

**August
2018**

Brookfield Occasional

Brookfield Heritage Neighborhood Association <http://brookfieldneighborhood.net>

BHNA Officers

President:
Philip Eisenlohr
236 Oakland
2015-2018

Vice President:
John Hays
1645 Roseland
2017-2020

Treasurer:
Alan Munn
164 Oakland
2015-2018

Secretary:
Mike Benedict
2147 Oakland
2015-2018

Communications:
Jennifer Castner
205 Oakland Drive
2017-2020

At-large:
Hassan Alizadeh
120 Maplewood
2016-2019

Bill Martin
204 Oakland
2016-2019

Jeffrey Johnson
144 Maplewood
2017-2020

Kevin Poli
217 Oakland
2016-2019

Email the board:
board@brookfield-neighborhood.net

Neighborhood Picnic & Annual Meeting – Sep 9

Join us on Sunday, September 9, 4-6 pm on Maplewood Drive for our annual neighborhood association meeting and potluck gathering. Rain date – Sep 16.

In addition to sharing food and conversation, you can catch up on neighborhood news, participate in the Association's official annual meeting, and elect new Association board members.

September is also the time to pay your 2018-2019 dues! A bargain at \$20 per year, here are some benefits:

*Funds to provide for replacement trees along our beautiful streets

*Neighborhood Association representation and a voice at East Lansing government meetings

*Our fabulous website and forum

If you prefer, drop your dues by Treasurer Alan Munn's home @ 164 Oakland Drive.

Make your check out to Brookfield Heritage Neighborhood Association!

Hope to see you there!

Meeting Details

The Association will provide paper goods, water, a hot grill, and hotdogs! Bring a dish to share or not – just come!

- Enjoy the popcorn machine
- Talk trees
- Pay your annual dues – a bargain at just \$20/household
- Annual meeting starts ~5pm. Be there!



Updating Our Neighborhood Constitution

This year, the Board is recommending that the Association Membership approve changes to our Constitution. A simple majority vote is required at the Annual Association Meeting in September.

Following is a summary of the proposed changes. See the newsletter insert to read the full proposed text of the Constitution. Read the old version here:

<https://bit.ly/2wa65zZ>

1. The language in our deed restrictions regarding race is illegal, and the concept is unacceptable. While the Board works to remove the odious language

from the deed restrictions, add language to the Constitution to highlight that we are a welcoming and inclusive neighborhood.

2. Clarify provisions about membership, elections, and meetings in the Constitution:
 - a) Allow that any member in good standing can apply for a seat on the Board up to the day of the Annual Meeting and Picnic.
 - b) Clarify language about who can be a member of the Association.
 - c) Specify that the Board determines the elections process.

d) Clarify the types and conduct of meetings for the Association, including the annual Board meeting, regular Board meetings, and special meetings.

3. The Board proposes removing reference setting the amount for annual dues, leaving it to the Board to determine annually.

4. The Board proposes other changes made to make the Constitution less cumbersome, such as:

d) Moving the listing of properties in the Association from the front of the Constitution to an Appendix.

e) Minor grammar and structural changes to the docu-



The Brookfield Heritage Neighborhood Association's mission:

- *To preserve the neighborhood's unique treescape and environment – your dues help pay to replace trees along our streets!*
- *To promote the safety of the neighborhood.*
- *To foster community through annual picnics and social events*
- *To protect the single-family character of the area through representation in city government.*

Deed Restrictions: An Update

The Board is still studying amendment of the Deed Restrictions attached to our properties in order to eliminate the offensive racial covenant. While the restriction is clearly illegal and unenforceable, its continued presence in the covenants conveys an acceptance of an unfortunate past.

At the January 2018 Board meeting, a committee was appointed to pursue the issue. The committee has learned that restrictive covenants exist in other city subdivisions.

Legal research confirms that 100% of Brookfield property owners are required to approve amending the covenant

and thus removing the restriction.

Barring that very challenging process, friendly litigation, seeking declaratory relief, would be our best option. This would mean filing a law suit in State Circuit Court, asking the judge to declare the restriction illegal and striking it from the covenants.

Property owners would then be served by publication, meaning notice of the suit would be published in a local newspaper, giving objectors the opportunity to answer and contest the suit. The

judgment would be recorded with the Register of Deeds.

The committee is currently seeking an attorney willing to assist in this effort. The committee will continue to explore other possible avenues, such as through the Fair Housing Act or legislation, and investigating the related actions of other associations. You can follow this issue in the Board meeting minutes on Facebook or the Association website.

STAYING IN TOUCH

Our primary communication tool is the neighborhood forum on our website!

<http://brookfieldneighborhood.net/forum>

You can also interact with neighbors on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/brookfieldheritageneighborhood

Website Questions?

For website support contact Carl Lira at ctlira@gmail.com

Thanks again to Carl Lira for his volunteer webmastering!

Brookfield Treescape

Brookfield "Tree Lady" Pat Robinson recently walked the neighborhood with Cathy DeShambo, East Lansing's Environmental Services Administrator. The City recognizes the importance of our streetscape to us, but also to the city itself by maintaining the

The trees marked with pink paint are considered dangerous and will be removed. This determination has been made by Davey Co tree specialists.

Removal will be staged to maintain our canopy for as long as possible and will be done by Ayles Co. Affected homeowners will receive removal notification from the city.

Important trimming and maintenance will also be done.

As you know, we have been replacing 3+ trees annually for several years. You can help by paying annual dues and by donating to the tree fund.

We also suggest that reachable suckers be trimmed from your street trees. Not only are they unsightly, but suckers steal tree nutrition. Foliage plants around tree bases should also be removed to reduce fungal invasion and allow airspace around the trunks.

Contact Pat Robinson at ohandley@cvm.msu.edu or (517) 351-6958.

Neighborhood Happenings!

Read the wonderful **neighborhood history** on our site: <http://tinyurl.com/lSz8l2d>

Our **Little Free Library** is thriving at 165 Oakland Drive. A great place to leave a book OR take a book as well as to get the latest info our new neighborhood book group. Contact Jennifer Castner for info: pennifer@gmail.com.

Brookfield Book Club has begun meeting in 2018. Contact Erin Compton for news about the latest book/meeting date: erin.m.compton@gmail.com