

Ravenna-Bryant

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2006 Issue

NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME

Ravenna Park Attack Leads to Meeting About Park Safety

Crime has been an issue of neighborhood concern over the last several years. Burglaries, tire slashings, car thefts and graffiti have drawn the ire of neighbors. But a recent attack in Ravenna Park has provoked fear and questions about the safety in our local park.

As a result, community members organized a meeting in mid-March to discuss the assault. Officer Ken Turner said that the attack occurred at about 7:30 a.m. The victim was injured, but is expected to make a full recovery. A suspect was taken into custody by the police and later released due to lack of evidence, but additional evidence was later reported, and the investigation is ongoing.

The officer emphasized that the attack is believed to be an isolated incident. The parks crew chief, who was also at the meeting, stated that her crew has a policy of removing belongings that seem to indicate camping, to discourage camping by transients in the park. Karen Ko, University District Neighborhood Coordinator, described some of the support programs for the homeless in the area.

Much restlessness surrounds the relative safety of the park, especially for families and children. Officer Turner responded that the park is as safe as other city areas, but that sensible precautions should be taken, such as being aware of your surroundings, walking in groups if that makes you feel more comfortable, and taking the main wide service road.

So, is the crime rate increasing in our neighborhood? Police say that the violent crime rate is going down, while property crimes are tending to be on the rise. Unfortunately, budget cuts and staffing issues have impacted the ability of Seattle Police to handle the increase of incidents.

Included among suggestions about how we should respond to this incident: 1) report all crimes, including car prowls, so that police can shift staffing to

Spring 2006 General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, April 4, 6:45 pm

Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center, 6535 Ravenna Ave. NE

The Ravenna-Bryant Community Association is holding a general meeting, and we hope you'll join us. Here are some of the topics scheduled:

TENTATIVE AGENDA

- 6:45 Meet and greet the neighbors
- 7:00 Election of RBCA Board members and officers
- 7:15 Stand-Up Comedy Act about our City and Community
— Scott Black, Ravenna neighbor and part-time comedian
- 7:30 Meet our new City Councilmember, and convey your concerns
— Sally Clark, Seattle City Council
- 8:30 Discussion about the future of SR 520 and its effect on our city
— Led by Larry Sinnott, RBCA Transportation Chair

handle problems; 2) band together the block watches on all sides of the park to distribute information faster; and 3) use the park — the presence of citizens has been shown to have a deterrent effect on criminal activity in other neighborhoods.

UNIVERSITY VILLAGE AREA

New Hope for Sidewalks on 30th Ave. NE

Sidewalks on 30th Ave. NE between NE 55th and Blakeley, long a neighborhood dream, are now a bit closer to reality. After years of requesting money for the project, the neighborhood was recently awarded \$118,000 from the Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF).

This allocation is long overdue. As anyone who lives in the neighborhood knows, walking along 30th NE is not for the faint of heart. With the growth of University Village, and the addition of several new condo projects nearby, traffic volumes and speeds have increased substantially. It's a relief to know that soon there may be a safe place to walk.

A local design firm is in the process of preparing a preliminary design and as the project moves forward there will be community meetings to gather public input on such issues as the location of parking, and whether the sidewalks will

be asphalt or concrete. Look for announcements through RBCA e-mail.

Because the NSF dollars will likely not be enough to pay for the entire project, a small team of interested neighbors is in the process of preparing a grant application to the Neighborhood Matching Fund. If successful, this grant would bring in up to another \$200,000 for the project. With the agreement of the Laurelhurst Community Club we should be able to use \$55,000 in funds from University Village toward the match.

The biggest challenge right now is demonstrating that we can raise the remaining \$45,000. If you have ideas for fundraising or if you would like to make a donation, please contact Mary Whitfield at mwhitfie@u.washington.edu.

Super-Sized Development Planned on 25th Ave. NE

Community members packed the room in early March to comment on a major development proposed for 25th Ave. NE, south of NE 55th. Neighbors attended the design review meeting to voice concerns about the project's size, and its impact on traffic, parking, and safety.

Architects from Runberg Architecture Group presented "Merrill Gardens at

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General RBCA Information

Please Join Us for the April 4 Meeting

Our spring all-community meeting is scheduled for April 4. We'll get started around 6:45 pm, and go until 8:45.

