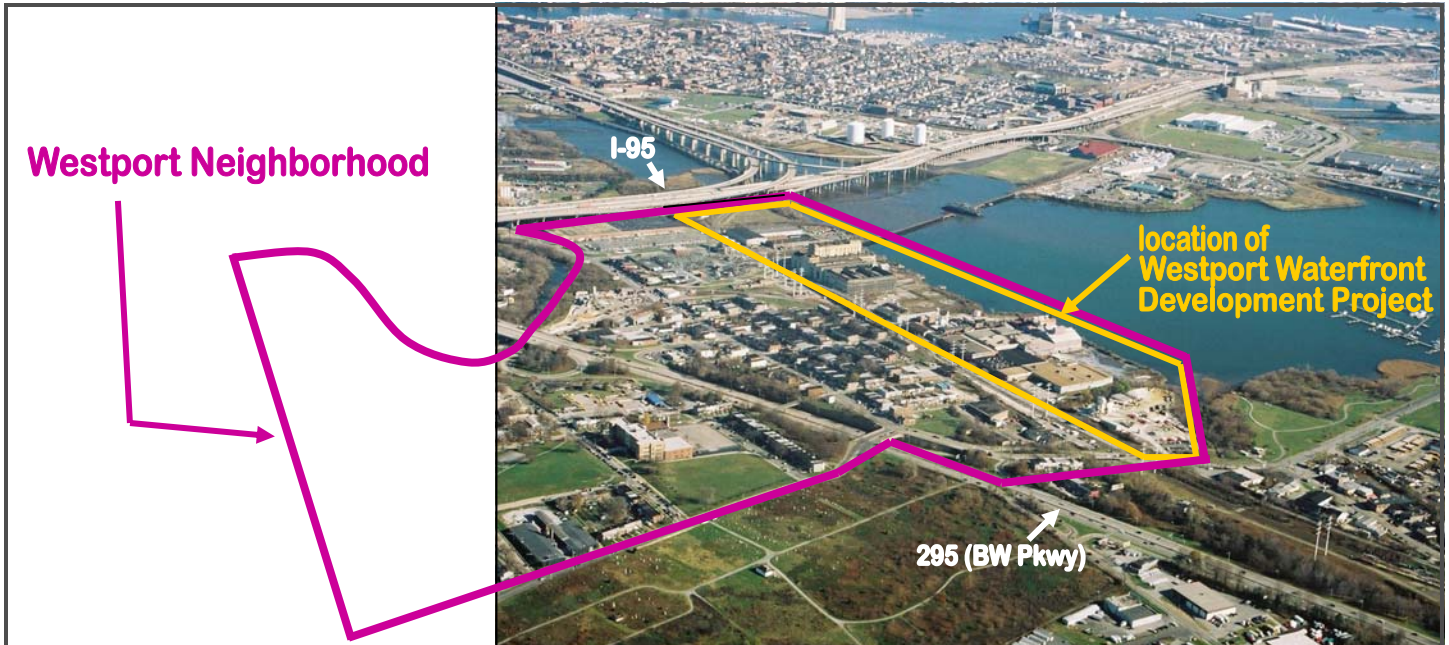


# westport community partnerships newsletter

july-august 2008



## CHANGE IS IN THE WIND

Since the first issue of this newsletter, a lot has happened in Westport. The feeling of change is in the air. There have been neighborhood trash clean-ups, greening classes and tree plantings, new trash cans installed, street naming contest winners selected, and more. The neighbors are feeling it too — pulling together to form a new business association and turning out in grand fashion to walk as Citizens on Patrol. Read more about these changes and enjoy photos of some recent efforts in this issue of the newsletter.

Even bigger changes are on the horizon. The roll-out of the matching façade grant program, an exciting new partnership with the Living Classrooms Foundation, the Fall planting of dozens of trees, comprehensive cleaning efforts, and more, will make a real difference in the neighborhood. Read about the coming opportunities and find out how to get involved in the process in this issue of the newsletter.

In the next few weeks, the new Westport Community Partnerships website will be up and running with frequent updates on neighborhood projects, a calendar of events, photo albums, business listings and more. To join Westport Community Partnerships' email list for the latest information, email [bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org](mailto:bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org).

