

LPCA General Meeting Minutes - January 8th, 2025

Held at Francis Scott Key Elementary-Middle School

Preliminaries:

- Pledge of Allegiance
- New Neighbor Introductions
- Treasurer Update:
 - 2025 Budget - A quorum was not present. The budget approval will be moved to the February meeting.
 - \$65,955 - General Fund
 - \$3,744 - Dog Park
 - \$8,892 - Park Fund
 - Paypal payments for \$5 annual memberships now accepted (and checks to PO Box); cash will be accepted at meeting, and checks can be mailed to Locust Point Civic Association, PO Box 27097, Baltimore, MD 21230-0097
- There was no update on memberships. Please renew your membership for 2025.
- November Minutes Review/Vote:
 - Minutes were made available online.
 - A quorum was not present.

Committee Reports/General Updates

Safety:

- BPD Southern District representative was in attendance.
 - Officer Rivera can be reached at Raul.Rivera@baltimorepolice.org.
 - Detective Wiggins and Officer Washington were in attendance
 - Aggravated assaults have increased by two incidents.
 - All other crime categories, including auto theft and larceny, have decreased over the past 28 days.
 - Officers conducted seven foot patrols and three business checks. Please provide any additional suggestions for business checks.
 - Year-to-date crime is down by 49%.
 - A safety walk is being planned for March.
 - Question: Are there any new initiatives for package thefts?

Two suspects were caught in Federal Hill, but there are no new initiatives at this time. Please continue to report thefts, as many people file claims with the shipper without notifying us, making it difficult to track trends. Thefts under \$1,500 can be reported via 311 or online. If you have camera footage, that is extremely helpful.

- Question: Is there an update on the task force mentioned in the last update?

GBRS is coming to the most violent areas, including Cherry Hill, Westport, and Pigtown. They were originally scheduled to come in December, but their deployment has been delayed due to crime in the Western District.

- Question: Have any new officers been onboarded?

Six new officers have started, and five trainees are currently in the district.

- Question: How many officers are in the district?

The number fluctuates, but we can find out if needed.

- Look out for a safety walk in January! (date TBA)
- The April meeting will be our safety meeting. The LPCA has invited higher level police representatives. Please attend.
- There was no DoT representative in attendance.
- As a reminder, if you open a 311 ticket please email the board with the ticket number.
- Safety concerns can be sent to contacts@mylocustpoint.org.

Parks & Beautification:

- The next committee meeting will be held in the last week of January. Reach out to the committee for information.
- Park team is very active (sporadically as the seasons change) and you will see ongoing work in the park by both the LPCA and Parks and Rec.
- The committee is encouraging everyone in the neighborhood to pitch in to maintain the alleys, pick up garbage, and help to keep the community looking nice.
- If you are interested in joining the parks and recs committee in one of the targeted task forces, questions can be directed to parksandbeautification@mylocustpoint.org.

Education & Schools:

- Harris Teeter is no longer donating back to schools for VIC card users. You must register for the Harris Teeter delivery service to earn a \$10 credit back to your school.

Social:

- No Update.
- No date yet for the LP Festival, stay tuned

UA Community Garden Updates:

- We are planning to invite the Fort McHenry Superintendent in May.
- The LPCA is looking to continue "Long Nights at the Fort" over the summer and will begin planning efforts soon.
- Maintenance for the 28 newly planted trees (2025) is covered under an agreement with Living Classrooms. If anyone notices issues, please report them.
- We are exploring areas near the ballpark for additional plantings, pending permission and funding.
- The LPCA is working on programs to support in-neighborhood tree upkeep, potentially through a community grant. Volunteers and interested residents are welcome to get involved.
- We are moving forward with the banner replacement project to update the 10-year-old neighborhood banners. This will align with the 250th anniversary of the U.S. in 2026, which will feature major events both in the city and at Fort McHenry.
- Questions can be directed to locustpointcg@gmail.com.

Communications/Newsletter/Website:

- Please check out mylocustpoint.org for information and opportunities.

- If you would like to receive our emails, send a note to contacts@mylocustpoint.org and like our page on Facebook for updates. Send any editorial ideas or interest in volunteering on the newsletter - communication@mylocustpoint.org.

Community Improvement Grants:

- These grants are available to the entire neighborhood. Projects may beautify, benefit, or otherwise enhance the community with a preference given to those ideas with lasting impact or creating broad new connections. Please consider submitting a grant to contacts@mylocustpoint.org. The grant form is available on the website <https://mylocustpoint.wordpress.com/about-the-lpca/community-improvement-grant/> and on Facebook.

LPCA Website:

- Please check out the website at <https://www.mylocustpoint.org>.

New/Old Business

Serenity Wine

- Someone has applied to transfer the liquor licenses. More information to come.

Tide Point Taskforce

- Next meeting 1/28 @ 7-8:30 pm at 1215 E. Fort Avenue.
 - Avenue. Agenda: review any updates, create and vote on LPCA approved MOU.
 - MOU = memorandum of understanding. This is a contract between the community and a business (restaurant/bar) about how the restaurant will conduct itself in the community (i.e. hours, decibel levels of noise, if it can be rented to others, where its patrons will park). A MOU can be bound to a liquor license, meaning a business can risk losing their MOU if they don't honor the terms agreed to.
 - What do you think is appropriate? How late should restaurants be open? Should live music be allowed? Come to our meeting on 1/28 to discuss!
- Please email contacts@mylocustpoint.org if you would like to participate.

