

Update on the Agenda and on the horizon.



Dear neighbors,

It's summer. You might think of this as a lazy time of year, when it's too hot to move. You might be concerned about whether it will ever rain again. But some of us are concerned about the wellbeing of animals.

One of our neighbors wrote to me about some baby raccoons she found. She was concerned that they were ill (possible distemper) and researched how such animals can be helped or dealt with humanely. She called the city's non-emergency police/fire dispatch, who referred her to Friends of Wildlife, the nonprofit that rescues animals. They have a specific number for each species and their main number is 734-913-9843.

She also provided some secondary resources: the Humane Society, with business hours of noon to 6:00 p.m. -- 734-662-5585 ext.105 or 734-662-4365 for the Humane Society clinic. You can also contact the Natural Areas Preservation staff at 734 794-6627.

If you run across an ill or wounded animal as you wander about our community, I recommend that you don't try to help it unless you are already trained and experienced.

And yes, the deer continue their munch across my yard, but my favorite animal visitor recently was a juvenile rabbit, cheerfully chewing on the red clover I planted as part of my no-mow lawn. The clover will put out more leaves, and the bunny was charming.

## [On the Agenda](#)

It's a pleasantly light agenda, but that doesn't guarantee that the Council will finish its work early.

### **Ordinances**

There's a public hearing and vote on a proposed revision to the PUD granted for a Shell gas station and convenience store on Ann Arbor/Saline Road. There aren't any other ordinance changes on the agenda for this meeting.

### **Motions and Resolutions**

#### [A Resolution to Direct Staff to Create a Green Streets Policy](#)

The concept of Green Streets is not new. Storm water systems (this includes storm sewers, holding tanks, and pavement) can be designed to drain water, but aren't intended to remove pollutants. There are alternative mechanisms for managing and cleaning storm water; the City has used some of these (tree planting, permeable pavement, rain gardens) but hasn't consistently applied a policy or a set of criteria to infrastructure improvements. This resolution directs the staff to work with Environmental Commission members to develop such a draft policy. Once developed, it would return to the Council for approval and possible incorporation into the master planning documents or into ordinances. I'm co-sponsoring this resolution.

#### [A Resolution to Adopt the Sustainability Goals as Part of the City's Master Plan \(here's the list of 16 sustainability goals\).](#)

You could legitimately wonder what the City's sustainability goals are. The City held public meetings and workshops to develop the goals, but few of us were interested enough to attend – although, at about the same time, the lecture series on sustainability drew large crowds to the Library's downtown branch.

That process — the public meetings and workshops — resulted in a set of goals that are intended to help guide boards, commissions, the Council and the staff. If the Council approves this resolution, the Planning Commission will begin the process of incorporating the sustainability goals into the city's master plan. At the same time, the City Administrator will work with City staff to incorporate these goals into staff work plans.

However, some goals are more specific than others. It would be possible to apply others of these goals broadly to a number of different outcomes. If you have concerns, please let me know. I'm co-sponsor on this resolution.

A Resolution Authorizing the [Washtenaw Health Initiative \(WHI\) Charter 2012 Statement of Commitment and Authorization of Funding Appropriation](#) from the General Fund Balance.

On Thursday, June 28th the Supreme Court ruled that the Affordable Health Care Act is constitutional. Although states aren't going to be required to open Medicaid to a broader populace, those states that do so will be eligible for funding. In 2014, the new individual mandate kicks in. Those of us without health insurance will be able to acquire it, and pre-existing conditions won't keep us from coverage. Those of us who cannot currently afford health insurance will be able to seek health care and health insurance at a reduced rate. (If you think this is a bad idea, please contact the UM and St. Joe's emergency rooms and ask about the portion of their patients who come to emergency because they cannot get preventive or rapid care without insurance.)

