

# ARDEN HILLS

## notes

The Official City Newsletter for Arden Hills Residents

May 2015

### Valentine Bluff development to begin

by Susan Cathey

Two vacant buildings on County Road E2 near the intersection of New Brighton Road will be replaced by upscale single-family homes over the next 18 months. The properties at 1901 and 1941 County Road E2 have been sold by Bethel University to Landmark of Arden Hills at a purchase price of \$856,000 for the 4.77 acres. Hanson Builders, a partner of Landmark, has submitted a proposal to construct seven two-story homes on the land, to be called Valentine Bluff.

Several things had to happen before this development could be approved. City Planner Ryan Streff presented the proposal to the Planning Commission at its March 4, 2015, meeting. The developer requested a Preliminary and Final Plat, Rezoning, and Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) in order to subdivide the two contiguous parcels of land into seven single-family lots.

The property at 1941 County Road E2 is the site of the former Arden Hills branch of the Ramsey County Public Library System, which closed in 2010. It was zoned R1 (Single-Family Residential). The building at 1901 was occupied for many years by the Minnesota Baptist Conference but is now vacant. It was zoned NB (Neighborhood Business). In the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, both properties were guided for NB. The Comprehensive Plan lays out the future land uses that are anticipated for all properties within the City, allowing for planning for future needs and appropriate land use regulation.

The developer sought a rezoning to R2 (Single and Two-Family Residential). The property would also be designated Very Low Density Residential, which is defined

as 1.5 to 3 units per acre. One of the conditions of granting this request was that the project be contingent on approval from the Metropolitan Council, which has the final say on whether to allow a CPA. The City must also allow adjacent governments, affected special districts, and affected school districts the opportunity to review the proposed CPA.

The Arden Hills Subdivision Ordinance requires a park dedication from developers to the public. Based on the purchase price, the six percent fee in this case is \$51,360. A 68-foot park, trail, and recreation easement will be provided by the applicant to the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department for a future trail connection through the wetland complex in Tony Schmidt Regional Park, which borders the property to the north and east.



Valentine Bluff model home design

Lots in the proposed plan will be developed to preserve as many of the highest quality trees as possible. One hundred-nine new trees will be planted, exceeding the City's requirement.

Other information was provided to the Planning Commission by City staff:

- No new streets are included. There will be four driveways from County Road E2, three of them shared by two homes each, and the easternmost lot having its own. A traffic study was

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This chart shows the size of the proposed lots and how they comply with zoning codes.

Lot	total area (square feet)	Width	Depth
Zoning Code	11,000	85	120
1	44,483	139	320
2-7	27,202	85	320

## Arden Hills Service Directory

1245 West Highway 96  
Arden Hills, MN 55112-5734

### Office Hours

Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.

### City Contact Information

651-792-7800

[www.cityofardenhills.org](http://www.cityofardenhills.org)

### Sheriff and Fire

911

### Water and Sewer Problems

(During non-business hours)

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Desktop Publisher: Mary Nosek

Council meetings are held at City Hall on the second and last Monday of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings are televised live on Cable Channel 16. Meetings of the Planning Commission are televised as well. Visit [www.cityofardenhills.org](http://www.cityofardenhills.org) for information about taped meeting playback.

Arden Hills Notes is the official newsletter of the City of Arden Hills, an equal-opportunity employer.

## City Park Profiles--a series

### Royal Hills Park

by Tina Kulzer

4375 Snelling Avenue

Arden Hills residents in the northern neighborhoods of the City have been enjoying Royal Hills Park since 1986 when 4.57 acres of land on Snelling Avenue were conveyed to the City as satisfaction of the park dedication requirement for North Heights Lutheran Church. With the exception of one acre of pond adjacent to Highway 10, the remaining acreage was considered ideal for park space. "North Snelling Park," as it was referred to during its acquisition, suitably filled the need for park space in this part of the City at that time.



Extensive grading immediately commenced on this long and narrow north-south-oriented land parcel to establish level ground for a youth softball/baseball diamond and open field space on the far north end of the park. Installation of playground equipment and construction of a tennis court and a full-court basketball area south of the ball field soon followed - in part due to a series of letters sent to the City and signed by dozens of neighborhood residents, urging consideration of such amenities that would serve the recreation needs of the young families and children populating the neighborhood.

Royal Hills Park also features a covered picnic shelter next to the playground area where summer playground programming is offered to City residents. This park is also utilized for other Parks and Recreation programming, including youth summer tee-ball and baseball leagues and youth spring/summer soccer mini-camps. Royal Hills Park is well-utilized in the winter as well, as it boasts a terrific sledding hill on the south end of the park.

