



Bancroft Banner

A Newsletter for the Bancroft Neighborhood

Spring 2010 • Vol. XX, Issue 2

Special Spring Gardening-and-Getting-Outdoors Issue

Personal garden plots offered at Bancroft Meridian Garden

In 2010, Bancroft Meridian Garden will be offering six 6' x 12' garden plots for individual or family vegetable gardens, which will be leased for a modest cost of \$20 for the growing season. The plots will be ready for planting by Memorial Day weekend. Our goal is to contribute to the health and vitality of our community, while increasing interest and participation in the community garden.

We are looking for volunteers on Saturday, May 22 to help install the new plots. Please meet at the garden on the corner of 38th St. and 12th Ave. S. between 9 a.m. and noon. Anyone helping with installation will be given preference for leases on the plots. After that, plots will be offered on a first come, first served basis after completing a simple application process, with agreement to the practices of Bancroft Meridian Gardens, and payment of the lease.

Persons interested in leasing plots should contact the Bancroft Neighborhood Association.



In 2007-08 the Bancroft Meridian Garden began to take shape. Now in 2010 it's taking a new form. Get involved in this active group of gardeners! In this picture, Jacque Passow is helping plant perennials. Inset: a sketch of the new path and garden plots.

2010 Bancroft Meridian Garden Calendar

- May 22 - Installation of plot gardens at Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9 AM-noon
- June 19 - Volunteer gardening day, Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM
- July 17 - Volunteer gardening day, Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM
- August 21 - Volunteer gardening day, Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM
- September 18 - Volunteer gardening day, Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM
- October 16 - Volunteer gardening day, Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM

The plots will occupy less than a third of the existing garden, leaving the best ornamental areas of the Bancroft-Meridian Garden intact. All gardeners will be asked to use organic and sustainable practices.

On April 8, the BNA board generously authorized a grant helping to defray costs for this transformation. Risen Christ School and Big Brothers and Big Sisters have volunteered to help with spring cleanup. Thank you!

Beginning in June, we will have neighborhood gardening days on the third Saturday of each month. A year-long calendar is in the box at left. Join us for neighborhood involvement and getting some dirt beneath your fingers!

School gardens – A growing movement here in Bancroft!

Bancroft Elementary School is exploring the possibility of developing a school/community garden space, and would welcome your interest and involvement in these early conversations! Please call Cathy Schacher at 612-668-3563 or email catherine.schacher@mpls.k12.mn.us for more information or to join the crew of supporters and gardeners-to-be. Thanks!

Help with heating bills is still available

Minnesota Energy Assistance Program (EAP) grants are available to help pay for a portion of Centerpoint Energy's natural gas bill. Call 612-372-4680 or toll free 1-800-729-6164 to find out if you are eligible. Last year, the average grant was \$493 per customer. Call today: funds are limited and awarded on first-come, first-served basis.

Centerpoint Energy also offers a Gas Affordability Program (GAP) that is available to residential customers who receive assistance from the Minnesota EAP in the current federal fiscal year. Customers must have received a Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) guarantee or grant to qualify. To learn more about GAP, call 612-321-4727 or 1-800-245-2377.

There are numerous energy assistance programs available to Centerpoint Energy customers, one of which is the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP helps pay home heating costs. Households with the lowest incomes and highest energy costs receive the greatest benefit. Households who are at or below 50 percent of the state median income are eligible. Size of grant is based on household size, income, fuel type and energy usage. Funds are available for renters and homeowners.

To apply for LIHEAP, you must complete a Minnesota Energy Programs application form. To obtain an application or for more information call 1(800) 657-3710.

Home Improvement Loans available to Bancroft residents

The Bancroft Neighborhood Association (BNA) has home improvement loans available to Bancroft residents at a fixed rate of 3% for homesteaded property and 6% for non-homesteaded property owners. Loans may be between \$1,500 and \$15,000. All permanent interior and exterior projects are eligible for this loan program, with the exception of projects deemed "luxury items for the Bancroft Neighborhood." These would include in-ground pools, hot tubs, garages over 576 square feet and luxury landscaping. With each Bancroft Loan, we ask you to contribute five volunteer hours toward the Bancroft neighborhood association project, committee, board meeting of your choice.

