

The Greenbrier Gazette

The newsletter of the Greenbrier Neighborhood Association

Fall 2017

Web Page
CvilleGreenbrier.weebly.com

GET IN THE LOOP

The neighborhood group email list is a non-public "Yahoo Group," and it is free. It is monitored and maintained by your GNA Executive Committee to connect all and only those GNA residents who ask to be added. We currently have about 335 neighbors on the list. Membership on the list is a great way to stay informed about issues that affect the neighborhood and to let your neighbors know about a lost or found pet, a fox sighting, a crime, or a water main break. It is also a useful source for recommendations of tradespeople and services. A full set of the use rules for our group list can be found on the home page of our website (which is also chock full of other information and history): <http://cvillegreenbrier.weebly.com>

Some of you might be wondering about the difference between the GNA group email list and the Internet group "Nextdoor" for the Greenbrier neighborhood. "Nextdoor" is a nationwide company that sells advertising and presumably collects data on users, but the privacy policy says it does not give info to third parties. It has a "social media" Facebook kind of feel and has a phone app. People post onto a web page set up for Greenbrier residents, and you can opt to receive email notices of posts. There are settings to adjust based on whether you want to allow posts to go to and from other neighborhoods (the default is being part of 41 neighborhood discussions). Nextdoor's Greenbrier neighborhood boundary does not quite match ours. It is used and enjoyed by many Greenbrier residents, but it is not affiliated with the Greenbrier Neighborhood Association. The two groups are used for similar purposes, but the rules of use for our GNA email list are tighter than those of Nextdoor (e.g., we do not allow advertising by neighbors, soliciting for the too many good causes in the world, or using the list for political purposes).

We believe the differences between our group list and Nextdoor are significant enough to continue operating our list, which we can fully control, even though the existence of two groups is in some ways problematical.

These printed newsletters only go out twice a year, so we strongly encourage everyone to join our group email list to stay informed and connected. To be added to the GNA email list, contact Ned Michie at NedMichie@aol.com and include your street address.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING AND FORUM

For City Council Candidates

City Council in most ways has a much greater influence on our daily lives than does the state legislature, Congress, or the President.

There are two Council seats up for grabs in the upcoming election. Come meet the candidates, ask questions, and learn their thoughts and positions on issues that will directly affect you and our neighborhood.

Place: Greenbrier School Auditorium

Date and Time: Monday, Oct 23, at 7:00 PM

PARK MULTI-USE TRAIL PLAN UPDATE

The City Parks and Rec department continues to move forward with implementing our June 2013 City Council Adopted Park plan (go to our web page to see the plan details). It has been frustrating that this forward movement has been virtually imperceptible to the neighborhood, but implementation has required flood studies, engineering, and approvals by FEMA and local government departments in both the City and County.

Normally, adopted park plans are funded and fully implemented by the City within about five years, and our plan is currently only half planned and less than half funded, even though the multi-use trail is also the embodiment of what city-wide residents said was their clear number one priority in desired facilities, in a scientifically valid poll done by the Parks and Rec department back in 2005. A new poll is being done this month, but the Parks and Rec leaders fully expect the same priority result for multi-use trails.

The City is also getting help from grants to fund the park trail. This is not typical for a park plan implementation, but it is certainly welcome. The City already has \$140,000 in state grant funding and is now applying for a few hundred thousand more – a grant which only requires only a 1/4 match from the City. The GNA Executive Committee is also offering up to \$1,000 of our Association’s accumulated savings, to show support by the neighborhood and increase the chance of getting the grant.

If all goes according to plan, by the middle of next summer (2018), the City will have (1) completed the planned eight-foot-wide multi-use greenway trail from the railroad embankment in Greenbrier Park up to Brandywine and (2) completed a bridge across the creek just beyond the current rock hop across the creek. Then, assuming success with the grant and/or City funding, the planned trail will be complete to at least Hillsdale Drive near the Senior Center by the following summer (2019) and hopefully also to another connection point to Hillsdale and Route 29, passing in some woods between the main post office and Seminole Square.

