

WARD 9 NOW – OUR WARD, OUR CITY

A community newsletter serving Ward 9 of Kingston, New York

Vol. 1, Issue 4

June 21, 2007

INTRODUCTION

Happy Summer! Did you know that the City of Kingston has nearly 20 parks and recreational facilities? From the Kingston Point "Rotary Park" to the Forsyth Park/Children's Zoo and Nature Center, Kingston parks offers a wide variety of outdoor opportunities for residents to enjoy the warm weather. So get outside!

VOLUNTEERS - STEP UP!

Our community group has started individual committees, and we need volunteers. The committees include: Traffic Calming; Food Co-Op; and Community Gardens. If interested or have ideas for others, please sign up at the front of the Muddy Cup during our Ward meetings, or write us at: kingstonnyward9@googlegroups.com

THE NEXT WARD MEETING

The next Ward 9 meeting will be on Thursday, July 19 at 6:00 p.m. at the Muddy Cup. The topic will be "How (and Why) to repair your Historic Bluestone Sidewalk" by Lowell Thing. The discussion will focus on why our historic bluestone sidewalks are rare and valuable, how the city values bluestone and why it's sometimes endangered. Lowell will cover ways to protect bluestone, where it came from, how to repair your bluestone sidewalk and other masonry work. Handouts will be provided. Guests and resources at the meeting may include City Historian Ed Ford, Landmarks Chairman Youirj Donskoj and a modern bluestone quarry worker.

MEETING FORMAT

We are visited this evening by GAR Associates and Mayor James Sottile. Our regularly scheduled format will change to accommodate their busy schedules to be:

5:30 p.m. Resident sign-up. The maximum amount of residents to speak at each meeting is 5. Prepare a 5 minute or less statement. Public comment to follow for a maximum of 15 minutes.

6:00 p.m. Past Business

6:15pm Special Guest Panel

7:15pm Short Break

7:30pm Public Comment

9:00pm Meeting adjourned

PAST BUSINESS (from May 19, 2007)

Our meeting began with residents' questions and comments.

1). **Debbie Brown:** a) Spoke of the danger on Hasbrouck and E. Chester Street intersection and that during the week, there was a very bad traffic accident due to the placement of a 'no right on red' sign that is apparently hidden from view. She asked that it be placed over the traffic light so it is seen, and enforced. **Mike Madsen** is to be looking into this matter (but we'll stay on top of it). b) The accident took place where there is an elementary school bus stop. Had it happened three hours later, it would have potentially been lethal, as there are students who wait for the bus on that corner. The school needs to fully analyze that location, and either move

it to a better location or work out the issues so it is appropriate and safe. c) Furthermore, there is a sex offender (what level, we were not sure at print time. We do know that he is not registered) who lives on that same dangerous corner and who has been seen sitting outside on his stone wall where the children's bus stop is. [FYI, There is a Ward 9 Traffic Calming committee beginning in July and this dangerous corner will certainly be looked into] d) KUDOS to the **DPW** for doing a job well done. Apparently, when her garbage had been collected, there was quite a bit left behind. The streets had been cleaned the night before, however, when Debbie called the DPW to complain of the mess that was in front of her home, they came right over within 15 minutes. After thanking them, they continued to clean the area for an entire hour.

2). **Jennifer McKinley:** Jennifer gave a brief description of the beginnings of her food co-op committee that she is working to bring into the city, and particularly in the downtown area. Any residents who are interested in joining her monthly meetings, please sign up in the front of any Ward 9 gathering or contact Jennifer directly at: Jennifer@jennifermckinley.com

LAST MONTH'S PANEL

Our guest panel was entitled "Sex Offenders and the proposed comprehensive plan for Ulster County" led by District 6 Legislator **Frank Dart** and DA **Don Williams**. Also present was **Jeanette Provenzano**, Majority leader of the Ulster County Legislature [the panel was taped for the local public access channel, and we are working on getting a copy to post on our Ward 9 website].

1). Frank Dart gave us some sobering statistics. There are 197 registered sex offenders in Ulster County. Kingston houses approximately 57 of them. The city of Kingston represents 12.7% of Ulster County's population and yet 28% of all registered sex offenders live in the city of Kingston. This is due primarily to Social Services being in Kingston as well as complications with the safety net program.

2). DA Don Williams brought with him the proposed 11 page comprehensive plan for Sex Offenders in Ulster County (we currently have a copy, and would like to make it available for Ward 9 residents on our site once we have been given permission). At the time of the meeting, no one (including any of the legislators) had seen it. Ward 9 was the very first.

3). In most cases, no one will hire a convicted sex offender after they have served their time and will apply for social services. If they are still not hired after five years, then they fall into the safety net program. (for more on the safety net, visit: <http://www.ulstercountyny.gov/> and type 'safety net program' in the search site). Currently, \$832,000 in safety net costs pays for Sex Offenders.

4). Jeannette Provenzano is also on the mental health committee. She says there is an obligation to place everyone who serves his or her time with a job. She would like to see

the county commit a facility or lease an existing building to house sex offenders. It was agreed upon by all that evening that it should not be in Kingston and must be a state obligation. If all sex offenders are in one location, then they could be monitored.

