



THE VALLEY VIEW

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 147

madisonvalley.org

June · July · August 2007

Around the Valley

Tree Fund Transforms Neighborhoods: Free Tree Deadline is August 10

by Jennifer Karkar Ritchie

Driving down Martin Luther King Jr. Way, I'm reminded of the beautiful tree-lined streets that I grew up with in the Midwest. While some Seattleites landscape planting strips with native plants, trees, and flowers, many don't. The result is either a plain rectangle of grass, or in my case a mass of straw-like grass and weeds.

For us, "The Tree Fund" opened the door to converting our planting strip into something we were proud of and also better served the environment. As part the Neighborhood Matching Fund Program, The Tree Fund provides trees for free to neighborhood groups in order to "enhance the City's urban forest." Don't be deterred by the idea of a forest in your front yard: what that really means are two to three easy-to-care-for trees appropriately sized for your planting strip.

The benefits are great. As the City states on its Website, trees:

- Absorb carbon dioxide emissions and filter air pollution
- Beautify your street
- Reduce noise pollution
- Provide shade and cool the street in warm weather
- Provide habitat for birds and wildlife

Participating in the program is pretty simple. You'll need to get a minimum of five households to agree to participate and receive trees. Neighbors can request 10-40 trees, so you are encouraged to get as many participants as you can. You then select from a list of tree varieties determined by the City Arborist. The choices take into account the width of your planting strip, and any utilities (overhead and below ground), so you don't plant a tree that outgrows its location. The city will even deliver the trees to your requested location on the street just before your planting day.

As a "matching" fund, you are responsible for organizing the planting effort, providing necessary tools and watering the trees adequately.

This is very important in their first years. You also need to send two neighbors to a brief seminar on how to plant the trees so they'll thrive in their new home. My block organized this last October. We planted 14 trees with seven people in less than three hours. The two neighbors that led the planting provided doughnuts, coffee and orange juice, and beyond landscaping our street, it helped us to forge a stronger community and in build lasting friendships.



Neighbors Planting!

provided doughnuts, coffee and orange juice, and beyond landscaping our street, it helped us to forge a stronger community and in build lasting friendships.

⇒ Please see *Trees* on page 4

Save the Date: 2nd Annual Madison Valley Community BBQ! Sunday, August 12th – 4pm to 7pm

It's that time of year again! SAVE THE DATE! Details will be provided to Madison Valley residents in July. You can also visit our website, madisonvalley.org, for updates! In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to VOLUNTEER to help make this another success like last year. Suggested ways you can give us a hand: manning the grill, staffing the food and drink table, providing entertainment, playing music, setting up, cleaning up. To volunteer, send email to president@madisonvalley.org, or call Tom at 971-5123. You can also sign up at the next GMVCC meeting, June 20th at 7:30pm in the Bush School Community Room. Entrance is on E Harrison St across from 34th Ave E.



Highlights from the 2006 Community BBQ

Events Calendar

Wednesday, June 13: Madison Valley Merchants Association. Meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at Cafe Flora. All are welcome to attend.

Wednesday, June 20: Greater Madison Valley Community Council. Meetings are at 7:30 p.m. at the Bush School Community Room (entrance on E. Harrison St. and 34th Ave. E.). All are welcome to attend.

Friday, August 10: Deadline for the Free Tree program. See article, this page.

GMVCC ID Statement

The Valley View

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Miller Greens Condo Development

Miller Greens Early Design Guidance Meeting

by Julia Gold

The City hosted the second Early Design Guidance (EDG) meeting for the proposed Miller Greens Condominium development for the corner of 24th Ave East and East Thomas St. Over 50 neighbors joined the four-person Design Review Board to review the design changes requested at the first EDG meeting in February.



Elevation drawing, from MillerGreens.com

The meeting began with the architect's presentation of revisions to the design. The design has been "softened" at the corner of E. Thomas

and 24th Ave. E., by placing the corner units further back and lowering their height. The community room has been removed, and entrances are turned more toward the street, with balconies and windows facing outward. The walls along 24th Ave. East are also lower, and there is no curb cut along East Thomas. The entrance to the underground parking garage (for 14 cars) remains on 24th Ave., and the entrance is narrower.

