

Published by the



MYERS PARK

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Oak Leaf

Fall 2018

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Have an idea, a suggestion,
a compliment or a
correction? Contact us at
info@mpha.com
or our Editor at
fwardell@bellsouth.net.

mpha.com

Join us for the
**Myers ParkSM
Homeowners
Association**

2018 Annual Meeting

**Wednesday, November 7, 2018
at Myers Park Country Club**

Socializing:

6:00 pm

Meeting: 6:30 pm

- **Keynote Speaker**
Ken Joyner, Mecklenburg
County Tax Assessor

- **Connie Brown**
Preservation Award

- **Election of 2018-19**
Board of Directors
and Officers

Photo courtesy Pamela May

All members are encouraged to attend.
Not a member yet? Join at the meeting!



This Is Your OakLeaf

We hope you enjoy this edition of *The Oak Leaf*.

It underscores our commitment to inform our members of important news and events. Did you know you can also keep current via www.mpha.com and by asking to join our periodic email list?

For more information or to advertise in *The Oak Leaf*, contact Info@mpha.com or the Editor at fwardell@bellsouth.net

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2018/19 Slate of MPHA Officers & Directors

President:

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Vice President:

Charlie Welch

Secretary/Treasurer:

Rick Handford

Directors:

Jane Coghill

Emily Fisher*

Kathy Harkness

Jennifer Jackson*

Randy Masters

Jack McNeary

Sarah Monnin

Kevin Murray

Lisa Parrish*

David Quattlebaum

Suzanne Ross*

Jenifer Walker

Ferman Wardell

Emily Zuyus

Presidents Emeritus:

Sadler Barnhardt

Bob Lilien

Pamela May

Joddy Peer

Susan Shaver

* New Nominee



2018 Connie Brown Preservation Award

Each year the Myers Park Homeowners Association presents The Connie Brown Preservation Award(s) to recognize outstanding renovations or additions to existing homes. These awards are designed to encourage the preservation of existing homes and to maintain the character and scale of the Myers Park neighborhood.

The 2018 winner(s) will be announced at the November 7, 2018 MPHA Annual Meeting. We hope you will attend.

Advertising Rates & Specifications:

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Help Protect
the Unique Beauty
of Myers Park

2018-19 Membership Form



Title(s) _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Mailing Address (if different than property address) _____

Phone _____

E-mail Address(es) _____

Membership Options

☐ MPHA Member: \$75

☐ Myers Park Guardian: \$150

☐ Myers Park Defender: \$300

All three membership options include annual dues

Please consider an additional donation to help preserve our magnificent tree canopy

☐ Tree Fund Donation: \$25

☐ Additional Donation: _____

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to MPHA and mail to:

MPHA, PO Box 12733, Charlotte, NC 28220. **Thank you!**

The President's Message:

Pamela May, MPHA President



MPHA President Pamela May

Greetings members and neighbors,

Perhaps you saw, via mailchimp or local news, of our last-minute fight against a rezoning petition to permit a 300' tall (for perspective, tree canopy is 80'), 530k sq ft structure plus a 240-room hotel on a small parcel that sits between two historic neighborhoods. The building will be the approximate height of the Westin Hotel uptown. The property is nearest the Elizabeth and Cherry neighborhoods whose representatives contacted the Myers ParkSM Homeowners Association (MPHA) in desperation to limit the density, height, and traffic that promise to forever change their neighborhoods.

While our board is known to focus on projects within Myers Park, we will take an active role in proposed rezoning that has the severity of impact of Petition #2017-177 at 3rd, 4th, Queens, and Baldwin, so near to Myers Park. Normally, the city notifies us of rezonings in surrounding neighborhoods; however, they acknowledge their failure to do so here and have vowed to prevent this error in the future. That's why our efforts were at the eleventh-hour vs our usual ready preparation. Knowing us to be a leader in successful lobbying for preservation, Cherry and Elizabeth hoped that we could help pull out a miracle with an upcoming council vote looming.

