



WINTER 2022

News for the Varsity View and Grosvenor Park Neighbourhoods

FREE

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



-Jon Naylor,

What's New in Varsity View and Grosvenor Park

There are really four major events in recent months, the newly refurbished Varsity View Community Association hockey rink, changes to planning and zoning, crime and a greater focus on the environment.

Firstly, and very wonderfully, the team of Angela, Anne, Barb, Fredy, Holly Ann, and Luke have overseen the completion of our Community Association's wonderful new rink. There is more about this later in our newsletter. Thanks to all who supported this wonderful venture.

As a side note on winter activities, we will also be paying for ski trails to be groomed around President Murray and Grosvenor Parks. These were much appreciated last year and will reappear as soon as we get some snow. On the civics/development front our City Council's plans for intensification are moving ahead quickly. Several meetings and surveys have already

occurred. The City's plan is for medium density housing from College to Temperance. What is planned for Grosvenor is less clear but probably entails increased density from Bate Crescent to Preston. Within these zones the plan calls for housing to 4 stories, or 6 stories around the intersections of College with Munroe and Clarence. However, at one meeting, a developer thought pockets of 20 storey development would be more appropriate. Not surprisingly, our residents took the opposite view with some calling for a cap at three stories and a gradual downward transition towards the interior of our neighborhood. For residents, major concerns include having more commercial services, better traffic flow, and improved public space. This includes preserving historic homes, trees, providing more parks, better walk-

ways and cycle paths. A growing concern is having an overall visually attractive neighborhood rather than row upon row of block housing. Calls for using the green space around the College-University drive junction as a park have been met with the City recommending the sale of part of this space. This is, despite planners lamenting the lack of opportunity for more parks within the corridor. We will find out how this all plays out by the summer of 2022.

One important question is how will the infrastructure that this development requires be paid for?

We have two reports, an external one from Hemson Consulting and an internal one from the City, both pointing out that infill of this scale is very costly.

...continued on page 2



One of the three infill proposals for density along College Drive. Density is also planned for the area around the Stone Barn and Preston Avenue.

2021-2022**President**

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Roger Williamson*President's message**...continued from page 1*

Think of the cost of ripping up an existing street to put in bigger sewers. These costs are not currently covered by development levies and so are borne by the general taxpayer. In addition, we will have to pay for the tax breaks that are given higher density housing for the first 5 years of their life.

The other issue is the revisiting of infill guidelines. Most of Varsity View is zoned in 25 foot lots. However, many original homeowners purchased double lots. This is why we often see an older house torn down and replaced by two new homes. The size and height of infill is limited by certain rules. A change about 5 years ago reduced the distance new homes could go deep into the lot which helped neighbors maintain a bit of sun and privacy. Developers are pushing for a relaxation of the depth rule, the ability to build higher, and for automatically allowing garage suites.

At a joint meeting of east side inner city community associations, we were pretty much united in our opposition to these changes. Two issues where there may be room for support are front verandas and roof lines. Verandas are a feature of some of our older houses and can be visually appealing. The problem is in the rules, verandas could easily become enclosed heated spaces which are just another part of the big blob rather than visually appealing semi-open space. Roof lines could be improved without neighbors losing sun or privacy. Gables are presently penalized by the way height (the sidewall rule) is calculated. I would like to see more visually appealing roof lines within the current physical height limit.

Remarkably, we appear to be experiencing some infrastructure renewal (hurray). Parts of Bottomley have been repaved and it will have to give up its title as the worst street in the City. Some of us are also getting new sidewalks (Ted is happy). I personally wish that they were built back with rounded curbs, as we see in new neighborhoods. This would remove the need for driveway cuts that are so slippery for pedestrians in winter. City planners assure me residents have given their blessing to perpetuating the old square curbs with cuts, although I have no recollection of ever being asked this ques-

tion and wonder why basic pedestrian safety is not paramount.

If you have concerns about these issues, please drop our councillor an email or try adding it to her Facebook page. Your association is, of course, happy to represent any views that are important to the community.

