

Gem Lake News

Gretchen Artig-Swomley, Newsletter Editor

Special Interest Articles:

- *Hillary Farm Nears Completion*
- *Gem Lake Hires Staff*
- *City News Page 4*
- *Metro Transportation Update*

Upcoming Recycling Dates:

- *February 4*
- *February 18*
- *March 4*
- *March 18*

Tip: put out your bin the night before for 7 a.m. pick-up.

Hillary Farm Nears an Impressive Completion

Ten years after its original platting as a development area in Gem Lake, Hillary Farm is almost completely built out, and the results are impressive.

The 87 acre property, owned for more than 50 years by the Judson Bemis family, was slated for development in 2004, when the original plat was approved by the Gem Lake City Council.

The plat called for 28 lots, ranging in size between 1.8 and 6.5 acres, and one “pocket” lot of less than an acre.

The development was managed by McNulty Homes, and aimed at preserving the natural beauty of the area.

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Gem Lake Now Has a Professional Staff

Gem Lake hired a receptionist/administrative assistant recently who began staffing Heritage Hall for approximately 30 hours a week.

Local resident Gloria Tessier filled the role, selected for the job due to her experience in the same type of role on a county level.

In her new position, Gloria answers phones, greets visitors, collects and distributes documents for city council meetings, helps citizens with some of their questions and generally acts as a point of contact for people in our city who are looking for information on various subjects.

As time goes on, Gloria may be taking on additional responsibilities for some tasks that are currently being done off site.

Welcome, Gloria!



Hillary Farm Nears an Impressive Completion

from page 1)

Several years after the beginning of the project, a beautiful model home at Hillary Farm was featured on a local home tour. Two other executive sized homes followed, as did the remodeling and expansion of the original Bemis house.



With the "Great Recession" which started in the 2007-2008 time frame, progress on Hillary Farm slowed down for several years, as did much of the surrounding real estate market.



Scroll forward to approximately 2012-2013 and things began to pick up dramatically. Many of the 25 completed homes in the development were built or started in this time frame. A significant number were started in the last 18 months.

At present, there are between three and four lots available. One is a lot near the first cul-de-sac off of Scheuneman Road. Another one or two border the west edge of the development area and are highly wooded.

The last available lot is the one on which the sales office sits and includes the heavily remodeled original barn, that once housed the Bemis family horses.

Hillary Farm residents who have begun to move into their new homes, range from families with small children to retired couples looking for more space.

Although it took a while to complete, most seem to consider the development to be a beautiful success story. For more information on the development, consult their web-site at HillaryFarm.com

"We are pleased that Hillary Farm is nearing completion, with only a few lots left for sale," said Jim McNulty of McNulty Homes. "It is now full of nice families and lots of children too. We always knew that it would be one of the best neighborhoods in the area, and we are happy that Hillary Farm is such a success."

Welcome new residents of Gem Lake!! To be sure you receive each issue of Gem Lake News, contact Gloria Tessier at Heritage Hall. (See page 6 for contact information.)

Naughty List Released: 2014 Ramsey County Traffic Report

The annual report of the Ramsey County Sheriff's Traffic Unit for 2014 was recently completed and sent to contract cities, which includes Gem Lake.

It shows that our city comprised 2.92% of traffic stops made within the seven contract cities of Arden Hills, Shoreview, Vadnais Heights, North Oaks, Little Canada, Gem Lake and White Bear Township.

In total, there were 30 traffic stops made in Gem Lake in 2014, comprised of 28 citations and two verbal warnings, most of them for speeding.

One of the noteworthy aspects of this report is the dramatic drop in the total number of traffic stops, as compared to previous years. Throughout Ramsey County, there were a total of 1,024 traffic stops in 2014, compared to 2,084 in 2013 and 3,025 in 2012.

This reduction in traffic stops is also reflected in Gem Lake numbers. The 30 traffic stops last year compared to 89 in 2013.

Some of the tickets issued throughout the seven contract cities come as a result of speed display equipment installations that are followed by the concentration of speed enforcement vehicles.

Council Members Sworn in

Newly re-elected council members Rick Bosak and Gretchen Artig-Swomley were sworn in for the new terms of office by Gem Lake City Clerk Bill Short. The brief ceremony took place right before the Gem Lake City Council Meeting on January 20. Council terms of office run for four years. Bosak and Artig-Swomley were on the ballot in the November, 2014 elections.



City News Page

Recycling Report for 2014: Results were Significant

An impressive number of households took part in the single-sort recycling program sponsored by the City of Gem Lake in 2014, and carried out by Waste Management.

An average of 88.55% of all households in Gem Lake participated, which is up from about 79% during the first year of the program (2011). Although exact numbers are not available, it has been estimated that only about half of residents used to participate in the old recycling program, which required each household to individual sort each type of recycling and park in on the street in different containers.

A total of 34 tons of recycling materials were picked up in 2014, resulting in 32 tons of reusable materials. The rest were residue that were sorted out during processing.

By far, the largest category of materials were newspapers, which comprised 20 of the total 32 tons, followed by 4.8 tons of mixed paper products, 3.8 tons of mixed glass, and 1.2 tons of plastic products. The remaining materials were comprised of color sorted glass, aluminum and steel cans and scrap steel.

Goals for 2015: The Mayor Weighs In

Mayor Bob Uzpen believes that 2015 will be more of the same from the previous four years and he will work hard to control expenses, provide the necessary services, and position ourselves for the future, while protecting what makes Gem Lake unique.

In 2015, his special goals will be to complete a water contract with White Bear Lake, begin construction to bring water to the Hoffman Road area, (if feasibility studies show the idea is reasonable and the public hearings are supportive of the project) and then develop a plan to provide city water to the businesses on County Road E and Scheuneman Road.