BNA has contracted with TCF Bank, to originate and service continued home improvement loans in Bancroft. This program utilizes Bancroft's Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) funds designated for home improvement. For more information or to obtain an application call the BNA at 612-724-5313 or email info@bancroftneighborhood.org



Learning to sew at Urban Arts Academy—

Nathaniel Jackson, now in fifth grade, sews a reusable shopping bag in an afterschool class. This class is being taught by resident artist Sveltana Petrovich at the Urban Arts Academy this spring. Urban Arts Academy offers classes in sewing, cooking, stilt walking, mask making, printmaking, and more. For more information, visit www.urbanartsacademy.org or email info@urbanartsacademy.org



Plan a spring cleanup for your block

By Ellie Skelton

Now that the snow has melted and the trash is beginning to appear from beneath the icy mounds, it is a great time to plan a spring cleanup. The 13th Avenue block club, between 40th and 41st streets, is planning a spring block cleaning day as a way to reconnect neighbors with each other after the long winter, and to hear from the Mayor of 13th Avenue, John O. and his dog, Crunch. The event is planned for Saturday May 1 in the afternoon (1-4 p.m.) and will end with a block club grilling party. Neighboring 14th Avenue will be joining us, and we invite any Bancroft neighbors to stop by and say hello. Let's all work together to clean up our neighborhood and build community!

The Bancroft Banner

Published by the Bancroft Neighborhood Association and distributed in the Bancroft neighborhood, which is bordered by Chicago Avenue on the west, 38th Street on the north, Cedar Avenue on the east, and 42nd Street on the south.

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Printed on recycled paper

Update for Southern Bike Connection

Hi everyone! I'd like to give you an update on the Southern Bike Connection.

The project is a north-south corridor running along or near Bloomington Avenue, between 24th Street and Highway 62.

Over the winter, Public Works staff met with neighborhood organizations to collect feedback on two proposed routes. Option A includes bike lanes or shared lanes along Bloomington Avenue S. Option B is a proposed bicycle boulevard running along 17th and 18th Avenues S.

On March 21st, Public Works hosted a working group tour of the proposed routes. Most feedback has been in favor of a 17th Avenue S. bicycle boulevard. Many residents and bicyclists prefer a traffic-calmed residential street to accommodate a wider range of bicycling skill levels.

Many residents are particularly concerned with the safety of younger or less-experienced cyclists.

Currently, Alliant Engineering (our consultants) are preparing draft plans of a 17th Avenue S. bicycle boulevard. Draft plans will be posted online and shared at a public meeting in May. If you would like to attend, get in touch with me! If you live on the 17th Avenue blocks and want to get more involved, let the BNA know. There are a lot of possibilities popping up with this project for that street in particular, so call to find out more!

Thanks!

— Rose Ryan

NTP Project Intern

*Minneapolis Dept. of Public Works
612-419-9090*

Stay in touch!

Become a fan of Bancroft on Facebook and send the office your email address to stay up to date.

BNA Calendar

All meetings and events are held at Bethel Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Childcare is available with advance notice. Call 724-5313.

May

- 5 38th and Chicago Ave. Business Association Meeting, 12 noon, Derrick's BBQ
- 5 BNA Commercial Development Committee Meeting, 1 PM, Derrick's BBQ
- 6 BNA Executive Meeting, 7 PM
- 13 BNA Green Initiatives Committee, 6:30 PM
- 13 BNA Community Council, 7 PM
- 14-15 Plant Pick-Up at Bancroft Elementary
- 17 Small Area Implementation Committee, 6:30 PM, Pillsbury House
- 20 BNA Finance Committee, 7 PM
- 22 Installation of plot gardens at Bancroft Meridian Garden, 9 AM-12 PM