City Councilmember Sally Clark will join us to talk about her goals and to hear about the issues affecting our community. This is a great opportunity to voice your concerns to the new chair of the Council's Neighborhood Committee.

We're also setting aside time to discuss details of proposals for SR 520, and how they may impact our communities.

And don't miss a short comedy act about our city and communities by Ravenna neighbor Scott Black, who recently won a competition at Giggles.

RBCA Searching for Board Members; Contact Us if You're Interested

At the meeting we'll also be electing the RBCA board. We're always looking for new board members, and perhaps you might be interested.

Board members are elected to two-year terms. Board meetings are usually the second Wednesday of each month. Separate committee meetings occur when necessary. Since we occasionally have various officials come to our meetings, it's important that we have a steady turnout by our board.

Typically board members bring a broad interest in the community, and specific interest in particular issues which affect our neighborhoods. We like board members to follow their issue(s) and report on the latest happenings at our meetings and in our newsletters and website.

If you're interested in being on the RBCA board, please contact Jody Chatalas at jchatalas@comcast.net.

Distribute the RBCA Newsletter

RBCA has traditionally relied on community members to hand-deliver the newsletters to homes and businesses. But covering every single street hasn't yet been achieved. If we had a few more volunteers, we could near our goal of full-circulation throughout both neighborhoods.

The newsletter publishes two or three times a year. If you usually receive the newsletter, then it's likely somebody from your street is already volunteering. Still, there may be another street near you that may need your help. If you are interested, contact our newsletter distribution coordinator, Barbara Holya at 524-4884. She'll be able to identify a street for you.

25th Ave. NE Development...

Continued from previous page

University Village" to the design review board and community members. Merrill Gardens, one of the nation's largest owner-operators of senior housing, wants to build the project, which spans almost the entire block between NE 54th and NE Blakeley and between 24th & 25th Avenues NE (across from McDonalds).

The project is in the early design stages with proposed mixed use of retail, apartments, and senior housing. 109 apartments with ground level retail are planned along 25th. 107 senior residential units with common space amenities will line 24th. A 200-stall underground parking garage is planned below.

The 25th Avenue side of the block was rezoned a few years ago to promote smaller local retail business.

The design proposed a bank as a tenant at the southern tip of the block with drive through access (between the current 7-11 and Roundtable Pizza). However, the review board concluded that this was a bad idea due to traffic congestion at the already dangerous corner of Ravenna Place NE and Blakeley.

The proposed parking garage entrance/exit on the west side of the block raised the most resistance during the public comment session. Neighbors felt that the existing intersection, coupled with the speeding traffic around the corner off Blakeley, would create a traffic nightmare.

The senior housing entrance is proposed mid-block on 24th NE with a turn out area for drop-off/pick-up. Ravenna Creek currently runs under 24th at this point. Kit O'Neill, an active community member, reminded the review board and architects of recently installed stainless steel letters spelling "RAVENNA CREEK" cast into the sidewalk along 24th and Ravenna noting the creek below.

The review board kept the uneasy public comment session to design-related issues and concerns. The community's

general objective was to create a safe and welcoming passage from the Burke-Gilman trail to Ravenna Park, and an enhanced sidewalk and public space along the property with respect to the creek below. Good building materials, such as brick, were requested.

The evening concluded with the board agreeing that additional public meetings were in order. During deliberation the issues of note were redesign of the garage entrance, consideration of public amenities on the west side of the property, and attention to creating a safer crossing from the Burke-Gilman Trail toward Ravenna Park. Future meetings have yet to be scheduled, but design concerns should be directed to DPD planner Scott Ringgold at 206-233-3856.

STATE ROUTE 520

Pacific Street Interchange Option Raises Questions

Many organizations already oppose the proposed Pacific Street Interchange for SR 520, including RBCA, the UW, Friends of Olmsted Parks, and other northeast neighborhoods. This proposal calls for 520 access to move north of the Montlake Cut, connecting traffic from near Husky Stadium to 520 via a soaring suspension bridge.

As this option continues to be considered, the questions continue to mount.

