



Browncroft Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SINCE 1973 - Volume #202

P.O. Box 10127, Rochester, New York 14610
<http://browncroftna.org>

Spring 2021

BNA Executive Committee

Officers:

President

Peter Easterly

Vice-President

Skip Pleninger

Secretary

John Campoleito

Treasurer

Bob Scheidt

District Reps

Elm

James Nicholson

Corwin

Holly Petsos

Croydon

David D. Kaiser

BNA Email:

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Crier Editor -

Cassy Petsos

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BNA Annual Meeting

Via ZOOM

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Election of Officers: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary (See nominations article inside.)

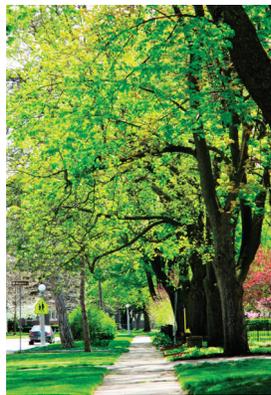
Committee Reports

Open Forum: Members' opportunity to express concerns, discuss issues affecting the neighborhood, volunteer for actions proposed.

Guest Speaker: To Be Determined. Stay posted to BNA Announce.

To attend the meeting members must register by email to pjeasterly@gmail.com. A reply email will provide registrants with the Zoom meeting number.

Cancellation of In-Person BNA Events Continues in 2021 Due to Covid-19



Windemere Road

be graced with abundant flowering trees throughout the neighborhood beginning with the yellow green, sweet smelling maple blossoms.

Though the moratorium on BNA events continues for 2021 due to covid-19 (See the President's Message on page 2.), the neighborhood provides its own spectacular events and displays throughout the year, but most particularly in the next few weeks.

Happening now and through May we will



Magnolias, Dorchester Road

President's Message...

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Happy Spring! I hope that everyone is healthy and keeping safe. This past year has been truly unforgettable, despite the fact many of us would rather do so. Nearly every aspect of our lives has been affected, changed or even eliminated by the spread of the COVID 19 virus. Our deepest sympathies go out to those who have lost loved ones, often without closure, to the virus. As dark as some of the days in the past year may have been, the widespread availability of the vaccine brings relief and optimism. We can now be immunized and have resistance to the virus...and actually enjoy the

company of loved ones who have also been vaccinated! Yay!!

Although the sense of normalcy is starting to return, the BNA Board has had to wrestle with some decisions about conducting neighborhood sponsored events for 2021, including the Bi-annual BNA Garage Sale, the garden tour, and the clam bake. To this end, the board has unanimously decided that, in an abundance of caution, these events will be canceled this year. City, county and state COVID regulations still prohibit gatherings in the numbers that these events potentially attract, and we would not want our neighborhood to be the source of spread or to be a "hot

spot". The board also discourages residents from conducting their own yard sales that weekend, despite the cancellation. I wish this course of action were not necessary, because events such as these are great ways for the neighborhood to connect and grow stronger. I will endure this disappointment for a bit longer, as I hope you will too. I look forward to the day in the not-too-distant future when we can get together again to celebrate our beautiful neighborhood and each other. Cheers!

Peter Easterly
BNA President

PARKS AND PEOPLE TO THE RESCUE

Volunteer Work Continued in the Browncroft Rose Garden in 2020 beginning with Spring Clean-up and ending with Fall Clean-up. Parks saw more attendance by the public during the pandemic as open spaces provided safe ways to be out in the world, socialize separated by space and fresh air, and take advantage of nature's spiritually restorative power. The Browncroft Rose Garden was no different.



who continued to work, socially distanced, to help keep this neighborhood park blooming: Mary Ann Evans, Linda Mauck, Kathy Edelman, Sharon Bloemendaal, Holly and Cassy Petsos, Connie and Don Schmitt, Ann, Peter and Jacob LaDolce, Patrick and Shalini Beath, and Kay Rust.

Spring Clean-up was scheduled this year for April 24th at 10:00 a.m. with a rain date, or finish up date of May 1st. There was a great turnout of neighbors responding to the call for volunteers: the Schmitts, Beaths,



Petsos' and Lori and Tom Wood, Cara Paul, Kathy Edelman, and Sharon Bloemendaal.

There is still one and a half rose beds to do, and the circular bed. Hopefully a follow-up crew to tackle these can work on **May Day, May 1st at 10:00 a.m.**

May 22nd is the next big scheduled work party to plant annuals in the circular bed, as well as to divide hostas.

Hostas anyone? Come and help May 22nd!