The members of the Design Review Board inquired about the height of the units, tree preservation (none), and green and sustainable building elements (many are contemplated). The public comment period followed, with most speakers noting that the design had improved in many ways. However, of the more than 20 speakers, only four were in favor of the project. Specific design-related concerns were: the setbacks in relation to adjoining properties were insufficient; the design does not fit the character of the single-family neighborhood; height is still over 50 feet from street level; too many blank walls; insufficient parking; increased traffic on a narrow, already crowded street; and the large bulk and scale of the project. It was also noted that the units will not contribute to the need for affordable housing. Almost all those who spoke in opposition to the current design were opposed to the required rezone as well.

City land use planner Michael Dorcy reminded the group that the Design Review Board is only looking at the design of the project, and presupposes that the zoning change from single family (SF5000) to L-1 multi family will occur. Comments on the design should be sent to Michael Dorcy at Michael.Dorcy@seattle.gov and reference DPD Project #3004806.



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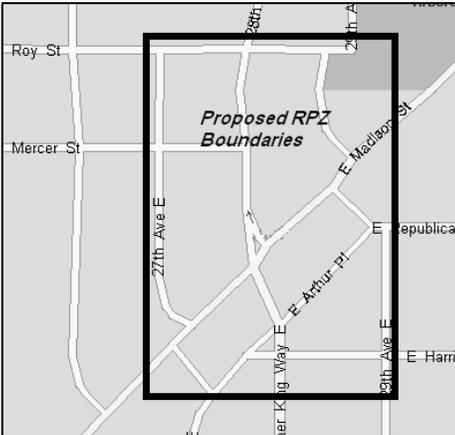
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Zoning News

RPZ: Coming Soon!

by Ann McCurdy

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has determined that four contiguous blocks along East Madison St. meet the criterion for a Residential Parking Zone (RPZ). Cars without RPZ permits will be restricted to a maximum of two hours of parking from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., except for Sundays and holidays. Residents within the RPZ can purchase RPZ permits for \$35. The permit is good for two years.



Volunteers collected the required number of signatures from at least 60% of the households (owners or renters) within the proposed boundaries. The signs could appear as soon as mid-June, and a follow-up with SDOT should occur within six months to determine if adjustments need to be made to the design. SDOT will mail out information, including how to purchase RPZ permits if you live within the RPZ boundaries.

For more information, please call the SDOT at (206) 684-5086, or go to:

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/parking/parkingrpz.htm>

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Valley Gems

Hidden Outdoor Gems

by Ann McCurdy

Within Madison Valley there exist several small, quiet areas that are hidden gems—big enough for the neighborhood to enjoy, but too small to attract traffic from all over the city. If you haven't discovered them yet, visit one or all of our green areas sometime this summer:

Prentis I. Frazier Park (401 24th Ave. E.). This small neighborhood park includes a fun children's play area, a basketball hoop, and plenty of trees. Its best features include lots of cool shade on hot summer days, and a guaranteed lack of crowds.

Julia Lee's (Knudsen) Park (Corner of MLK and E. Harrison St.). This is a private mini-arboretum, open to the public. Restful and beautifully maintained, it is only a half a block south of Essential Bakery. Its numerous benches (but sadly, no tables) make it an almost perfect location to have an outdoor lunch after purchasing food or a latte from one of the many nearby restaurants on E. Madison Ave.

Homer Harris Park (2401 East Howell St). One of Seattle's newest parks, it was dedicated in 2005. It is filled with intriguing sculptures, including climbable animals in the small play area. It also has a courtyard, lawn, picnic tables, grills and terrific views of the Cascades. Both Prentis Frazier Park and Homer



Playing on the sculptures at Homer Harris Park

Harris Park were named after prominent African-Americans within the Seattle community.

Plum Tree Park (1717 26th Ave. E.) This small park includes a grassy area, basketball hoop, and oddly enough, a play area and benches made from telephone stubs.

William Grose Park (1814 30th Ave. E.) Site of last year's Madison Valley BBQ, this is a park good for picnics—grassy hills, some benches, and a short meandering path from one end to the other.

Harrison Ridge Greenbelt (along 32nd Ave. E. between E. Denny Way and E. Thomas St.) This is a wooded hillside. Years ago, the community rallied to prevent a housing project here, and have worked on maintaining it and planting over 500 trees, shrubs, and plants to help with reforestation. These trees and plants are now over 10 years old, and have helped make Harrison Ridge a cherished green space.