This resolution would result in opening the budget, on a one-time basis, and using \$10,000 from General Fund reserves to cover some of the administrative costs for developing a local health care initiative. The Council will also consider the option to build funding for this project in to the FY2014 budget. I'm co-sponsoring this resolution.

### **A Resolution Setting a Public Hearing on August 9, 2012 to Receive Public Comment on the Proposed Industrial Development District (IDD) No. 2012-010**

At this time, I don't have any documents that accompany this resolution. I imagine, based on the news over the last week, that this resolution refers to approving an Industrial Development District for that portion of the old Borders store that once housed their administrative offices – the new home of Barracuda networks. We've all seen this building; the access is under the Maynard Parking Structure bridge. This resolution sets the date for a public hearing; it does not establish the IDD.

Continuing the ongoing concerns some of us have with employee benefits, please note that there is a [resolution to approve the renewal of contracts with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan](#) to provide health care coverage to City employees and retirees and their dependents and to authorize the City Administrator to execute the necessary documentation (\$1,388,292.00)

I've heard from a number of folks that [resurfacing and reconstructing streets is incomplete without repainting the crosswalks and lane indicators](#). There's a resolution to approve a contract with P.K. Contracting (Bid No. ITB 4235 - \$135,000.00) for Annual Maintenance Pavement Markings which ought to result in refreshed crosswalk and lane markings.

## **Appointments**

Most of the time, committees and commission nominations are made by the Mayor and ratified by the Council. Members of two commissions, The Greenbelt Advisory Commission and the Environmental Commission, are nominated and approved by the City Council.

### **A Resolution to Appoint Archer H. Christian as a Member of the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt Advisory Commission**

At its June 18, 2012 meeting, Archer Christian was nominated by the Ann Arbor City Council to replace Mike Garfield on the City's Greenbelt Advisory Commission. Garfield is director of the [Ecology Center](#), a nonprofit based in Ann Arbor, and Ms. Christian is the center's development director. The council will vote on the nomination at during the Monday, July 2 meeting.

The complete slate of membership positions include the following: two members to serve as representatives of environmental or conservation groups; one member who is an agricultural landowner or operates an agricultural business; one member who is a real estate development professional; one member who is a plant or animal professional; one member who is a plant or animal biologist; three members from the public-at-large; one member of the Ann Arbor City

Council.

### A Resolution to Re-Appoint John German as a Member to the City Environmental Commission

At its June 18, 2012 meeting, John German was nominated by the Ann Arbor City Council for another term, commencing in August, 2011 and completing in August, 2014 The Council will vote on this nomination during the Monday, July 2 meeting. Mr. German's term had expired in 2011, and this nomination was inadvertently missed.

According to the City Charter, "the Environmental Commission shall consist of 13 members nominated and approved by the City Council for 3-year terms. Two members so appointed shall be members of the City Council. In making appointments of members of the Environmental Commission, the City Council shall appoint persons who, insofar as possible, have an interest in protecting and enhancing the well-being of the environment and public health of the community. . . . [A]ll members, except the City Councilmembers . . . will be appointed for 3 years. The City Councilmembers shall be appointed for a 1-year term. A City Councilmember shall cease to be a member of the Environmental Commission if she/he ceases to be a member of the City Council. To help coordinate an integrated environmental policy, 3 members of the Environmental Commission shall be appointed to the commission from the following city committees or commissions: Planning Commission, Parks Advisory Commission, or Energy Commission."

As always, there are other items on the agenda: street closings for Oktoberfest, utilities easements, liquor license changes. You can read about those [here](#).

And you can always contact me with any questions or concerns.



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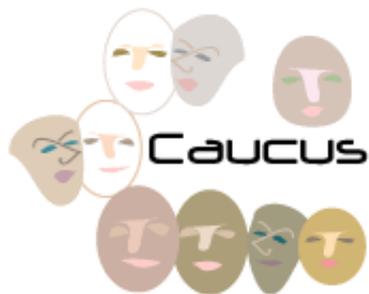
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### Blog

Everyone has an ego, even I. So please forgive this shameless link.

