

Bailey Newsletter

BAILEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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February 2012

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26th ANNUAL VALENTINE'S PARTY

Place: Orchard Street Pump House
Date: Sunday, February 12th, 2012
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Entertainment: 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., The Jugglers
Entertainment: 3 p.m., Storyteller CHRIS MEASZROS

The *B.C.A.* and *Community Relations Coalition* invite you to the 26th Annual Bailey Valentine's Party on Sunday, February 12th from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the Orchard Street Pump House (Orchard between Linden and Chittenden). Please join us for card making, cookie decorating, and door prizes contributed by local businesses. Delicious drinks and snacks will be provided. From 2 – 4 p.m. **THE JUGGLERS** will circulate, showing off their art and teaching the basics of juggling to those who ask. At 3:00 p.m. **Storyteller CHRIS MEASZROS**, *The Man of 1,000 Voices*, will engage children of all ages in his hands-on, interactive storytelling. He captivates audiences with voices, sound effects and pantomime, creating stories from his own life, classics, and requested themes such as dragons and spies! Don't miss this great party to brighten a cold winter's afternoon! Bring your big and little friends and sweethearts! **HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

MORE GREAT PUMP HOUSE CONCERTS

Sundays, beginning at 7 p.m.

The Pump House Concerts music series at the Bailey Pump House brings in top level talent from Michigan, Nashville, and across the country to play in this special venue. Past shows have featured winners of Grammys and of best artist awards at prestigious music festivals. The focus is on singer-songwriters. **All shows begin at 7 p.m. unless there is contrary notice, and a \$10 voluntary contribution/person is appreciated for the artists.** (Please send an email to pumphouseconcerts@gmail.com to receive updates on the ongoing shows, or go to <http://www.facebook.com/pumphouseconcerts> and www.baileyneighborhood.org. You can also call Smitty at 517-927-2100.

Sunday, Feb 26 – Dan Crary

He is a musical legend, a pioneer of one of the most intricate, yet powerful, forms of American music, and a master of the guitar; he's Dan Crary, a flatpicking stylist with an international reputation for innovation, taste and brilliance. Dan Crary has received acclaim as a versatile performer able to range from Mozart to Anglo-American fiddle tunes to moody, evocative original compositions. <http://www.dancrary.com/>

Sunday, Mar 18 – Doop & the Inside Outlaws w/ Ned Van Go

The deep working class roots of singer/songwriter Don "Doop" Duprie echo throughout his music. Front man for the Detroit area alt-country/ roots rock band Doop & the Inside Outlaws, Doop is a veteran firefighter born and raised in River Rouge, MI. His songwriting has received national attention, having been hailed "hands down the best songwriter we (Detroit) now have to offer the Americana World" by Don Zelazny, AmericanaRoots.com. www.insideoutlaws.com/ Ned Van Go rocks with energy and a simple "blue collar" feel that tells stories of factory working, racism, love in prison, love in a small town and time running out on an aging musician. www.myspace.com/nedvango

Sunday, April 1 – Nathan Bell and Craig Bickhardt

"Nathan Bell writes of love, families, war, personal struggles and simple joys. He even writes about muscle cars, factory towns and legendary country music stars. But he comes at it from fresh, bold angles that blow the dust from songwriting conventions." - *The Nashville Scene* Craig Bickhardt has written number one songs for many musical legends including Art Garfunkel, Ray Charles, and B. B. King. He was one of the original Writers In The Round at The Bluebird Café in Nashville. "Craig Bickhardt stands among the giants of songwriting." - Philadelphia Folk Festival. www.craigbickhardt.com/

Sunday, April 15 – Eric Brace and Peter Cooper

Eric Brace is the lead singer and songwriter for the renowned roots rock band Last Train Home. Peter Cooper is a music journalist, professor of country music, and a highly acclaimed songwriter in his own right. When they play together, it's something special. "Eric Brace and Peter Cooper bring the sound of East Nashville to my radio shows. Authentic, intelligent and beautifully played..." - Bob Harris, BBC Radio

THANKS TO ALL HELPING WITH LUMINARIES!

The Pump House Board would like to thank all of the block captains and residents who participated in the 2011 luminary display! Although the weather wasn't ideal, the neighborhood still looked beautiful. We will cross our fingers for better weather next year! The luminary sale is the Pump House Board's primary revenue source. It is vital to have resources available to keep the building's charming ambiance and utilitarian virtues available for an increasingly wide variety of activities. We continue to add new users, activities, and events to the Pump House calendar. The effort put forth by our dedicated volunteer block captains and all of the residents continues to highlight the spirit of our neighborhood that makes it a great place to live, work, and play. Thank you again to all involved! (And many thanks to the Pump House Board!)

