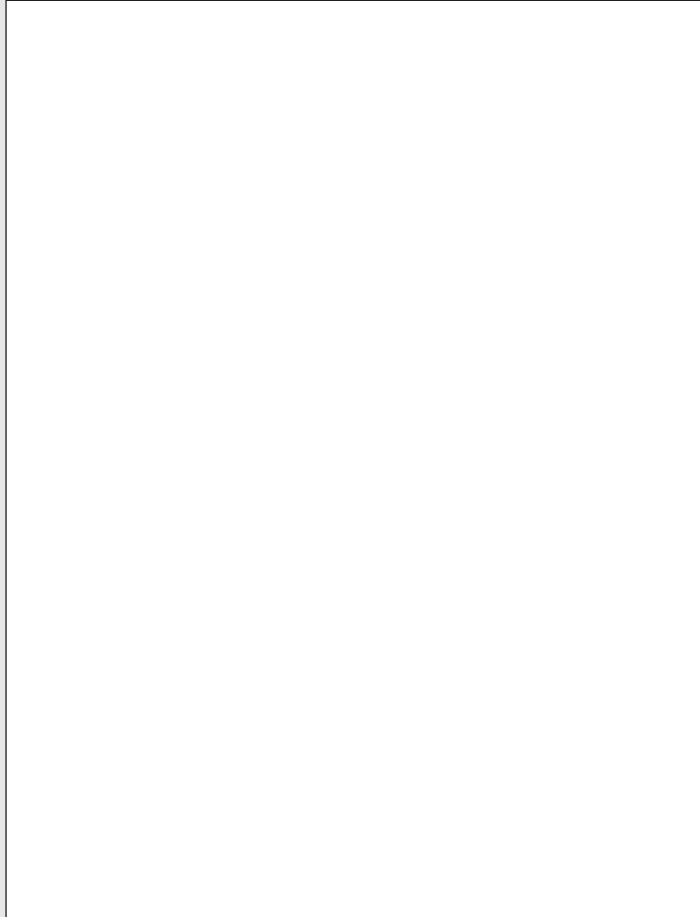


# THE NORTHWEST CURRENT

WIII!



Bill Petros/The Current

**Jonathan Willingham, chief of staff to Ward 3 Council member Mary Cheh, watches Joan Joseph of Cleveland Park as she learns to bowl on a Nintendo Wii system donated to Iona Senior Services by Cheh's office on Friday. See story, page 15.**

## Council votes not to reopen Klingle

■ **Budget:** Graham, Bowser lose bid to restore funding

By IAN THOMS  
Current Staff Writer

Ward 1 Council member Jim Graham made a final plea for reopening Klingle Road during yesterday's D.C. Council budget meeting, but his colleagues were not persuaded, and they voted down his

amendment in favor of keeping the road closed and creating a hiking and biking trail.

The failed amendment and subsequent passage of the city budget could end the council's involvement in what has been one of the most-debated projects in recent city history. The Klingle Road amend-

ment — which would have restored funding sought by Mayor Adrian Fenty — failed on a 3-10 vote, with Graham, at-large member Carol Schwartz and Ward 4 member Muriel Bowser voting in support. The council later unanimously passed the budget.

Klingle Road was closed in 1991 after years of deterioration and erosion. In 2003, the D.C. Council authorized reopening the .07-mile See **Klingle**/Page 27

■ **BUDGET APPROVAL:** Council tweaks mayor's plan. Page 3.

## Palisades looks to host farmers market

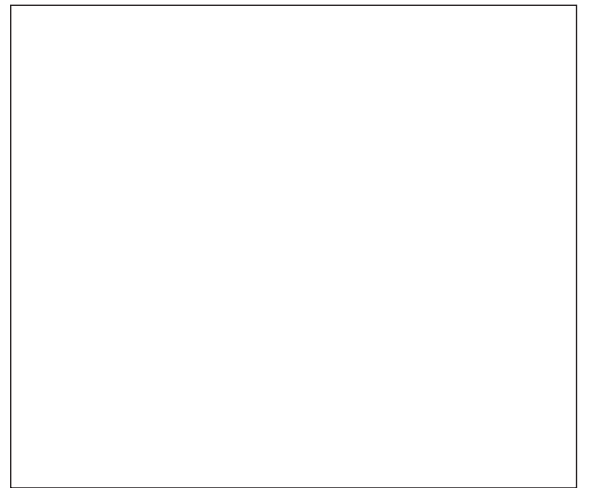
By VICTORIA SOLOMON  
Current Staff Writer

When Christopher Baer was a boy growing up in the Palisades, he regularly accompanied his grandmother to buy fresh tomatoes from a nearby market stand. Now an adult, Baer still lives in the Palisades, and soon he will be able to buy farm-fresh, seasonal produce from a market in his neighborhood again — thanks to his own efforts.