5). Don Williams added that ultimately, all sex offenders (including level 3 offenders) are released back into our communities. He stressed that an effort had to be supported statewide in order for new law to be effective. Other wise, inconsistencies from town to town would allow a sex offender to easily move and 'hide out' in another part of NY State with less lenient laws. The goal is to monitor, control and manage all convicted sex offenders who are released back into the community.

6). DA Williams said that 90-95% of sexual offences occur between people who know one another and it was essential to educate, especially parents to be pro-active prior to the offense occurring.

7). Sex Offenders are comparable to those who commit domestic violence or animal abuse. They all share a perverse desire to control their victims. Many do not understand this. They are a diverse group and do not share the same background. These points are important to understand in order to manage.

8). DA Williams suggested the state enhance prosecution, policing and judge abilities. It would be most helpful if the same laws applied on the state level as they do on a federal level.

Earlier this month, as a follow up, we contacted Frank Dart to get an update of the response of DA Don Williams comprehensive plan and to get information on any upcoming meetings that we might attend. There hasn't been any movement toward a resolve, and we were told that the recent immigration crisis has diverted some of the attention away from issues such as sex offenders in NY State. We will keep up on it and post any updates that we receive on our Ward 9 website.

ONGOING BUSINESS

1). Jeanne Bittner has started walking tours of the Montrepose Cemetery with history lessons. If you are interested, contact her at 845/331-7113.

2). Identify stretches of street that are having dog-curb problems. Mike Madsen to help with placing an order for signs in the Ward.

3). Re-instate neighborhood watch group.

4). Jewish holidays are not included on our government calendars. We'd like to ask that they be.

5). Submit petition asking the city to post the agendas of all government meetings (such as common council, planning, zoning, etc.)

GOOD NEWS AND POSITIVE OUTCOMES

1). We have found transportation for up to 5 elderly residents in Ward 9 thanks to our neighbors at St. James Citgo on Broadway and W. Chester Street. They have made a generous donation of their car service Taylor's Taxi. Neighbors who can help identify those who would like to be at our meetings, but need a ride, please see Rebecca or Arthur, or email us at: kingstonnyward9@googlegroups.com

COMMENT BOX

Q: The property called the Wine Storage Cave on 77 McEntee hasn't been cared for in some time. How can we encourage them to be good neighbors by keeping their property in good condition? It's really an eyesore!

A: We spoke to Jeanne Edwards at the DPW who is on the case. Though her jurisdiction is curbside only, she has contacted the proper powers with your complaint. We also took the time to call ourselves and left a message and plan to follow up in the coming months.

UPCOMING PANELS

*** TONIGHT!**

"Question and answer session on the current citywide re-val" with GAR Associates and Mayor James Sottile.

*** THURSDAY, JULY 19 8:00 p.m.**

"How (and Why) to repair your Historic Bluestone Sidewalk" with Lowell Thing. A discussion on why our historic bluestone sidewalks are rare and valuable, how the city values bluestone and why it's sometimes endangered, ways to protect bluestone, where it came from, how to repair your bluestone sidewalk and other masonry work. Handouts will be provided. Guests and resources at the meeting may include City Historian

Ed Ford, Landmarks Chairman Yourij Donskoj and a modern bluestone quarry worker.

*** THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 8 p.m.**

"Volunteering in your community: citizenship isn't a spectator sport – you can make a difference!" with Catherine Canzian, Director SUNY Ulster Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

***THURSDAY, SEPT. 20, 8 p.m.**

"An Introduction to the Comprehensive Planning Process 101" with Jennifer Schwartz-Berky

***THURSDAY, OCT. 18, 8 p.m.**

"Composting and Recycling in our city" with Steve and Julie Noble

TIP JAR DONATIONS

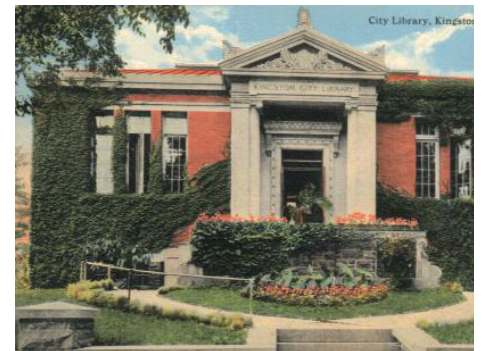
Collected, 5/17/07:	\$22.00
Balance From 4/19/07	-\$249.23
Total:	-\$227.23

Newsletter expense 5/17

200 total

1 double sided	\$17.00
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Total	-\$244.23
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FAST FACT

Did you know that the old Kingston City Library on Broadway here in Ward 9 is a rare, historical building? It is known as a Carnegie Library, built a century ago, as a gift to the city by the famous philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. For more information on Carnegie libraries and the movement to restore these historical buildings visit: <http://andrewcarnegie.tripod.com>

QUOTE OF NOTE

If I am not for myself
Then who will be for me?
If I am only for myself
What am I?
And if not now
When?

- Hillell