Regrettably, the city council voted in favor of the rezoning in defiance of the Midtown Morehead Cherry (MMC) Area Plan adopted by council in 2012. The MMC Plan had the benefit of input from the City Planning Department, related staff, and a highly talented and diverse Citizens Advisory Group. The plan emphasized the importance of new development consistent with the "character of surrounding neighborhoods,... blending scale and setbacks with existing structures," and "compatible with existing development." The myriad examples provided by the plan were here ignored.

In approving, Council cited desire for the greater tax revenue that will be supplied to that corridor; far greater than that of

Novant Presbyterian Hospital and CPCC. They also cite a light rail extension going in nearby and their determination that there be density such to provide riders to make the light rail a success.

MPHA strongly advocated a more balanced approach to meet the interests of all constituents, including the developer. A deferment would have allowed for a full Traffic Impact Study to be done, as the previously conducted TIA-SWA is clearly insufficient for a proposal of this size and magnitude with an estimated 8,300 new trips per day. CDOT's Rezoning Transportation Analysis had also called for a complete Traffic Study to be conducted.

Disappointingly, after receiving a barrage of calls and emails from neighbors, our Myers Park councilmembers voted in favor, with one making the motion to approve and the other providing the second. As the city has informed us of a similar previously-approved rezoning for a tall building on Kings Drive, vigilance will be required against this trend of moving uptown scale to the neighborhoods.

On a separate matter, I'd like to thank architects Don Duffy and Joddy Peer for their expertise and gratis work hours in attempting to assist some homeowners whose project is determined to be noncompliant with legally-enforceable deed restrictions. While Myers Park has no design committee, we do have zoning and deed restrictions* that determine ability to build. On rare occasion, homeowners must be given an expert opinion on the issue of noncompliance and, given that these respected architects were willing to provide suggestions to the owners on how to make this compliant, we provided the forum for that to happen.

I'll pass the gavel to a new president at our annual meeting. Having been called back into the presidency from ex officio status a few years ago, I've repeated the privilege that comes with serving a people and neighborhood I cherish. It's often a wild ride and mostly gratifying. I love our dear Myers Park. I hope you'll join me in honoring her through protective stewardship and keeping the park in Myers Park.

As I feel you're like extended family, I will share that I sadly lost my nearest and dearest, my beloved 97-year-old daddy this year. While my role as stalwart supporter of my precious father and my presidency of MPHA come to an end, I will use those hours in search of my next full-time professional role. I ask for your good wishes (and ideas of any great roles) to accompany me in this. I assuredly give my good wishes to the incoming officers and board and gladly return to a president emeritus position or help if needed. Many thanks to the board members for their hard work this and every year.

With my best wishes to you and your family,

Pamela May

*Any element of deed restrictions that violates current local, state or federal law is null and void.

Myers Park Tree News

Tim Porter, Charlotte City Arborist



Maintaining the spectacular Myers Park tree canopy is a challenge requiring the attention of both the City of Charlotte and MPHA

Greetings to Myers Park Residents! I'm reaching out to inform you of some exciting tree canopy issues on which the City of Charlotte and the Myers Park Homeowners Association are partnering. As you probably know, the tree canopy in Myers Park and other older established Charlotte neighborhoods is aging. Unfortunately, tree losses in these neighborhoods have been increasing in numbers for multiple years. In an effort to better understand and manage the aging canopy issue we're seeing in these neighborhoods, the City of Charlotte has and will be working on new initiatives to protect our greatest natural resource.

I've met and spoken with MPHA President Pamela May and other neighbors multiple times over the past year in an effort to develop a strong partnership with your community. I believe there's a deeper and shared understanding between the City and the Myers Park community regarding the challenges, values and management options in play related to tree canopy.

Last year the City purchased multiple new tree assessment tools that allow my team to conduct the most technologically advanced tree assessments possible today. Our goal was to improve the City's ability to evaluate tree risk and

health. This in turn will help us be better stewards of street trees and meet our greater goal of preserving large mature shade trees as long as possible. New assessment tools include a Resistograph drill that measures wood density and structural integrity, a compressed air tool



City arborist using Airspade tool as he conducts a root collar excavation on a large tulip poplar at Old City Hall in Uptown Charlotte. Photo courtesy Tim Porter.



Arbotom tool being used to inspect a large oak on Euclid Ave. Photo courtesy Tim Porter.

