

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



*-Jon Naylor,
President,
VVCA*

Winter Update

There are several pieces of good news and some very important decisions facing our community.

First the great news. Our rink is fully functional! Thanks to all who contributed and particularly to Angela Jones and the Rempels. Others made important contributions including Barb, Fredy, Holly Ann and many who contributed according to their talents. It is truly fantastic to see what a committed community can accomplish as a group. I was there for the media scrum when the Huskies played (I would not like to get in their way on the ice). The media seemed awestruck by the players, but it is the community that made this great rink possible.

The other good news is that VVCA is, mostly, back to in person programming. People are enjoying the physical and social aspects of Badminton, Tae Kwon Do and other activities. Please see Barb's section later on for more details.

On the development front there are

two major sets of decisions that will define our community for years to come. The first is proposed changes to infill regulations. Details are on the City's engage page on infills:

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/engage/neighbourhood-level-infill>

The proposals are to increase the height above grade for the front door, permit open verandas to encroach into the front yard, allow new builds to align with existing houses, and remove restrictions for building extensions into the rear yard.

Some of these changes are sensible. Enclosed porches and verandas are already allowed, allowing them to be open gives design flexibility. Presently, some older streets have houses that are closer to the road than is presently allowed. When this happens, developers usually get special permission to align their build with existing houses. The proposal would formalize this change and simplify the process. Changes are also being proposed to make it easier to add gables to new buildings. Other proposals were more contentious. One was to allow the front door to start at 1.6 meters (over 5 feet) from grade. The present regulation is 1 meter. At a recent meeting of the community associations and town planners, the vast majority thought that this would lead to an uneven appearance to the street. A Canada Post employee indicated that so many stairs would be hard on the feet. The downside to this proposal is loss of street appeal and houses

that dominate, and detract from, their neighbors (thus making them cheaper for developers to buy). After a lot of discussion with the area community associations, the City has decided to recommend front doorways can be up to 1.3 meters above grade.

More importantly, changes to the sidewall rule were proposed. The sidewall rule was bought in several years ago to limit how far back into the lot a house could go. It has been successful in giving neighbors some privacy and sunlight. A new proposal was to exempt extensions that are at least 2.5 meters (8 feet) from the property line. To visualize the overall effect, think of a new build with a long skinny extension into the backyard. Houses would be 20% larger, use more energy, overlook the neighbors, detract from the value of neighboring houses, and add to developers' profits. Current regulations allow 2,000 square foot, 4 bedroom houses. They are already priced beyond the means of many families. After discussion with the community associations, this change to the sidewall rule was dropped so there may still be room for a little greenspace in the backyards of new builds.

The other important change is corridor growth which will have a defining affect on the future of our community. Corridor growth is coming, driven by our councillors. The plan increases Varsity View's population by about 25%.

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

As tall buildings encroach from the periphery changes will be felt throughout our neighborhood. In the previous issue I talked about the scope of the zoning changes. Currently we are discussing public space enhancements. This could be a huge opportunity to design a compelling public environment for our community.

Competing visions for the public space were discussed at the recent public consultation. The City proposes increased use of existing facilities, both in our community and at the University. Pictures of the area around the Bottomley house and at the head of University bridge are used as examples. Unfortunately, the City's actions do not align with their message. In the case of the Bottomley house, the City is in the process of selling nearby green space for development. Around University bridge, the new land use plan calls for rezoning for high density. The City also proposes improving existing greenspace as a way to give us recreational space. The problem is that after the community has spent millions of dollars improving our parks, there is less room for improvement. At the meeting, community input centered on preserving trees, vegetation, and historic sites such as the University gates, the Bottomley and Mann houses. Other concerns were that green spaces must be accessible (close by?), and a desire for outdoor public spaces with room for active transport, trees and seating areas. My contributions have

been to push for a parklet bounded by the Bottomley and Mann houses, this would be easier if the sale of green space in this area was compensated for with land purchases. I also promoted wider and better back-alley space. For example, requiring developers to give up footage along the side of back alleys in exchange for zoning density would widen the alleys. In turn, this could be one way to provide room for active transport corridors, trees and seating areas without a major cost to taxpayers. What do you think? The default position is relying on existing amenities. Let your Councillor know.