## MATCHING FAÇADE GRANTS

Westport Community Partnerships is getting ready to roll-out the Matching Façade Improvement Grant program thanks to Turner Development Group's \$50,000 donation to the grant fund. The Design Committee, made up primarily of Westport neighbors, will meet on Thursday, July 24th, to finalize the application form and discuss the process.

Property owners or tenants (with property owner's approval) will be able to submit applications for a matching grant to improve their property's façade— new porch, new stairs, new door, new windows, paint, a new porch roof, a new sign (for businesses), etc. Grants will be awarded for 50% of the project cost up to a total grant amount of \$2,000. (E.g., if the façade improvement costs \$4,000, the grant award will be \$2,000; if the façade improvement costs \$1,000, the grant award will be \$500, etc.)

To assist in covering the applicants' matching half of the total façade improvement costs, The Harbor Bank of Maryland is pleased to offer personal loans with favorable rates and terms to grant applicants. Additional details on this unique opportunity will be available soon.

Once a matching façade improvement grant application is approved, the applicant will pay their matching half to start the construction process. Upon completion of the façade

continued on page 2...

## NEW PARTNERSHIPS: THE LIVING CLASSROOMS FOUNDATION

In an exciting new partnership with the Living Classrooms Foundation, Westport Community Partnerships hopes to start on three initiatives this Fall: Façade Improvements, a Workforce Development Center, and the Clean Team. These efforts will be implemented through Living Classrooms' ProjectSERVE program and Workforce Development Center, which will soon be setting up shop in Westport.

ProjectSERVE (Service-Empowerment-Revitalization-Volunteerism-Employment), now in its 11th year, is a community-based nonprofit program that works in the City's underserved neighborhoods, training disadvantaged residents with marketable skills while they revitalize their communities. Project SERVE works with adults age 18 years or older. Currently, the program serves over 140 people a year.

**Westport Façade Improvement Project.** ProjectSERVE will be the contractor making the façade improvements that are part of Westport Community Partnerships' matching grant program. (See the article, page 1.) ProjectSERVE participants will gain valuable experience in construction skills, work skills and life skills. And they will be provided with a living wage and other benefits while they improve the appearance of Westport. ProjectSERVE participants, especially those on the Westport façade improvement crew, will be recruited primarily from Westport and the surrounding areas.



**Westport Workforce Development Center.** Living Classrooms is planning to establish, staff and operate a Workforce Development Center in Westport, providing a wide range of services to unemployed and under-employed residents, including job readiness and job skills training, life skills training, financial literacy, and more. The Workforce Development Center will link participants with local resources to assist in eliminating barriers to gainful employment, (such as driver education classes, literacy programs, continuing education classes, daycare, substance abuse counseling, residential assistance, credit counseling, transportation assistance and healthcare information).



Look for these Living Classrooms uniforms.

## FAÇADE GRANTS, continued from page 1...

improvement, matching grant funds will be issued to cover the second half of the project cost.

In an exciting new partnership with the Living Classrooms Foundation, (see more detail in the article on this page), Living Classrooms' ProjectSERVE will be the contractor making the façade improvements. This added feature greatly increases the overall benefits of the program. Façade improvement grants will help Westport residents improve and increase the value of their homes. A series of façade improvements will give the neighborhood a quick face lift. And the construction workers doing the job will be learning new skills and entering into the workforce with the help of ProjectSERVE.

The volunteer Design Committee, which met once at the end of April, will meet again on Thursday, July 24th, at 6:30pm, (location to be determined). The committee will finalize the rules and language of the application form and discuss the approval process. Anyone interested in participating on the committee should contact Bonnie Crockett at [bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org](mailto:bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org), or call 443-717-3627. All interested members will be notified when a location for the meeting is set.

Notice will go out to all neighbors when the Westport Matching Façade Improvement Grant application forms become available and applications are being accepted.

In the meantime, Westport Community Partnerships continues to look for additional funding sources to expand and extend the program. An application for \$1 million in affordable housing funds was submitted to the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta on June 16th. It is a highly competitive application, so crossed fingers wouldn't go amiss. And an application to bring the program Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April) to Westport will be submitted by the end of July.