Thanks, All.



NEW BOOKS FOR NEW STUDENTS FOLLOW-UP

During the summer of 2020 through the generosity of Browncroft neighbors we gifted the following to students at #46 School:



- 46 gift wrapped packages of new books for kindergarten and first graders
- 40 biographies geared to 4-6 graders
- 12 new books for use in the library or in primary classrooms

Recently the school librarian sent the following message expressing the schools appreciation for the books:

"The art teacher and I had a couple of days where we posted ourselves outside the school and notified families that they could come to pick up art supplies and library books. It was at these supply pick-ups that I gave away the books to any students who came that were in K and 1st grade (and their little siblings if they came along).

I did not keep numbers but most of the wrapped books were given away minus the few left that I have given out during our classes that are now back. They really enjoyed getting that little treat, especially since they were wrapped! Lora Lonadier, Librarian"

This has always been a very successful project and I am looking for feedback about continuing this project for kindergarten students who will be entering school in September, 2021 (hopefully everyone will be back for in-person classes).

Please feel free to contact me at: hakanthor1@outlook.com.

With appreciation,
Ann Kanthor

Flowering Browncroft

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The magnolia trees are a spectacular presence in the beginning of May throughout the neighborhood; but most notably those lining the public tree lawns on Corwin Road, Dorchester Road, and Croydon

Road, – a legacy of the Brown Brothers Nursery and subdivision and preservation-minded residents. Also the Browncroft Rose Garden and various private properties have some fabulous mature spreading specimens.

These are followed later in May by dogwoods, cherry, pear and

ornamental crab trees, as well as the Browncroft wisteria, spirea and forsythia bushes on the tree lawns. Don't miss the lines of pale pink crab trees on both sides of the Browncroft Rose Garden planted by the City for BNA as part of a rededication of the park ceremony in the 1980s. Also



Browncroft Blvd

NOMINATIONS FOR 2021-22 BEING ACCEPTED FOR BNA OFFICERS

At this May's BNA Annual Meeting by Zoom the membership will elect four officers for 1-year terms: president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary.

The Board of Director's Nomination Committee is carrying out the search for leadership candidates to continue forward with a vibrant Browncroft Neighborhood Association that remains dedicated to "promote, organize, and carry on those activities which are intended to maintain and improve the character and quality of neighborhood living in the Browncroft area." On our web site, www.browncroftna.org, you can find our BNA Constitution and Bylaws which contain job descriptions.

If you are so inclined, please make yourself known or nominate another worthy candidate by emailing info@browncroftna.org or leaving your nomination on the answering machine at 585-288-0955.

keep an eye out for the bright pink cherry trees in the Gazebo Park at Elm and Merchants Road.

June brings plenty of roses in the Rose Garden.

Fall brings the brilliant canopy of our shade trees ablaze in yellow, orange and red.

The activities provided by YOU and nature include: walking, running, inhaling, lying in the grass, playing catch, tossing a flying disk and kite flying, bird watching, and more.

ENJOY!

Membership Update and Treasurer's Report

The 2020 membership call for the BNA fiscal year June 2020 to June 2021 got off to a late start with the Summer Crier that was published last August. It was an awkward year due to the Covid-19 pall on BNA events, though beautification volunteers were able to (unofficially) continue working in the park at Browncroft Boulevard and Merchants Road; one BNA Board meeting was held in July; and the Summer Crier was published. Membership dues of \$10 were paid by under 100 residents, which is approximately 25% of the usual participation; but many of those residents gave an additional contribution, which was very generous and appreciated.

The usual procedure would be to put in a follow-up reminder in this newsletter asking for member-

ship dues. However, June 2021 is around the corner. Therefore, applications for membership in BNA and payment of dues at this time will be applied to the 2021-2022 fiscal year that ends May 31st, 2022. The members who paid in the 4th quarter of 2020 will continue as paid members of BNA through May of 2022.

Financial Update

The BNA financial condition remains strong. Through the March 2021 month-end we have cash assets of \$9,348 in checking and \$98 in savings and an additional \$12,218 in a CD Payment Processing Update.

On a personal note, throughout last year I wrote only one paper check. That was to the BNA. Everything else I paid was through

electronic means. The BNA used pay pal for a number of years, but we found that the pay pal account was directly linked to personal information of a prior treasurer and when we changed treasurers we were unable to transfer the Pay Pal account, so we closed the account.

