



City of Oak Park Heights

Tree City USA

First Quarter 2011 Newsletter

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City Planning Commission Vacancy

Applications are now being accepted for consideration to fill an upcoming vacancy on the Oak Park Heights Planning Commission. The anticipated term for the vacated seat is June 1, 2011 to May 31, 2014, subject to City Council approval. The Planning Commission is comprised of five members, who are appointed by the City Council to serve on the Commission in an advisory capacity.

The Planning Commission serves as the City's planning agency and conducts public hearings on matters affecting zoning, subdivision and building regulations, land use development, and comprehensive planning. Other matters are referred to the Planning Commission by the City Council from time to time. The Commission typically meets on either the 2nd or 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and periodically holds workshops or other special meetings.

If you are a resident of Oak Park Heights and are looking for an interesting and rewarding opportunity to participate in the development of Oak Park Heights, please contact Julie Hultman at the City of Oak Park Heights for more information and an application: by phone at 439-4439 or by email at jhultman@cityof oakparkheights.com

Applications may also be printed from the City's web page www.cityof oakparkheights.com. Applications will be accepted until the 4:30 p.m., Thursday, April 28, 2011. Applicants will be contacted for an interview.

REMINDER — Utility bills for the 4th Quarter of 2010 (October—December) are due February 9, 2011.

Auto pay is available. With auto pay, there is no need to waste time writing and mailing a check. Paying your utility bill electronically allows you to save time and money on stamps and late fees. The amount you owe on your utility bill is automatically withdrawn from the account you designate on the billing due date each month. You will continue to receive your bill so that you know the date and amount to be withheld from your account.

If you are interested in participating, please call or stop by City Hall to obtain an enrollment form. The form is also available on the City's website, under City Information, Forms & Handouts. Call Judy Tetzlaff at City Hall, 439-4439, if you have questions.

Lower the Cost of Your Prescriptions. Start Saving Today!

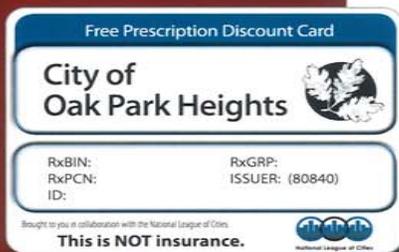
The **Prescription Discount Card** is easy to use and can be used any time your prescription is not covered by insurance.

The program includes:

- Average savings of 20%
- It's FREE, no enrollment or membership fees
- All family members are covered
- Even some pet prescriptions are covered
- No limit on how many times you use the card
- 9 out of 10 pharmacies accept the card



**Start Saving Today with the
City of Oak Park Heights
Prescription Discount Card**



It's easy to get a card from the Internet, go to www.caremark.com/nlc and select 'Print a Card Now' and follow the easy steps.

The City of Oak Park Heights Prescription Discount Card can be picked up at City Hall.

This is NOT insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies.

106-9003HL 12.04.10

For more program information visit
www.caremark.com/nlc
or call toll-free
1-888-620-1749.



National League of Cities

Oak Park Heights Recognized as a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon City

The Minnesota National Guard has pioneered a program which employers community leaders to synchronize efforts and build an enduring network of support for service members and families throughout the deployment cycle. The Yellow Ribbon Community Campaign is a reminder that supporting service members cannot end when they return home from deployment and the yellow ribbons are untied. A Yellow Ribbon City develops an action plan and organizes groups to support military families.

The City of Oak Park Heights was recently recognized as a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Community for its effort in supporting military members and their families while defending the democratic values of the United States of America. The City is proud to recognize, appreciate, and say thank you to our military members and their families for their service sacrifices and all they do.

If you are interested in helping with this initiative or want more information, please contact Oak Park Heights Councilmember Mary McComber by e-mail at marymcomber@aol.com or by phone at 351-7879.

Business and Development Happenings

Welcome New Businesses:

Energy Pilates & Fitness – 5980 Neal Ave. N., Ste 300
Farm Bureau Financial Services – 14791 60th St. N. #3
Mildon Bros. Hot Tubs – 5633 Memorial Ave. N.
The Lived In Room – 5855 Neal Ave. N.
State Farm Insurance – 14612 60th St. N.
Ultimate Martial Arts & Fitness – 5980 Neal Ave. N., Ste. 400

Congratulations to:

Carbone's Pizzeria & Pub at 5988 Osgood Ave. N. on their expansion, adding a pub to their pizzeria at Stillwater Crossing.

Oaks Wine at 5805 Neal Ave. N. on their new ownership and management of the former Oaks Wines & Spirits at Oak Park Ponds.

Currently Under Construction:

Aldi Foods - 13747 60th St. N.
Oakgreen Commons Assisted Living Complex – 13936 Lower 59th St.

Coming Soon:

Look for these new businesses later this year.

AutoZone – 13613 60th St. N. (between Applebee's & Jerry's Auto)
Dairy Queen Chill & Grill – 60th St. N., just west of SuperAmerica
Mr. Chow – 5980 Neal Ave., Ste. 600
White Castle – 5950 Nova Scotia Ave. N.

