

# ORCHARD HILLS-MAPLEWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

www.ohmha.org

## OHMHA NEWSLETTER

February 2015

### Join Your Neighbors at a Community Forum

Get the very latest news on:

- Thurston Nature Center
- Bromley, Thurston and Clague Communities
- Nixon Rd. Property Developments
- OHAC and Dolphin Pools
- Thurston Players



*The first Community Forum at Zoup in 2014*

**Sunday, March 15, 5:45 - 7:00pm**  
**Location: Zoup at Traver Village**

The entire neighborhood is invited to join for an informative Community Forum on Sunday, March 15 at 5:45 pm at Zoup at Traver Village.

“There are many initiatives and issues in our area that neighbors want to know more about. This event will allow us to get together to hear the latest updates and discuss,” said Jack Cederquist, OHMHA Board President.

While OHMHA is coordinating the Forum, it is open to everyone who lives in the surrounding area. Consider bringing your neighbors and friends and also enjoying some soup as a way of thanking Zoup for hosting us. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, March 15! ■

## Neighborhood

## Garage Sale

## Saturday, May 9, 2015 Starting 9am



# 50 Years of Community Celebrated at Fall Festival 2014

It was a gorgeous fall day when 150 neighbors gathered on Sunday, Sept. 28, 2014 for the 8th Annual Fall Festival. This year's was the best ever, as we marked 50 years since the founding of the neighborhood and nature center. Among the special events were talks by community leaders such as Thurston Elementary School Principal Natasha York and Police Sergeant Hickey, recognition of retiring mail carrier Mike Bellaire and dedication of the William Stapp amphitheater at the Thurston Nature Center. In addition all enjoyed terrific music, refreshments, and the presentation of the birds of prey from the Leslie Science Center.

Musical entertainment included Martin Torch-Ishii & Henrik Karapetyan, Tom Teller, and Bill Edwards & Surefires, as well as Thurston Elementary School students. The live critters from the pond were a hit as always. The Thurston PTO sold hot dogs and other treats, with proceeds going to the Thurston Nature Center. OHMHA again provided donuts, cider, and apples. Local businesses generously donated numerous items for the free raffle drawings that were held throughout the festival. The festival ended with the Tree Tour led by Mike Conboy.

Many organizations and individuals contributed to the success of the Fall Festival, including OHAC, Thurston Nature Center, Thurston PTO and Bromley neighbors and Kiwanis. The annual



***Cider and Donuts, always yummy.***

Fall Festival is a great way to connect with your neighbors. We look forward to seeing you at the 9th OHMHA Fall Festival in 2015. ■

## **Thanks to these generous Fall Festival donors:**

- Above All Movers
- Ann Arbor District Library
- Anytime Fitness
- Arbor Printing
- Avanti
- Big Salad
- Book Bound
- Busch's
- Chase Bank
- Clay Work Studio
- Crown House of Gifts
- Domino Pizza's
- Espresso Royale
- Green Things Farm
- Jafferson Computers
- Kumon
- Lesemann Learning
- Nail and Co
- Ocean Nails
- Olga's
- State Farm: Lynn Raade
- State Farm: Joe Simkins
- Studio Y
- Tea Haus,
- Toyota
- Umi Sushi
- Victory Lane Oil Change
- Way One Grocery
- Wine Sellers
- Zamaan Café

# Georgetown Entrance Monument Update

-by Jerry Schulte

In the Fall 2013 addition of the OHMHA Newsletter, an article noted the significant deterioration of the brick monuments at the intersection of Georgetown Blvd. and Plymouth Road. These monuments have long served as a gateway to our neighborhood.

At the 2014 Fall Festival a poster with “photoshopped” images of repair/ replacement options was displayed.

Three options were presented:

- Complete restoration
- Lower structures in the current location
- Demolition of the current structures and replacement with a monument in the median of Georgetown Blvd.

Of the 44 neighbors who commented, the vast majority (30) preferred lowering the structures in their current location. The least preferred option was the median monument (6).

The lower structure option offers a number of advantages:

- It will improve a driver’s ability to see pedestrians on the sidewalk as drivers approach Plymouth Road.
- Hopefully the existing monument footings can be reused (the existing brick is too porous and weathered to be reused) which will save cost.
- It will retain some of look/charm of the existing structures.

Since the project is still very much in the planning phases, both feedback and support for moving forward with a project would be very welcomed. Since the cost of this project will significantly exceed what the Board can fund from its current budget, fundraising will be necessary to move forward with a replacement or restoration project.