I have investigated VENMO only to find that VENMO requires a cell phone number. The BNA does not possess a cell phone and using a personal cell phone would create the same issue we had with Paypal. If any of the membership has expertise in this area, I would welcome the support; simply send me an email at treasurerbna73@gmail.com.

Thank you.

Bob Scheidt

LAST NAMES _____

FIRST NAMES OF
PERSONS 18 & OVER _____

ADDRESS _____

Zip +4 _____ PHONE (____) _____

NUMBER OF RESIDENTS age <18 _____ age 18-55 _____ age 55> _____

EMAIL ADDRESS(s) _____

Do you wish to SUBSCRIBE or RENEW to the free BNA-Announce emailing list: _____ YES (email address required) _____ NO

YES I would like to consider volunteer opportunities available with the Browncroft Neighborhood Association. My area of interest is:

Enclosed is:

Annual Household Membership Dues \$ _____

Additional Contribution to be earmarked to this activity: \$ _____

or to _____ General Fund

TOTAL \$ _____

Cash _____ or Check (No.) _____

Thank you for your membership.

REMEMBER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NYS HOMEOWNER REHABILITATION CREDIT

Before starting your home improvement projects this season know that there are tax credits for residents living in the Browncroft Historic District (area from Merchants Rd., southerly to Blossom Road) through the Division of Historic Preservation of the NY State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. To find out if your project is eligible for a 20% income tax credit you can contact

the Division staff at 1-518-237-8643 and ask for the staff person who handles Monroe County. The staff is very helpful at facilitating the process and getting you signed up. You can also access instructions and application forms at <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/tax-credit-programs/>. Scroll past the income properties and go to the “Homeownership” category. The Landmark Society, www.landmarksociety.org/oldhousehelp/, will

also help you through the process for a fee.

Basic requirements are: 1) The applicant must own and live in the house. 2) The house must be in an historic district listed in the New York State and National Register of Historic Places and is in a qualified census tract (Browncroft HD qualifies). 3) The rehabilitation expenses must be \$5,000 or more with a minimum of 5% of that spent on

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MORE SHADY ACTIVITY HAPPENED LAST FALL

Last fall the “Let’s Get Shady” landscape preservation initiative continued and eight more shade trees were planted to replace lost Browncroft historic landscape shade trees on Newcastle, Corwin, and Windemere Roads. The historic landscape installed by Brown Brothers Continental Nursery Company when creating the Browncroft Subdivision was designed to have the large shade trees planted on the private property side of the public sidewalk, with ornamental flowering trees and shrubs placed on the public tree lawn.

The preservation of this unique landscape – a contributing feature to Browncroft’s National Register of Historic Places nomination – requires the Browncroft property owners’ personal investment. The property owners participating in the fall planting were Andy and Tammy Baisch (2 trees), Kimberly Brock (1), Sarah and Michael Milano (1), Anna and Nate Pensgen (1), and Ed Hourihan and Bridget Dee (1).

Additionally, two trees were donated to the School 46 campus on Newcastle Road, south of the school building -- one by the Browncroft Neighborhood Association, and one by Cassy and Holly Petsos in memory of Marwode and Hugette Neracker, long-time Browncroft supporters on Yarmouth Road who had passed away.

Kudos also go to the MaGees at 165 Windemere for independently replacing a Browncroft tree taken down by a previous owner.

There are many open stretches, particularly on Windemere and Croydon Road, missing Browncroft shade trees.

Cassy Petsos



Newcastle School Grounds - one shown here of the two planted on the western side



Corwin Road, one of two planted here

Anyone missing a Browncroft shade tree on their property, who would like to participate in the spring planting to replace it, please contact Cassy Petsos, chkpetsos@frontiernet.net. Project details and pricing will be provided.

REIMAGINE RTS BUS ROUTE CHANGES

RTS has been working on a comprehensive change to the regional bus routes which will be put into effect May 17, 2021. Its roll out was postponed due to the covid-19 pandemic.

Some of the changes include: The fixed routes that use 40 to 60 foot buses will now run seven days a week until midnight. An on demand system of small buses will pick up customers not covered by the fixed route system such as in the suburbs to connect up with the fixed route, and there will be three

new crosstown routes that will help navigation around the county without going downtown.

To learn more about the new plan and access bus route maps and schedules go to myrts.com.