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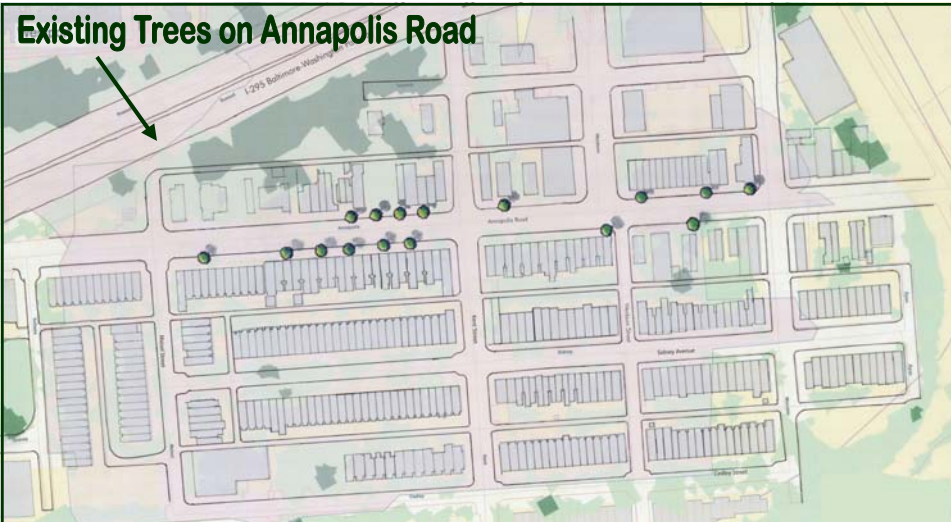
## LIVING CLASSROOMS, continued...

**Westport Clean Team.** Once appropriate funding is identified and secured, ProjectSERVE will operate a daily Clean Team in Westport. Three to five people will clean, improve and maintain Westport's streets, sidewalks and alleys, supplementing the city's baseline services. Participants will receive hands-on workforce development support and will earn a living wage and other benefits while they keep the streets of Westport clean. Participants on the Clean Team will be recruited primarily from Westport and the surrounding areas.

Look for more information about Living Classrooms programs coming to Westport over the next couple of months. For more information about the Living Classrooms organization, log onto [www.livingclassrooms.org](http://www.livingclassrooms.org).

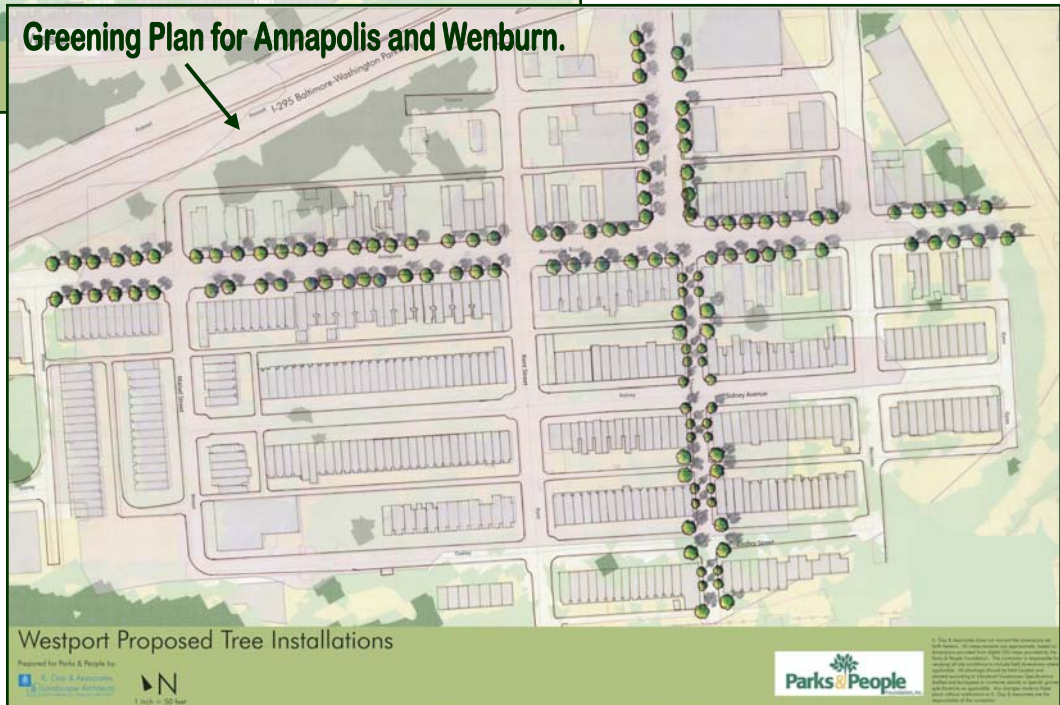
# WESTPORT GREENING PLAN—PHASE 1

Westport Community Partnerships and Parks & People Foundation Tree Plan—Phase 1:  
Greening Annapolis Road and Wenburn Street.