Proposed Development for the Cottages at 400 Gunson

At its meeting of Wednesday, January 11th, the Planning Commission reviewed a proposal by DTN Management to redevelop of the “Garten Hous apartment complex,” the 10 cottages at the corner of Beech and Gunson and the multi-family dwelling behind these. The units now belong to KEK Family Limited Partnership (not DTN) and are licensed to house 50 people. The new development would consist of one three-story building with 12 apartments and one single-story townhouse with 4 apartments.

In order to achieve this, the lot in question would have to be rezoned to RM-54 from RM-14. Although the legal rental occupancy would decline by two, parking standards would have to go up requiring 20 more spaces. According to Darcy Schmitt, Planning & Zoning Administrator, who attended the Bailey Board Meeting of January 9th, this could best be achieved through the RM-54 zone. Unfortunately, RM-54 allows buildings up to a height of six stories. The buildings surrounding this lot are far lower, and most are in single or dual-family zones.

Moreover, not just this lot, but two adjacent lots (316 Gunson and 1130 Beech), each with different owners and each with three-story multi-family buildings, would have to be upzoned to RM-54. Although the proposed development is in keeping with neighboring buildings, future developments of the other parcels could create tall buildings. Furthermore, if a zone allowing six stories is appropriate for these lots, why not for additional lots nearby? The Bailey board did not vote on this matter, because they had learned of it only at the Monday meeting, but afterwards the B.C.A. chair and vice-chair looked at the particulars of the RM-54 zone and had questions about its appropriateness for this spot.

The Planning Commission did not act on this at its follow-up meeting on January 23rd so the earliest they might act on this would be their next meeting of February 8th. If they then forwarded a recommendation of some kind to City Council, Council would not act on this before March.

WANTED !!! Nominees for BCA Board of Directors **B.C.A. Annual Meeting: Thursday, April 26th**

The Bailey neighborhood extends from Hagadorn to Abbot, and from Saginaw to Grand River. The BCA is currently accepting nominations for new board members to begin serving as of the Annual Meeting in May. If you live within this area but are not now a member of the BCA, join now or within 30 days of the Annual Meeting to become eligible for election. Terms are 2 years. Meetings are on the second Monday of each month. Nominate yourself or a friend! To do so, please contact one of the officers whose email addresses are listed under the article on the Bailey Community Association. *More details on the Annual Meeting in the next newsletter.*

The East Lansing School Bond

Most of you already know that on Monday, September 26th, the East Lansing School Board voted to close the Red Cedar School in 2016 and to rebuild the remaining five elementary schools (Donley, Pinecrest, Marble, Whitehills and Glencairn) as K-5 schools and move 6th graders to MacDonald, which would also have renovations. The renovations would require that the voters pass a bond proposal, set for the date of the presidential primaries on February 28th 2012. As has been reported, the board wished to maintain the current millage rate while maximizing the amount of money it could raise at that rate. In the spring, the valuation of East Lansing property will be recalculated and reflect the lower values caused by the recession, so the same millage rate would raise less money.

This is the last in a series of articles about the meetings of the K-8 Facilities Committee, appointed to look at the grade configurations of the elementary schools, but adds to a summary of their deliberations details about the school board's actions. There is a great deal of detail for your information because this is such an important matter.

As reported in several issues of last year's *Bailey Newsletter*, the school district has been considering how to deal with declining enrollments and budgets for some time. On October 5th 2010, East Lansing Public School Superintendent, David Chapin, wrote an open letter to residents of East Lansing stating that:

"In the midst of the 2009-10 school year the East Lansing Public Schools Board of Education wrestled with multiple issues associated with balancing the ELPS general fund budget. Among many other things, the condition of the elementary schools, the optimal configuration of grade levels and the most efficient size of the K-8 schools became focal points in the discussion." He went on to say that the school board would be appointing a committee to discuss this matter and come up with recommendations to optimize the use of school facilities. The district now operates 6 elementary schools, with 4 of these K-4, and two (Glencairn and Whitehills) 5-6.

In the Fall of 2010, the school board appointed a 35-person committee representing different neighborhoods and organizations. Two representatives from Bailey, Konrad Hittner and Eric Schertzing (co-chair of the committee) were on it. The committee had to examine the number of students likely to be enrolled in the district (including schools of choice students), the condition of the elementary schools, the optimal configuration of grade levels, the most efficient size of K-8 schools, the feasibility and costs of refurbishing existing facilities, and the optimal locations for refurbished buildings and/or new construction. According to Konrad's April *Newsletter* article, there was committee consensus that improvements were needed to elementary buildings, and that consolidation of the schools to house about 400 students each was desirable. Currently, the four K-4 elementary schools hold from 280 - 345 students each, with Glencairn and Whitehills accommodating 190 and 230.

