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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Mount Vernon Place Conservancy to Manage 2019 Baltimore Tradition – FlowerMart

(Baltimore, Maryland) – The Mount Vernon Place Conservancy (*“the Conservancy”*) announces that it will begin managing Baltimore’s annual rite of spring – FlowerMart – in 2019.

Dr. Lance Humphries, Executive Director of the Conservancy, notes of this news: “FlowerMart is Baltimore’s oldest continuous public festival. While it has changed over the years, we look forward to this opportunity to celebrate and enhance its many cherished traditions.”

FlowerMart was founded in 1911 by the Women’s Civic League, an organization formed to advocate for better living conditions in the City of Baltimore. A focal point of the original market was to encourage flower, plant, and vegetable gardening in the yards of homes and vacant lots—thereby making them green. “This is a relevant message today,” says Humphries, “and we plan to make the need for and value of urban green spaces and gardens an important part of our educational activities at Flower Mart.”

Since 2000, the FlowerMart has been run by the non-profit Flower Mart at Mt. Vernon, Ltd., an organization that continued the tradition when the Women’s Civic League discontinued their management of the annual event.

Karen Lease, FlowerMart Director of Operations and President of Flower Mart at Mt. Vernon, Ltd. notes: “We are so honored to have been the custodians of this tradition for nearly 20 years and are now excited to see the new directions the Conservancy will take this wonderful civic festival in the future. Many thanks go out to FlowerMart’s Board of Directors and Committee Members who volunteered much creative input and numerous hours. Not only did they work diligently to produce the event but also welcomed many community schools, entertainers, businesses, organizations and generations of citizens who played a part in this ‘feel good’ event for the city of Baltimore and its surrounding communities over the years.”

“Since our partnership agreement with the City of Baltimore was signed in 2012,” Humphries adds, “we have worked closely with Karen Lease and her team. When they approached us about continuing FlowerMart, we were appreciative of their consideration. In the Conservancy’s role as steward of Mount Vernon Place, this is a good fit.”

“Mount Vernon Place is one of Baltimore’s oldest surviving public gardens—and certainly its most iconic,” continues Humphries. “This transition offers new opportunities for the Conservancy to communicate its mission to a large audience and raise awareness of the ongoing needs of Mount Vernon Place.”

The early 20th century civic movement of greening urban spaces led not only to the first FlowerMart, but also to the 1917 redesign of the squares of Mount Vernon Place by Carrere & Hastings. In this period, cities across the nation were investing in their public spaces to counter urban decay and make urban centers beautiful.

“100 years later, Mount Vernon Place’s century-old infrastructure is in need of a major investment to once again realize those aspirations for the 21st century,” says Humphries.

Cherished traditions will be honored, with a renewed emphasis on local vendors. There will be flower and food stalls, musical performances, and, of course, Lemon Sticks.

“We have been listening to the Mount Vernon community, and envision making the festival a showcase for local and Baltimore vendors.”

Initial plans are underway for FlowerMart 2019. A call for vendors will be released in the early fall.

About the Mount Vernon Place Conservancy:

Since its 2012 partnership agreement with the City of Baltimore, the Conservancy has overseen the design and multi-award winning 2014-15 bicentennial restoration of Baltimore’s iconic Washington Monument, raising more than 10 million dollars in funding. While this major investment was underway, the Conservancy was also improving the maintenance and management of Mount Vernon Place’s park squares and bringing attention to this important resource through an increased online presence and an expanded calendar of events in the squares. The Conservancy is currently working toward the restoration of the public squares of Mount Vernon Place.

More information about the Conservancy can be found online at www.mvpconservancy.org or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/mountvernonplace

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