June

- 2 38th and Chicago Ave. Business Association Meeting, 12 noon, Derrick's BBQ
- 2 BNA Commercial Development Committee Meeting, 1 PM, Derrick's BBQ
- 3 BNA Executive Meeting, 7 PM
- 7 Start of Urban Arts Academy Summer Camp
- 10 BNA Green Initiatives Committee, 6:30 PM
- 10 BNA Community Council, 7 PM
- 17 BNA Finance Committee, 7 PM
- 19 Volunteer Gardening Day at Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM
- 19 38th and Chicago Ave. BBQ & Clean-up
- 26 Rain date for above festival

July

- 17 Volunteer Gardening Day at Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM
- 21 BNA Ice Cream Social & Neighborhood Gathering, Bancroft Meadows

August

- 7 Hazardous Waste Pick-Up sponsored by the BNA, held at Bethel Lutheran Church Parking Lot
- 15 Urban Arts Academy Artisan Event
- 21 Volunteer Gardening Day at Meridian Garden, 9-11 AM

Help support the BNA with a tax-deductible donation!

We warmly appreciate any amount you wish to give. Please make checks payable to BNA and send to:



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4120 17th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407



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Summary of April Neighborhood-Wide Meeting

We had good attendance and input from Bancroft neighbors at the neighborhood meeting on April. The evening started with music by Jerry and Shirley Spanhanks of Bluewolf Bluegrass (Bancroft musicians!), and refreshments donated by CUP Foods at 38th and Chicago Avenue as well as by board members Keith Twist, Jacque Passow and Julie Zamora. We then moved in to the nitty-gritty of the evening: approving a four-year budget, seeing an overview of the programs and funding sources at BNA and deciding how to use BNA's remaining NRP funds. While there were a lot of numbers and programs to comprehend, in the end, we moved BNA's remaining NRP funds so that we will meet our future expenses and added additional funds to strengthen existing programs.

During the meeting the BNA's four-year budget was explained and approved; we took a look at the past and existing housing, commercial and social programs; and made decisions about how the remaining NRP funds, just under \$135,000, would be used. The largest portion, \$84,000, was set aside for administrative expenses (staff and overhead for the next four years). That's a lot of money, we realize, but our staff (one part-time employee) is one of BNA's most valuable resources. \$25,000 was set aside for the BNA's previous commitment to the Riverlake

Greenway Project and will create a new contract that can be used for future transportation and greening projects. The remaining funds were divided up in to three existing programs: the Commercial Matching Grant Program (received 30% of the remaining funds or \$7,700); the Neighborhood Initiated Projects Program (received 50% of the remaining funds or \$12,850); and the Events & Outreach Strategy (received 20% of the remaining funds or \$5,169). In addition to our existing TCF Low Interest Home Improvement Loan Program (which will remain viable for the next 10 to 15 years), a second housing program will be developed in the coming months. For this second program we will use roughly \$65,000 of our NRP Phase II funds. Beginning in 2011, BNA will receive additional programming and administrative funds from the City of Minneapolis' newly developed Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR), which will replace NRP. We do not yet know how much money BNA will receive from NCR.

It was exciting to all be in the room talking about what this neighborhood can do with our funds to make a long-term impact. With more money available for Neighborhood Initiated Projects, we are able to fund ideas such as the transition of the Bancroft Meridian Garden to include plot gardens for lease (see article in this



Zoe Kardasis, Chris Tripp, Andy Hestness, and Dan and Catherine Mandle all listen closely to Ryan Sturtz explain the proposed four-year budget.

edition) as well as other ideas that might be out there. Block clubs, individuals, groups and nonprofits can all apply to receive funds for a project that enhances our neighborhood. Call the office to find out more! If you are a business in the Bancroft Neighborhood, more money in the Commercial Matching Grant programs means more façade improvements. The Commercial Development Committee is researching ways to expand our Commercial grant program; if you're interested in getting involved, come to our next meeting.

With the work that was done at this meeting, the BNA is in a good financial position and will continue to be a valuable asset to our community. Thanks to all who attended and made it possible!