

MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER QUARTERLY NEWS & UPDATES FROM YOUR BUSINESS DISTRICT

AUTHENTIC GREEK FOOD at MR. SOUVLAKI

— MERCHANT SPOTLIGHT —



Thanks to first generation Greek Americans Paul and George Karoutsos, Market Center boasts the tempting flavors of authentic Greek cuisine. The brothers opened Mr. Souvlaki in Mount Vernon Marketplace in 2017, after experiencing 15 years of success with their popular food truck (which still operates today on the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Campus).

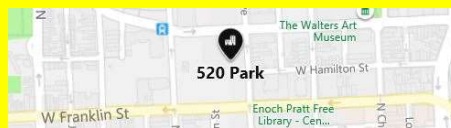
At Mr. Souvlaki, guests can dine on fan favorites like traditional Greek gyros (made of pork, not lamb as is often thought –

though they have lamb, too), go for the namesake souvlaki (grilled meat on skewers), or opt for a vegetarian dish like spanakopita (spinach, feta, ricotta, and herbs in a delicate fillo pastry). There are no bad choices here!

The brothers and their father, who was head chef at Greektown’s Ikaros restaurant for decades, make everything themselves, from marinades to tzatziki sauce and falafel to baklava. Bonus: diners can complement their meal with Mythos, a popular Greek beer, or Ouzo, a Greek anise-flavored liqueur.



Mr. Souvlaki
Mount Vernon Marketplace, 520 Park Ave.



A PUBLICATION OF

**MARKET CENTER
MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION**

PAGE 2 _____
FROM THE LEADERSHIP

PAGE 3 _____
NEWS & UPDATES

- Charm City Night Market Returns September 21
- Current Space Acquires its Forever Home
- Baltimore Museum of Art Opens Lexington Market Outpost
- Business News & Notes
- Market Center Community Development Corp. Receives 501(C)3

PAGE 5 _____
MCMA COMMITTEE
UPDATES

PAGE 6 _____
INFORMATION FOR
MEMBERS

- Thank you, Vincent Lancisi
- MCMA Board Updates
- Comprehensive Bag Reduction Legislation
- Resources for Businesses

PAGE 7 _____
ABOUT THE DISTRICT

WELCOME NEW
BUSINESSES

PAGE 8 _____
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

FROM THE LEADERSHIP

— OF THE MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION —

FROM MCMA PRESIDENT JUDSON H. KERR, III



At its July 2019 meeting, MCMA's board voted to support the Comprehensive Bag Reduction legislation introduced in June by Councilman Bill Henry. The legislation was co-sponsored by eight city council members and City Council President Brandon Scott. For more information on the bill, see page 6.

The board did not make this decision lightly and understands that some business owners will find the adjustment, should the legislation pass, difficult.

However, the prevalence of litter in Market Center deters many potential customers from patronizing our businesses. We know from a 2019 survey of Market Center residents that "neighborhood cleanliness" is among the three most important qualities they look for in choosing where to shop and dine.

Business owners, too, find the amount of litter in Market Center unpleasant, often citing it as one of Market Center's biggest problems. Indeed, many business owners with whom MCMA's executive director spoke support the legislation. We believe that this law will diminish reliance on single-use bags of all types and reduce the amount of litter on Market Center's sidewalks, streets, tree wells, and alleys, thus helping to attract more foot traffic to businesses.

Among other things, healthy business districts require constant attention to cleanliness, basic maintenance, infrastructure repairs and upgrades, and public safety. The revitalization of Market Center requires much more, of course, including the renovation and reuse of many city-owned buildings, and MCMA is committed to working on all fronts simultaneously. Reducing litter is just one factor, but it is a step in the right direction.

FROM MCMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KRISTEN MITCHELL



It is hard to pack a lunch when one works in Market Center. With so many enticing places to eat, I cannot get excited about a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Why am I talking to you about my lunch habits? Because I think – and I am far from the only person who thinks this – that Market Center's diversity of cuisines is special and distinguishes Market Center from other business districts.