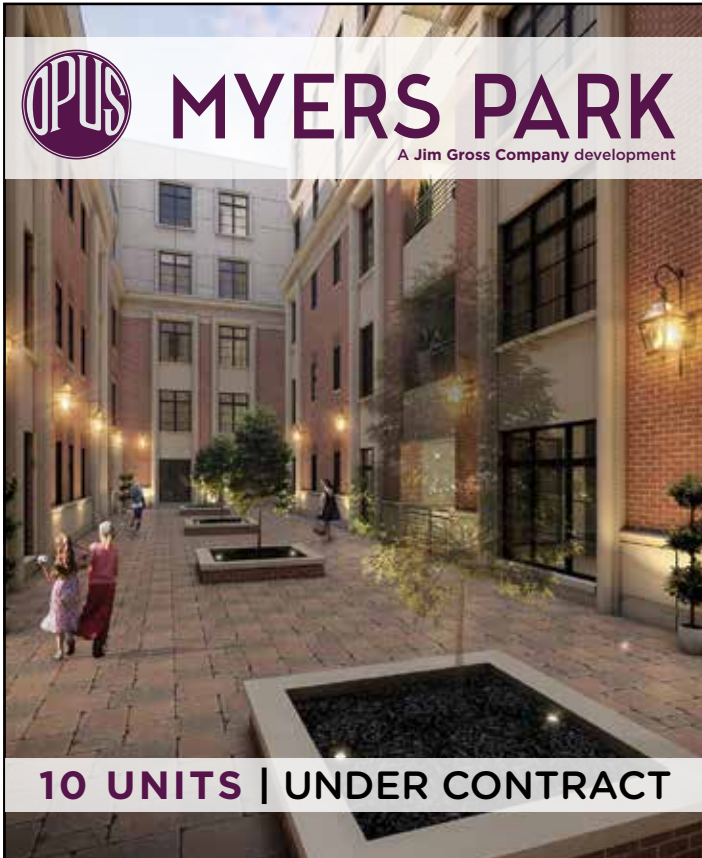
called the Airspade that allows for detailed root inspection and a tomography tool called the Arbotom. The Arbotom uses sound waves, it's kind of like an MRI for trees, to detect decay and structurally unsound wood. These tools have all been implemented into operations work and are being used daily to assess trees all over the City. An "open house" event may be scheduled for later this year to show residents in Myers Park how these new tools work and how City arborists are using them.

Additionally, an effort has begun to assess revising City tree planting strategy in Myers Park and return to a strategy that aligns with the original Nolen neighborhood design. I believe there are many areas of that original design that can be revisited. My team is working with the MPHA board to assess center median planting strategy on all segments of Queens Road and Queens Road West. Possible revision may include returning to planting two rows of trees in medians that originally had this dual planting design and creating a mutually agreed upon street tree species master plan for Myers Park. The master plan would specify certain species for selected streets in the neighborhood that best fit Nolen's original plan and meet the challenges of modern transportation needs.

Lastly I'd like to share that the City will be commissioning a study on the large willow oaks along Queens Road West. This study will focus on developing a list of tree canopy management options that could be utilized by both the City and the community to prolong the life of the majestic oaks that line this street. That study will begin this fall and I look forward to sharing the results with the community early next year.



Tim Porter



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2-4

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Myers Park Home Security Evaluation

Ferman Wardell and CMPD Officer David Padgett

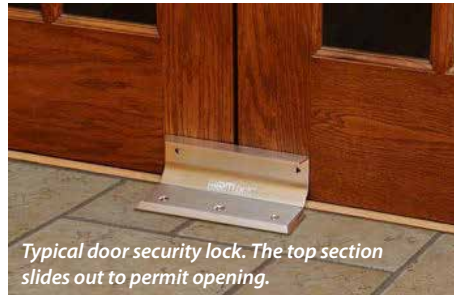
This article describes my experience having a Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) home security evaluation. The evaluation was performed by Officer David Padgett, who serves as our Myers Park Homeowners Association police department contact.

Soon after requesting my home security evaluation, a shiny, clean police patrol car pulled up out front. I recognized the driver as Officer David Padgett. A couple of neighbors also spotted the cruiser and called to see if things were OK. I love my nosey neighbors as we look out for one another!