More than a dozen off-street parking spots are available adjacent to the park on the west side of Snelling Avenue. Crosswalks marked at Royal Hills Drive and at a City trail outlet between McClung Drive and Briarknoll Drive allow safe crossing of Snelling Avenue and pedestrian access to Royal Hills Park.

### Meeting changing community needs

The "Community Parks and Trails Survey" conducted by the Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee in 2013 reported a 23.3 percent response rate from residents living nearest to Royal Hills Park—the highest response rate in the City. Survey responses also

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**Correction:** In the April *Arden Hills Notes*, it was incorrectly stated that the tennis court at Johanna Marsh had been resurfaced last summer. The court was scheduled for resurfacing, but the work was not completed due to weather conditions. Resurfacing is being planned for this spring now that MnDOT has lifted the seasonal load restrictions in that area.

## Benchmarks: a review of recent City Council action

### March 30, 2015

- Approved the North Suburban Cable Commission (NSCC) Joint and Cooperative Agreement. (5-0)
- Approved the purchase of residential recycling carts, funded mainly by a Public Entity Innovation Grant (PEIG) from Ramsey County. (5-0)
- Approved the appointment of Kyle Lassen and Michael Hands to the Economic Development Commission. (5-0)
- Approved a revision to the 2015 Fee Schedule for electrical inspections. (5-0)
- Approved the Red Fox Business Center Master and Final PUD and CUP Agreement. This is the final action required for a two building development on Red Fox Road. (5-0)
- Approved an amendment to the Boston Scientific Master Planned Unit Development (PUD) Agreement. A PUD Amendment was required to reflect the change in property boundaries and to update the existing Campus Master Plan. (5-0).
- Approved Planning Case 15-003 for a site plan review and variance for CSM Properties located at 4293 Lexington Avenue North. A site plan review was required for parking lot modifications and a variance was required to address the encroachment of the parking lot into the five-foot setback requirement. (5-0)
- Approved a no parking resolution for the west side of Lexington Avenue from County Road F to Cummings Park Drive, and on County Road F from Lexington Avenue to Innovation Way. MnDOT requires a resolution from the City banning parking in order to utilize County State Aid funding. (5-0)
- Approved City staff to begin summer work hours starting on May 26, 2015 and ending on September 4, 2015. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Friday. (5-0)
- Approved the quarterly special assessments for delinquent utilities. (5-0)
- Approved the transfer of Great China Liquor License. (5-0)
- Approved the Valentine Bluff redevelopment project for a Preliminary and Final Plat, Rezoning, and Comprehensive Plan Amendment to subdivide the two parcels of property into seven single-family lots at 1941 and 1901 County Road E2 (the former library and Baptist Conference sites). (5-0)
- Approved Planning Case 15-002, a Preliminary and Final Plat and Master PUD Amendment for Arden Plaza, minus the proposed Frattallone's outdoor seasonal sales area. (5-0)
- Tabled the Frattallone's section of Planning Case 15-002 to the April 13 regular City Council meeting. (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2015-015, declaring cost to be assessed and ordered the preparation of the Assessment Roll for the 2015 PMP - Venus/Crystal Neighborhood. (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2015-016, setting the date for the assessment hearing for the 2015 PMP - Venus/Crystal Neighborhood as Monday, April 27, 2015. (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2015-017, declaring cost to be assessed and ordered the preparation of the assessment roll for the 2015 PMP - Grant/Noble/Lake Lane Neighborhood. (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2015-018, setting the date for the assessment hearing for the 2015 PMP - Grant/Noble/Lake Lane Neighborhood as Monday, May 4, 2015. (5-0)

### April 13, 2015

- Approved the appointment of seasonal Public Works employees. (5-0)
- Approved the advertisement of the Deputy Clerk position. (5-0)
- Approved the contract for this year's sewer lining project to Hydro Clean Inc. (5-0)
- Approved the portion of Planning Case 15-002, relating to the Arden Plaza Frattallone's Garden Center. This consisted of a Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Planned Unit Development Amendment at 3527-3557 Lexington Avenue North. This approval enables Frattallone's Ace Hardware to construct a more permanent garden center. (3-2) (McClung, Woodburn).

## Spring Cleanup Day!

Saturday, June 6  
7 a.m. - 1 p.m.



Ramsey County Public Works Facility  
1425 Kirkwold Drive  
(Highway 96 and Hamline Avenue)

#### Some things you should know about Cleanup Day:

- There are charges based on vehicle type and load: cars--\$10, trailers--\$35, others--\$25. Loads larger than 8'x10' will be subject to extra charges.
- Yard waste, donations, and oversize items will not be accepted.
- The gate will close at 1 p.m.

