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Update on the budget, the Agenda and on the horizon.
Results of the surveys on solid waste, too!



Dear neighbors,

Did you wonder whether that report on the Solid Waste surveys was interesting? I've attached it [here](#).

I'm enjoying this long-anticipated rainfall today. Everything in my yard seems parched, and it's much too dry for mid-June. Rain will make the yard grow, though. Over the past decade, I've converted much of my lawn to garden. Now, I'm embarking on an effort to replace lawn with other plants that can bear traffic. I've picked plants for color and contrast, and for their ability to withstand foot traffic: red creeping thyme, a flowerless chamomile, red clover and *leptinella squalida* "Brass Buttons" which I've pictured above. Each of these plants can handle light (the chamomile) or moderate foot traffic. Some need more sun than others. But the best part -- to me, anyway -- is that we won't have to mow or, after the first year, water too heavily. The challenge, of course, is to keep the aggressive grass out, but this is an experiment.

All but one of these plants is deer-resistant; that one will be planted in the shade under a bush, as it prefers less light. I had thought that making these gardening changes would reduce the amount of maintenance I have to perform; instead, it's shifted from efforts to kill grubs and fertilize grass to trying to kill grass and use mulch to control soil moisture. But I haven't used pesticides or herbicides in a decade, and things grow, whether I want them or not.

At the last meeting of Council we were presented with a [proposal for the Allen Creek Greenway](#). This proposal included an estimated budget of \$45K to conduct research on whether the buildings already at 415 W. Washington can be renovated. I expect the Council will hear a resolution about whether to help fund this proposal in July. The Council also appointed members of a task force to look at 721 N. Main and access to the parks along North Main. This task force reports in December and next July. As soon as I hear of the meeting schedule, I'll let you know.

The underground parking structure next to the downtown library is supposed to open within three weeks. Fifth Avenue opened on Friday, June 15; the DDA is hosting a party on July 12 to celebrate the grand opening of the parking structure, and those who want to see a park built on top of the parking structure are hosting a [party on July 14](#).

[On the Agenda](#)

The agenda is fairly light this week.

Public Hearing and Ordinances

The Council will hold a public hearing on the site plan for [618 S. Main](#). This will be followed by a vote on both the site plan and the [brownfield development funding application](#). (Washtenaw County will decide whether to allow a

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Brownfield TIF capture for this project.) There's been a bit of coverage about this proposed project (the first major project in the new zoning for downtown fringe areas, D2). If you want to know why the developers are asking for a brownfield TIF, here's a [link to the coverage](#) in The Chronicle about their presentation to the DDA and the resulting policy development. If you want to know more about the development itself, here's a [link to the coverage](#) of the Planning Commission's hearing and vote on this project.

The Medical Marijuana Licensing ordinance is also on the agenda -- to be amended. However, there are a dozen different bills in the Michigan House and Senate that would affect medical marijuana regulations and implementation. I will ask that this ordinance be postponed to the first meeting in October.

Resolutions

The budget for 2012 was an estimate; by the end of this month, the City will know how closely it came to estimating expenses (Fiscal Year 2012 ends June 30th). Some line items have clearly changed, and there's a resolution on the agenda to [open the 2012 budget](#) and make some amendments to the dollar amounts.

The City Council will vote on allocations to human service organizations. The budgeted amount (from the General Fund) was approved as part of the budget discussions in late May. This resolution is to allocate dollars to specific organizations ([listed in the resolution](#)). Ann Arbor is one of only two local governments that continue to provide financial support to local human services organizations.

Stormwater control and our stormwater system have been on my mind this year. In 2006 the City Council agreed to begin mapping and evaluating the condition of our stormwater system. This complex and expensive project has been done in stages; on the agenda for June 18 is a [contract for Phase III](#). This phase requires engaging with the public to discuss impacts of storm water on our neighborhoods and homes. Two phases have been completed, and two more remain to be initiated.

Other items

As always, there are other items on the [agenda](#) that might interest you -- dump truck purchases, easements for utilities, changes in contracts -- please let me know if you have questions or concerns about any item on the agenda.



Solid Waste Survey

I've finally finished reading and writing the [results of the surveys on solid waste](#).

Do these findings match what you think? Are there ideas in the report that you like or don't like? Please let me know.

The City will conduct its own survey on solid waste to help identify goals and actions that can help us achieve those goals. When that survey is ready, I'll include a link in this newsletter.



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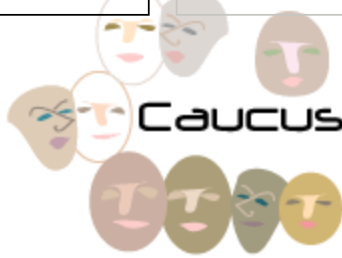


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Caucus

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

The [R4C/R2A draft report](#) was presented at the last working session. So was a report on the draft [Climate Action Plan](#). The Climate Action Plan will be on the agenda (as a resolution) in the near future. Potential changes to City ordinances, based on the R4C draft report, will possibly appear later this year.

On Wednesday, June 20th, the First Ward Democratic organization will host a debate between Sumi Kailasapathy and Eric Sturgis, both candidates in the Democratic Primary, August 7th. The debate will be held from 6:30 to 8 pm at the Arrowwood Community Center, 2566 Arrowwood Trail, Ann Arbor MI 48105.

Thursday, June 21st you can attend a meeting on the Stadium Bridges Project. This update starts at 7 pm at the Ann Arbor Senior Center shelter, 1320 Baldwin Ave., Ann Arbor, MI ([map](#)). The County Board of Commissioners will discuss the 4-Party Agreement and Articles of Incorporation documents at their July meeting. If the Board of Commissioners approves the documents, the next task is for them to file those documents with the State, following the procedures outlined in the 4-Party Agreement. The text of these documents can be amended by the Board of Commissioners, and if the amendments substantially change the documents, they may need further approvals from Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti City Councils prior to BoC approval. The Connecting William Street study has produced a [draft](#)

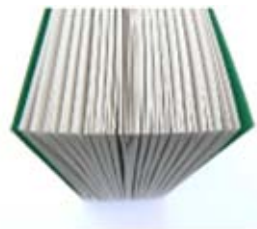


Coffee wakes some of us up

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'm also reading

"Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing." 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

[report](#). If you have comments about this report, please contact

me or [Susan Pollay](#).
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