The initial next steps are as follows:

- Come to a consensus plan for proceeding by soliciting resident input
- Gauge resident enthusiasm to fund such a project
- Seek permission from the two property owners where the monuments are located
- Confirm the requirements for seeking City of Ann Arbor approval
- Develop design drawings
- Obtain estimates
- Fundraising

What you can do:

- Provide feedback on a restoration or replacement approach
- Indicate your willingness to contribute
- Provide ideas for fund raising

The OHMHA board has formed a subcommittee consisting of Jerry Schulte, Peter Mooney and Frank Commiskey. You can share your thoughts with one or more of the subcommittee members or provide input at the February 10, 2015 OHMHA board meeting. You can also share your thoughts on the OHMHA Facebook page. ■



***Photoshopped (simulated) image of planned lower wall at Georgetown entrance***

# New Construction in Our Area

- by Jack Cederquist, OHMHA Board President

There are many new projects nearby the Orchard Hills – Maplewood neighborhood. Here is a brief update as best as I can determine, writing in early January.

## Nixon Farm North and South Residential

The Toll Brothers have submitted, to the City of Ann Arbor, site plans to build 208 single-family attached housing units on the 67-acre Nixon Farm North site at the northwest corner of Nixon and Dhu Varren roads and 264 townhouses on the 41-acre Nixon Farm South site at the southwest corner of Nixon and Dhu Varren roads. The City of Ann Arbor Planning Commission has recommended the annexation of the sites into the City of Ann Arbor, the necessary rezoning as residential R4A (currently farm land) and the site plans. The next step will be consideration of annexation by the Ann Arbor City Council.

## Woodbury Club Residential

Planning Commission has recommended the annexation, rezoning and site plans for the Bleznak Group proposed Woodbury Club Apartments, comprising 282 apartments on the 54-acre site at the southeast corner of the “intersection” of Nixon Road and M-14. City Council has approved the annexation and the required approval of the annexation by the State of Michigan is in progress.

City planning staff states that rezoning and site plans for these residential developments cannot be further approved until a plan is in place for the improvement of the Nixon – Green – Dhu Varren intersection and that leads me to the next item.

## Nixon - Green - Dhu Varren Intersection

In December 2014, a public meeting was held at Clague School to allow public input to the ongoing, City-funded study to redesign the Nixon - Green - Dhu Varren intersection. About 100 residents attended. Opus, the company performing the study, presented alternatives with the interim recommendation of two possible redesigns: four way traffic lights or a roundabout. Either redesign would require that Dhu Varren be relocated south to align with Green. This relocation would require a small wetland to be moved elsewhere. Public input was intense with the dominant theme of many statements



**Nixon - Green - Dhu Varren Intersection**

# New Construction in Our Area (continued)

being that the City needs to fund a traffic study of the entire Nixon corridor. All four Ward 1 and 2 City Council members were in attendance. I expect there will be an attempt to fund that more extensive study.

## Nixon Sidewalk

City staff anticipates that the installation of a sidewalk on the east side of Nixon Road, north of Clague Middle School and connecting to the sidewalk at Haverhill Court will occur in the spring/summer of 2015. This installation is made possible by the hard work of many in obtaining a Safe Routes to School grant. A few hurdles do remain, however, including a special assessment on the two single-family homes and the Northbury Condominiums that border the new sidewalk and standard hearings and City Council resolutions needed to approve the work.

## Plum Market

Plum Market has purchased the former Cleary University, 19,000 square foot building at 3601 Plymouth Road. City Council has given initial approval of the rezoning of the property to allow use as a grocery store. The site plan would construct a 4,600 square foot, one-story addition to the north side of the building and an outdoor patio on the south side and reconfigure the parking lot while retaining the existing 82 parking spaces. Although some City concerns may still need to be addressed, I would expect the site plan to be approved.

## Flagstar Bank

Site plans to build a Flagstar Bank branch at the northern part of the Holiday Inn parking lot at 3600 Plymouth Road were considered by Planning Commission at their November 5, 2014 meeting. The plan is for a 3,000 square foot bank with a drive thru facility and 16 parking spaces. The Commission voted to postpone consideration indefinitely. I would expect the issue to return in the future. ■



***Traffic and safety on Nixon Road are a concern.***

# Thurston Nature Center News

- by Frank Commiskey

Many thanks to all who have contributed and donated to help fund the Thurston Nature Center Pond and Wetland Restoration Project. Our Fundraising Campaign for this specific project started on December 9th and as of January 26 we had raised approximately \$36,000. Due to the fantastic participation of local residents in Bromley, Orchard Hills, and Maplewood, along with the wonderful students and parents at Thurston and Clague, we have a very good chance to meet our goal of \$60,000. There is still time left to donate - if interested contact me at [frank@thurstonnaturecenter.org](mailto:frank@thurstonnaturecenter.org).

Without your support, it will almost be impossible to restore and save the pond. Engineering data supports the facts that we are quickly losing the pond. Each year you will see these changes unless we do something about it.

The total estimated cost for our project is \$160K. This is considerably less than the original projected cost of \$300K when the project was planned to be executed in 2009. The reduction in scope and tireless effort of key TNCC members has given us a reason to have hope that maybe we can perform the work this year. But, we still need assistance from our local community, AAPS, and city of Ann Arbor.