- WSDOT says they can put 1,000 more cars, in the peak hour, between the Montlake Bridge and the University Village. Is that an improvement, or just more congestion in different places? Streets in the Ravenna-Bryant neighborhoods such as 25th Ave. NE, NE 65th and NE 75th St., and 5-corners at NE 45th St. & Union Bay Place will likely bear the brunt of the increased traffic.
- Should all of Seattle, including Ravenna-Bryant, pay to move the entire Montlake interchange into the Arboretum, and suspend it 70 feet in the air? The expensive Pacific Street Interchange

The RBCA Newsletter is published periodically by the Ravenna-Bryant Community Association. Articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board.

Board meetings are the second Wednesday of each month. All are welcome. If you wish to be on the agenda, please notify us at rbca@scn.org.

RBCA Coordinating Board Jorgen Bader, Matt Bowman, Kirk Brewer, Jody Chatalas, Brett Frosaker, Barbara Holya, Nazila Merati, Peter Ramels, Andrew Schmid, Larry Sinnott, and Mary Whitfield

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Police/Crime Barbara Holya **RBCA Newsletter: Editor** Jody Chatalas **Distribution** Barbara Holya

Spring 2006 Contributors Mary Whitfield, Kirk Brewer, Larry Sinnott, Theresa Barker, Peter Ramels

RBCA membership dues are \$15/year. Dues cover the costs of operations and communications. Please send check to RBCA, 6527 29th Ave. NE, Seattle, 98115.

To subscribe to our e-mail list, send an e-mail to rbca@scn.org and ask to be added. Your e-mail address will not be shared with any group or commercial entity.

option requires pylons-in-the-sky over 110 feet above the Ship Canal and massive ramps and parking structures in the Husky Stadium parking lot.

- When the traffic on the future SR 520 can't get onto I-5, and diverts even more through the Arboretum, will we have lost an irreplaceable park space? Our historic Olmsted Park and Boulevard system, currently the least degraded Olmsted-designed system in the country, is at risk.
- Do you think we should relieve traffic congestion in the Montlake neighborhoods by moving those problems to the Ravenna-Bryant neighborhoods, Madison Valley and the Arboretum? While one neighborhood benefits, many suffer.

Governor Gregoire is expected to make a final SR 520 decision in August, with input from jurisdictions along the corridor. This "input" has not been specified, but remember most of the "public" at the WSDOT/SR 520 Open Houses has been from Montlake.

If any of these questions arouse your interest, please review the SR 520 Project website (www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr520bridge) paying specific attention to the Pacific Street Interchange option listed as one of the six lane alternative design options). And please come to our April 4 community meeting and tell us what you think — we'll be discussing 520 at the meeting.

Board member Larry Sinnott follows transportation issues on behalf of RBCA.

NE ARTERIAL IMPROVEMENTS

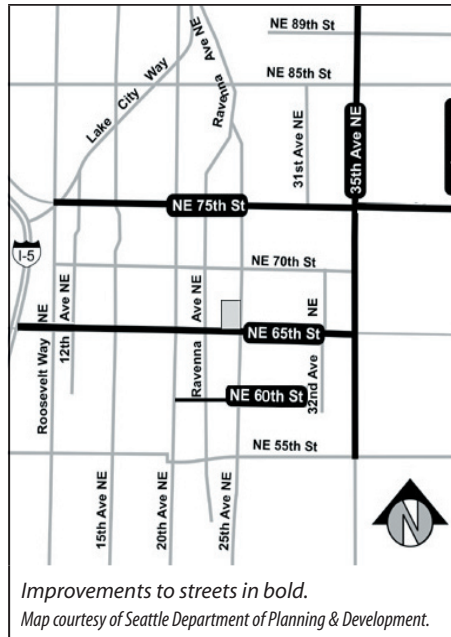
Work on Local Streets Continues

Arterial streets throughout our neighborhoods are still under construction as part of the City's \$8 million upgrade to improve traffic flow and safety. The most obvious is the concrete paving on 35th Ave. NE. But there's plenty more planned or already under way.

On NE 65th Street, the City is working on the traffic signal system, and throughout the spring sidewalks will be repaired and trees will be planted between 35th NE and Ravenna Boulevard. Then that span of NE 65th will be resurfaced.