Officer Padgett followed his checklist as we first walked around the exterior of the house and detached garage. He was looking for entry points in which a burglar could easily enter, make a quick grab of valuables and leave without being seen. He explained that the intent is to add a layer of security to increase the time it takes for them to gain access, so they eventually become frustrated and move onto another neighbors home that has not taken the necessary steps to add basic security recommendations. We have several French doors, which Officer Padgett advised were favorite break-in points. The reason being, criminals can break out a glass pane on the door, reach inside and unlock the door. He further explained that a majority of break ins occurred at the rear entrance or side entrance doors because they are out of sight from the road. This problem can be mitigated by adding security film to the glass pane to keep the glass from shattering and make more difficult for a criminal to reach inside to unlock the door. Of course, double cylinder locks (key used on both sides of the lock) are always recommended for "French" style and country style doors.

On the other hand, our low bushes did not provide much of a hiding place. Officer Padgett acknowledged that our several entryway motion-activated lights were a positive as were the dead bolt locks and our storm windows.

Touring the inside, Officer Padgett noted that our alarm system was a positive with all entry doors alarmed and two motion sensors covering the front and rear entrances. He again mentioned that the French doors were vulnerabilities, which could be strengthened with metal doorstep panels (brass, bronze or metal door guards avail-



able from Global Securities or Night Guard) screwed into the bottom doorjamb. These panels would help keep the doors from being forced open. Our two motion activated cameras (one in den and one outside) were positive features.

Asked about our neighbors' watchfulness, I reported that we actively look out for each other. And some were downright nosey! This was another positive.

Officer Padgett gave us a grade of 85/100, which I considered a 'B'—pretty good. The major corrections needed were the door guards for the French doors and a doorbell camera. He recommended the Ring Doorbell camera due to the issue of door-to-door solicitation in the area. He likes the fact that you can answer the door from your smartphone from anywhere in the house, plus it also records who is at the door if they are casing your house. He reminded me to not leave valuables (e.g., computers, cameras, mobile phones, cash, jewelry, etc.)

in sight when leaving the house. He also provided me with a CMPD Property list and spoke about the importance of making sure that you write down the model number, serial number, value and description of the item. He suggested that I scan the list and upload it to "The Cloud" or tape the list to the inside of a cupboard. He cautioned about saving to a laptop, because the laptop will be the first thing stolen and the information will be lost. The list is important because the CMP has a system called "Pawn Tracker" that they input information for stolen items. They are alerted by the system as soon as the item is pawned at one of the many pawnshops in the Charlotte area. Once alerted, investigators work to obtain warrants on the person who pawned the item and to recover your stolen item from the pawnshop. He followed up with a written report several days later. He also encouraged me to share this service with my neighbors. He would rather residents be proactive with the security of their home, than reactive after it has been broken into.

This was a good experience, which I recommend for all residents of our lovely neighborhood. All you have to do is email Officer Padgett at dpadgett@cmpd.org and he will touch base with you to schedule a date and time. His visit takes about 30 – 45 minutes, as he is very thorough with the residential security survey.

I ♥ DOGS

But... sometimes their owners make me wonder.

I walk a lot on our wonderful sidewalks in Myers Park and see most everything that's happening. Runners, bicyclists, neighbors walking their dogs, strollers with babies—it's so nice! Nice, until I come across a little plastic bag with a knot in

it on or near the sidewalk. You know what I mean. Or, even worse, what should be the contents of those bags just sitting there. These occurrences are few and far between, but they are there! In spite of our signs.

Finally, leashes. Leashes are good. Leashes are mandatory. Practically all owners use 'em. Not all. I've been bitten by dogs off leashes, right here in the neighborhood. I've had a toy Poodle (a toy Poodle!) jump up almost into my face. Boy, did I get nervous when a black Doberman Pinscher passed me unleashed on the nearby greenway.

Thank you, responsible owners.

