

June 29, 2008

To the Members of the Baltimore Country Club:

Thank you for the opportunity to explain to Baltimore Country Club members why Roland Park residents are opposed to your officers' proposal to sell 17 acres of land to Keswick Multi-Care. Though I currently serve as the President of the Roland Park Civic League, I am writing as an individual. The Civic League has not yet taken an official position.

The community has erupted in opposition. If you visit your beautiful Roland Park Clubhouse, you will see signs and banners of opposition placed in the yards or hung from the homes throughout our community. These signs have been made at spontaneous gatherings throughout the neighborhoods. I visited one such gathering this week and saw nearly 100 people sitting on the floor working together. The kids are participating as well by posting the signs where they play such as at our community pool. This weekend, residents are knocking on every door in Roland Park seeking signatures on petitions opposing the plans. This next Tuesday, a group of residents with their children will march down Roland Avenue in protest. The reaction is strong and still building as we approach our community meeting on July 1 at St. David's Church.

I have lived in Roland Park since 1995, and I have never seen my community so engaged. Those who have lived here much longer tell me that this is unique! While it is exciting and positive to see a community so engaged, the obvious questions are why and what do they want?

The opposition is actually fairly easy to understand. Your officers have proposed to sell one of the largest non-public areas of green space in our community to build a 300 occupant facility with parking for over 400 cars. The area is entirely bounded on the north and on the south by parents and children living in single family homes. I strongly believe you would react in a similar manner. The planned facility would change the entire residential fabric of our community and residents are adamant in their opposition to the proposed zoning change.

We are certainly not against continuing care retirement communities. Caring for our parents and older Roland Park residents as they age is obviously important. You may know that we already have three such facilities in Roland Park (Keswick and Roland Park Place are two). Many of us have had parents or other relatives and friends in these facilities and are extremely appreciative of their efforts. But, placing the proposed facility on this land would change the entire character of our neighborhood.

Despite a long relationship between Baltimore Country Club and Roland Park, the

community's strong negative reaction is related to the way your officers developed and announced this proposal. There was no consultation with Roland Park community organizations despite the fact that we have been neighbors for over 100 years. This is not the way a neighbor treats a neighbor. The Roland Park community and the Country Club share a common origin.

I am surprised when Club members tell me that they are unaware that our community has made offers to the Country Club to purchase the land. We did so in 1999, 2001, and 2003 and wish to do so again now. Suggested plans have included the preservation of green space, shared recreational facilities, and access by Roland Park residents. Paramount to all those concerned is the preservation of green space.

We recognize the value of the land and realize that we need the funds to make this purchase. The community has a track record of raising money before, millions of dollars for our newly renovated library, and we believe we can do it again. Foundations and non-profit land use organizations have expressed interest in assisting in our goal to buy the land.

I would ask each of you to consider whether the Keswick proposal is the legacy you wish the Club to leave. I believe we offer an alternative that is much more consistent with your values and the character of the Club. I hope you will consider rejecting the Keswick proposal and if you do, I promise that I will work diligently with your officers to achieve an outcome preferable for the Club and the Community.

If you would like to speak with me directly or attend our community meeting on July 1, you may do so. You can contact me by email at civicleague@rolandpark.org . You may also wish to view our community web site at <http://www.rolandpark.org/BCC1.html> to gain a better perspective of the feelings of my fellow Roland Park neighbors.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Philip J. Spevak