Guest: Councilman Zac Blanchard

- Represents the 11th District and lives near Cross Street.
- Inaugurated on December 5, 2024.
- City Council conducts work through committees.
- Vice Chair of the Public Safety Committee.
- Also serves on the Education, Youth, Older Adults, Housing & Economic Development, and Land Use Committees.
- Currently ramping up constituent services.
- Chief of Staff: Brandy Savarese (formerly Associate Director of Transportation at Morgan State University).
- Onboarding a new Constituent Services Representative.
- Legislative Director: TBD, expected to be onboarded by the end of the month
- Question: What are you hearing from other communities?

Concerns about the Tide Point Redevelopment.

- Question: What is your stance on the Tide Point Redevelopment?

The redevelopment includes a large area with multiple parcels, some owned by Cross Street Partners (including the Cheers building). There is an existing Planned Unit Development (PUD) in place, and the current plan leans heavily toward commercial use, which is not in high demand at the moment. Ideally, all stakeholders (Under Armour, Baltimore City Planning Department, Locust Point, and Cross Street Partners) could develop a joint master plan. Ayers Saint Gross, a current tenant in the Tide Point building, could play a role. There's a lot of opportunity for collaboration.

- Question: Is Baltimore Peninsula part of the 11th District?

Yes, east of the bridge is in the 11th District, but the park is not. Relatedly, a bill is being introduced to create an independent commission for redistricting. Under Armour remains a constituent.

- Question: Are there concerns about the connection between Locust Point and the Peninsula? McComas Street is unsafe, including for cruise line staff.

This is a frequent concern in Riverside. Have talked to the development partnership and discussions with Kadin Grant indicate there's currently no budget for improvements, and Locust Point is outside the designated funding area.

However, in the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreement between developers and the city, there is funding for future infrastructure improvements once development reaches a certain threshold. Plans include a pedestrian bridge over the CSX tracks on Charles Street and improvements at McComas and Key Highway, but these are triggered by tax revenue growth and are unlikely to happen in the next few years.

- Comment: The Rec Center should be a key connection point for Digital Harbor and Port Covington, with low-cost improvements like lighting and striping.
- Comment: This isn't just a District 11 issue—it's a citywide problem. Visitors arriving for cruises encounter unsafe pedestrian conditions.
- Comment: There has been little effort to connect existing residents to the development, making it feel insulated from Baltimore City.

Public perception matters, but the needs of city residents should remain a priority. A meeting is scheduled in February with the current president of MAG Partners. Discussions with Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DoT) are ongoing and the councilman encourages coordination with other community associations in the area.

- Question: Is there a Port Covington community association?

No, but any residents can form one. Some development plans may shift from apartments to rowhomes. As new residents move in, demand for a community association may increase.

- Question: Is there any effort to extend rail service into South Baltimore neighborhoods?

Passenger rail demand is too low to justify expansion. Existing commercial rail infrastructure does not easily translate to passenger service. However, there is interest in improving transit connections to existing passenger rail.

The councilman advocates for expanding Water Taxi service to seven days a week. A cost analysis estimates the expansion would require a little over \$1 million per year. Water Taxi operators have expressed interest in the idea. Improving Key Highway and expanding Water Taxi access are key priorities.

- Question: Years ago, there was talk about turning the MARC rail yard near Merritt into a MARC station.

If anyone has information on that conversation, please share it.

- Question: What is the next step for the Inner Harbor Redevelopment Project?

Reached out to project leaders after the election. They requested time to organize plans and assess potential impacts of the federal elections on funding sources. No major updates at this time. The project is likely still years away from breaking ground.

- Question: What are your key priorities for 2025?

Addressing vacant properties: 13,000 vacant properties cost the city \$200 million per year (due to fires, lost tax revenue, etc.). A newly passed bill allows the city to tax vacant properties at a higher rate, accelerating the process of reclaiming them. No similar law exists for vacant lots, which may need to be addressed.

Managing opioid settlement funds: \$500 million from opioid manufacturers and distributors is coming to the city. The Lexington Market area is particularly affected and should be prioritized.

Supporting the Main Street Program to revitalize local businesses.

Expanding outdoor sports facilities for Digital Harbor High School: Currently, students use Latrobe Park for sports. Within the next 3–4 months, we could expand Digital Harbor's own field to accommodate more sports without relying on Latrobe as often.

Community Announcements / Guests

- 2025 dumpster days: To be announced
- Question: They used to do movies on the pier in Federal Hill. Has there ever been an effort to bring that here?

The PTO has hosted kid-friendly movie nights, and the Knights of Columbus (KoC) have held small screenings. This could be a great idea for a Community Grant. Baltimore Parks and Recreation runs a program called Rhythm & Reels that might be able to help coordinate.

- Please renew your membership for 2025!

Motion and Second to Adjourn the Meeting

- Motion was made and seconded.
- Our next meeting is February 12, 2025.

Adjourned 8:24 pm