

MOUNT HOPE - BREITHAUPT PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION



SUMMER NEWSLETTER • 2016



NEIGHBOURS AND OUR HOOD

By Ted Parkinson, MHBPNA Co-Chair

What neighbourhood do you live in? "Mount Hope", "Breithaupt Park", "North Ward", "Duke St. West" are all possible answers among many more. The idea of "neighbourhood" has been examined by many people including Jane Jacobs, Richard Florida, urban planners and staff at the city of Kitchener.

There is no one concept of what makes up a neighbourhood. Each day we walk out our front door and see the people immediately around us. We may have extended conversations with them or just say "hello". We take our children to the Breithaupt Centre for swimming lessons and meet other neighbours and parents who are doing the same thing. We have formed some friendships when walking our young children to school. These interactions are all part of our "neighbourhood".

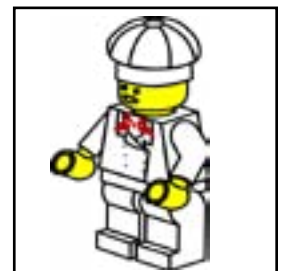
Another way to define neighbourhood is through activities where we donate our time and meet others. This could include participating in a community garden, organizing a street event, making a lantern for a walk in the winter or volunteering for a City of Kitchener event like

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NEIGHBOURS...



Cruising on King, Summer Lights or the Blues Festival. Wherever we spend our time we engage with other people and expand our contacts and interests. We meet people who live two blocks away and others who live at the other end of the city or in Guelph.

The City of Kitchener has promoted Neighbourhood Associations for many years and Mt. Hope - Breithaupt Park (MHBPNA) is over thirty years old. We have organized many events like Winterfest, the Soapbox Derby, Ahrens and Wilhelm street painting and the Margaret Avenue Bridge re-opening party. We have met with politicians and presented before city and regional councils on topics like the Transit Hub, the Wilhelm (and Weber) crosswalk, the spur line trail, the designation of historic buildings and much more.

Ultimately it is up to residents themselves to decide what they are interested in and we try and help in any way we can. This has included donating money to projects like community gardens, street parties and Lantern Walks; talking to city and regional councillors and staff about traffic, zoning, development and many other topics.

What does/can the MHBPNA do for you?

MARGARET AVE BIKE LANES

By Lane Burman, MHBPNA Co-chair

On Wednesday June 1st, the MHBPNA had a unique opportunity to provide input to the City of Kitchener regarding the Margaret Ave Bike Lanes from a neighbourhood perspective. We invited some members of our neighbourhood as well.

You may remember back in 2012, the City announced that Margaret Avenue was going on a 'diet'. They would narrow the lanes, define the parking spots and bike lanes. The first attempt at this was not well implemented. There were a lot of jogs, and the lines were not painted well. The City agreed, and we heard of a 'shave and pave'* of Margaret Ave with new painted bike lanes. The Margaret Ave Bridge crisis happened, and the construction was put on hold. The City then painted the lanes to a new configuration that took into account some of the concerns of riders and residents. Unfortunately the lines were not painted well again and the paint truck broke down. This led to a mess of lines that confused a lot of people.

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BIKE LANES...

One point we should make about road painting is that the lines last less and less. The Government of Ontario no longer allows epoxy to be applied to roads. This means that only water based paints can be applied. Water based paint wear off a lot quicker than epoxy based. No matter how you paint, it will wear off. The option of thermoplast, where a plastic is melted to the road surface is available, but is very costly.

Every now and then we touch base with the transportation department. One of the questions asked was about the 'shave and pave'*. We were thrilled to learn that it would be happening this summer.

The City of Kitchener was willing to meet with us on bike to ride the lanes and talk about some of the issues we saw prior to any work. For us, we learned some of the work that is being done, and got answers to questions about some of the other designs we see throughout the world.

Some points we made included the poor quality of the painting, the poor quality of the actual bike lane, the jogs that still exist at Blucher St, and Guelph St, the variance of widths of the lanes, and the inconsistency of the signage both on the road and on a post.

We learned that there will be some challenges around the pedestrian island at the Giant Tiger. These changes will allow the bike lane to be wider through this area, one of the tightest areas on the route. We also learned that the painting will be done by the contractor and that there will indeed be a redesign to ensure it is more comfortable to ride for all ages.



It was very interesting discussing the importance of cycling in our community with people that are on your side. The City of Kitchener has a tonne of traction. The Cycling Master Plan is alive and well, and being looked at constantly. My suggestion? Buy a bike.