Will the corridor plan nurture and sustain natural areas? There is growing realization that green spaces are essential infrastructure that provides health and environmental benefits at a lower cost than built solutions (check out Nature Briefing, Jan 2022). Examples? Trees providing shade on hot days. Another is the role of open spaces and trees in soaking up rainfall. As council builds and paves over our neighborhood, runoff is more rapid and severe, one reason that we are spending \$54 million on flood control (think Ashley Park and similar). It would be nice if council and planners were more holistic in their planning goals.

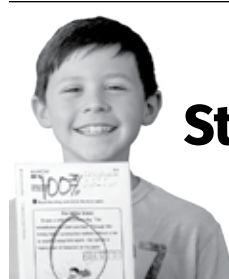
Lastly, please attend our AGM April 27th at Brunskill School. I also hope to see you at our annual spring clean-up or maybe our community barbeque at Raoul Wallenburg Park in May.

Jonathan (Jon) Naylor,
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Jennifer Bowes
People First



Your NDP MLA for Saskatoon University
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MATH & READING PROGRAMS

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CITY NEWS FROM COUNCILLOR CYNTHIA BLOCK

Happy Spring Ward 6 –

Construction season is just around the corner with a number of big projects planned in our neighbourhoods. The work can be disruptive, but it is great to see so many improvements to roads and sidewalks as the City works to make projects run as smoothly as possible. To find out more go to: saskatoon.ca/construction The interactive map is a great tool, plus you can sign up for updates on specific projects.

I want to highlight the City of Saskatoon's newly adopted 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. This guiding document sets the direction and priorities for City Council and administration over the next four years. saskatoon.ca/strategicplan While service delivery and basic infrastructure remain the bedrock of civic work, these strategic files are supporting concrete actions to align with the Official Community Plan.

There are 10 priority areas, with each member of Council leading one of them: Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - Economic Development – Community Safety and Well-Being – Engagement on Infill and Growth – Regional Planning – Downtown Development -Environmental Sustainability – Transportation – Recreation, Culture and Leisure – Smart City (IT).

I am excited to continue as Council's strategic lead for Downtown Development. During this Council term a formal advisory group is being created to begin planning the Downtown Entertainment District, and a decision is expected on the location for a future arena. Thanks to the Downtown Stimulus Strategy created last term, we have a new tool to promote the heart of our city. "Downtown Saskatoon: Urban with a Prairie Heart" is an exceptional collaboration among many partners and volunteers. dtnyxe.ca/destination-downtown/

Don't forget to get your green cart subscription before April 30th to receive the early bird price at \$65 for the season. saskatoon.ca/greencart

Have your say by weighing in on a number of areas under review by the City: infill guidelines, childcare/group homes, park development standards and tree protection. saskatoon.ca/engage

You can sign up for e-updates to find out the latest from City Hall, and the next date for Coffee with Your Councillor (hopefully, in real life). cynthiablockward6.com

Many thanks to everyone helping us get through the pandemic and supporting others in crisis at home and around the world. It all seems like too much sometimes, but I am constantly amazed and encouraged by the strength and kindness in our community. Keep up the great work!



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COMING EVENTS: SPRING CLEAN-UP & BBQ

Spring is upon us so stay tuned for a couple of upcoming events.

The annual VVCA annual spring clean-up for our community is happening in early May. All community associations who wish to participate will hold clean-up blitzes in their respective communities between April 23-June 8th and the VVCA clean-up is scheduled for May 7th.

Now that we can mingle again, the VVCA has plans to hold a barbeque before the Sum Theatre performance tentatively scheduled for May in Raoul Wallenberg Park.

Once the details are confirmed for both these events, we will post information on the VVCA website and facebook page:

Website: www.vvcasaskatoon.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/vvcasaskatoon](https://www.facebook.com/vvcasaskatoon)



— VVCA AGM —
 APRIL 27, 2022
 7-9 PM AT BRUNSKILL
 SCHOOL LIBRARY
 EVERYONE
 WELCOME!

VVCA is an organization run by volunteers and we need your help.

We organize and attend meetings, provide programs and activities for youth and adults, work with the City regarding development in our communities, transportation, parking and other issues. We raised funds to fix the rink at Brunskill school and maintain it in good condition.

We keep you informed through things like this newsletter, an up to date website and facebook page. We organize community events, stay up to date on civic issues and generally try to make your neighbourhood a little nicer place to live.