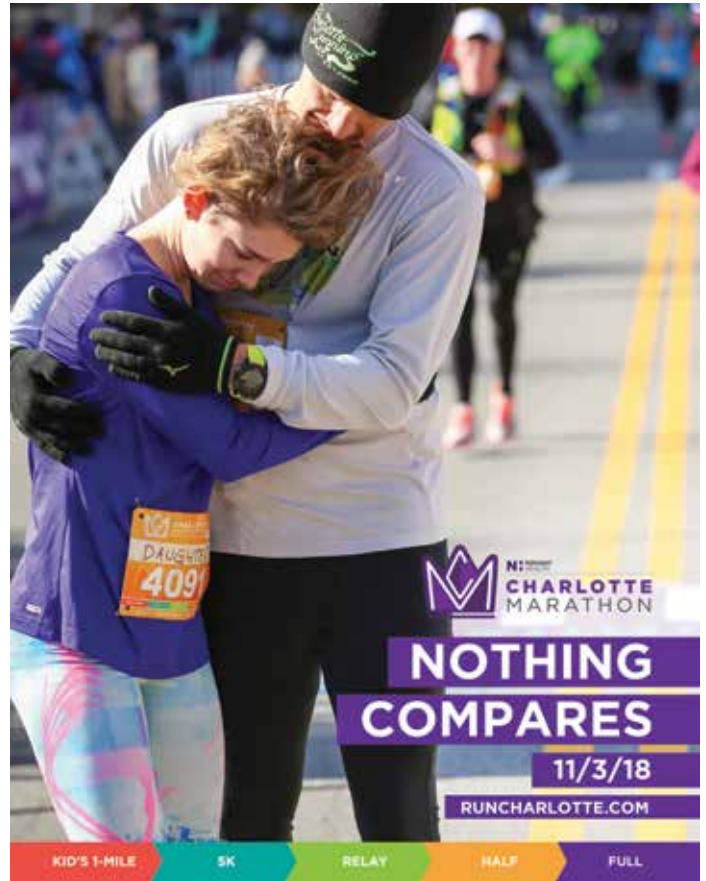
In conclusion, **I ♥ DOGS.**

Ferman

“Everyone Reads *The Oak Leaf*!”



Our Myers Park children are especially advanced. William, son of Sarah and Taylor Hayden of Bromley Rd. enjoys his semi-annual issue of *The Oak Leaf*! His one comment: “Where are the comics?”



Don't Forget:

Get your Fall Cankerworm tree bands up after Thanksgiving and before the first major frost!



2019 – The Year of the Tax Revaluation

Emily Zuyus,
MPHA Board Member

For those living in Mecklenburg County and especially Myers Park, that word invokes anxiety and a nightmare of a failed process with a failed government that began January 1, 2011. For those citizens new to our community, here are the cliff notes: Every eight years, state law requires all 100 counties to revalue real property. The 2011 Revaluation in Mecklenburg County produced inequitable values and a flawed process. There were 40,000 formal appeals—ten times the normal expected number during a Reval year. Citizens in Myers Park petitioned the county commission to review. The county hired Pearson's Appraisal Service from Wilson, NC to conduct an official review of the valuations. The reviewed proved what so many citizens knew, the values were not equitable. State legislation was passed to officially "redo" the Reval. State legislation was also passed to allow for refunds. Ultimately, \$100 million was refunded to the tax payers of Mecklenburg County.



Emily Zuyus

I was one of the many citizens that 1) filed an informal appeal, 2) appeal denied with a "no change in value" notice, 3) formally appealed to the Board of Equalization and Review, 4) received a nominal change and continued to appeal to state Property Tax Commission. I then worked with a group of citizens from all over the county fighting to redo the Reval. This year, I have served on the Citizens Revaluation Advisory Committee for Mecklenburg County. This is a committee of citizens charged with reviewing the overall operations of the Revaluation, monitoring the progress, and reviewing the appeals process. The group consists of residential and commercial appraisers, mortgage brokers, and other interested citizens.

Fast forward to 2018 and much has changed in the Tax Assessor's Office. First and foremost, we have a new leader at the helm. Ken Joyner became Mecklenburg County's Tax Assessor in 2013. Prior to this position, he worked as a faculty member in the School of Government at UNC Chapel Hill. It is interesting to note that Ken was very helpful to me as one of the neighbors fighting against the 2011 Reval—he provided guidance and helped me understand the state laws back when we were making our case for a review.

