Brook Creek Neighborhood Association

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Lawrence, Kansas 66044

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The **Brook Creek Breeze**

The Newsletter of the Brook Creek Neighborhood Association

November 2016

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19th Street is a low-traffic residential street but several trends indicate it's in danger of becoming a busy arterial street. In the last newsletter, we reported that BCNA asked the City not to connect 19th St. to O'Connell Rd. because that would open the floodgate of Kansas City cut-through commuter traffic. That project is still planned for 2018. Do you remember the KU dormitory McCollum Hall demolition ? Unfortunately, that was a harbinger of a $350 million KU expansion along west 19th St. They have said "We want to make 19th Street feel like it's more of a front door to campus." Even without a transit hub, KU's 4-level parking garage will have 2,640 spaces at 19th and Naismith St. at this planned south gateway. Lawrence transportation plans call for 19th St. to be an arterial to accommodate all the new traffic. A coalition of the five neighborhoods along 19th St. are working together to keep the traffic on 23rd. St., and enter campus via Naismith.

Traffic Safety Solutions Sought

Brook Creek has suffered cut-through and speeding traffic for decades. Because we're on the east edge of town, Kansas City commuters and game day traffic regularly use 15th and 19th Streets and our residential streets to avoid congestion on 23rd. St, often speeding. The first BCNA request for the City to stop this problem was in 1997 by then President Mark Taylor. We were ahead of our time by suggesting speed humps, partial turn restrictions, and slower speed limits. Instead, we got yield signs and stop signs, and a lowered speed limit of 20 MPH north of 15th Street. Engineers now say that yield signs and stop signs don't calm traffic, and a 20 MPH limit without physical controls is also not effective. Speeders blow through our stop signs, and they ignore the speed limit. The issue surfaced again with cut-through speeders on Maple Lane, Oak Hill Ave., and East Glenn Dr. The City Commission agreed to traffic calming on Maple Ln. and Oak Hill, but not on East Glenn, and told the Traffic Engineer to meet with the neighborhood to develop solutions to problems on all three streets.

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BCNA Meeting Notes

September 2016

Henry Fortunato gave an update on the Hike Through History project. The exhibit will be to be on display at the East Lawrence Community Center, and then additional locations. Fortunato wants permanent panels installed along the Burroughs Creek Trail. He is open to any ideas for panel content from neighborhood residents. As Fortunato requested, BCNA sent a letter of support for the panels to the City of Lawrence. A survey will be sent to residents to ask about a possible day or time change for meetings. Attendees discussed a possible change in month for our annual election, but kept the current month of December. Attendees discussed possible Veterans' Day activities. The neighborhood will also follow-up with Parks and Rec to see if there has been an increase in pesticide usage.

October 2016

City Manager Tom Markus shared a presentation on current City projects and activities, plus information on the City budget. He answered questions and listened to concerns and ideas expressed by Brook Creek and visiting Barker residents. The Veterans' Day activity was postponed until next year in order to allow more planning and alignment with other activities to honor veterans. BCNA adopted guiding principles for management of the woods as a natural area in Brook Creek Park. Volunteers joined a committee to collect November BCNA board and officer nominations for December elections.

BCNA meeting minutes are posted in full on the BCNA website: https://brookcreeklawrence.wordpress.com/

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Help BCNA Plan Next Year's Meetings

The BCNA board thanks everyone who took the time to reply to the neighborhood survey last month. We really appreciate all feedback and ideas! We will take all the responses into consideration as we continually improve and update the neighborhood association to best serve residents. We have a quick follow-up survey about a possible meeting day change. If you are interested in seeing the meeting day change or would like for it to stay on Wednesdays, please take a moment to let us know your preference.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6WPRK98

Policies Drafted for Management of Brook Creek Park Woods

Efforts to preserve the woods within Brook Creek Park at the north edge of Brook Creek Neighborhood began 20 years ago. In 1996, Douglas County wanted to level this nature area and use it as the site of the new jail. Then BCNA President, Mark Taylor, led the fight to stop the jail, and the County instead chose a site in southeast Lawrence. The City bought the nature area, and Fred DeVictor, Lawrence Parks & Recreation Director, decided "to keep the woods natural, which is what the neighbors wanted." However, this was not a written policy, and after DeVictor retired in 2007, the agreement became overlooked. Over the years, the nature area has suffered encroachment by the City Public Works operations, pollution from illegal dumping, unannounced brush hog trail cutting by Parks & Recreation, illegal bike ramp construction, rifle game hunting, and transient camping. On at least four occasions, BCNA has reaffirmed our intent to preserve the nature area. In April of this year, BCNA residents met with Parks & Recreation staff to discuss a formal policy to preserve the nature area. We have adopted a list of policy conditions, and will soon take them to the Parks Board and then to the City Commission for consideration.

Eat Pizza. Help the Neighborhood.

As a neighborhood association, we feel that paper newsletters are a wonderful way to reach everyone in the neighborhood and get the word out about upcoming events. It is expensive to send these out and the city grant funds that help us afford them are being cut more and more every year. Please take time to come out and enjoy a meal at Papa Keno's Pizzeria on November 7th and tell them you are with BCNA. They will donate 20% to our neighborhood association!

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