In this newsletter, we feature the traditional Greek cuisine of Mr. Souvlaki, but Market Center is lucky to have authentic fare from all corners of the globe: from Ethiopia to Peru, India to Mexico, and Vietnam to Afghanistan and Italy. Of course, we also boast delicious homegrown flavors, from award-winning crab cakes, oysters, and chicken and waffles to crowd-pleasing desserts.

Why does this matter? In an increasingly competitive environment, business districts need to understand, promote, and build upon the qualities that make them unique, to attract and retain customers. Going forward, Market Center's distinctive food offerings will play a key role in strengthening its identity, which in turn should benefit all the businesses, not just those in the food and beverage industry.

I look forward to working with our new Marketing Committee Chair, Jenny Kessler Klump, on boosting Market Center's visibility and image. If you have a similar interest, please consider joining the Marketing Committee – or come see what it's all about by participating in one of our monthly meetings (on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. at Lexington Market).

Cheers, and happy dining!

NEWS & UPDATES

— IN THE MARKET CENTER —



L on Liberty will open soon at 216 N. Liberty

CHARM CITY NIGHT MARKET RETURNS SEPTEMBER 21

People still talk with a mixture of wonder and delight about the inaugural Charm City Night Market (CCNM), which attracted 12,000+ people to Baltimore's historic Chinatown in September 2018 for a night to celebrate the Baltimore pan-Asian community's culture through food, artisans, and entertainment.

Conceived of and produced by the Chinatown Collective, CCNM infused Market Center with joy, music, art, laughter, light, and nourishment – in short, *life*. As Chinatown is an integral part of Market Center's geography, history, and future, MCMA sponsored the 2018 Night Market and is doing so again this year.

The 2019 CCNM will once again take place on Lexington Street and Park Avenue. Due to last year's success, CCNM 2019 will expand into Center Plaza.

If you want to participate as a food vendor, performer, artist/maker, or volunteer, email thechinatowncollective@gmail.com. If you own a business nearby and have questions or want to discuss how to make the most of this opportunity, contact Kristen Mitchell at 443-478-3014 or executivedirector@marketcenterbaltimore.org.

CURRENT SPACE ACQUIRES ITS FOREVER HOME

Longtime tenants at 419-21 N. Howard Street, Current Space, an interdisciplinary, experimental artist-run gallery, studio, and headquarters for cultural production, recently purchased the building from the City of Baltimore. As owners, they will have greater ability to invest in and make improvements to the building and establish permanent roots as a prominent anchor in Market Center/Bromo Arts & Entertainment District. In addition to renting studios, Current hosts events and exhibitions in its main gallery, project space, and courtyard. Congrats to Michael Benevento (director), Julianne Hamilton (associate director), and all the Current Space members!

BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART OPENS LEXINGTON MARKET OUTPOST

In June, the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) opened a 250 square foot venue in Lexington Market which will be open Thursday – Saturday, 9 to 5. Admission is free. BMA staff will program the space with a mix of art education and opportunities to create art. For their first show, the BMA partnered with the Greenmount West Community Center, where some lucky students got to learn photography from the pros – specifically New Orleans-based Chandra McCormick and Keith Calhoun, whose work the BMA will feature through October 27. The BMA displayed the students' photographs, and the students joined in the grand opening celebration.



After working with professional photographers to hone their skills, students from Greenmount West Community Center collaborated with BMA staff to display their photographs at BMA Lexington Market.