Other street resurfacing includes 35th NE, between NE 65th to NE 75th, and two segments of NE 75th, from 20th NE to Roosevelt Way NE and from 35th NE to 45th NE.

While these projects are at times inconvenient, they are necessary and when finished will be a noticeable enhancement



over the next few decades. If you have questions or want more information, contact Sandra Woods, sandrawoods@seattle.gov or at 206-684-5298.

PROVAIL BURKE-GILMAN APARTMENTS

Special Needs Housing at Risk

RBCA is supporting tenants in efforts to save their housing at the Provail Burke-Gilman Apartments, on 40th Ave. NE. This two-building complex has 12 units for wheelchair-bound tenants, with wide corridors, bathrooms and other amenities designed for their needs.

The worry is that the property owner, Provail, may redevelop the land or sell it on the open market to a group not committed to this affordable housing for the handicapped.

This property has a history spanning over 20 years, back to when the Coast Guard gave the property to the City. At

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Join the Ravenna-Bryant Community Association

RBCA and its members work on important issues for the community. Like any organization, we want new contributing members, and need volunteers for tasks such as distributing the newsletter and working on community projects and concerns.

Annual dues are only \$15. Your dues help cover our operations, including printing and mailing newsletters. Return this form with your dues to: Ravenna-Bryant Community Association, 6527 29th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98115. You will receive the newsletter and other information, and know you've made a contribution to your community.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Areas of interest or concern _____

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Provail Burke-Gilman...

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that point there were many community meetings to determine how the property should be used. The property was allocated to some low-income housing, some to the Ronald McDonald House for families of patients at Children's Hospital, and a portion for housing for the low-income disabled. In 1998, Provail requested it be released from its contract so they could sell the apartments, but HUD refused. The Low-Income Housing Institute expressed interest in the property, and after a year of negotiations Provail agreed to sell the property for \$1.2 million in 2003. The deal fell through at that point, but in late 2004 LIHI offered to buy the property at the previously agreed-upon price. However, Provail had appraised the value at over \$3 million, and subsequently announced it no longer is committed to selling the apartments to a non-profit or to keeping the buildings affordable under the Section 8 program under which the property was initially obtained.

All the nearby community groups are in favor of continuing the housing in its current usage. If you feel strongly about

this issue, please contact the Seattle City Council and Provail's CEO Mike Hatzenbeler at mikeh@provail.org.

DAHL PLAYFIELD

Renovation Begins This Summer

Friends of Dahl Playfield has been working under the guidance of the Neighborhood Matching Fund Program since 2004 to make capital improvements to Dahl Playfield, a 15-acre Seattle Parks property located at 7700 25th Ave NE. These are the first major improvements since Dahl was established in 1950.

The Dahl Playfield Renovation Project started with a need for a children's play area. After receiving Neighborhood Matching Funds, the project was then awarded additional funds for a forested wetlands landscape, a John Hoge public art installation, and renovation of the four ballfields. Plans now include: new children's play equipment, new half basketball court, updated walking/jogging trail network, public art, forested wetlands landscaping, and new fences, dugouts and bleachers for up to four ballfields. Construction begins early this summer with an opening day celebration

planned for the fall 2006.

The group has secured more than \$800,000 in support from City, County, Foundation, Corporate and in-kind resources. University Prep is serving as the fiscal sponsor. Volunteers are seeking additional donations, which can be made by sending a check payable to "University Prep" with "Dahl" in the memo field c/o Friends of Dahl Playfield, PO Box 51027, Seattle, WA 98115. The website for the project is www.dahlplayfield.org. If you would like to help install children's play equipment this August, or plant trees and shrubs in October, please contact Christine.Larsen@comcast.net.

Skatespot Also Planned for Park

Seattle Parks and Recreation gave approval to Boarders 4 Parks to proceed with the design phase of a 3,600 square foot skatespot at Dahl. Boarders 4 Parks goal is to create a skatespot suitable for beginning and intermediate skaters, while being sensitive to the needs of the community. Three public design workshops in early 2006 were funded by a grant from the City. For more information visit www.boarders4parks.org.

**Come to the Spring Community Meeting on Tuesday, April 4
6:45 pm at Ravenna Eckstein Community Center**

Ravenna-Bryant Community Association
6527 29th Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98115

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