City Ordinance Requires House Numbers

Not only are house numbers required by the City's Zoning Ordinance, they are essential for people to find you. Not only is it important that delivery people be able to find you, it is critical for emergency response groups, such as the police department, fire department and emergency medical responders to assist you as quickly as possible.

To make it easy to locate your home, your house numbers should be:

- A minimum of three inches in height
- Made of durable, weather resistant material such as metal, glass, or plastic
- A color that stands out against the house or background upon which they are placed
- Easily and clearly seen from the street when approached from any direction. You may want to consider having the numbers coated with a reflective material for better visibility in the dark or locating them beneath a light source.
- Attached to your home or a sign post that faces the street

A If your home does not have house numbers on it, make it a priority to get them put on today.

Parking pads

City Ordinance states that cars, trucks, trailers, boats, snowmobiles, water-skis, four-wheelers, motor homes and other similar items shall be parked in your garage or other accessory building, upon your driveway or an approved parking pad.

What is an approved Parking Pad?

An approved Parking Pad is a parking pad that is hard surfaced constructed of asphalt, concrete, cobblestone, paving block or crushed rock that meets minimum Class 5 material specifications and has at least a 4 inch deep base.

Designated parking pads shall extend directly from the driveway, away from the house and may be located within the front, side or rear yard setback. Parking pads must be set back at least 5 feet from rear yard property lines.

There are limitations to what you can place on a parking pad. Your parking pad may be used for the placement of:

No more than a total of two (2) recreational vehicles (boats, snowmobiles, etc.) or pieces of equipment (trailers, etc.), not including racing cars.

- Registered and operable passenger vehicles.
- No more than one (1) truck and/or trailer not to exceed a gross vehicle weight of 12,000 pounds, except when loading, unloading or rendering a service.
- Construction and landscaping materials currently being used on the premises.

Firewood Storage shall not be on a parking pad. Firewood shall be neatly stacked and stored in the side yard or rear yard or residential premises.

Attention Pet Owners

Leash Law Reminder

The City of Oak Park Heights has a leash law in effect that prohibits pets from running at large. Any dog or cat that is off the premises of the owner and not under the physical control (by leash or by voice) of the owner or another designated person is in violation of this Ordinance.

When you are out walking your pet, please remember to bring a plastic bag. Pet owners are required by City Ordinance to clean up pet waste on public and private property. Removal and proper disposal of pet waste helps keep our City clean and healthy.

Pet Licenses

All dogs and cats in the City for more than 30 days are required to have a City Pet License. There is no charge for this service and it could save your pet from a trip to the animal shelter. Bring proof of your pet's rabies vaccination to City Hall to receive a pet license and tag. For more information, please call City Hall at 439-4439. City Ordinances can be viewed on the City's web-site: www.cityfoakparkheights.com.

Street light out in your neighborhood?

Your help in identifying street lights that are not working is very important, as we rely solely on your notification assistance. Once City staff is aware of a light out, we contact Xcel Energy immediately to help make sure the light is repaired in a reasonable amount of time. Xcel Energy Streetlighting Department strives to repair outages within two business days of notification that the light is out or not working properly. To report a City street light out, please contact City Hall at 439-4439.

If possible, have the following information available:

- Property address and/or nearest cross street to where the light pole is located.
- Whether the light is located on a corner, mid-block, or in a cul-de-sac.
- The nature of the problem (i.e. light is out, light is blinking, light is broken).

City Meetings (subject to change)

City Council:

2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission:

Typically the 2nd Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Parks Commission:

3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m.

Agendas and Minutes are posted on the City's website:

www.cityfoakparkheights.com

Will my improvement project require a permit?

When planning your project, keep in mind that many projects require a building permit prior to the project starting.

Some common do-it yourself projects such as decks, porches, gazebos, fences, sheds, re-roofing, re-siding, new plumbing or heating or alterations to your existing services, window replacement, driveway replacement and parking pads typically require a permit to ensure compliance to adopted construction and local ordinance codes.

If you are hiring a contractor for your project, make sure they are licensed, have obtained a permit for the work you that you have hired them for, and that the inspections appropriate to your project are being scheduled while they are working.

Building permit applications and information on a variety of projects are available at City Hall and can also be found on the City webpage at www.cityofoakparkheights.com. If you don't find what you are looking for, let us know. We will do our best to get you the information you need.

You are encouraged to include a call or visit to the Building Official to discuss what may be needed to make your project safe but also compliant with adopted local ordinances and construction industry codes.

Please take the opportunity to utilize the Building Official and City Staff as another set of knowledgeable eyes on the projects and work being done on your property. It is the goal of the City to also make your project a success and we are here to help!

Jim Butler
Building Official
651-439-4439
jbutler@cityofoakparkheights.com

Julie Hultman
Planning & Code Enforcement
651-439-4439
jhultman@cityofoakparkheights.com

**No question is too small.
Our goal is to make your project safe and successful!**

Reserve a City park shelter

Are you thinking about having a get-together or a family reunion? The Brekke, Valley View, and Autumn Hills Park shelter buildings can be reserved free of charge for your event. The Autumn Hills Park Shelter does require a refundable \$100 deposit.