BUSINESS NEWS & NOTES

- **Forever Wireless Boost Mobile** (108 N. Howard) is now a full-fledged Boost Mobile brand store. To complement the transition, the owners created a modern new interior.
- Congratulations to **Everyman Theatre**, which received *Baltimore Magazine's* Best of Baltimore – Best Play (Editor's Pick) award for *Queens Girl in Africa* and *Queens Girl in the World!*
- Kudos to *Baltimore Magazine's* Reader's Choice awardees: **Mount Vernon Marketplace** (Food Hall); **Hippodrome** and **Everyman Theatres** (Live Theatre and Play/Performance for Hamilton and Queens Girl), and **Ceremony Coffee Roasters** (Coffee).
- **Urban Outlet** and **Catholic Relief Services** contributed baby wipes and toiletries, respectively, to Poe Homes residents when they lost water service this summer.

BUSINESS NEWS & NOTES

- MCMA mourns the passing of **Alexey Shkolnik**, who owned **The Cobbler's Shop** at 219 W. Saratoga Street for thirty years. Mr. Shkolnik did much more than repair shoes, though he did that exceedingly well – he also *made* shoes, including custom orthopedic shoes for children, and performers at the Hippodrome.
- MCMA is sad to note the passing of Charles Hawkins, long time staff at **Jericho Candle & Herb Company** at 529 W. Lexington Street.
- On June 20, the Liquor Board granted a new restaurant liquor license with live entertainment to the **Marble Bar** (306 W. Franklin).
- On August 22, the Liquor Board will consider a request for a new restaurant liquor license with outdoor table service for **Refocused** vegan restaurant at 429 N. Eutaw.

MARKET CENTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION RECEIVES 501(C)3 APPROVAL FROM IRS

The Market Center Community Development Corporation (MCCDC), which formed in 2017 to make investments to catalyze a healthy, dynamic, and diverse community in Market Center, encourage community development, and galvanize the renaissance of Baltimore's historic retail core, recently received IRS approval of its 501(C)3 application. This designation as a charitable organization will allow MCCDC to pursue more grant opportunities and tax-deductible contributions for its efforts to revitalize Market Center.

MCCDC and MCMA work closely together and complement each other's work. In contrast to MCCDC, MCMA is a 501(C)6 organization, the designation for a nonprofit business league, so donations to MCMA are not tax-deductible.



MOHAMMED KAZAL
PRESIDENT

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MONDAY-SUNDAY
8:30am - 7:00pm



Cookie Carroll makes one-of-a-kind 14 karat gold jewelry at Cookie Carroll Boutique & Salon (310 Park Avenue), where one can also purchase clothing and accessories and get a massage or manicure!

MCMA COMMITTEE UPDATES

If you are interested in participating on a committee, contact
Kristen Mitchell at 443-478-3014 or executivedirector@marketcenterbaltimore.org

CLEAN & SAFE COMMITTEE

P.C. Price, *Chair*
Legal Services Assoc., Inc.,

Ann Winder, *Co-Chair*
The Place Lounge

*Meets the second Monday
of every month at 8:30
a.m.*

- The City Center Residents Association (CCRA) hosts monthly cleanup days on the last Saturday of every month. To date, every cleanup has focused on Market Center, and we are lucky to have such a dedicated group of resident volunteers. We want to let them know that the businesses support them in these efforts, so please consider volunteering your time. Contact Kristen Mitchell to sign up today!
- Committee leaders continually advocate for public safety improvements in Market Center.
- The committee runs MCMA's 50/50 Power Washing Incentive Program. If you would like to have the front of your business power washed, MCMA will cover half the cost, up to \$300. Contact Kristen Mitchell if interested.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wendy Blair, *Chair*
Re/Max Commercial Logic

*Meets the first Thursday
of the month at 8:30 a.m.*

- In collaboration with the Market Center Community Development Corporation (MCCDC), the committee will initiate Phase Two of the Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan this fall. Phase Two will feature additional community input, such as from youth, Market Center's existing customers, and more business owners and residents, as well as in-depth conversations on complex topics left unresolved after Phase One. Potential topics include parking, workforce development programs, transit-oriented development incentives, and a structure for ongoing community engagement.
- MCMA wrote a letter of support for B&B Urban's state historic tax credit application for Crook Horner Lofts, a planned renovation of 301-307 N. Howard Street. When complete, the project will include 15 large, light-filled live/work spaces and ground floor retail on the corner of Howard & Saratoga.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Jenny Kessler Klump, *Chair*
Lexington Market