** A 'shave and pave', refers to a process where a series of machines work inline to first shave the top layer of asphalt, crush it, heat it and repave the road. The road will be a lot smoother for both bike and car.*

2ND ANNUAL SOAPBOX DERBY COMPETITION

By Lane Burman, MHPNA Co-chair

The date has been set. Last years racers have been notified, and the promotion for the MHPNA Soapbox Derby 2016, has begun.

This year, we will race on Saturday August 20th. Registration starts on July 1st, and goes until August 1st. To get a registration package, email Lane at mhbpncochair@gmail.com. There is no fee to enter.

Last year, was our first derby. There was a lot to learn, and we feel we will benefit this year from the small field last year. Prior to the last derby, there were a lot of questions that we just couldn't answer. How fast would the cars be? How long will they roll? Will the brakes work? How long does it take to get a car from the top to the bottom and back? After all we had never done this.

We build our cars to the standard/classification used by the Woodstock SoapBox Derby. These are tried and tested parameters used to build a car. Use of these rules, allow for cars that race in Woodstock, and vice versa, which makes building a car a little more worthwhile. Some of the racers from last year will be racing in Woodstock this year.

This year, we will race on Saturday August 20th at 9:00am on Edwin St, between Blucher and Louisa St.

Building a car is not too difficult. The class does not allow for kit cars, and all cars must conform to the rules, for safety, and to maintain competitiveness. Knowing

some of the difficulties designing and building a car, I would suggest the builder be a 'handy' person. While the class gives the rules, the ultimate design is up to you and your racer. Our car took us about 2 weeks to build. Some of the build was easy, some like the design of the steering and braking was a little more difficult, and very important to get right.

This may seem intimidating at first, but it is actually a lot of fun and good challenge. On July 13th, and July 20th from 7:00-8:00pm, we will be holding an information session at the Breithaupt Centre to discuss how these cars are built and answer any questions.

We will be moving the race this year. Last years race was a little slower than we thought, so we are moving around the corner to Edwin St. Follow us on Facebook and get ready to race.

Come out and give it a try. Remember to register in time!

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FALL PROGRAMS

By Michelle Jennings, MHPNA Program Director

INTRODUCTION TO AROMATHERAPY

This comprehensive beginning Aromatherapy class teaches the basics of essential oils, safety and shares some DIY recipes too. Get to know how to safely use essential oils for relaxation, cleaning and other things they are good for. Taught by a certified aromaterapist.

Breithaupt Centre Wed Sep 21 7:00- 8:00pm 6wks \$60+tax CLASS 220038

CREATIVE LEGO

35 lbs of LEGO + 1 hour of unstructured play = an awesome time! Some parents drop their kids off, some stay and play. We don't charge for parents! It will be the one thing your kids look forward to each week. Ages 4-6.

Breithaupt Centre Tue Sep 20 6:00- 7:00pm 8wks \$20.00 CLASS 221519

DAYTIME LEGO

Geared for homeschooled kids, this session is an opportunity to get creative. With building themes, teamwork, and problem solving this program will be a hit with your kids. Ages 9-12.

Check Facebook in July for day and time. Manual registration at Breithaupt Centre. By donation.

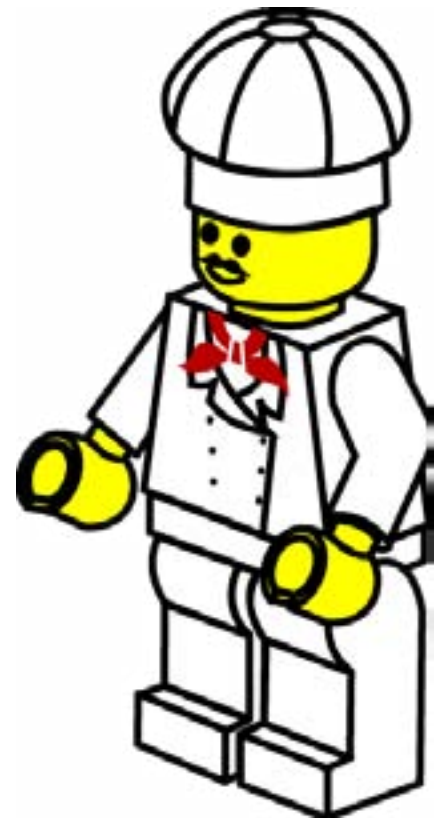
MECHANICAL LEGO

Structured classes teach participants how to use gears and pulleys to build things like cars, cranes, other fun things. Always interesting building projects. Ages 7-9.

Breithaupt Centre Tue Sep 20 7:00- 8:00pm 8wks \$35.00
CLASS 221525

VEGETARIAN COOKING SERIES

Vegetarian cooking for meat eaters. Each class in this series will take place on Tuesday evening (November 15, 22, 27, and December 6). \$10 each. See next page for further details.