Baer shopped at several area farmers markets last summer, and they inspired him to roll up his sleeves and create the Palisades Farmers Market.

"I had been enjoying them and the community [they foster]," he said. "I found it so attractive to go out there, and thought I could see if I could make it happen here."

Baer said he has received "a landslide of positive feedback" from the Palisades community about the planned market.



Bill Petros/The Current

**The Palisades Farmers Market is planned to operate on 48th Place on Sundays, likely starting in June.**

See **Market**/Page 12

## Belt Road addition yields zoning fight

By ELIZABETH WIENER  
Current Staff Writer

A zoning dispute on Belt Road has left a partially built addition open to the elements for more than a year, the front yard strewn with mud and debris, and the driveway next door caved in. The imbroglio has left neighbors and the builder, Stephanie Wallace, angry with each other and the city.

The dispute is now playing out at the Board of Zoning Adjustment. The zoning board must decide an arcane zoning question: Does the unusually small side yard of the original house on Belt Road, completely demolished, justify an equally small side yard on the large new addition that now sits rotting in the rear?

The board also must decide whether the termite infestation that made the original house structurally



Bill Petros/The Current

**After a developer began an addition on this Belt Road lot, she demolished the original house due to damage from termites.**

unsound can be termed an "act of God" or "casualty" — or whether the developer should have known all along she would have to raze it.

But if the zoning questions are messy, the situation See **Zoning**/Page 46

## Hardy Middle School rehab on schedule for August end

■ **Schools:** Officials prepare to vet updated facilities plan

By VICTORIA SOLOMON  
Current Staff Writer

Hardy Middle School's updated building is well on its way to completion, with freshly painted classroom walls, white and blue ceramic tile lining the hallways and a spacious new gymnasium.

Officials from the D.C. Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization met with mayoral staffers, contractors and the press at

the Georgetown school last Friday. In the classroom on display, only a few finishing touches remained to be done, including installing a drop-tile ceiling and peeling protective paper off the floor.

A lot of work has occurred on an expedited timetable, say officials from SIGAL Construction Corp., the contractor that has worked on the \$48 million-plus project since January.

In the fall, Mayor Adrian Fenty and the city's school-facilities-modernization chief, Allen Lew, fired the joint-venture group Arrow See **Hardy**/Page 20

### NEWS

■ **Glover Park eatery imports self-serve wine machine. Page 9.**  
■ **City again includes library site in Tenley proposal. Page 2.**



### SPORTS

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## PARKS

From Page 2

Petworth-16th Street Heights advisory neighborhood commission has offered support. And, according to Badalamenti, Ray has met with residents several times and been receptive to their plans.

Badalamenti said multiple community meetings have helped her group understand what residents want from the parks. The group is currently forming five committees to fine-tune the ideas: park design, building and maintenance; dog park; fundraising; events and programs; and outreach/membership.

In a letter to Ray last October, the group outlined its goals. Both parks need improved playground equipment, including pieces for both younger and older children, the group said. It suggests a sandbox area, a tot lot and a tricycle lot for the younger children, and challenging playground equipment, a climbing wall, bike paths, slides and a skateboard park for older children. The soccer fields and basketball courts at both parks, as well as the baseball diamond at Upshur, need upgrading and maintenance, the group said.

All of those components fall in the category of long-term plans that would require additional funding. The group also suggested short-term improvements, which available funds could cover. The community would like to see a water spray park installed at Hamilton, since Upshur Recreation Center already has a pool. Both parks need landscaping, new benches, bleachers and picnic tables. Fencing around the playgrounds and improved ramp access for wheelchairs and strollers could make the parks safer, the letter said. And the group would like to set up dog parks.