The VVCA annual general meeting will be held April 27, 7-9 PM at Brunskill School library. If any of these things are of interest, or if you have ideas on how to improve our neighbourhood, come out to the AGM and get involved. We'd love to have you join our board, get involved in one of our committees or volunteer to help on a project or for a specific event. You can also observe the meeting (but not participate) via Zoom. Contact info@vvcaskatoon.com to get the Zoom link or check out our website at vvcaskatoon.com.

NEXT NEWSLETTER - FALL 2022

The FALL 2022 issue will be distributed to the Varsity View and Grosvenor Park neighbourhoods in August/Sept. To submit news/events or to book an ad, email newsletter@vvcaskatoon.com. Ad booking deadline is July 31, 2022.



Celebrating Brunskill Rink

After a couple of delays, the celebration for the opening of the revitalized Brunskill Rink finally happened in January. Below, you will find a few photos from that day, when sponsors, donors and volunteers and their families gathered. Thanks again to all who volunteered and to those who donated to make this new rink a reality!

It's fast becoming a destination spot in our community as you can see from the photos on page 5. Mike Babcock, former NHL coach now in Saskatoon coaching the U of S Huskies, brought his team to the outdoor rink for a work-out.

"I actually drive down this road every morning on the way to campus," Babcock told gathered media. "The lights are always on and people are usually out here getting it ready for the kids. Obviously it's a spectacular facility, so we wanted to come down and enjoy it."

The community raised about \$70,000 for the improvements to the rink which included new poly panel boards that surround the ice, fencing, newly painted lines and they also added a pair of nets from the Huskies' former home at Rutherford rink.

Angela Jones, who spearheaded the fundraising efforts with a team of volunteers, says the day with the Huskies, surrounded by school kids watching the practice, illustrates the importance of this rink.

"This rink is for everyone," Jones said. "It's for everyone in our community, everyone in our city because it's so central."



U of S HUSKIES AT BRUNSKILL RINK



Coach Mike Babcock brought the U of S Huskie hockey team for an old-fashioned outdoor workout at Brunskill rink in January.



Thank you to the team of volunteers who have put in so much time to bring the new rink at Brunskill to our community.



Emmanuel Refinery
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A new event series being offered with the goal of educating and inspiring community about living as treaty people in SK. Learn and experience several elements of Indigenous culture and grow in community.

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INDOOR COORDINATOR'S NEWS

by Barb Giles

Wow what a winter!!!! Looking forward to SPRING!!
Hope everyone is staying healthy and safe. A BIG THANK YOU to ALL participants who have followed the rules to make everyone safe!

Thanks also to Andrea Albert, who has taken on the position of equipment coordinator. Welcome to the team!

I am happy to say we are offering some spring programs.

The registration night is Tuesday March 29, 2022 in the small gymnasium from 7-8:30pm at Brunskill School.

A reminder participants MUST be registered before the start date of the program.

If you cannot make the registration night, you may email me (blgiles@sasktel.net and I can get you set up!!


VVCA Winter 2022 Programs In-Person Registration

Tuesday, March 29, 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	Must wear mask	Art Room Brunskill	6:30-7:30 PM	W	April 6-June 15	\$75
Art for Children	5-8 years old Must wear mask	Art Room Brunskill	6:30-7:30 PM	TH	April 7-June 16	\$50
Badminton	Adult Supply own racquet Must wear mask Need proof of vaccination	Small and Large Gyms (Brunskill)	8 PM - 10 PM	TH	April 7-June 16	\$45
Tae Kwon Do Pre-Beginner	3-5 years	Gym (Brunskill)	6-6:30 PM	M	April 4-June 13	\$50
Tae Kwon Do - Pre-Beginner	3-5 years	Gym (Brunskill)	6-6:30 PM	W	April 6-June 1	\$50
Tae Kwon Do - Beginner	6+	Gym (Brunskill)	6:30-7:30 PM	M&W	April 4-June 27	\$85
Tae Kwon Do - Intermediate	8+	Gym (Brunskill)	7:30-8:30 PM	M&W	April 4-June 27	\$125
Tae Kwon Do - Advanced	10+	Gym (Brunskill)	8:30-9:30 PM	M&W	April 4-June 27	\$150
Yoga multi-level	Adult	ONLINE	6:30- 8 PM	M	April 4-June 20	\$110

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.


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