The longer-range plan is now to go back for more grant funding in the next cycle (Nov. 2019) and get enough money to build, in 2020, the critical tunnel under the railroad track to connect the greenway to the John Warner Parkway paved path running north and south. That connection will create an appealing level, off-road commute to the downtown area, and also to Rio Rd and beyond.

The 2013 trail plan also calls for the trail to connect to Michie Drive and go under Hydraulic and Route 250, using existing culverts. Frustratingly, there is very little planning that has taken place yet for this segment of the adopted plan. A connection to Michie Drive will provide an easy and safe path for Greenbrier students living on Michie drive to get to and from school. The completion of the adopted plan to Meadowbrook Road behind Bodo’s will allow pleasant off-road travel to Barracks Road and UVa beyond.

On a more positive note: the City planners think they are going to be able to complete, by the end of 2018, the commuter trail paralleling Route 250 from Hydraulic through McIntire Park and connecting to the John Warner Parkway at its intersection with Route 250.

LET’S PARTY

The GNA Executive Committee wants to use some of our GNA accumulated funds for the most important purpose we can think of – building a sense of community.

To that end, we are offering up to **ten \$100 grants** to anyone in the neighborhood who will host/organize a social gathering for your block or just some immediate neighbors around you. You can invite known neighbors, but the point is to also invite others around you whom you don’t know or don’t know well. The money can be used for booze, tea, soda, food, table/chair rentals, party hats, or any other communal offering/amenity for the party. A member or two of the Executive Committee will also attend to meet people and further spread the good will, in addition to making sure you didn’t just buy steak, lobster and fine wine for your family dinner. In order to apply for such a grant, please contact Heather Griffith at heather@nestrealty.com.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS AND THOSE WITH NEEDS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Toward the cause of “helping thy neighbor,” we would like to compile a list of those who might be willing to volunteer to help a fellow Greenbrier resident in need, for some project (e.g., shoveling snow, moving boxes or furniture, a small paint job, or doing some other unskilled or even skilled labor). The volunteers on the list would be contacted when a project need develops, but of course you would always be free to say no.

The flip side appeal is: we would like to know if you are in need of volunteer labor from the neighborhood because of health, tight finances, and/or inability to hire someone for a small project, or any other such reasons (no explanation needed).

If you are game to potentially volunteer or if you have a request for volunteers, please contact Ned Michie at NedMichie@aol.com or call me: 296-1198.

BIG PLANS FOR RT 29 / HYDRAULIC AREA

VDOT, the City, and the County are working to improve traffic flow at and between the intersections of Route 29/Hydraulic, Route 250/Hydraulic, and Route 250/Route 29. The planning process is moving pretty quickly to meet next year's application deadline for the State's capital improvement program. Once the applications are all in, the State ranks the projects by a priority scoring system and funds them

based on rank. VDOT already has \$10 million in the bank designated for extending Hillsdale across Hydraulic Road (between Kroger and Virginia Power), but they aren't going to spend that until the improvements for the whole area are figured out. They also have \$10 million toward figuring that out -- i.e. doing the design, planning and engineering work. Actual construction work is not likely to begin for more like three to eight years from now, depending on how the project(s) ranks in the state funding process. VDOT has been having public meeting input meetings and will have more. Follow the events at the web site:

<http://www.route29solutions.org/>

On a related note, we need to keep an eye on the redevelopment of the **K-Mart Plaza**. It seems clear that the whole building is likely to be demolished to make way for what may well be some sort of mixed use development. Whatever is done will likely have some impact on our neighborhood, and hopefully it is all to the good.

CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Every five years or so, the City updates its Comprehensive Plan. The update of the 2013 Plan has been going on this year, and the draft 2018 plan is posted on the City's web site and available for comment:

www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/departments-h-z/neighborhood-development-services/comprehensive-plan

GREENBRIER SCHOOL NEWS

Greenbrier Elementary PTO needs

volunteers. The Organization has two projects they are working on over the next couple months and would love some assistance from our Greenbrier neighbors. You don't need to have a child enrolled at the elementary school to participate.