## Meet Finance Analyst David Perrault

by Emma Theis

The City of Arden Hills welcomes David Perrault as its new finance analyst. David will help run the finance department, supervise the utility billing clerk and the accounting analyst, and get ready for audits and perform reconciliations (making sure money leaving an account matches the actual money spent). David grew up in St. Paul and attended the University of Wisconsin - Madison for his undergraduate degree. He was also an analyst in the military for four years.

Still living in the St. Paul area, David is currently working on his MBA (Master of Business Administration) and MPA (Master of Public Administration) from Hamline University. Before coming to the City, David worked at the State of Minnesota in the Department of Agriculture doing accounting and finance.

We sat down with David and asked him some questions so that Arden Hills residents can get to know him a little better.

### What unique skills do you bring to the table?

"I think I have a critical eye, and leadership skills too."

### What was your first job ever?

"I worked at the Science Museum in St.

Paul. I helped with the visitors and exhibits and stuff. Nothing too exciting."

### What is your dream job?

"End goal is I kind of want to be in the Director of Finance or City Manager role. It's nice that I'm working with the City now instead of the State, it's setting me up to move forward from there."

### What do you do when you're not working?

"Going to school. I like to go for runs—and travel."

### What is something you would like to do before you die?

"I would like to go to South America and Antarctica because those are the two continents I haven't been to yet—I want to hit all seven."

### What is the most unusual item in your office?

"Beef jerky."

### What's a lesson you live by?

"Treat everyone with respect."

### What would be impossible for you to live without?

"I'm gonna have to go with my iPhone—probably should have said my fiancée."



## Royal Hills Park

*continued from page 2*

indicated Royal Hills Park (in a tie with Perry Park) as the second most-regularly-visited park in the City.

Many additional survey comments referring to Royal Hills Park strongly favored and requested park updates—especially in playground equipment upgrades and additions—to accommodate the explosion of kids in the neighborhood due to the addition of the 39 single-family homes in the Fox Ridge development. As one survey respondent put it: "Need a bigger playset for the Fox Ridge community which has over 90 children that will utilize this park and there is insufficient play area for this growing community."

These numbers, combined with a new generation of young children and families in the surrounding original neighborhoods, will certainly put the park's amenities to the test in the years to come. As with all other City parks, Royal Hills Park is on a 20-year equipment replacement schedule and is scheduled for new playground equipment in 2022.

## About those new recycling carts

You may have noticed a different look in Arden Hills' neighborhoods on recycling day. Beginning with the May 5 and 6 pickup dates, homeowners were able to put out their new 64-gallon single sort recycling carts. The containers are black with green lids and the Arden Hills logo on the sides.

The carts, which were purchased in large part with a \$100,000 Public Entity Innovation Grant through Ramsey County, were scheduled for delivery to all single-family dwellings in Arden Hills between April 27 and May 1. The City's five-year contract with Republic Residential Recycling Services went into effect on May 4.

If, after a trial period of three months, residents feel they need a smaller cart, a 32-gallon size will be available for exchange.



A mailing from Republic to all residents encourages participation in the recycling program, which has been made easier with the single sort approach. Additional information is available on Republic's website, [www.republicservices.com/recyclinganddisposal](http://www.republicservices.com/recyclinganddisposal).

## Valentine Bluff development *continued from page 1*

done, which helped staff determine there would be minimal impact on the County Road E2 and New Brighton Road intersection.

- The Very Low Density Residential designation is compatible with adjacent land use.
- The Metropolitan Council has indicated to City staff its support for the proposed CPA.

Hanson Builders has been in business for 35 years and has constructed many homes in the north suburbs. Owner Dean Hanson told the Planning Commission that he believed this would be a special develop-

ment of seven unique homes with a price range of \$750,000-950,000.

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of Planning Case 15-004 subject to a number of conditions.

The case was then presented to the City Council on March 30. Mr. Hanson was again present to share information and answer questions. The motion to approve the proposal was amended to allow the construction of a model home before all permits are issued, at the developer's risk. The City Council also approved the proposal unanimously, subject to the conditions stipulated by the Planning Commission.

## City Hall moves to summer hours on May 26

Summer office hours at City Hall begin on May 26 and end on September 4.

### Hours for City Hall staff:

- Monday-Thursday: 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Friday: 7:30-11:30 a.m.

### Hours for Public Works staff:

- Monday-Thursday: 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Friday: 6:30-10:30 a.m.



## New bridge to improve County Road E corridor

*by Ed von Holtum, Economic Development Commission*

Replacement of the County Road E bridge over Snelling Avenue began in mid-April. It was the start of a much needed upgrade that has been in the works for several years and is a culmination of years of planning. The City Council, City staff, City commissions, and especially citizen advisory groups have worked hard to make sure these needed upgrades will benefit all the residents of Arden Hills.