During this time of uncertainty the many volunteers and members of the TNCC continue to stay true to the founding principles and mission of the Nature Center. We get together each month and share information.

Thurston Nature Center meetings are open to the public and you are more than welcome to come and join us. Meeting schedule for the coming months is as follows (all meetings are at Thurston Elementary School's Library, 7 to 9 pm): February 5 and 26, March 5 and 19, April 9 and 30, May 7 and May 28, 2015.

We also have a number of activities coming up that require volunteers to help. Spring is our busiest time - - Earth Day and Earth Week (April 20 -26, 2015). In the celebration of our 50 yrs. there will be a Kiwanis-Thurston 5K Run/Walk through the neighborhood on May 16.

If you are interested make sure you follow us by subscribing to our E-Newsletter- To subscribe contact via email [frank@thurstonnaturecenter.org](mailto:frank@thurstonnaturecenter.org). For more information you can always check the Thurston Nature Center website at <http://www.thurstonnaturecenter.org> and stay in touch with us on the Thurston Nature Center on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ThurstonNatureCenter> ■



***Future plans for the Thurston Nature Center, pending successful fundraising, are shown above***

# Note on OHMHA Dues

If you have paid your annual dues of \$20 (due 1 June each year), your OHMHA Newsletter should arrive with your name and address on the label. If you haven't paid, the label will say simply "Resident."

Thus, the address on your newsletter should be a convenient way for you to determine whether or not you have paid for the year. Although payment of annual dues is voluntary, the Board hopes you'll agree that in return OHMHA provides useful benefits: the Fall Festival, Candidates' Nights, landscaping at the Plymouth-Georgetown and Green-Bluett entrances, Garage Sale advertising and signage, this Newsletter, the upcoming Community Forum and more. ■



*Thanks to Thurston School principal Natasha York for joining us at the Fall Festival.*

We urge neighbors to pay their dues, to help support OHMHA activities, including maintain the image and attractiveness of our neighborhood entrances, and delivering communications such as this newsletter.

Thank you to all who mail in or deliver their dues.

## ORCHARD HILLS ~ MAPLEWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR JUNE 1, 2014 ~ MAY 31, 2015

(Make check for \$20.00 payable to OHMHA ~ additional contributions gratefully accepted.)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT PAID \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  Please remove my name from your email list.

COMMENTS (we welcome suggestions and/or offers to volunteer on OHMHA projects):

**Mail or deliver your dues to:** Wendy Carman, OHMHA Treasurer, 2340 Georgetown, Ann Arbor 48105

## **OHMHA BOARD MEMBERS**

Jack Cederquist	2145 Ardenne	665-2282	President
Greg Jagst	2080 Yorktown	846-6332	Vice President
Wendy Carman	2340 Georgetown	761-8693	Treasurer
Peter Mooney	3352 Yellowstone	213-0440	Secretary
Anne Karabakal	2405 Bunker Hill	669-2084	Webmaster
Jerry Schulte	3334 Yellowstone	668-2590	
Amy Seetoo	3111 Cedarbrook	332-0390	
Rabia Shafie	3325 Bluett	668-6430	
Martin Torch-Ishii	3366 Bluett	474-1249	
Nadine Wong	3092 Lexington	222-1716	
Frank Commiskey	2647 Antietam Ct	369-0992	
Emily Eisbruch	2561 Bunker Hill	665-0533	Newsletter & Facebook (eisbruchs@gmail.com)

## **ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES**

Christopher Taylor (Mayor)	794-6165	ctaylor@a2gov.org
Kirk Westphal (Council Member, Ward 2)	660-9955	KWestphal@a2gov.org
Jane Lumm (Council Member, Ward 2) 3075 Override Drive	677-4010	JLumm@a2gov.org

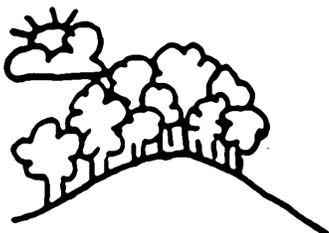
**How do I get on the neighborhood email list? Answer: email [wjcarman@umich.edu](mailto:wjcarman@umich.edu)**

**How do I get on the neighborhood watch list? Answer: email [gjagst@aol.com](mailto:gjagst@aol.com)**

**Also remember to “like” OHMHA on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ohmhaneighborhood](http://www.facebook.com/ohmhaneighborhood)**

**OHMHA  
2145 Ardenne  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
[www.ohmha.org](http://www.ohmha.org)**

**Your are invited:  
Community Forum on  
Sunday, March 15 at Zoup  
See pg 1 for details.**



# **NEWSLETTER**

---

**ORCHARD HILLS-MAPLEWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**

---