*The Marketing Committee
meets the fourth
Wednesday of the month
at 9:00 a.m.*

- MCMA is pleased to announce that Jenny Kessler Klump, PR & Marketing Manager for Everyman Theatre, has agreed to serve as Marketing Committee chair.
- The committee is creating a business directory and map, which MCMA will make available in hard copies and on-line.
- MCMA is sponsoring the Charm City Night Market on September 21, 2019, which will take place on Lexington Street between Howard Street and Center Plaza.
- MCMA is excited to co-sponsor two elected officials' forums with the City Center Residents Association. The first forum will focus on state issues and take place on Wednesday, October 2 (stay tuned for details). The second forum will focus on city issues and take place in early 2020.

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

— OF THE MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION —



The lunch crowd at Taco Town, 413 W. Baltimore Street.

THANK YOU, VINCENT LANCISI

MCMA would like to express our deepest gratitude to Vincent Lancisi, Founding Artistic Director of Everyman Theatre, for his unwavering support of and advocacy for Market Center, who has recently stepped down from the board. He was instrumental in moving the Everyman Theatre to Market Center, one of the most prominent businesses and arts institutions around. He has always been willing to lend a hand and a voice to Market Center, whether through hosting events, helping to problem-solve, or encouraging Everyman staff participation in our work. He also served as the president of the Bromo Arts & Entertainment District, an important Market Center partner. We look forward to continuing to work with him and Everyman staff!

MCMA BOARD UPDATES

MCMA welcomes four new board members:

- John Campion, Internal Auditor with Catholic Relief Services (Treasurer);
- Jenny Kessler Klump, Public Relations and Marketing Manager with Everyman Theatre (Marketing Chair);

- David O'Donnell, Director of Development for Lexington Market, Inc., and the Baltimore Public Markets Corporation; &
- Mike Watson, Operations Manager, Everyman Theatre.

In addition, Jason Sullivan, Deputy Chief of Party II, Operations, Supporting Seed Systems for Development with Catholic Relief Services, has assumed the role of Board Development Chair.

COMPREHENSIVE BAG REDUCTION LEGISLATION

In June, Councilman Bill Henry introduced the *Comprehensive Bag Reduction* legislation, which would prohibit businesses from giving customers plastic bags at checkout. Co-sponsored by eight council members and Council President Brandon Scott, the legislation would exempt certain types of products, such as fresh fish, meat, and poultry, and purchases made by people using a voucher or electronic benefits transfer card issued under the Food Supplement Program, Women, Infants, and Children Program, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The legislation would allow businesses to provide customers

with a bag at checkout upon request but require the businesses to impose a surcharge on such bags. For more information, visit: <http://www.baltimorecitycouncil.com/>. Type "bag" in search engine.

RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

MCMA's webpage includes information on grants, loans, technical assistance, and other resources available to business owners. For information, visit <http://marketcenterbaltimore.org/information-for-businesses/>.



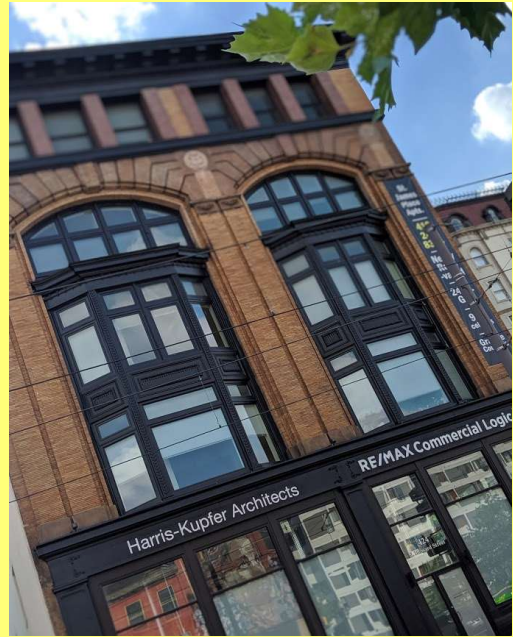
Classic marble steps and iron railing, lush greenery (thanks, Downtown Partnership), and attractive storefronts every few steps make Saratoga Street an appealing place for pedestrians.

MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

ABOUT THE MARKET CENTER

Market Center is comprised of 27 blocks near Lexington Market, roughly bounded by Baltimore Street to the south, Greene to the west, Cathedral/Liberty to the east and Madison to the north. The exact boundaries are best shown on a map [back page].

Established in 1983, Market Center is one of ten Retail Business District License (RBDL) areas in the City of Baltimore. Each RBDL was established by a separate City Council ordinance, and the businesses within the RBDL boundaries are required to pay an annual fee, which the city collects and then redistributes back to the business association for use in the district.



Classy new signs at Harris-Kupfer Architects and RE/MAX Commercial Logic on the ground floor of St. James Place.

ABOUT THE MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

The Market Center Merchants Association (MCMA) represents the businesses within Market Center. MCMA promotes commerce, retains and attracts business, and enhances the customer and residential experience. MCMA uses the RBDL fees to support a variety of work, much of which is outlined in the reports in this newsletter.

ADVERTISING SALES RATES

MCMA offers advertising opportunities in this quarterly newsletter, which we send to our email distribution list (406 members and growing), post on social media and our website, and distribute to Mount Vernon Marketplace and some apartment buildings for welcome packets.

Advertising Prices*				
	1 issue	2 issues	3 issues	4 issues
¼ page	\$60	\$110	\$155	\$200
½ page	\$100	\$190	\$275	\$355
Full page	\$170	\$320	\$460	\$590

* Market Center businesses that are current on their Retail Business District License fees receive a 10% discount.

WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES TO THE DISTRICT

- Fishnet, 520 Park
- The System Global, 429 N. Eutaw
- This & That Thrifts, 401 N. Eutaw

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

— IN MARKET CENTER —

Key

- A – 602 N. Howard – retail, storage
- B – 600 N. Howard – 12 studio apts., commercial
- C – 501 W. Franklin – 96 apts.
- D – 418-24 N. Howard – apts.
- E – 416 N. Howard – 5 apts., retail
- F – Le Mondo Arts Incubator
- G – 108 W. Saratoga, 7 apts.
- H – Lexington Market
- I – 106-110 N. Eutaw – 11 apts., retail
- J – University Lofts – Mixed-use
- K – Four Ten Lofts – artists' housing
- L – 109 W. Lexington – 20 apts., commercial
- M – 106 Park – Retail
- N – 500 Park – 153 apts., retail
- O – Hela Franklin Apartments – 50 apts., retail
- P – 9 N. Howard – 15 apts., commercial
- Q – Howard Row – 41 apts., retail
- R – 400-15 Park – Mixed-use
- S – Pratt Library Renovations
- T – Mulberry at Park Apts. – 70 apts.
- U – La Quinta Hotel – 42 keys
- V – L on Liberty – 72 apts.
- W – 101 W. Lexington – 8 apts., retail
- X – 2 Hopkins Plaza – 183 apts.
- Y – Howard Station – Mixed-use
- Z – Paca House Renovation, Expansion
- 1 – Crook Horner Lofts – 15 loft apts., commercial
- 2 – Mayfair – 50 apts., commercial
- 3 – Fayette/Liberty – 20 apts., commercial
- 4 – 106 W. Saratoga – 10 apts.



Blue - Complete * Green - Under Way * Orange - Breaking Ground Soon

MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kristen Mitchell

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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