

REDISTRICTING GROUP -- 3/20/2012

BARRY SCHADE

I am here before you again, on behalf of the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association, to ask that you keep Bryn Mawr intact when you set the Ward and Park district boundaries.

By your latest map, nearly all of Bryn Mawr is in one Ward and one Park District: Ward 7 and District 4. We are glad for that and we thank you for all the hard work you have put into this process. We do have a concern that a small, uninhabited sliver of northeastern Bryn Mawr is no longer in Ward 7. We believe that this is because you are following the legislative line which, instead of following the Bryn Mawr boundary that goes down Bassett Creek, follows the railroad tracks just slightly to the south.

This may seem like a small matter but it is a very important issue for us. Bassett Creek is the natural, established boundary of Bryn Mawr and runs just north of the railroad tracks. Ten years ago, the City moved the neighborhood boundary south and to the creek to allow Harrison and Bryn Mawr to have equal participation and equal representation in the development of the Bassett Creek Valley Master Plan. We want that equal representation to continue.

By using the railroad tracks rather than the creek as the ward boundary, a small uninhabited part of Bryn Mawr is effectively isolated from the rest of the neighborhood. By becoming part of Ward 5, this small part of Bryn Mawr now will be represented by an elected Council member and Park District commissioner that no one in Bryn Mawr will have a chance to choose.

This lack of proper representation makes it very difficult for the neighborhood to advocate for the development plans that we worked on for this area since 1997,

plans that were approved by the City in 2006 and made a part of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed Ward line will keep Bryn Mawr from having equal participation and representation in the master plan implementation.

Bryn Mawr tried to bring the problem with the ward and legislative district line to the Secretary of State. We were told that the remedy lay with the City's redistricting group, and we should bring it back to you. All the City has to do is create a precinct and place it within Ward 7. We understand from City staff that this can be done without a great amount of difficulty.

In our eyes it is a simple technical change that involves no shifting of voters. So we ask that you move this boundary of Ward 7 to the middle of the creek, the boundary of Bryn Mawr and put this small area of Bryn Mawr back in Ward 7.