On the public safety front, there is increased concern about petty theft and random violence in our neighborhoods. Some blame influx of people without houses to the Colonial Motel, possibly compounded by its closeness to a liquor store. We are trying to get a meeting with our police liaison to discuss what can be done. A previous meeting basically resulted in the suggestion to lock everything up. I will keep you posted, if we do get another meeting with the liaison, it will be posted on our webpage (www.vvcasaskatoon.com) and Facebook ([Facebook.com/vvcasaskatoon](https://www.facebook.com/vvcasaskatoon)). Besides enforcement, more affordable housing would help.

I would like to give a shout out to all who are using their homes to contribute to a healthier planet. You have been very innovative. If you have bought an electric vehicle, installed roof top photovoltaic cells, built a net zero home, or simply installed a better furnace or more insulation, well done! For those who are wondering what to do, you might want to investigate a Canada Greener Home Grant. You can get a home appraisal and a grant of up to \$5000 for approved renovations.

Link: <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy-efficiency/homes/canada-greener-homes-grant/start-your-energy-efficient-retrofits/23443>

Best wishes to all for Christmas, the New Year, and all other upcoming holiday celebrations.

Jonathan (Jon) Naylor
President, VVCA

A Few Of The Lights of the Season in Varsity View



One Small Step Makes A Big Difference

At this time of year, people often turn their minds to helping others in the community.

Still, figuring out what community needs are, and how you can help, can be daunting. That's where One Small Step SK comes in. The website provides a glimpse at the work done by dozens of local charities.

"We have them all in one place to make it easy for people in our community," said co-founder Alice Kuipers. "Every charity on our site is registered and serves or advocates for vulnerable populations. All we do is let people know what they need. For example, on our home page, you can type in "diapers", and any of the charities on our site who need them will be listed."

You can also search for organizations looking for financial donations, volunteers, food, clothing, personal items, office supplies and a variety of other items. Kuipers says the site does not take any money at all from the charities, nor is

it involved in the donations. It just puts everything in one place to make it easy for people to help.

"We just want people to know that this free resources is there for them. Our sponsors ensure it's free for people to use and for the charities to be on the site and there's no log-in or sign-up required," she said.

Check it out at www.onesmallstepsk.ca



Choose what you want to give

CITY NEWS FROM COUNCILLOR CYNTHIA BLOCK

I hope everyone is staying warm, safe and finding ways to connect with friends and family. It has been a busy year at City Hall.

Saskatoon just completed another huge construction season with the largest-ever investment in sidewalks and our Building Better Roads program is yielding significant improvements in our ward. As roads are now fully funded to “best practice” standards, all streets will catch up to a 20-year rehabilitation cycle instead of the previous 80-year cycle.

2021 Ward 6 Highlights:

- The dry storm pond at W.W. Ashley District Park is substantially complete. Designed to catch overflow water, it will also serve as a sports field and park space. It is the first project under the City’s Flood Control Strategy to reduce flooding in Saskatoon’s most flood-prone areas.
- 11 lane-km of planned road rehabilitation work was completed
- 6.3 km of sidewalk work addressed (including infill sidewalk on Cumberland)
- 73 lead line connections replaced (The City is on track to complete all lead line replacements by 2026.)
- 1.9 km of water main preservation/replacement
- *Note: Two significant Nutana projects are deferred to next year.

Saskatoon now has an official emergency response plan for large snowfall events, following last winter’s epic storm. Also, Council passed the City’s first drainage bylaw, which will help protect existing properties in infill neighbourhoods.

For more information on what’s happening at City Hall, including our Low Emission Community Plan and Residential Parking Permit expansion, go to: www.cynthiablockward6.com . You can also sign up for monthly updates



direct to your inbox, including information for the next Coffee with Your Councillor.

I want to send a huge shout out to your community association. These volunteers are working hard to make your neighbourhood better. Thank you! And thanks to all of you for the opportunity to serve. I love our majestic ward 6 neighbourhoods and will continue to do my best to represent.

Happy New Year Everyone!

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Proud to live and work in this area

SEE THE NEW AND IMPROVED BRUNSKILL RINK

by Angela Jones



Thanks to everyone in Varsity View and surrounding communities who did their part to make the new Brunskill rink a reality.

Well it's been a long time coming...but this winter we can all go skating and play hockey on the new and improved Brunskill rink!