Sometimes I want to think and talk about ideas that have nothing to do with agenda items. I'm doing that on this blog. I encourage you to comment or even engage in a conversation. But play nice, please.





## Caucus

The City Council holds a caucus meeting each Sunday prior to a Council meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for members of Council to discuss agenda items -- and pending issues -- with each other in public view. Members of the public are welcome to attend to bring issues to the attention of Council members. Caucus is held in Council Chambers and starts at 7 pm.

I go to almost all Caucus meetings.



## On the horizon

All this reading and learning about the environment, storm water controls, recycling and composting has made me even more aware of the impact of our behavior on our planet. Yesterday's news (6/28/2012) included the information that sea levels on the east and west coasts are rising faster than the initial models of climate change indicated. To see what that means, click [here](#).

And for an interactive map, to see what changes this increase in sea level would cause on the coasts, not considering other climate changes, here's a [link](#).

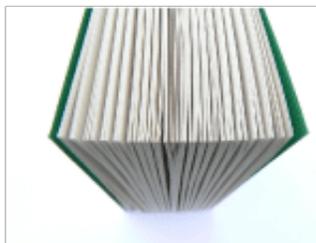
**The DDA's Connecting William Street process continues.** Here's a [link](#) to the Market Study for the sites, and another to the [Connecting William Street web site](#) with all the materials available. Ann Arbor's City Council voted last summer to task the DDA with implementing a 'robust public process' to identify desired uses and needs for five (5) different City-owned parcels in the downtown. An acknowledged difficulty with the City's most recent efforts to develop downtown parcels has been the tendency to put together a list of possible uses, throw that list into the RFP (request for proposals) and then try to cram as

## Coffee wakes some of us up

I hold office hours 7:30 to 9 am on Mondays at the Northside Grill.

While I'm there, I meet with neighbors from all over our community to discuss the issues that concern them. Lately I've met with neighborhood groups to talk about utility issues. Last week Interim Police Chief John Seto joined me for an hour or so.

The folks at the Northside put up with political talk early in the morning. If you see me there, please wave, and if you have time, please, join me for coffee and a chat.



## What am I reading?

I've been gardening more than reading lately. But I've borrowed books from the library so I can learn more about rain gardens and no-mow yards.

In keeping with the work I've been doing with the Environmental Commission and the Solid Waste Plan update, I continue to read "[Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing](#)."

Other good references on sustainability, storm water runoff, and environmental impacts include: **The Localization Reader**; **The Politics of Urban Runoff**, **Suburban Nation, Urbanism and its End**, and **Rough Winds: Extreme Weather and Climate Change**.

So many of the ideas being proposed as solutions to environmental change are really about how to change our behaviors. I want to learn about those ideas, and help direct our efforts at those changes that will make a difference.

many uses as possible on each parcel. Efforts to use this type of RFP process have resulted in failed processes: the Old Y Lot, the Library Lot and 415 W. Washington. The City Council wanted to be smarter this time, and learn more about needed and desired uses.

I asked you for your input about this process one year ago. Your responses to my questions are [here](#): <http://www.sabrabriere.org/VisionWhite%20Paper.pdf> This survey is not part of any DDA activity, but has helped me understand your views.

**The North Main Corridor task force** will hold its first meeting on July 11, 2012 from 5-7 at the NEW Center.

**The Urban and Community Forest update** for June is attached to the agenda, and linked [here](#).

Council members Lumm and Anglin have been talking about introducing a resolution that, if passed by the Council, would place an issue on the ballot. This issue - whether the City Charter require that we hold a popular vote before using park land for any purpose other than as park land - is one that many in our community have discussed. Right now, the Charter speaks only to the sale of park land.



## Everyone loves a parade!

I'm going to the 4th of July parade on Wednesday. I hope to see you there.

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