Annapolis Road is Westport’s ‘Main Street.’ It is the first impression made on family, friends and other visitors to the neighborhood. And it’s where many neighbors spend much of their time. More than any other greening project, a tree-lined Annapolis Road would make the biggest impact on the neighborhood.

Fall planting is by far the best for trees, but preparations will begin this Summer as tree pits are readied for planting: new pits dug, old ones revitalized, and dead stumps removed.



## HELP CREATE PLAN FOR PHASE 2

Parks & People is looking for neighbors with a passion for greening. Help survey the neighborhood to determine more locations for new trees; identify vacant lots that could be turned into gardens, and more. Enthusiasm for tree-lined streets and corner gardens is the only requirement. Contact Bonnie Crockett at 443-717-3627 or send an email to [bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org](mailto:bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org).



## GREENING IS FOR KIDS TOO

The kid-friendly clean-up of the Indiana Street and Annapolis Road playgrounds this Saturday is also part of Phase 1 of the Green Plan. Planting of the playgrounds will take place in the Fall.

Westport Community Partnerships and Parks & People have been reaching out to the students at Westport Academy to focus on greening. In May, 4th grade teachers Bridget Wrightson and Katie Clayton welcomed Jaleel Nash from Parks & People to talk to students about the importance of trees and a healthy environment. Jaleel then supervised the planting of a tree in front of the school, (pictured left). The class voted for their favorite tree and planted their first choice: a magnolia. Plans for more student projects are in the works for the Fall.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP A NEIGHBORHOOD SUCCESS

These are just a few photos from the very successful neighborhood clean-up organized in April by Westport Improvement Association, Westport Community Council, and Westport Community Partnerships. Look for information in the next issue of this newsletter about a new website, coming soon, featuring photo albums of Westport neighbors and events.





## OPENING AN OFFICE IN WESTPORT

Turner Development Group just purchased the old Union Trust Bank building on the corner of Annapolis Rd. and Wenburn St. so that Westport Community Partnerships will have a presence in the neighborhood. Once the building is restored, the space will be shared with the Living Classrooms' Workforce Development Center and other partners in the effort to revitalize Westport.

## WELCOME TO THE NEW WESTPORT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Thanks to the initiative and perseverance of Colleen Vanskiver, owner of Colleen's Corner on Wenburn and Cedley Streets, there is now a business association organized and operating in Westport. The purpose of the business association is to promote a greater sense of unity among the members of the Westport business community enabling them to join forces to improve the business climate in Westport. Together they can promote, encourage and assist existing businesses, and help stimulate business development to bring in new businesses, all to improve the economic stability of the community.

At a meeting of business owners held in June, Colleen Vanskiver was elected President, Patrick Turner Vice President, Mark Alt Treasurer, and Carol Henry Secretary. Other board members include Mike Alt Jr., Bruce Brown, Irving Little, Charles McCurdy and Evan Mickel. The board of directors will meet monthly, and the general membership will meet every other month on the 1st Tuesday of the month. The next general membership meeting will be held on September 2nd, 6pm at Colleen's Corner, on the corner of Wenburn and Cedley.

Colleen Vanskiver has been hard at work on the new association website. Check it out at <http://mysite.verizon.net/vzezqw03/>. For more information, contact Colleen at 410-360-0543 or [colleenvanskiver@verizon.net](mailto:colleenvanskiver@verizon.net).

## COP WALKS: WALKING THROUGH WESTPORT

Thanks to the Westport Improvement Association and the Southern District Police & Community Relations Council, a sizeable group of citizens walked the streets of Westport on the steamy evening of June 30th. As Ruth Sherrill and Jack Baker led the group up and down the streets of the neighborhood, it continued to gather participants as neighbors came down off their porches and joined the walking crowd. It was not only good for the neighborhood, it was fun.

Join the neighbors on the next COP Walk and become a part of the solution. Westport COP Walks will be held monthly on the **3rd Tuesday**. The next walk is scheduled for **Tuesday, July 15th, at 7:00pm**. Meet on the sidewalk in front of 2322 Annapolis Rd. Or join the crowd as they're walking past. (See <http://sdpcrc.org>.)