Along with the new leadership, there are many improvements that have been made. The Tax Assessor's Office has added a new Customer Service Strategic Team. They have revamped the informal appeals process. Many Myers Park citizens remember having 30 days to complete an informal appeal (which was responded with a "No Change In Value" response). Now there is an online feature for an informal appeal and even the opportunity to meet with an appraiser at this level. A Quality Control Team was added and will be using statistical analysis to ensure equity and fairness. They have added the Modria online system which will help tax payers with their appeals and show the information that the assessor's office has used in determining the value. Another critical improvement is the development of an official field manual to give appraisers specific standards when valuing properties, also helping with fairness across the county. I encourage you to also visit the meckreval.com website for additional information.

The new values on real estate are set to be as of 1/1/2019 and will be mailed to property owners in mid January of 2019. At that time, citizens will be given all the steps necessary to appeal the values. During the budgeting process in June 2019, the county commissioners will be setting a new tax rate. It is certainly important for property values to be fair and equitable, but equally important for the county commission to set an appropriate tax rate. Please make sure your voice is heard next June and request a REVENUE NEUTRAL TAX RATE from our county commissioners.

The Myers Park Home Owners Association is pleased to have Ken Joyner, the Tax Assessor of Mecklenburg County, attend our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, November 7th at Myers Park Country Club. Please join us, hear his presentation and ask your questions about the upcoming Reval. In summary, I want my Myers Park neighbors to know that I have faith in Ken Joyner and his staff. They have worked tremendously to "right the ship". Certainly no Revaluation will be perfect, however, I trust that they will be fair, equitable and treat citizens with the respect that was missing in the last Revaluation.

Meet Our Editor



Ferman Wardell is a native Charlottean raised in Eastover but quickly saw the light and moved to Myers Park. A graduate of Myers Park High School and NC State, Ferman practiced Nuclear Engineering at Duke Energy and currently enjoys nuclear consulting, hiking and backpacking, sailing, vintage cars, reading, writing, travel, the piano, and walking the wonderful Myers Park sidewalks. He and his wife, Joana, and their two children and five grandchildren frequent Blowing Rock and Wrightsville Beach, NC. Ferman is a current MPHA Board Member, Editor of The Oak Leaf, and a tree lover.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 24, 7:30 PM

Grupo Los Morales
- International Latin
American Music

Nov. 1, 7:00 PM

Fall Student Choral
Concert

Nov. 13, 7:00 PM

Morri Creech Poetry
Reading

Nov. 15, 5:30 PM

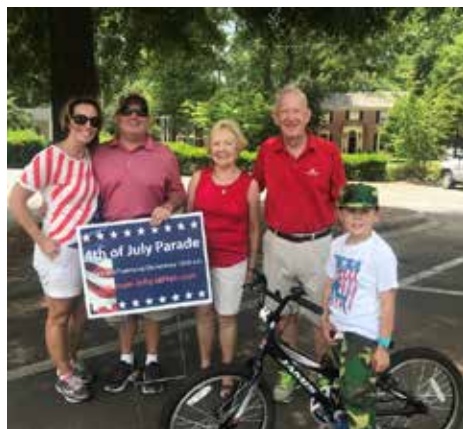
Leaders in Action
Lecture featuring
Diane Morias

Dec. 13, 7:00 PM

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PRISONER: 34032

Community Spirit at its Best: The 4th of July Parade

Sarah Monnin, MPHA Board Member



Although it now seems like ages away, a great community event is always something to celebrate! Thank you to everyone who joined in this year's 4th of July Parade helping to make it a wonderful social event! It was the first time in almost a decade that our neighborhood celebrated this festive occasion together, sponsored by our MPHA. Neighbors came out in droves with over 300 participants of all ages, all decorated and festive in their holiday best. Thank you once again to musical talent David Britt, a local product with CMA accolades. Additionally, special thanks to our own Station 6 Firefighters as well as JJ's Red Hots and King of Pop's. Last but not least, our own Parade Grand Marshall Andy Presley and CMPD Officer David Padgett and his team.