This is another opportunity to get involved and spend some time with new and old neighborhood friends.

The first event is the courtyard clean-up. This is the area around the fishpond on grounds. Clean-up is to take place at 9:00 am on October 14th.

The second event is the famous Fall Fun Fair. There are endless opportunities to assist with this event. It is the PTO's most important fundraiser.

We would love to see you come out to support us.

If you are interested in participating on some level, please contact greenbrierPTO@gmail.com.

To stay up-to-date on events at Greenbrier Elementary, please visit our new website at www.GreenbrierPTO.weekly.com.

GREENBRIER GRIPES

We all love our neighborhood, but this section is dedicated to those residents who wish to comment on ways we might potentially be even better neighbors to each other.

“A dog’s bark travels long distances; dog owners, please control your dog’s disturbance to others as much as you can. (For example, somewhere in the Kenwood/Concord vicinity is a dog left outdoors who barks for long periods of time, not at passing people but just ongoing barking, seeking its master’s attention).”

“Leaf blowers are very useful tools but make a lot of harsh noise. Please consider whether a given project might be done with a little quiet exercise instead.”

A couple people in the neighborhood wrote in again with concerns about cars/trailers parked in awkward spots on the roads that create visibility problems. One further gripe was filed about disabled cars on the street.

A note from GNA governance – Please keep bushes and branches cut back, away from sidewalks in front of your property; and, per City code, remember: “It shall be the duty of every owner and/or occupant of every house or lot which abuts or fronts on, or is otherwise situated on, a paved sidewalk or walkway to have all snow or ice removed from such sidewalk or walkway within twenty-four (24) hours after the same has ceased falling.”

SIDEWALKS

Speaking of sidewalks, the City is in the planning stages for building a sidewalk on Kenwood between Meadowbrook Heights and Yorktown. This project was chosen apparently based on a priority scoring system the City adopted in 2015 and spurred on by the desires of the of residents on the street. We have pointed out our concern to City planners about the curvy hilly part of Yorktown that is without a sidewalk.

NEW PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVER Rt 250

As you have seen, we have a new, improved way for crossing the Route 250 Bypass on foot or pedal. The original plan had been to fix the existing bridge and sidewalk, but it was discovered that not only was the sidewalk an add-on to the bridge but the sidewalk was actually stressing the bridge. Consequently, the decision was made to create a separate pedestrian/bike bridge and remove the old sidewalk attached to the bridge, while doing some additional repairs on the bridge.

NEIGHBOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Porch / Deck Warning. One of our neighbors had her elevated screened porch collapse – with her on it – in what could have been, but thankfully wasn't, a fatal accident. The homeowner's insurance is denying coverage. The house was built in 1971 by the same builders who built many houses in the neighborhood, and the raised porch met code at the time by being simply nailed into the side of the house. The attachment points, however, were covered by the flooring of the porch and a ceiling on the patio below, so the age related problem was not visible.

1. If you have a deck or raised porch, consider taking advantage of the free inspection service the City offers.
2. Review your homeowners insurance.

Pick-up Basketball games for those 35 years old and over are available Saturday mornings at 9:30 AM at Greenbrier Elementary School's gym. Most of us are in our 40s and 50s, and women hoopsters are more than welcome. We are all just long-time pickup game players (I'm not sure anyone even played for a team in high school), and while the games are competitive, it is all about fun and exercise. We seek players who are not so good as to dominate (making the rest of us feel less important) and not so bad as to hinder play. For more info, contact Ned Michie at NedMichie@aol.com

REQUESTED DUES

If you believe in what the Greenbrier Neighborhood Association is doing and want to support it, send in whatever you can afford. The **suggested amount is \$10 per calendar year** (the money goes toward printing this newsletter and causes such as those described herein). Please support our efforts to have an active, useful neighborhood association by sending your check (made payable to the "Greenbrier Neighborhood Association") to our treasurer,

Lise Dobrin
2101 Tarleton Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Send it now while you're thinking about it!

Note that you are not required to pay dues to join the neighborhood group email list. Joining the list is free.

GNA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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