

MEETING REMINDER!

**EASTLAND GARDENS CIVIC ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 6:30pm
@KENILWORTH ELEMENTARY**

Focus this month:

CRIME & SAFETY IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Guest Speakers:

- **Chief Kenneth Ellerbe,
Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department**
- **Lieutenant Josiah Eaves
Metropolitan Police Department, 6th District**

**The Eastland Gardens Civic Association will continue to
meet at Kenilworth Elementary on the
3rd Tuesday of each month**

See you there!

**EASTLAND GARDENS CIVIC ASSOCIATION
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER—March 2013**

Dear Neighbors,

It was wonderful to see so many people come out to our February meeting, which was focused on the closing of Kenilworth Elementary. For those of you who missed it, DCPS's new Kenilworth Central Office Transition Coordinator, Sarah Johnson, explained why DCPS decided to close Kenilworth Elementary at the end of this school year and what it means for our children. DCPNI's Ayris Scales also explained how the school closure would impact the DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative's mission to ensure that our children obtain a quality education. In a nutshell, we learned that:

- DCPS made the decision because enrollment is only at 37% of the building's capacity. Note: a majority of neighborhood kids are attending outside schools.
- Parents will have the choice to send their children to either Thomas ES or Houston ES. Presently, both schools have better test scores than Kenilworth ES.
- The City will provide transportation ONLY between Kenilworth ES and Thomas ES.
- DCPNI's \$25million from the U.S. Department of Education can be spent on in-school educational programs at Thomas ES, but NOT at Houston ES. After-school programming is available to all.
- DCPS is keeping the building in its inventory and expects to reopen Kenilworth ES in 2017 as the numbers of kids in our neighborhood grows.
- DCPS is considering our community's plea that rather than leaving the building vacant for years, it invite good, local non-profit organizations to use the vacated classrooms as office space, like DCPNI has been.

Nearly everyone in the community was distressed that DCPS decided to close Kenilworth ES, but that decision is not the end of the story. Though many remain skeptical, DCPS claimed that the decision is in the students' best interests. We must hold DCPS to that standard and insist on change if student performance suffers or if our children are unsafe making the trek to and from their new schools.

The theme of our March meeting will be "Crime and Safety" as these are perpetually important quality-of-life issues for our community and all communities. We will hear from MPD and FEMS and have an opportunity to have our questions answered. We expect to have a good discussion on crime trends in our neighborhood and on what more can be done by the City *and us* to prevent crime and improve safety here.

On March 1, the National Park Service released its proposed plan of action for addressing the issue of contaminated dirt in Kenilworth Park: covering the entire park with 2 feet of soil over several years at an estimated cost of \$18million. Don't get alarmed: as long as you do not habitually eat the dirt, there's no danger! But seriously: don't eat fish from the Anacostia River. Much more on these issues at our April 16 EGCA meeting...

-The Eastland Gardens Civic Association Executive Committee

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