The rink is all brand new, with safer and taller fencing at the ends, new boards and puckboard, and freshly-graded land to allow for a smoother ice surface. Thank you to all who donated time, money, effort and/or had sponsorship puckboards made for their local businesses, making this new rink a reality. The sponsorship puckboards really add a professional look to our rink, and add a pop of colour. Drive by behind Brunskill school and admire the product of our community's commitment to improving our neighborhood.

By the time you are reading this article, we will likely have scheduled a ribbon cutting party for those who donated enough money to be recognized on the donor board and for all companies who bought puckboards, as well as their families. This is to be the inaugural skate on the new rink,

complete with hot chocolate, sweet treats and music for all!

There is still time to donate. All donations over \$250 will be recognized on the donor board which has not yet been finalized. The date of the party will be determined based on the weather and when the rink can be appropriately flooded and ice surface made.

Any questions about how to donate or in general about the rink, please email or e-transfer rink@vvcasaskatoon.com. With more donations we can build benches, continue to maintain the rink, add lines and whitener, and keep our rink looking and functioning well, and continue to have Brunskill rink known for some of the best ice in town.

Thank you again Varsity View and surrounding community! To another great season of enjoying outdoor skating...



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REMEMBERING A SASKATOON LEADER

reprinted from Nutana Community Association fall newsletter

Cathy Watts was a true leader. A visionary leader. A lover of her community, her family and her bicycle. If you are unfamiliar with this Saskatoon legend, please take some time to read up online and check out Saskatoon Cycles. Ask a neighbour, they will be able to tell you about this remarkable woman and likely have more than one story to share.

It is with great honour that we take time to reflect on Cathy, one year after her passing. While this tribute could be to

look back on all of her accomplishments as a well-known cycling advocate and community place-maker, it might be more fitting to take Cathy's approach and use this as an opportunity to highlight the importance of people believing in themselves, believing in others, and working together to make change.

Because right now this notion is not just a good idea, it seems absolutely vital for the sake of our tomorrows.

REMEMBERING A WONDERFUL GRANDMA

Cathy's granddaughter, Olive shares the impact her grandma had on her

My grandma provided me a lot of advice and words of wisdom, and there were many teaching moments when we were together. Here are some of her teachings and beliefs that she instilled in me:

When I was 5 years old, before I started school, she made me wear some gloves to pick up cigarette butts in the park... and then wrote a shaming message on duck tape and stuck it to the bench... the message said: "A 5 year old had to pick up your butts... do better"

Don't give up...come up with another idea (or 10!)

Grandma supported me to recruit my classmates and other kids at school to join me at climate action strikes and never doubted I had a voice that could make a difference... she gave me confidence that I could make change even though I was not even in high school. No matter how young or old I am, I have a voice and I can use it to make change.

If you can, do it now... don't wait.

Don't worry about the past or the future... focus on what is happening right now.

My Grandma would invite me to help her host tea and appetizer parties for fundraisers and events to support young women in politics... I know a lot about hosting many people in my house!



Don't worry about what other people think, just go for it.

This is what my Grandma taught me... when I believe in something, or think that something is wrong or causes harm, I will never give up trying to make change to make things better... She also taught me that each and every idea I have ever shared with her could all be possible, nothing ever seemed to be impossible for her... and I think that that is something that I have learned from her... and what I live with and live by...

Thank you to Olive and the Cathy Watts family for contributing their reflections. You have had and will continue to have the support of your friends and neighbours.

Cathy Watts - September 3, 1948 - September 8, 2020

A healthy and connected community was a vision Cathy strived for. “Saskatoon could become one of the best biking cities in the world” was a belief she felt strongly about. In her efforts, she showed us what determination looks like when faced with challenge and adversity. She showed us it wasn’t easy but that it would be no reason not to try nor give up. Until the very end Cathy made people believe in what the strength of a community can do.

Family, friends, the many community members of Varsity View and Nutana, the citizens of Saskatoon and beyond

who were touched by Cathy’s presence - be it briefly or lengthy - it is you that can carry on as Cathy would. With purposeful actions and a voice that rings loud for what you believe in.

Thank you Cathy, for every effort you made to put a spotlight on the importance of safe and vibrant active transportation in Saskatoon. Thank you for caring about the community you lived in and the well-being of all its members. Thank you for leading in such a way that fostered your own legacy to be continued on by others.