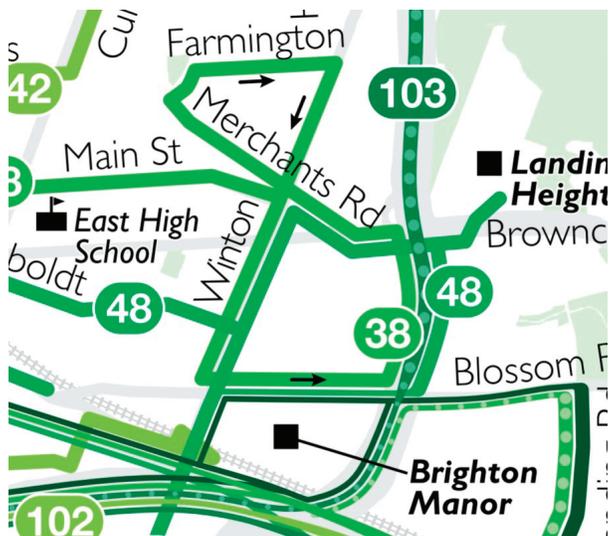
Below are two maps of our area of the city – the current bus routes and the proposed new ones.

You will note that there is no coverage from East Main northward on Winton, and on Merchants Road. Also, there is a long stretch to walk on Winton Road from Browncroft to Blossom Road. The

impact of this is that the side street bus patrons who could previously walk down their streets to catch a bus on one of these two main intersecting streets will need to walk over to Main Street or Browncroft Boulevard.

The surveys done by RTS in preparation of “Reimagine RTS” informed the planners that users would rather walk farther distances if they could have more frequent buses throughout the day.

Cassy Petsos



Current routes serving neighborhood - E. Main (light green) and University (green)



New Routes effective in May 17th - 8 is East main, 9 is University, 10 is Park

Be Smart, Be Safe by Being Aware. Lock your cars!

At the PCIC Meeting on April 7th (Police and Citizens Interaction Committee) the car jackings were discussed. Attendees were told to be aware of their surroundings whether out walking or driving.

If you are out on the street walking, put your phone away for safety reasons, and pay attention to what is around you.

If you are driving, be cognizant of potential safety issues. No talking on the phone while driving. Watch out for bicycles. If someone bumps your car, do not get out. Drive to the nearest police station. If you are not able to drive away, when confronted, hand your keys over to the attackers and walk away.

And once again, remember to lock your cars. It's hard to believe how many neighbors throughout our city have been victimized by criminals rustling through cars looking for anything of value. Unfortunately we hear of many wallets and cell phones stolen from unlocked cars.

Holly Petsos

CITY OF ROCHESTER ZONING CODE AMENDMENT (ZAP)

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW AND RESOURCES

The City of Rochester approved a new comprehensive plan in November 2019 known as Vision 2034. The concepts in this plan included proposed redefinitions of the zoning districts contained in the city's Zoning Code. For example Residential 1 (R-1 single Family) and R-2 would change to Low Density or Medium Density Residential, and the Commercial 1,2,3 would become various intensities of mixed-use designations.

The city intends to use zoning to achieve the principle goals of the plan, which are to increase density in an attempt to regain lost population in recent decades; encourage economic development and jobs; and foster racial equity. The city is currently rewriting the zoning code to conform to Vision 2034. They refer to this process as the Zoning Alignment Project (ZAP). There will be minimal input taken from neighborhood(s), as the city feels that comments collected throughout the Vision 2034 plan were sufficient. Instead, the residents' direct representation and contribution to the rewrite process has been designated to the City Planning Commission, which is made up of seven individuals appointed by the Mayor who live in various quadrants of the city, and who preside over special permit granting, site plan review and zoning code amendments and, therefore, have knowledge of planning and zoning matters.

The City has also set up a web page for the ZAP where anyone can comment on what they would like to see in the new zoning code. However, anyone commenting

there can include non-residents who may do business or work in the city; as well as developers, income property owners, social welfare organizations, and other entities that the city considers "stakeholders".

Based on the stated goal to increase density there is a great deal of concern in neighborhoods across the city that single family zoning may be substantially weakened by the revised zoning code. For instance, in the "Low Density Residential" zone, described in Vision 2034 as being made up of primarily "traditional detached single family homes" there is a reference to the future in that if Rochester's population increases the City "should consider" allowing an additional unit on single family lots in this type of zone. The insecurity of not knowing when the "future" becomes "now" for current residents, and how this will manifest in the new code for neighborhoods like Browncroft, whose stability can be attributed to its consistently strong single family zoning on lots sized considerably smaller than those in the suburbs, is the concern of many residents.