Mad P-Patch (30th Ave. E. and E. Mercer St.) and **Ida Mia P-Patch** (E. Madison St. and Lake Washington Blvd in the alley). The Department of Neighborhoods' P-Patch Program, in conjunction with the not-for-profit P-Patch Trust, provides organic community garden space for residents of 70 Seattle neighborhoods. The program supports two gardens in Madison Valley: Ida Mia and Mad-P. Plots in our garden are rented on an annual basis, and you can grow vegetables, small fruits, flowers, or herbs.

How do you apply for a P-Patch plot?

You can call the P-Patch office at 684-0264 or sign up at their website, <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/ppatch>. Both places allow you to put your name on the waitlist for any gardens in Seattle. Now is a good time to apply.

The P-Patch Program allows organic gardening only and since all our gardens are maintained by community members, there is an eight hour annual volunteer requirement in our allotment gardens.

Trees, *continued from page 1*

This year's applications for participation in the Tree Fund are due on August 10. While you need to apply in the summer, you won't plant until the fall, in order to benefit from the beginning of our rainy season. For more information, visit www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/treefund.htm.

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GMVCC Elections!

It's that time of year! The officers for the Greater Madison Valley Community Council are up for reelection. Anyone who resides in Madison Valley, or in the adjoining neighborhood, and is interested in being part of our vibrant community is welcome to run for an office. Positions to be elected are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In particular, we will need a new Secretary, since neither John Coldewey nor Larry Kron (who have been sharing the position), will be able to continue.

Nominations and elections will occur at the next Community Council meeting on June 20 (see the Events Calendar for details). If you would like to be on the Council, or just meet the candidates, please attend!

Minutes of the GMVCC for May 18

by Secretary Larry Kron

President Tom Scarce called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Treasurer's Report: Jennifer Janzen reported the printing and mailing expenses for the months of April and May left the treasurer with approximately \$14,000.00. Additional discussions for

examining expenses and advertising income for the Valley View will be discussed in next month's meeting.

Council Elections: Nominations and elections will be held during the June meeting. All interested in running for offices (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) or willing to support existing officers are urged to attend this meeting.

Madison Valley Summer BBQ: The tentative date for the second annual event is August 12th. The Valley School has volunteered their grounds for the BBQ rather than using the park facilities. A beer garden may be possible at this location. Details about the event, such as entertainment, food, and how to pay for the BBQ (Charging admission? Charging for food?), will be discussed in June. Anyone with suggestions, or interested in volunteering, is urged to attend this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.



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Art Walk, *continued from page 8*

instead.

The funds were awarded, and were used to print and mail postcards; to distribute cards to businesses; to print posters; and for balloons, ads, yard signs, and a banner. Funds were also used to fund a vendor of gourmet hot dogs and sausages. All the funds paid by customers were donated to the scholarship program of Thrive Art School. Many customers made an additional donation to the scholarship program, and participating artists agreed to donate 5 per cent of their sales to the program. More than \$400 was donated.

The MVMA is happy to proclaim its 2007 Art Walk a rousing success, thanks to the grant; the rain that held off until minutes before the close of the event; Izilla Toys, donor of the cost of a balloon artist who entertained children during the Art Walk and of course the Art Work Committee: **Karrie Baas**, Baas Art; **Thoa Nguyen**, Chinoise Restaurant; **James Sutherland**, Café Flora; **Theresa Harris**, Thrive Art School and **Peter Triandafilou**, Attorney.



The Work of Young Art Students from Thrive

Around the Valley

Join The Valley View Team!

"I read it and you do a very good job on covering events...you really put out a very nice newsletter. I appreciate it."

--Voicemail from Tanya, Valley View reader

Do you enjoy *The Valley View*? Are you happy with the topics we cover? Or is there something else you'd like to see? *The Valley View* is taking its traditional two months off this summer, and during that time we'd like to assess how we're doing. Is the newsletter too big, too small, or just right? Is nine months a year a good frequency? (There are no issues July, August, or December.)

We are also looking for new writers. It's easy—at most one page a month, but we also welcome writers to write shorter articles, or less frequently. It's fun, connects you to the community, and you get to see your name in print!

If you have comments about *The Valley View*, or are interested in being a writer, contact Ann McCurdy at 568-7372 or at editor@madisonvalley.org. I also recommend attending the next Community Council meeting on June 20 (see the Events Calendar for details). We will be discussing *The Valley View* then!