The project should last about four months. When it is complete, County Road E will have improved turn lanes, attractive lighting, and boulevard trees. The road surfaces will also be upgraded. The new bridge will be much wider and include an improved

bicycle pedestrian crossing that will connect existing sidewalks and trails. It will also be a better looking, longer lasting structure than the previous bridge.

Arden Hills has worked to maximize the aesthetic appeal of the bridge, which will fit in well with the newly upgraded County Road E Corridor. The pedestrian lanes on the south side of the bridge will allow Arden Hills to extend the walking trails down to Bethel College in the future.

The traffic between the east side of County Road E and Snelling and the west side of County Road E and Snelling will be cut off during construction. The ramps will be closed for up to two weeks during construction. There will also be full closures of Snelling Avenue for bridge removal and placement of beams for the new bridge on some weekends.

### Detour information

#### Traffic east of Snelling Avenue:

Travel east on County Road E, north on Lexington Avenue, west on County Road F and south on Hamline/Snelling Avenue to reach the west side of Snelling Avenue.

#### Traffic west of Snelling Avenue:

Travel west on County Road E, south on Old Snelling Avenue/Old Highway 10, south on Hamline Avenue and east on County Road C to reach the east side of Snelling Avenue.

Current information and detour maps can be found at the MnDOT website: [www.mndot.gov/metro/projects/creoverhwy-51ardenhills/](http://www.mndot.gov/metro/projects/creoverhwy-51ardenhills/).

When this much-needed project is completed, Arden Hills will have a more attractive and usable bridge to connect with the new and improved County Road E Corridor.



*photo by Susan Cathey*

*There she goes! The County Road E bridge over Snelling Avenue was demolished in mid-April to make way for a new and improved structure.*



Arden Hills, MN • 55112-5734

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*Valentine Bluff development*  
*Royal Hills Park*  
*Meet David Perrault*  
*County Road E corridor improvements*

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### News from the City Council

#### Dealing with increased traffic in Arden Hills

Since the summer of 2013, rail traffic has increased in Arden Hills due primarily to the crude oil production at the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota. As the rail traffic increased, quality of life issues emerged in Arden Hills, primarily relating to increased noise, vehicular street traffic congestion at rail grade crossings, and safety concerns.

Train traffic is regulated by the interstate commerce clause and is within the jurisdiction of the federal government. Consequently, there is little local, county, and state government can do to regulate the amount of train traffic. However, since there is every indication that the train traffic will not decrease in the foreseeable future, Ramsey County and the cities in Ramsey County are working on solutions to improve our quality of life.

#### What is being done currently

Ramsey County and its cities have found that working with the railroads themselves has been an effective way to reach some solutions. The Canadian Pacific Rail (CP Rail) and Canadian National Rail (CN Rail) are the main railroad lines that run through Ramsey County. With cooperation from these rail lines and under the authority of the Federal Railroad Administration, a Quiet Zone was established at the grade crossing on Lexington Avenue, just north of County Road E in Arden Hills. (There are other Quiet Zones in place or being

proposed in Ramsey County.) A Quiet Zone is an exception to the federal law which mandates trains to blow their horns at grade crossings. Additionally, the tracks in Ramsey County are being improved, especially at and near the grade crossings, to allow trains to move faster to comply with Minnesota state law requiring that trains be restricted from stopping vehicular street traffic for more than ten minutes. CP Rail and CN Rail also have been working with Arden Hills residents who live close to railroad tracks to address concerns with noise created when trains stop or back up.

#### Addressing safety concerns

The fire departments in Ramsey County, including the Lake Johanna Fire Department which serves Arden Hills, are receiving increased training on how to manage and control fires in the event there is a rail emergency involving crude oil or another flammable liquid. This training also focuses on pipeline and storage tank spills and semi-tractor trailer truck emergencies, other ways that flammable liquids are transported throughout Ramsey County. The safety training includes enhanced communication within the emergency response community, safe evacuation methodologies, and fire control using both water and foam. In addition to the railroad companies that have highly-trained responders, the fire and police departments throughout the Twin Cities area have mutual aid agreements—all of which increase the rapid response should an emergency occur.

#### Looking to the future

Other initiatives to improve rail traffic issues are more long-term solutions. The federal government is now mandating improved tank cars carrying volatile liquids, to provide for stronger sides that are more resistant to expansion and explosion. There are also proposals for federal legislation to treat flammable liquids to make them less volatile before shipment. Efforts continue to improve the tracks to move all products faster and safer. Finally, there are initiatives to increase the number of oil and gas pipelines, which most safety experts agree are safer than rail or truck transport. However, the timeline for pipeline construction can be a number of years.

The Arden Hills City Council and our City staff are always willing to listen to your concerns and will try to assist to improve the quality of life in Arden Hills with regard to rail traffic or any other concerns you may have.

*Fran Holmes*

Fran Holmes  
City Council