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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Mount Vernon Place Conservancy Announces Flower Mart 2021 Will Largely be a Virtual Event

(Baltimore, Maryland) – The Mount Vernon Place Conservancy (*“the Conservancy”*) announces that Flower Mart at Mount Vernon Place 2021, planned for April 30-May 1, will largely be an online event.

The Conservancy, which manages the Washington Monument and the parks of Mount Vernon place, took on the management of Flower Mart in 2019, returning the festival to its original mission of the greening of the city, while at the same time supporting local vendors and talent. It was a huge success for the vendors, and visitors enjoyed the old-time charm of the festival, with pennants streaming across the Monument’s plaza.

Flower Mart 2020 was cancelled last year due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Lance Humphries, Executive Director of the Conservancy, notes of that decision: “It was clear in mid-March 2020 that the pandemic would quickly make such a large public gathering impossible. It was particularly disappointing to cancel considering that all of our vendors and educational activities were ready to go.”

Flower Mart 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 continue to make the need for and value of urban green spaces and gardens an important part of our educational activities at Flower Mart.”

Planning began last fall for Flower Mart 2021, at which time the Conservancy was optimistic about an in-person event in the spring. Engaging vendors, musicians, and educators, takes months of planning and logistics to prepare for the two-day event—most of the details are confirmed by late February. Notes Humphries “Unfortunately, the surge of the pandemic over the holidays indicates that the pandemic is still very much with us, and on people’s minds. What we are seeing is that many do not think a festival will be able to safely executed this spring, even with such obvious safety measures as masks and hand-sanitizing stations.”

“Flower Mart is Baltimore’s oldest continuous free public festival, and the launch of the festival season in Baltimore,” said Mayor Brandon M. Scott. “While I know that transforming this event into a virtual experience was not an easy decision for the Conservancy to make, I thank them for keeping the health and safety of our residents a priority and look forward to being together again in the near future.”

The Conservancy envisions an online marketplace highlighting its vendors, and online educational lectures and workshops. It is hoped that Baltimoreans will support the vendors, most of whom have had a challenging financial year.

The Conservancy also plans a way to sell the festival's signature Lemon Stick—perhaps as a “Take and Make” kit, so that residents can enjoy the iconic treat on their own.

“This is a not what we hoped for,” notes Humphries, “but public safety, and the safety of our vendors, educators, and the dozens of volunteers needed to run this event, remain paramount. However, we are determined to hold an event this year to continue the tradition.”

While a radical change for 2021, like everyone, the Conservancy looks forward to returning the event to Mount Vernon Place as soon as it is safe to do so.

Updates on the festival will be available on the Conservancy's website:

www.mvpconservancy.org/flowermart2021

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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