“Get on a bike, head for a trail and feel what it’s like to be free”

- Cathy Watts



Jennifer Bowes
 People First



Your NDP MLA for Saskatoon University
 saskatoonuniversity@ndpcaucus.sk.ca | 306-956-0224

VVCA MONTHLY MEETINGS:
 VVCA Board Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM. The public is always welcome to attend. Send an email to info@vvcasaskatoon.com or visit the website at vvcasaskatoon.com for more details.

NEXT NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2022
 The SPRING 2022 issue will be printed and distributed to the Varsity View and Grosvenor Park neighbourhoods in March/April. To submit news or events or to book an ad, email newsletter@vvcasaskatoon.com. Ad booking deadline is Feb. 21, 2022.

INDOOR COORDINATOR’S NEWS

by Barb Giles

Welcome back everyone! Hope your winter break was full of wonderful memories and you stayed healthy and safe! A BIG thank you going out for following all the rules to keep us all healthy and safe!

Registration for the winter line up is upon us. Please make note of the dates January 6th and 11th, 2022 from 7-8:30pm in the small gym at Brunskill. NOTE: EVERYONE MUST BE REGISTERED BEFORE CLASSES START!!! If you cannot attend the registration nights you may contact me blgiles@sasktel.net to make arrangements. Art class participants are required to wear masks! NOTE : TIME CHANGE FOR THE CLASS.

Badminton participants must show proof of vaccination and wear masks.

Conversational Spanish and Yoga will be ONLINE ONLY. The instructors will be contacting participants with info on the links.

Learn To Skate - If signing up for this class, there is the unknown of when the ice will be ready! I will have the list of participants and will contact as to when class will start and on what day and time.



I hope to have all this info at registration, but now just trying to finalize.

Tae Kwon Do participants must wear masks and anyone watching must also wear masks.

Yoga will only be running for six classes for now.

Winter seems like it will never end so get busy by signing up to participate and time will fly!!!!

VVCA Winter 2022 Programs In-Person Registration

January 6th and January 11, 2022 from 7-8:30 p.m. at Brunskill School Small Gym.

Full program descriptions available at vvcasaskatoon.com

PROGRAM	REQUIREMENTS	LOCATION	TIME	DAY	START & END DATE	COST
ADULT						
Art for Adults		Art Room Brunskill	6:30-7:30 PM	W	Jan. 19-April 6	\$75
Art for Children	5-8 years old	Art Room Brunskill	6:30-7:30 PM	TH	Jan. 20-April 14	\$50
Badminton	Adult. Supply own racquet	Gym (Brunskill)	8 PM - 10 PM	TH	Jan. 20-April 14	\$45
Conversational Spanish	Adult	ONLINE	6 PM - 7 PM	T	Jan. 18-March 29	\$110
Learn to Skate	TBD					
Tae Kwon Do - Pre-Beginner	3-5 years	Gym (Brunskill)	6-6:30 PM	M	Jan. 24-March 28	\$50
Tae Kwon Do - Pre-Beginner	3-5 years	Gym (Brunskill)	6-6:30 PM	W	Jan. 19-March 23	\$50
Tae Kwon Do - Beginner	6-Adult	Gym (Brunskill)	6:30-7:15 PM	M&W	Jan. 19-April 11	\$85
Tae Kwon Do - Intermediate	8-Adult	Gym (Brunskill)	7:15-8 PM	M&W	January 19-April 11	\$125
Tae Kwon Do - Advanced	10-Adult	Gym (Brunskill)	8-9 PM	M&W	Jan. 19-April 11	\$150
Yoga multi-level	Adult	ONLINE	6:30- 8 PM	M	Jan. 17-Feb. 28	\$70

Remember that VVCA is sensitive to the needs of families facing financial hardships, and may partially fund, or fully fund participation fees in various activities. Subsidization is only to cover the cost of programs and will not include membership in vvca. Please contact one of us at registration night. We are more than willing to be of assistance in a very confidential manner. In addition, assistance may be available through kidsport. To inquire, please contact Barb Giles (email: blgiles@sasktel.net) or inquire during registration week. All inquiries are confidential.