With the spirit of this event, we are reminded once more of what makes our Myers Park neighborhood so special. Gathering around our gracious Myers Park Traditional School and Queens University campus, marching thru our beautiful streets protected by our unique tree canopy and celebrating with family and friends— these are some of the many gifts of living in Myers Park.

Please join us at our next event, the Myers Park Homeowners Association 2018 Annual Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 7th at Myers Park Country Club. Hope to see you there!



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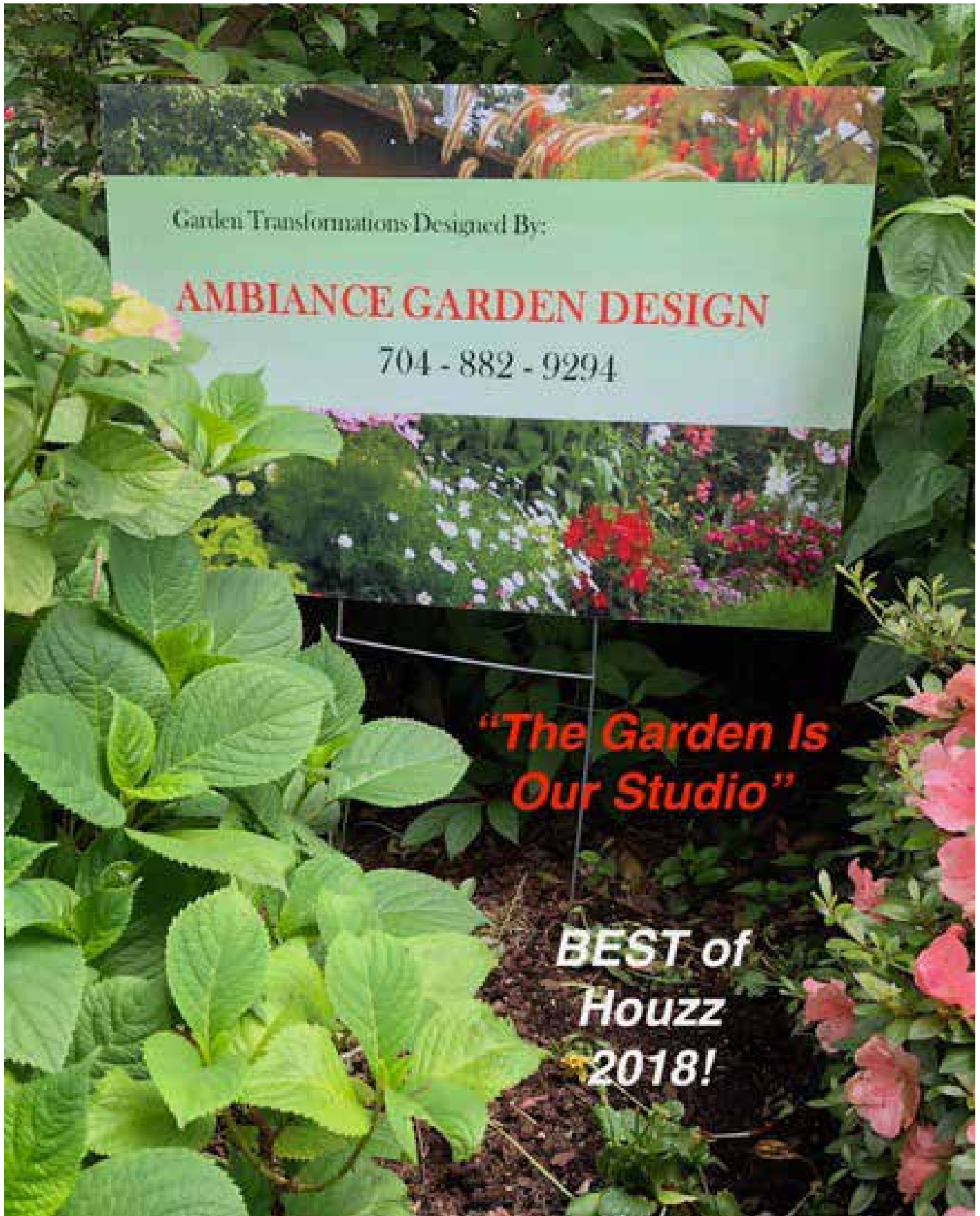


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