VEGETARIAN COOKING SERIES...

TOFU

How many of us really know how to cook tofu? Tofu has been around for a long time but most of us don't know how to make it taste really good. There are many different types, soft, shredded, firm, fried etc. We will cook some of my favourites, and sample many different tofus, from scrambles to egg salad to crispy to pulled.

Tuesday November 15th 2016 6:30:00pm

FAKIN' IT

Imitation meat intimidating? Curious about what fake meat tastes like? We'll cook some of the prepackaged stuff, as well as make our own meatless meat from scratch. We'll also make meatless meat alternatives

Tuesday November 22nd 2016 6:30:00pm

INDIAN

I love Indian food! We'll cook my favourite adapted Indian dishes. Learn how to layer flavours and develop texture.

Tuesday November 27th 2016 6:30:00pm

THAI

Tofu Salad rolls, Brooklyn Vegetable Pad Thai, and Tom Yum, all for the vegetarian. Learn these three dishes, and you'll be set for your next dinner party.

Tuesday December 6th 2016 6:30:00pm

GRAFFITI BUSTERS

By Ted Parkinson, MHBPNA Co-Chair

When the Region originally shared the plans for the Weber St. widening the MHBPNA discussed with them the problem of graffiti. They did not adjust their design and graffiti has been a problem for the area around Weber and Victoria. It has been cleaned up but only after we have brought it to their attention. As of June 2016, this area is still the responsibility of the contractor.

In the past few weeks we have heard complaints about the graffiti along the Spur Line trail. We walked the trail three weeks ago and were startled by the amount of graffiti we discovered. We contacted several City of Kitchener and Regional politicians as well as Regional staff because we were unsure who was currently responsible for the trail. It took staff more than two weeks to respond so while we were waiting we arranged an appointment with Gloria McNeil who is the Interim Director of By-Law for the City of Kitchener. She was happy to meet on the trail and walk along it for an inspection.

[A side note is warranted here because, Gloria has been a great help to our community for many years. The Neighbourhood Mobilization Alliance met for over 10 years to discuss with By-Law, Police and Fire issues in our MHBP area and Gloria attended some of those meetings and was always helpful. She has also responded to many of our complaints about 152 Shanley].

Gloria was startled by the state of the trail and it took her several emails and communications to find out who was responsible. We also received a detailed response from Peter Linn, the project manager for the Spur Line and Weber Widening from the Region around the same time.

It seems that the work is still not finished on the trail and the contractor has several issues to resolve. Ultimately the trail will be the responsibility of the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo (though most of it is in Kitchener). But for now the Region is still responsible and that is who ultimately cleaned it up. We were very happy with the speed at which the issue was resolved after the city of Kitchener became involved.

The Mt. Hope - Breithaupt Park Neighbourhood Association has also advocated for vines and other foliage to be planted along the walls of the trail as this is one of the best ways to discourage graffiti (the other way to discourage it is to report it and clean it quickly). The Region has already agreed to plant along the noise barrier walls along Weber St.

THE URBAN ORCHARD

By Lane Burman, MHPNA Co-Chair

Two years ago, I read an article about the Urban Orchards being set up in Seattle. There have been many built around North America, but I was intrigued by the version described in the article. I wondered if our NA could support something like this, and how it would all come together.

Over the past two years, I have done lots of research, met lots of people doing agriculture work on City property, and talked to anyone I can about an Urban Orchard in our 'hood. For the most part, I found everyone, including the City, to be very supportive of this project. One of the most supportive was Adam Spencer, a local trained Horticulture Technician, that has agreed to help spearhead the project.

**July 21st 7:00-8:30pm
Room 109
Breithaupt Centre**

As I talked to people around the City, it was hard to distinguish what an Urban Orchard is, and how it differs from a Community Garden. An Urban Orchard is a planting of trees, fruit bearing shrubs, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and other native fruit bearing plants. This type of Urban Orchard is relatively self sufficient. Once a year, volunteers would need to prune back the previous years growth to encourage new growth, and weeds need to be kept at bay. That is about it. Community Gardens have much more administration, and only benefit the people that are manage their plots. An Urban Orchard benefits all who walk through it. An Urban Orchard is open for all to enjoy, and for all to take.

In May of 2016, the MHPNA, agreed to support the initiative, and our first meeting is set for July 21st 2016 from 7:00-8:30pm in Room 109 at the Breithaupt Centre. While we have lots of ideas of what we would like, ultimately, it will come down to the Urban Garden that the community wants to build, in the location the community wants.