Liquor/Tobacco Licenses Approved for 2015

Licenses for establishments in Gem Lake selling liquor and tobacco, and involved in charitable gambling were approved for 2015. All licenses are

The approvals happened after review of license applications at the December Gem Lake City Council Meeting, held on December 16.

The Country Lounge was licensed for off-sale and on-sale liquor, Sunday sale of liquor, tobacco sales, pull tab sales and opening until 2 a.m. The Gem Lake Hills Golf Course was licensed for on-sale liquor and Sunday sale of liquor. The Black Sea Restaurant was licensed for the sale of wine and beer.

City Appointments Made for 2015

As required by state statute, the City of Gem Lake formally appointed individuals and organizations to various city positions at the January city council meeting. This included things like appointing a back-up mayor so meetings could be conducted in the mayor's absence. Some appointments are required by law, such as the city clerk, the city treasurer, the back-up mayor, and believe or not, a weed inspector.

Other positions or appointments are usual and customary to assign to someone to once a year in January. This would include things like naming an auditor, a sewer inspector, a building inspector, etc. With the exception of services the City contracts for, such as fire, law enforcement, zoning administration, animal control, city clerk, etc. most positions are what you call honorary, meaning there is no pay what so ever...

Some highlights of the appointments include the following:

City Clerk: William Short of White Bear Township
City Treasurer: Thomas Kelly of White Bear Township

City Engineers: Short Elliot Henderson (SEH)

City Attorney: Kelly & Lemmons, P.A.

Zoning Administrator: Robert Uzpen

City Code Enforcement Officer: Michael Johnson of White Bear Township

Representative to the Ramsey County

Sheriff's Department: Faith Kuny

City Emergency Services Director: Jim Lindner

Ramsey County League of Local Government

Representative: Faith Kuny

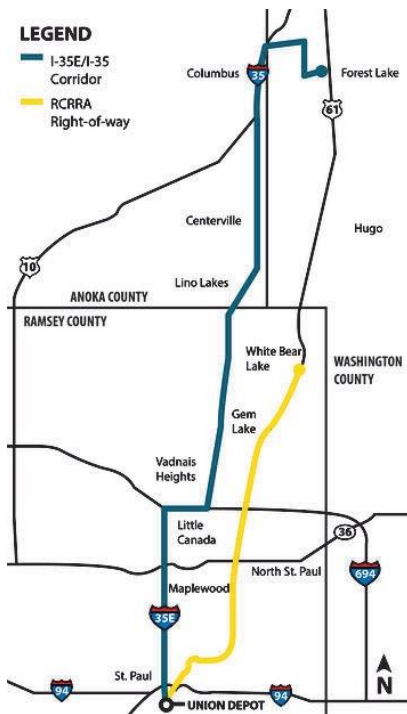
Back up Mayor: Gretchen Artig-Swomley

Assistant Weed Inspector: Jim Lindner

A complete list of city appointments can be obtained at Heritage Hall.

Rush Line Corridor Update: Transportation Options at Our Doorstep in the Future?

Officially, the Rush Line Corridor is an eighty mile transportation corridor that extends from Hinkley to St. Paul, roughly following Highway 61 and Interstate 35 between Hinkley and St. Paul's Union Depot. Transportation officials from numerous city and county government units are looking at how transportation needs will be met in the next 25 years. In the immediate metro area it impacts communities in Anoka, Ramsey, and Washington counties.



The Rush Line Corridor task force is chaired by Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt and includes elected officials from along its route. Communities within the Rush Line's boundaries expect to see a population increase of 24% between now and 2040, and have a 30% growth in employment over that same period. At the same time a large segment of that population will age and those without access to automobiles will increase. The net result is an expanding amount of the corridor's population will look towards public transit as their primary source of transportation.

The project is still in the Pre-Project Development Study phase, which is the earliest of all its potential phases. Officials are looking at all modes of transit and weighing their options with regards to efficiency, need, cost, and potential ridership. Some of the options being reviewed include adding more bus routes, improving existing bus routes, light rail, and various combinations of the above. No decisions have been made and public comment is welcome.

The task force expects to host additional open house/project update sessions in June, though no actual date has been set. But one look at the project map shows how Gem Lake is right between either potential corridor route. Thus our voice needs to be heard. For more information, including upcoming meeting notices, please visit www.rushline.org. (Written by Jim Lindner, Council Member for Gem Lake.)

The City of Gem Lake

PHONE:
(651) 747-2790

FAX:
(651) 747-2795
City Hall Address:
4200 Otter Lake Road
Gem Lake, MN 55110

GENERAL E-MAIL:
City@gemlakemn.org

Newsletter e-mail:
gretchenas@comcast.net

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.gemlakemn.org

Meetings: February and March, 2015

The following Gem Lake Meetings will be held at Heritage Hall for the next few months:

February 3, 2015

Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

February 9

City Council Workshop at 7:00 p.m.

February 17, 2015

City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

March 3, 2015

Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

March 9, 2015

City Council Workshop at 7:00 p.m.

March 19, 2015

City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Your Gem Lake City Council

Bob Uzpen-Mayor

Phone: 651-492-5083

City Council Members:

Gretchen Artig-Swomley

Phone: 651-260-9742

Rick Bosak

651-426-9695

Faith Kuny

Phone: 612-718-4316

Jim Lindner

Phone: 651-429-7597

For more information on meetings, city ordinances, recent events, permit procedures, etc. please consult the Gem Lake web-site. The address is www.gemlakemn.org

Each Gem Lake Newsletter is also posted on the web-site under the

news section.

Please email your ideas, comments and suggestions. See box at left for detailed contact information.

CITY OF GEM LAKE
4200 Otter Lake Road
Gem Lake, MN
55110