## NEW CORNER TRASH CANS ON ANNAPOLIS ROAD

As one of the first steps in the effort to revitalize the Annapolis Road corridor and bring businesses back to the neighborhood, Westport Community Partnerships requested that corner trash cans be installed by Baltimore City. The City's Bureau of Solid Waste installed new Victor Stanley cans, (a step up from the old mesh cans), late June.



# WESTPORT ACADEMY STUDENTS NAME FOUR CITY STREETS



The Westport Waterfront Development Project will soon be adding four new streets to Westport.

Reaching out to the lively imaginations of the young people in the neighborhood, Turner Development Group turned over the creative challenge of naming these new streets to the students of Westport Academy, (pre-K through 8th grade), by holding a school-wide Street Naming Contest. Winning names were selected based



on originality, creativity and a reflection of neighborhood spirit. Each winner took home a \$150 VISA gift card and a Street Naming Certificate with congratulations for becoming a part of Westport's permanent history.

The winning names are: Carr Lowrey Way, Green Port Street, Middle Branch Avenue, and Prosper Street.

Entries ranged from the wistful, (Caring Circle, Do Not Be Discouraged Street, Don't Walk in the Crosswalks Avenue), to the close at hand, (Math Avenue, Book Street, Education Lane). From positive thinking, (Success Avenue, Growth Avenue, Knowledge Street), to the rather less enthused, (Obtuse Avenue, Questions Street). From social causes, (Tobacco Free Street, Safety Street, Drug Free Lane), to pop culture favorites, (High School Musical Avenue, Hanna Montana Street, Blues Clues Lane). Almost all of the students suggested a street named after themselves. Many recommended naming a street after their teacher as well.



Deontray Conyers, 6th grade.

Deontray Conyers, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, thought of Carr Lowrey Way. Even though he's only lived in Westport for three years, Deontray has heard people talk about the old Carr Lowrey factory and knew it was a part of Westport's history.

Essence Cammon, pre-K, decided on Green Port Street because green is her favorite color. Essence likes the idea of spending her winnings on a backyard swimming pool.

Lauren Hill, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, suggested Middle Branch Avenue after thinking about all of the other street names in Westport, as well as what names should have been there, but weren't. "I am very proud," Lauren said. "Now I can say I was a part of Baltimore history." Lauren planned to spend her prize money on a Father's Day gift.



Essence Cammon, Pre-K



Lauren Hill, 5th grade

Raneir Scheffield, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, thought of Prosper Street, a name she believes is a reflection of neighborhood spirit in Westport. Raneir graduated from Westport Academy this year and will be starting high school next year, so she is happy to have \$150 to spend on new clothes to wear to her new school.

Carr Lowrey Way, Green Port Street, Middle Branch Avenue, and Prosper Street don't exist yet. But they will soon become a part of the Baltimore streetscape as the Westport Waterfront Development project takes shape. When the time comes to 'cut the ribbon,' Deontray, Essence, Lauren and Raneir, along with their families, will be invited to take part in the event.



Raneir Scheffield, 8th Grade

*In every community there is work to be done. In every nation there are wounds to heal. In every heart there is the power to do it.*

~Marianne Williamson



## CONGRATULATIONS TO WESTPORT TEENS AT BALTIMORE ROWING CLUB

The Baltimore Rowing Club Juniors Program ended its season as a winner. The South Baltimore team sponsored by Turner Development Group and Honeywell won the race for the Grand Prize Honeywell Cup in the annual Boat Christening and High School Championships.

Two New Era Academy students were winners in their own right. They turned their lives around with rowing. Three years ago, Akeem Smith's grades and self-esteem were low, and his weight was high. Then he found rowing. Now, 70 pounds lighter and an excellent student, Akeem has been nominated by Rep. Elijah Cummings for a place at the Naval Academy this Fall. James Freeman, another New Era student on the winning row team, is being courted by an Ivy League school as well. These students credit the sport of rowing for the positive changes in their lives.

If you know of a Westport teen who could use a fun and healthy pastime and would enjoy rowing in Middle Branch Park, contact the Baltimore Rowing Club and ask about available Juniors Program scholarships. 410-355-5649. [www.baltimorerowing.org](http://www.baltimorerowing.org).

