

Gem Lake News

Gretchen Artig-Swomley, Newsletter Editor

Special Interest Articles:

- Traffic Concerns
- Scheueman Road Project Update
- City News Page 4
- Gem Lake Villas and Hy-Vee Project Updates

Upcoming Recycling Dates:

- August 29
- September 12
- September 26
- *Tip: put out your bin the night before for 7 a.m. pick-up.*

Hy-Vee Project on September Agenda

An application for a Hy-Vee “Fast and Fresh” market and gas station was received in July for the corner of County Road E and Highway 61. This development would include a drive through coffee shop, a liquor store and other amenities.

This application has gone through initial review by the planning commission and will be on the agenda for both the Gem Lake Planning Commission Meeting on September 4 and the City Council Meeting on September 18. The September 4 meeting will be an official public hearing. A traffic study is underway at present to study projected traffic patterns before and after the project in order to insure maximum efficiency and safety for travel in the area. The Gem Lake planning commission modified the Land Use Ordinance governing this area to include this type of facility to be among the permitted uses. Revisions to the city liquor ordinance are also underway that will affect the project. Feedback from neighboring homes and businesses will continue to be encouraged by both the Planning Commission and the City Council.



Coffee with a Cop Prior to September Meeting

Gem Lake residents and others take note: Join us for the first annual “Coffee with a Cop” before the next city council meeting at Heritage Hall. The event will be held between 6-7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 18.

Meet the White Bear Lake Police Chief, Julie Swanson and her officers for a one-on-one with your police force. This is your chance to talk about your concerns, get your questions answered, meet some new people, or simply get a cup of coffee.

Coffee and cookies will be served, as well as bottled water. Plus, if you stay for the city council meeting, Chief Swanson will be attending, in order to give the city council an update on our first nine months of working together. We hope to see you then. Please let Gloria Tessier know if you have any questions. (See contact information on page 6.)



Gem Lake Villas Project Full Steam Ahead

The Gem Lake Villas project is underway and is proceeding on schedule. Thirty villa homes will be built on the nearly 18 acre property on County Road E, near International Drive. The property was once owned by Tom Hansen. (see photo below)



The first model home, located near the entrance on County Road E, at 26 Summit Farm Lane, will be in the Fall Parade of Homes, scheduled to begin on September 8. Models on the tour will be open between 12-6 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays.

The villa style homes being built here will all feature three bedrooms, three bathrooms and turned, three-car garages, according to Hansen Builders Marketing Manager Devon Palmer.

Sales have already begun. Two homes have currently been sold, with a third sale in the works. Anyone interested in learning more can contact Alan Kortan of Coldwell Banker Burnett at 612-559-8489.

Hanson Builders, Inc.(no relation to Tom) has undertaken the project and is currently busy putting in roads and trails, as well as grading and preparing home sites.

Event at Golf Course—Fun but Wet!!

The White Bear Police sponsored a community event at the Gem Lake Hills Golf Course on August 3 for the Junior League golfers.

The department brought donuts and greeted them with food and information as they headed out for golf. It was great fun until the huge rain and lightening storm started, about 45 minutes into the event that morning. After clearing everyone from the course, the department had a chance to hang out with the kids inside the club house for a while. (See photos at right.)



Slow Down Please—Lets Protect Each Other!

I normally don't editorialize, but its time to talk about traffic in Gem Lake. I witnessed what could have become a very bad accident several weeks ago on Goose Lake Road. It left me a bit shaken.

While just out getting my mail, I heard screams and angry shouting followed by a car driving like that "bat out of hell" that we all talk about. The car appeared to swerve in order to avoid hitting golfers in one of the crosswalks, then appeared to massively overcorrect and ended up driving into the ditch. At that point, I felt certain I was about to witness a roll-over accident that would have landed that car near, or on top of, the golfers on hole #13. The car some how corrected itself right out of the ditch and took off eastward on Goose Lake Road, without even slowing down.

Car parts were flying all over the place. I got a look at the car and the driver. After checking to make sure no one was actually hit, I called the police. While waiting for them to arrive, the car came back! Some one else was now driving, but the original driver was there, looking for his car's side mirror, or other parts, which had become airborne during this event.

When I asked the driver if he realized he could have killed someone, he became belligerent and said that no one was hurt and he wasn't speeding at all and just happened to get all that damage to the side of his car when he entered the ditch. I heard a couple of interesting new phrases, some of which were grammatically incorrect and not anatomically possible. Regardless, he simply didn't appear to care and stated that no one could prove he was speeding. Hmmm.....