Additionally, the plan states that the definition of home occupations for the Low Density Residential zone may be "reexamined" to support the "notion of zoning for jobs". Again, how the expansion of allowable businesses in homes will impact neighborhood character would depend on if the business has employees reporting to the residence, how many business patrons will be coming and going, how much delivery activity

could increase, etc. These prospective changes could be beyond the usual resident working at home running a business from their computer or telephone, which does not require any special permit for a home occupation, as it is non-affecting to the surrounding neighbors and has become universal due to Covid-19.

Browncroft residents need to be aware of the ZAP that is in progress and take full advantage of the public meetings where information will be provided by the City. Also, it is important for residents to communicate to the City administration, the Planning Commission, and City Council members what their (your) vision for this neighborhood's future is. Only you can express why you bought your house and if your choice of living here is connected to the stability associated with owner-occupied single family zoning, and/or that your neighbors are observing the same rules of property use and maintenance as yourself.

This neighborhood is already very walk-able, has easy access to shopping and services both here and throughout the county, and like every city neighborhood, is on a bus line. A new zoning code will not change that.

There are opportunities to ask for better enforcement provisions. Many neighborhoods, including Browncroft, have been frustrated with the lack of enforcement of the existing code, because violations are not cited or fined. Also, this is an opportunity to rewrite the zoning code to be more user-friendly by the use of charts and by

ZAP

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consolidating provisions that are related. The latter appears to be an intention.

Below are references where one can access information about the Vision 2034 Plan, the ZAP page where the city is providing status updates and a comment page (Beware-see below), the City Planning Commission schedule where the ZAP will be discussed, and email addresses.

Though it may seem easier to just write your comments on the zoning code into the city's com-

ment page, it is advised to do it by letter and from your own email system to ensure that you have a record of it and to be sure that it will be seen by your elected officials, or the Planning Commissioners, to whom you should provide a copy. Also, it would be helpful for BNA to know the neighborhood's sentiments and to know what has been expressed to the City Administration, so please provide a copy to Zoning Chairperson, Holly Petsos (h.petsos@yahoo.com).

Resources:

Vision 2034 Plan – cityofrochester.gov/rochester2034/

ZAP – rochesterzap.com

Current Zoning Code of the City of Rochester – ecode360.com/8679474

City Contacts:

Dorraine Kirkmire, Planning Manager, dorraine.kirkmire@cityofrochester.gov, City Hall, 30 Church Street, Rochester, 14614

Planning Commission – c/o Anna Keller, planningcommission@cityofrochester.gov, 585-428-7761, City Hall

Mayor Lovely Warren, info@cityofrochester.gov, City Hall, City Council, council@cityofrochester.gov, City Hall.

East District Councilperson, Mary Lupien, mary.lupien@cityofrochester.gov; At-Large, Loretta Scott, loretta.scott@cityofrochester.gov; Malik Evans, malik.evans@cityofrochester.gov; Mitch Gruber, mitch.gruber@cityofrochester.gov; Willie Lightfoot, willie.lightfoot@cityofrochester.gov; Miguel Melendez, miguel.melendez@cityofrochester.gov

Important Planning Commission Meetings:

May 10th at 5:00 p.m. – City Staff ZAP status report, www.youtube.com/cityofrochesterNY

May 24th 6:00 p.m. – additional briefing, www.youtube.com/cityofrochesterNY

June 28th 6:00 p.m. - Public can provide comments to the Planning Commission on the status report. To do so register by going to: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=LtonvrSU2kGUffYC1g6AfKCwEKiQWQhJiFyF4LZa_9tUOUZQMlkwTVJUWk5SUjZHMUIHTFZFQTVOVy4u

WINTON LIBRARY PROGRAMS CONTINUE VIRTUALLY

Small Space Gardening Tuesday, May 11th at 6:30 (Online)

Gardening requires planning and preparation, especially if your garden is as big as a matchbox! This workshop will cover small space gardening techniques and tips to help maximize your garden's productivity. We will cover site selection, vegetable varieties, soil preparation and crop rotation to assure fresh and nutritious food for you.

Presenter: Jarmilia Haseler, Master Gardener, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Use this link to register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82255545792?pwd=dmN6MEZVNGZpUnhEd1dvWFBVbFNCQT09>

Tax Credits

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exterior work. 4) All projects must be approved before work is begun in order to assess compliance. Any work that is inconsistent or deleterious to the historic architecture of the house would not be included under the tax credit.

You must check with SHPO to see what would qualify and then submit your paperwork.

Changes to the original materials and work on what is not part of the original structure would not qualify as eligible for a tax credit.

This is a tax credit, so the savings on a minimum \$5,000 project would be \$1,000!

Holly Petsos