New Trees for the Madison Valley

by Kathleen Dayton

The Madison Valley community has gained about 100 new trees as part of an initiative to increase the tree canopy in city neighborhoods.

At neighborhood work parties in December, 2006, and April, 2007, city workers and community members planted new trees in the blocks surrounding the recently-completed Madison Valley Temporary Stormwater Overflow Protection Facility at 30th Avenue East and East John Street. City construction crews had removed a number of trees during construction of the stormwater facility, includ-

ing many mature trees that enhanced the neighborhood's appearance and livability. As part of the city's initiative to replace every tree removed during construction projects with at least two new trees, city landscape architects and arborists identified the best kinds of trees for locations surrounding the stormwater facility, asked property owners to select from the appropriate tree species for their property, and supplied the trees to residents for planting. Larger trees included tulip trees, scarlet oak, Western red cedar and coast redwood. Medium and smaller trees included ginkgo, incense cedar, and hybrids of magnolia and dogwood.

The successful tree planting initiative was celebrated during Arbor Day festivities in the Madison Valley on April 27.



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Flooding, *continued from page 8*

quate mitigation to capture this water. One suggestion for this would be to encourage the construction of cisterns on new and existing development. This would help with runoff and provide water for people to use in their yards.

Most of these suggestions and more have been made to SPU at the Engineering Sub-Committee meetings and SPU continues to model the data they received from the December 14th storm. If you would like to review the minutes of the Engineering Sub-Committee meetings, they should be posted on the SPU website in the near future (http://www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/News/Current_Issues/MadisonValleyFlooding/). Lastly, if you would like to read my thesis when it is finished in mid-June, feel free to email me at shawnamcgarry@gmail.com.

Peter A. Triandafilou, Esq.

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Local Ecological Knowledge of Flooding in Madison Valley

by Shawna McGarry

After the December 14, 2006 storm, I decided to focus my thesis research in The Evergreen State College's Masters in Environmental Studies program on the local ecological knowledge of flooding in Madison Valley. The term *Local ecological knowledge* is used to refer to local expertise of residents who may not have a long-term relationship with the local environment, but nevertheless have local wisdom, experience, and practices adapted to local ecosystems. Many researchers assert that this knowledge is important to scientists. Though research has generally been conducted in rural areas, I believed that an intimate knowledge of place existed in Madison Valley and that this knowledge would inform Seattle Public Utilities (SPU's) long-term solution analysis.

Over the past few months, through research and interviews with a number of residents, I have learned a lot about Madison Valley. As most residents know by now, the utility infrastructure at 30th Ave. E. and East John St. has caused combined sewer backups in the streets and basements during major storms since the 1970s. This is what SPU's current project intended to correct. However, the recent storm has brought a heightened awareness to the problem of surface water runoff as an additional hazard in the neighborhood.

All interview participants felt that the long-term solution should provide substantial conveyance of stormwater out of Madison Valley. Additional suggestions include: 1) restoring a drainage and pedestrian route below East Madison near the P-patch where there was once a salmon stream that traveled to Lake Washington, 2) bigger storm drains and pipes, 3) redistribution of some stormwater pipes to the north rather than to 30th Ave. E. and East John St., and 4) broader community involvement. Many residents also expressed concern that the dense development on the hillsides to the west is taking away the land's natural capacity to absorb stormwater, without providing ade-

⇒ Please see *Flooding* on page 7

Art Walk: A Rousing Success

by Larry Levine

On May 19, sixteen artists displayed their art at fifteen businesses in our Madison Valley Merchants Association (MVMA) Fifth Annual Art Walk. At several of the businesses, students of Thrive Art School displayed their art work on cardboard box towers. Many people who attended purchased art. The event also resulted in many people coming to the Madison Valley who had never been here before. They purchased merchandise from merchants, and dined in area restaurants resulting in a very profitable day. There was also a feeling that many people will return to shop and dine.



An artisan and her jewelry

The MVMA was fortunate to be awarded a \$5,000.00 grant from the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development to put on the Art Walk. Originally, the MVMA planned to apply for the grant in order to place decorative banners on street telephone poles. When it was discovered that banners are only permitted on metal poles (and not the wooden poles here in the Valley), the MVMA scrambled to ask that the grant money be awarded for the Art Walk

⇒ Please see *Art Walk* on page 6



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