## KLINGLE

From Page 1

stretch of roadway with federal funds, but that money has been stuck in the federal approval process ever since. Graham said he suspects this is because the federal government does not support the road's reopening.

Ward 3 Council member Mary Cheh recently began championing a proposal to keep the roadway closed and to convert it into a hiking and biking trail. On Tuesday, she argued against Graham's amendment, arguing her case on both the potential environmental impacts of reinstating the road and what she views as misconceptions about the street.

"How shall we justify this vote to the next generation? How will we justify this vote to our children?" Cheh said. "I want to tell my children that I voted to protect Rock Creek Park."

Cheh said repaving Klingle Road would lead to harmful runoff into the creek and eliminate needed green space. She also said the city should be promoting smart growth, with development based around mass transit.

Cheh also noted potential risks for drivers if the road reopened. She said Klingle was prone to flooding when it was open, and that it was the site of many accidents because it is narrow and winding.

Graham objected to the suggestion that reopening Klingle would be environmentally reckless. He said he stands on his environmental record, pointing out that he authored legislation addressing issues such as "green" buildings. And he said reopening Klingle Road would

bring some environmental benefits because it would lessen congestion on neighboring Porter Street.

Bowser said she, too, cares deeply about the environment, but she doesn't think reopening Klingle Road would bring more cars.

"Pinching closed one artery, I suggest, is not a way to protect the environment," she said. When Klingle closed, "those cars didn't disappear."

All three legislators sat through testimony Thursday evening from dozens of witnesses at a public roundtable held by Graham's Committee on Public Works and the Environment. The hearing lasted nearly five hours, with advocates of keeping the road closed outnumbering those who called for its reopening.

The mayor — an advocate of reopening the road in his previous position as Ward 4 council member — had included \$2 million in the city budget to help pay for the road's reconstruction. But in a committee session last month, Cheh won approval of an amendment removing the funds and stating that the road "shall remain closed." The \$2 million will now pay for alley repairs citywide, and the city will seek federal funds to pay for the hiking and biking trail.

In defending her plan Tuesday, Cheh also took on the notion that Klingle Road is an important east-west connector, which Schwartz cited as a reason for her support.

"This road begins at the north on Porter Street, west of Rock Creek Park, and it travels in a southwesterly direction ... and deposits cars onto neighborhood streets," Cheh said. "It is not an east-west connector across the park."

Cheh also pointed out that the section of Klingle Road in dispute begins and ends in Ward 3. She said many supporters of reopening the roadway want only to use it as a shortcut, which, incidentally, is how it was created in the first place.

"Klingle Road is a historical accident," she said, adding that inventor Alexander Graham Bell used what was then a carriage trail as a shortcut to his girlfriend's place.

Most council members who supported Cheh said it was time for the council to move on from what should have been a small matter.

At-large Council member Phil Mendelson said the issue should have been extremely local and lamented that it has extended city-wide, even prompting discussion among mayoral candidates during the last election. He said he used to serve on the advisory neighborhood commission for the area, and the entire road fell within his single-member district.

Ward 8 Council member Marion Barry, too, said the Klingle Road issue has been around longer than it should have been. "Even when I was mayor, this was a big, big issue," he said.

At-large Council member David Catania said he thought the D.C. Council was doing the majority of the city a disservice by fixating on Klingle.

"It has really consumed this council on more than one occasion," Catania said. "I suspect the majority of the citizens of this city couldn't find Klingle Road on a map if you put a gun to their head. ... We have more serious challenges in this city than this tiny road ... and hope that once and for all we can put this issue to rest."

Bill Petros/The Current

### A friends group has formed to urge improvements at Upshur and Hamilton parks in Ward 4.

The improvements would help turn Upshur and Hamilton into "green," sustainable parks, members say.

"I would say that both parks are workable," said Badalamenti. "I'm not going to tell you they're the worst of the worst in the city, but they're not the best of the best either. They just have been left and are neglected. ... You just go to the west side of Rock Creek Park and you see these beautiful parks, and we understand that a lot of those parks were funded by the neighborhoods and the Friends groups."

In addition to physical improvements, the group is focused on adding programming at both sites. So far they have had success with two new programs: t-ball at Upshur and "tiny tots" soccer at Hamilton.

"There's just a huge need for young families," Badalamenti said. On the first night of soccer, 35 families showed up.

Julie Quinn and Penny Karr

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