This driver said that I could only have proven his speed if he was going eastward, due to the traffic monitor we have up. This showed me that he was paying attention and that perhaps we need one of these going the other direction also.

Several golfers stood by, possibly because they thought this gentleman was going to get even more expressive towards me in his actions. I was very grateful for their presence, as well as the nice man who stopped to make

Traffic speeds are a real problem here in Gem Lake, especially as we grow. This problem is not limited to Goose Lake Road, which at times seems like a freeway. We have also seen a spike in folks who treat the intersection of Otter Lake and Scheuneman Road like a casual rolling stop, or who speed down Scheuneman Road, despite the many children who live in the area. Hoffman Road is also getting more dangerous.

What else can we do? The City Council has asked Ramsey County to study options for Goose Lake Road, which is a county road. These options could include flashing crosswalk signals, lower speed limits, or other solutions. Gem Lake Hills Golf Course has been asked to do what ever they can to trim back hedges and landscaping, so golf carts are even more visible as they approach the road. They have been very cooperative.

Please, lets all take this issue seriously. I am asking you to drive like your kids are walking along the road, or like your parents are golfing at Gem Lake Hills Golf Course. Lets do whatever we can to prevent a tragedy.

Gretchen Artig-Swomley

Employment Opportunities in Gem Lake

Gem Lake Hills Golf Course is looking for grounds keeping help, as well as club house assistance, such as bartending. The jobs would be full or part-time and would last until the course closes, usually around November 1, depending upon when the white stuff starts falling. If you are interested, call Matt or Steve at 651-429-8715.

Newtrax-Collaboration in Motion is a Gem Lake organization that provides transportation services to individuals facing physical and intellectual challenges. The organization is looking for full and part-time drivers. See their web-site for more information.

<https://www.newtrax.org>.

City News Page

Substantial Donation Made to Willow Lane Elementary School

The Gem Lake City Council approved a large donation of charitable gambling funds to the Willow Lane Elementary School at the City Council meeting on August 8.

The \$3,200 donation will be designated for use by the school's 16 teachers, to buy school supplies and books for their school rooms. The funds are available for distribution as a result of pull-tab sales within the city limits.

Travel Policy Adopted

A suggestion made during the city's recently completed 2017 audit is that a travel policy be put into place for city officials. This policy would govern what kinds of travel would be covered, under what circumstances it would be covered, how pre-approval would be handled, and what evidence would need to be submitted for reimbursement.

As a result the suggestion, the city council approved a travel policy at the August 8 meeting, using a sample policy from a nearby city that conforms to all State laws. Gem Lake hasn't had a travel policy in its 60 year history because no one has ever had to travel anywhere overnight on city business. There are no travel plans projected for the year ahead either. Why would you go anywhere when you already live in Gem Lake?

Gem Lake's 2018 Comprehensive Plan Nearing Completion

Gem Lake's 2018 Comprehensive Plan is nearing completion as of September 1, with a complete final draft anticipated for review in the next month or so. The Metropolitan Council requires that all cities within the Twin Cities Metropolitan area submit a detailed comprehensive plan every ten years. This plan covers everything from land use and transportation to parks and storm water run-off. The plans typically take multiple years and significant engineering expertise to complete.

To get the job done, the City of Gem Lake enlisted the help of two outside agencies to complete this monumental task. They are the engineering firm of SEH, which acts as Gem Lake's engineering representative, and the consulting firm of Northwest Associated Consultants, which specializes in helping cities with this type of plan.

Preliminary drafts of major sections of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan for Gem Lake have been completed and are now being reviewed by outside experts. SEH is also working on a city water plan, which will be presented in draft form soon. When a final draft is ready for review, the public will be asked to participate with their feedback. Watch your newsletter and the web-site for more information.

Peddlers at Your Door?

The City of Gem Lake has an ordinance that regulates Peddlers, Solicitors and Transient Merchants within our borders. Ordinance #111 requires that any such person have a license from the city. Currently there are no licenses out, although there may be in the future. Anyone who has a license has passed a background check. If someone says they have a license from Gem Lake, ask to see it.

If you don't wish to have solicitors coming to your door, a sign or placard needs to be posted. The sign or placard should be at least four inches long and four inches wide. (All the home improvement stores sell them). The print should be at least 48 point in size and should state something along the lines of "No Solicitors" or "No Peddlers" or "Solicitors Prohibited." You get the picture. Solicitors can only visit homes Monday through Saturday between the hours of 10 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Selling Your Home?

