborhood
association

Invest in your neighborhood!

At just \$15 per household, membership in the Westover Hills Neighborhood Association (WHNA) is an easy way for you to support the neighborhood activities that you enjoy.

Memberships run through the calendar year.

Here are some of the activities your membership supports:

- Fourth of July Children's Parade and Riverside Drive Fireworks
- Neighborhood clean up efforts/alley clean up

- Neighborhood yard sale
- Lighting signs on Boulevard and WH West Entrance
- Home Tour
- Neighborhood picnic, which hosts over 350 families
- Westover Hills Elementary School Projects
- Music in the Park
- Westover Hills Rag Newsletter

Join now!

Sign up online
www.westover-hills.org/join
or use the form above.



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Nestled at the corner of the James River and Forest Hill Park, GSES encourages intellectual curiosity; embraces diversity; cultivates character; fosters respect; and implements place-based, outdoor education, while integrating community service with school life.

By visiting, you'll see that our small classes allow for big experiences. Join us for a personal tour to experience what our community can offer your family.

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for 2023-24



What GSES is:

- Grades PK-8, co-educational
- High school preparatory, independent school
- Located in the Forest Hill Historic District
- Close proximity to James River and Forest Hill Park

The facts about GSES:

- Tuition for 2023-2024
Grades K-8: \$14,500, plus fees
Financial Aid available
The Nature Preschool: from \$2500 to \$5800, plus fees
- 100 students in K-8 and 42 students in preschool
- Accredited by Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS)
- Member of Virginia Council of Private Education (VCPE)

-  www.facebook.com/GoodShepEpisSchool
-  www.instagram.com/goodsheperdepiscopalschool/
-  www.instagram.com/the_nature_preschool/

4207 Forest Hill Avenue • Richmond, VA 23225 • (804) 231-1452 • www.gses.org



Safety Reminder

As the weather cools, and the sun sets earlier, make sure you keep your vehicles secured at all times.

Do not leave cars to warm up unattended or unlocked. Other motor thefts have slowed down but Hyundais and Kias are still being targeted. Steering wheel locks are the best deterrent for these vehicles.

Also remind visitor and contractors to lock their cars and trucks unless nearby.



WESTOVER
HILLS
neighborhood
association

Upcoming Meetings 7:00 pm: November 14, December 12

WHNA's regular monthly meetings are the second Tuesday of each month at The Westover Hills United Methodist Church Chapel. Meet neighbors and hear updates from RPD, City Council and more!

Have you become a member of the WHNA? It's only \$15 and helps fund events like the neighborhood picnic and the 4th of July Children's Parade and neighborhood beautification efforts.

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- 🌐 Commonwealthtreecare.com



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in the Stratford Hills Shopping Center
804.232.6464 | artspaceorg@gmail.com | artspacegallery.org
Hours: Noon to 4pm, Tuesday-Sunday and by appointment



Board of Directors & Contacts

Officers *Terms of office begin December 2023 and run through the end of 2023*

	Name	Email
President	Fran Eckenrode	feckenr@gmail.com
Vice President	Tom Tichenor	tomtichenor3@gmail.com
Secretary	Vacant	
Treasurer	Melissa Butler	missyb114@aol.com

Other Board Members

Past President	Miles Keller	mileskeller1@gmail.com
Membership	Rich Meagher	rjmarr@gmail.com
Special Events	Carrie Rogers (4th of July Parade)	shawbelt@gmail.com
	Will Chapman (Fireworks)	willbchap@gmail.com
	Brianne Zambriczki (Picnic)	Briannezambriczki@gmail.com
WHES liaison	Gillian Lugbill	gillian.lugbill@gmail.com
Welcome	Lucy Kost	lucyjackson.coleman@gmail.com
Yards of the Month	Lauren Thorup	lauren@easton-interiors.com
Holiday Decor	Roger Wiley	roger@heftywiley.com
Communications	John Coski (Stray Watch)	jmcoski1@gmail.com
	Dick Bragg (Rag Delivery)	richardbragg@comcast.net
	Page Hayes (Rag Editor)	pagalina@yahoo.com
	Dave Morgerson (Crime Watch)	dave@morgerson.com
	Val Murphey (Rag Ads)	val.murphey@comcast.net
Merchants	Bruce Gould	bgould53@gmail.com
Beautification	Robert Kelly	robmkelly1@gmail
Community Involvement	Dick Bragg	richardbragg@comcast.net
Neighborhood Watch	Dave Morgerson	dave@morgerson.com



Note: Association boundaries include only the east side of North River side Drive, the north side of Woodburn Road and Forest Hill Avenue, and the west side of Cedar Lane and Southcliff