The Committee discussed a number of options for school reconfigurations and consolidations (from K8 Facilities Final Report). The committee interactions reduced the potential options to six:

- K-6, 7-8, 9-12, 6 elementary buildings, renovations only, \$33 million cost
- K-6, 7-8, 9-12, 6 elementary buildings, reuse and rebuild, \$57 million cost
- K-4, 5-8, 9-12, 3 elementary buildings, reuse and rebuild, \$54.6 million cost
- K-4, 5-8, 9-12, 4 elementary buildings, reuse and rebuild, \$55.4 million cost
- K-5, 6-8, 9-12, 3 elementary buildings, reuse and rebuild, \$57.6 million cost
- K-5, 6-8, 9-12, 4 elementary buildings, reuse and rebuild, \$58.6 million cost

Of these six options; **three** were chosen for presentation to the Board through a survey process and concluding discussion.

Option A

4 - K-5 buildings; separate sixth grade wing added to MacDonald Middle School
Students per Building 405 students per K-5 building
810 students at MacDonald Middle School

Option B

4 - K-4 buildings; separate fifth and sixth grade wing added to MacDonald Middle School
Students per Building 340 students per K-5 building
1,080 students at MacDonald Middle School

Option C

6 - K-6 buildings
Students per Building 315 students per K-6 building
540 students at MacDonald Middle School

In addition to the Committee's recommendations, the prospective architects for the refurbished schools, Tower Pinkster, reported to the School Board at a work session on August 30th on the 'buildability' of the various elementary school sites. They ranked the different elementary school sites against each other based on topography, expansion potential, location/access, circulation/parking and outdoor facilities. Donley ranked 1st, Pinecrest 2nd, Red Cedar 3rd, Marble 4th, Glencairn 5th and Whitehills 6th. Based on this review, the builders recommended the closing of two elementary schools, using one for administrative offices and one for early childhood education, while retaining four schools in the system. They recommended the closures for Glencairn and Whitehills.

In all, at that meeting the school board was considering 8 options:

- 1) Six K-6 Elementary and 7-8 Middle School. Remodel existing buildings. Site improvements to include pavement replacement or restoration only. \$33 - \$45 million.
- 2) Six K-6 Elementary and 7-8 Middle School. Additions and site circulation improvements. Salvaging and Renovation of newest portions of facilities. About \$62 million.
- 3) Four K-5 Elementary and 6-8 Middle School. Additions and site circulation improvements. Salvaging and Renovation of newest portions of facilities. About \$64 million.
- 4) Five K-5 Elementary and 6-8 Middle School. Additions and site circulation improvements. Salvaging and Renovation of newest portions of facilities. About \$63 - \$65.5 million.
- 5) Five K-6 Elementary and 7-8 Middle School. Additions and site circulation improvements. Salvaging and Renovation of newest portions of facilities. About \$64 - \$65.5 million.

To this initial list, board member George Brookover added three:

- 6) Retention and improvements to all six elementary schools. Use of Glencairn for school offices + a charter school or other educational use. No addition to the Middle School.
- 7) A variation of this plan, not yet disclosed. And
- 8) Doing nothing.

At the work session of August 30th, it was noted that the school board still lacked key pieces of information needed to make a decision on the potential reorganization/rebuilding of the elementary schools. It did not have the demographic data from the 2010 census regarding the number of school-aged children in the district since the last census, and it did not know MSU's plans regarding construction of housing for married students.

By its meeting of September 8th, the school board had received some of this information. Tim Dempsey, the Director of Planning & Development for the City of East Lansing, presented a chart showing the population of school-aged children within the catchment boundaries for each elementary school according to the current grade configurations of those schools. For example, Whitehills is now a 5-6 school that services a population that includes most of East Lansing north of Saginaw except Shaw Estates and Tower Gardens. The figures for Whitehills refer to the population of this large area and *not* to the population of the Whitehills Neighborhood. Nor do they refer to the possible new boundaries of the Whitehills catchment area if reconfigured. Mr. Dempsey explained to me that he could not give those calculations without knowing the boundaries, which have not yet been redrawn. Unless you consult the boundary map, you cannot make sense of the figures. (You can find a copy of this map at cityofeastlansing.com at the Planning Department's site where 'maps' are listed.)

Mr. Dempsey's chart showed that between the 2000 and 2010 censuses, the K-4 Donley area school-aged population had gone down by 10.2% while the number of children age 0-4 had increased by 0.6%. The K-4 Pinecrest area school-aged population had declined by 0.6%, while those under 5 increased by 7.9%. The 5-6 Whitehills school-aged population declined by 5.9% while those under age 5 increased by 4.3%. The K-4 Marble school-aged population declined by 19.3% while the under fives increased by 4%. The K-4 Red Cedar school-aged population declined by 45.8%, while its under 5 population declined by 43.6%. Finally, the grades 5-6 Glencairn school-aged population declined by 26.3% and the under 5's declined by 16.7%. Overall in the school district, the school-aged population declined 15.6% and the under 5 population declined by 6.9%.