*Look to this day for it is life,  
in its brief course lie all  
the realities and truths of existence,  
the joy of growth, the glory of action,  
the splendor of beauty...  
Today well lived makes every  
yesterday a memory of happiness  
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.*

~ancient Sanskrit proverb

## FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE BRANCH

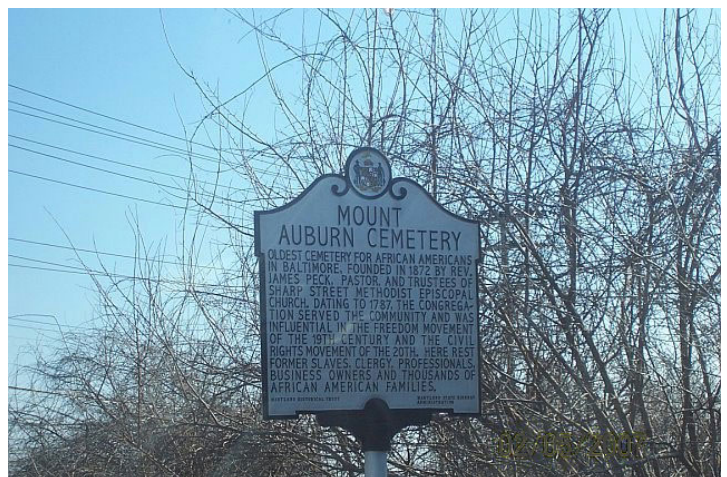
This new group came together for the first time in early June. Organized and chaired by Abby Cocke from the Parks & People Foundation, Friends of the Middle Branch is being formed to advocate, monitor and support the preservation and maintenance of open spaces and parks on the Middle Branch harbor. The group supports the implementation of the Dept. of Planning's Middle Branch Master Plan as a means of achieving its mission: guaranteeing the green legacy of parks and open spaces along the Middle Branch for countless future generations.

The Middle Branch Master Plan, which has been approved and adopted by the City, can be read online or downloaded at [www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/middleBranchMasterPlan.php](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/middleBranchMasterPlan.php). To get involved, call Abby Cocke at 410-448-5663 x. 122 or email [info@middlebranch.cherryhillnet.org](mailto:info@middlebranch.cherryhillnet.org).



## MT. AUBURN CEMETERY RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM MORGAN STATE U.

Westport Community Partnerships recently learned that Morgan State University is assisting Sharp St. Church in the restoration of Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Students in the Institute of Architecture and Planning have submitted a design proposal to the church. Soon, Morgan State should be submitting to the City, and to other potential funders, a funding proposal to pay for the restoration.



**All hands on deck!**

Westport Community Partnerships and  
Parks & People Foundation  
invite you to join in the

# PLAYGROUND CLEAN-UP

**Indiana Street Playground**  
(behind the firehouse)



**Annapolis Road Playground**  
(2334 Annapolis Road)



**THIS SATURDAY!**  
**JULY 12<sup>th</sup>**

**9:30am to 12:00 noon**

Bring the kids so they can help clean-up their favorite neighborhood playground.  
Join in the effort to tackle the clean-up of either or both playgrounds.  
whack weeds • pull vines • clear brush • remove trash  
Help give the neighborhood kids a safe and clean place to play.  
Help make Westport cleaner, safer and more beautiful.  
And have fun doing it!

**Come to the Indiana Street playground for supplies, instructions and encouragement.**



**At 12:00 noon, all participants will be rewarded with a job well done and ice cream!**  
(water and other drinks also provided)



For more info, email [bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org](mailto:bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org) or call 443-717-3627.

## You are invited!

Westport Improvement Association  
and the  
Southern District Police & Community Relations Council  
invite you to join

# CITIZENS ON PATROL WALK



**This Tuesday**  
**July 15th**  
**7:00pm**

**And every 3rd Tuesday of every month!**

Meet on the sidewalk in front of 2322 Annapolis Road.  
Or join the walking crowd of friends and neighbors when you see them walking by.

Help keep the streets of Westport safe and clean, and have fun at the same time!

If you are interested in joining the

## *Design Committee*

to discuss the facade improvement grant process, please join us at our next meeting

**Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**6:30 pm**

location to be determined

Contact Bonnie Crockett at 443-717-3627 or [bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org](mailto:bcrockett@westportpartnerships.org), and you will be notified when a location is determined. Those members already on the committee will be notified as well.