If you are selling your home, be aware that you need to have a septic inspection. This applies to everyone. Whenever a property transfer occurs in Gem Lake and that property has a septic system, city ordinance 67D, page 20, requires that there be a septic inspection. If you have any questions about this policy, call Gloria Tessier at the number listed on page 6 of this newsletter.

Good News about Gem Lake

Gem Lake has been delisted from the State impaired water body list. More information, including water quality data, is posted on our web-site.

Scheuneman Road Project Wraps Up On Schedule

A major road repair and water project for the Scheuneman Road business district in Gem Lake began earlier this summer and is now wrapping up successfully. The project included extensive road reconstruction between Highway 61 and County Road E, and extension of sanitary sewer and a water main to the area.



According to Gem Lake Engineer, Justin Gese from the firm of SEH, (ShortElliotHendrickson), the project is substantially complete and will complete on budget and perhaps slightly ahead of schedule. "There are some final turf establishment projects going on as of late August. Also, the final lift of asphalt is scheduled for August 24."

Gem Lake Elections 2018

Two spots on the Gem Lake City Council will be up for election this fall. They are currently filled by Gretchen Artig-Swomley (completing her third term) and Len Cacioppo, who was appointed as an interim council member filling the spot vacated by Rick Bosak. There are three candidates for these positions as follows:

Gretchen Artig-Swomley
 Len Cacioppo
 Laurel Hynes Amlee

Election Day is November 6. Heritage Hall is the polling place if you live in Gem Lake. Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Rush Line Corridor Project in Final Planning Stages

The Rush Line Corridor Project is a proposed 14 mile dedicated bus line that will run from Union Station in Downtown St. Paul to downtown White Bear Lake, near the current US Bank facility on Clark Street. A large part of this 14 mile pathway will run along side Highway 61 and will impact the Gem Lake area through several key stations, one at County Road E and another at Cedar and Highway 61.

This extensive transportation project will be designed to serve about 97,000 people and bring them to and from an area that has an estimated 106,000 jobs within a 10 minute walk of the various stations along the route. There will be approximately 15 stations or stops outside of the downtown area.

A Rush Line Corridor Meeting was held for the public on August 14 to gather feedback on station planning in the area, specifically proposed stations at Buerkle Road and County Road E. Extensive discussion occurred on station design and placement, with an emphasis on safety features and accessibility.

For most of the 14 mile route, current highway right-of-way will be utilized to form a dedicated bus lane, either on the shoulder or next to the shoulder of Highway 61 in both directions.

The station at Buerkle Road could be somewhere near Grandma's Bakery. The station at County Road E will be to the south of the intersection on Highway 61. Many concerns were raised about this station in terms of pedestrian safety, both for riders crossing the street to get on or off the bus, or those coming from the proposed park and ride facility, which may be located in the parking lot of the Sports Center.

Many decisions have yet to be made regarding this very costly transportation project and the public is urged to get involved. For more information, go to rushline.org, or email to info@rushline.org.

The City of Gem Lake

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(651) 747-2790

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City Hall Address:
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Gem Lake, MN 55110

GENERAL E-MAIL:
City@gemlakemn.org

Newsletter e-mail:
gretchenas@comcast.net

This newsletter is also posted on the city's web-site under the "Documents" section and the "News and Updates" section.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.gemlakemn.org

Meetings: September and October

The following Gem Lake Meetings will be held at Heritage Hall in September and October of 2018:

September 4, 2018

Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

This meeting will include a public hearing on the Hy-Vee project.

September 10, 2018

City Council Workshop at 7:00 p.m. This event is **CANCELLED.**

September 18, 2018

City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m. The preliminary 2019 City Budget will be discussed at this meeting.

October 2, 2018

Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

October 9, 2018

City Council Workshop at 7:00 p.m.

October 16, 2018

City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Your Gem Lake City Council

Bob Uzpen-Mayor

Phone: 651-492-5083

Jim Lindner

Phone: 651-429-7597

"Documents" and "News and Updates" section.

City Council Members:

Gretchen Artig-Swomley

Phone: 651-260-9742

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

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

Len Cacioppo

Phone: 651-796-3222

Faith Kuny

Phone: 612-718-4316

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

CITY OF GEM LAKE
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55110