In addition to this demographic data, the School Board had received a letter from Fred L. Posten, Vice President for Finance and Operations and Treasurer for MSU, regarding some of MSU's plans for married foreign students, estimating it would need 250 apartments, which would replace the 250 apartments of Spartan Village. The letter also stated that "Should the school district choose to close Red Cedar School, we believe that the demand for our housing will decrease as foreign students find other housing more suitable to their needs; most, probably outside your school district." The letter went on to urge the school district to keep Red Cedar open because it had succeeded in embracing global participation.

At this same September 8th meeting, the School Board voted on the bond issue. The main motion read:

"The Board of Education support a configuration as follows: grades 6-8 at MacDonald Middle School, grades K-5 at Whitehills, Glencairn, Donley, Pinecrest and Marble including renovations and additions as presented by Tower Pinkster on August 17, 2011, including renovations and additions and technology so the total cost would be \$62,012,021."

The motion as passed also included two amendments that if Timberlane were sold, the administrative offices be moved to Red Cedar as well as another educational use, and that all efforts be made to migrate the Red Cedar faculty to Glencairn.

Also at this meeting, a public hearing date of September 19th was set on this bond proposal.

Extensive public comment was taken on August 30th and September 8th, 19th and 26th.

The school board met on September 26th for its final decision on the bond proposal.

At that meeting the board passed a motion to support the configuration as indicated above, but rejected an amendment to move administrative offices to Red Cedar should Timberlane be sold (and otherwise use Red Cedar). It also rejected motions to move 6th graders to MacDonald using sinking funds to pay for it, leaving all six elementary schools open as K-5 schools, and tasking the Superintendent to figure out what to do with them. The board further rejected another proposal by Superintendent Chapin to go to the voters in February for purposes of doing reconstruction on Pinecrest and Marble only while retaining current grade configurations; then, in a second phase to last 5 to 7 years, reviewing data on public funding and data from the city and MSU to work towards a 6-8 middle school while retaining K-5 in the elementary schools. These two unsuccessful amendments were supported by Dr. Rich Kaplowitz, Mr. Brookover, and Ms. Kuhnmuensch in split three/four decisions.

At its January 23rd meeting the school board voted on a resolution supporting the bond issue, but as of this writing the language of that resolution is not known to this writer and it is being interpreted in different ways. If interested in obtaining it, please call: 333-7424, or wait until it is published in the school board minutes.

The vote on the bond issue will be on February 28th. The ballot language reads in part:

“Shall School District of the City of East Lansing, Ingham and Clinton Counties, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Fifty-Three Million Dollars (\$53,000,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefore, for the purpose of: erecting, furnishing, and equipping additions to Donley, Glencairn, Marble, Pinecrest, and Whitehills Elementary Schools and MacDonald Middle School; remodeling, furnishing and refurbishing, and equipping and re-equipping school facilities; acquiring and installing educational technology and equipping and re-equipping school facilities, including the high school, for educational technology, and developing and improving playgrounds and sites?”

(Sources: You can go to the EAST LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOL’s website at <http://elps.k12.mi.us> and click ‘school board’ to read their action minutes. Of especial interest are the meetings of Sept. 8 and Sept. 26th. You will also find there the report of the K-8 Facilities committee and Dr. Chapin’s letter. But you will not find the texts or summaries of the board members or speakers. You can, however, get DVDs of the meetings from the school district. This issue has become contentious and groups have formed who favor and oppose the bond. Each has a website with interesting information that is worth your scrutiny. These are: www.supportelps.org and supportabetterplan.org.)

The BCA Board of Directors meets on the second Monday of each month except August at 7:30 p.m. at the Bailey Community Center. Meetings are open to the public, and all residents are urged to attend meetings with their concerns. If you have questions, please contact Chairperson Suchitra Webster at hingwesu@msu.edu or Vice Chairperson Anne Grevstad-Nordbrock at aegrevstad@hotmail.com.

Dues help the Bailey Community Association to organize meetings where viewpoints and concerns can be aired, organize “meet the candidates” forums; organize and complete Bailey park and neighborhood clean-up days; work with MSU’s Community Relations Coalition; work with the Pump House Board to organize social events such as the Ice Cream Social and Valentine’s Party; and publicize these through emails and newsletters. Don’t forget the new Bailey website for updates and more information. It is: www.baileyneighborhood.org.

BCA MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ **PHONE:** _____

ANNUAL DUES: **\$7.00 for couples and families**
 \$4.00 for singles
 \$3.00 for couples and singles over 65 or for students

Please send dues to Anne Grevstad-Nordbrock, 700 Collingwood Drive, East Lansing, MI 48823. Checks should be made out to the Bailey Community Association.

**Thanks to the City of East Lansing for helping to pay for,
and put out this *Newsletter!***