Brekke Park is located on Omar Avenue south of the former St. Croix Mall. The park has a covered shelter building with rest-rooms as well as a tot lot, baseball diamonds, playground equipment, and barbeque grills. Valley View Park is located on Osgood Avenue at the edge of the city limits. This park has a covered shelter building, picnic areas, playgrounds and a beautiful passive park area with trails, a prairie restoration area and wetlands. Autumn Hills Park is located at 5697 Norwich Parkway off of 58th Street adjacent to the Boutwells Landing campus. The park contains meandering trails, trail access parking, and playground equipment. It has a 2,000+ square foot shelter, which includes a covered gathering area with a small kitchen/serving area, men's and women's restrooms, and a water fountain.

You may use the City's online reservation form to reserve either the Brekke Park or Valley View Park shelters. You may obtain the Autumn Hills Park Shelter reservation documents and information online as well. Or, you may call or visit City Hall anytime to reserve any of the shelters for your next event!

Emerald Ash Borer

At the time of this writing, emerald ash borer (EAB) has not yet been found in Washington County. We do not know if the insect is already in this area, so everyone with ash trees should be examining them for signs of EAB activity. If larvae are under the bark, one might see a lot of woodpecker activity and feeding holes on the tree along the trunk and larger branches, particularly in the top half of the tree. Looking closely, you might also be able to see $\frac{1}{4}$ long “D-

shaped” exit holes in the bark if adult EAB exited the tree in 2010.

If you have any ash trees which are dying from the top down, have excessive woodpecker activity and feeding, or you see any other signs of EAB activity, please contact the arborist to come out and take a look. Do not move ash wood from one area to another, as this is one way that emerald ash borer can be easily spread.

Tree Problems?

If you are an Oak Park Heights resident, and have a problem with a tree or shrub, such as an insect or a disease, have planting questions, or just want to have a plant identified, call Dr. Kathy Widin, the OPH Arborist, at 439-4439 Ext. 1106. She can either answer your question over the phone or make an appointment for a site visit. This service is paid for by the City of Oak Park Heights.



Oak Wilt

Oaks, particularly red and pin oaks, which lost their leaves within a few weeks last summer are most likely infected with the oak wilt fungus. These wilting oaks are potential spore producing trees next spring, when oaks are susceptible to insect transmission of the oak wilt fungus to fresh wounds. Diseased trees should be isolated from nearby healthy oaks, of the same or similar species, via root cutting or root graft disruption, to prevent the fungus from spreading underground also. If you need to cut root connections, diseased trees should not be cut down until root graft disruption has been done. Avoid pruning or wounding oaks in the spring or summer. The City of Oak Park Heights will remove recently wilted red and pin oaks from both public and private property. Please contact the arborist if you have any questions regarding oak wilt.

Storm damage and risk trees

Winter is a good time to examine trees for broken, hanging branches, split limbs and decay. Tree structure is easy to see at this time of year and the problems can be dealt with before limbs or trees break and damage property or cause injuries. If

you see a structural problem in a tree in your yard or on the boulevard, please call the arborist to make a site visit to examine the tree.

Recycling incentive program

The City of Oak Park Heights has a recycling incentive program. The City awards a prize of \$25.00 or a fire extinguisher and/or smoke detector. Residents participating in curbside recycling are picked randomly twice a month.

Recycling benefits the environment in countless ways: it reduces the amount of natural resources used to make new products, it saves energy, it prevents water and air pollution including greenhouse gas emissions, and it reduces waste. This means that the simple act of recycling in your daily life provides significant protection for our environment and reduces global warming.

Thank you for recycling!

How to sort your recycling

Materials collected by Veolia for recycling must be sorted into two categories to make sure they get recycled. Use paper bags and recycling bins to separate your materials. Do not use plastic bags. Place textiles in a separate paper bag from everything else.

Paper & Cardboard	Cans & Bottles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspapers • Magazines, mail, and office paper • Corrugated cardboard • Boxboard/soda boxes • Phonebooks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steel and Aluminum Cans and Foil • Glass bottles and jars (any color) • Milk cartons and juice boxes • Plastic bottles (1 and 2)

What's included in trash pickup?

In addition to the typical garbage and recycling pickup, the City also covers the disposal of yard waste, large household items, and 'white-goods' such as televisions, refrigerators, couches, chairs, desks, water-heaters, stoves, dishwashers, dryers, etc. for single family residences and complexes with four units or less in Oak Park Heights. In order to have these items picked up in a timely fashion, please contact Judy Tetzlaff at City Hall, 439-4439, at least two days prior to collection day so that the special truck may be dispatched to your home. If you receive a bill from Veolia for these additional services, please call the City Administrator at 439-4439 as most, if not all, of these items are covered under the City's contract, and you should not be billed.



Some items are not included in your monthly fee are extra bags of garbage not placed in your container. The City's waste hauler, Veolia, will bill you \$1.50 per bag. Some other items that are picked up for a fee are sinks, toilets and construction debris. You will be billed by Veolia at a regulated rate as monitored by the City.

REMINDER!!

Waste and Recyclable pick-up is every THURSDAY. However, if one of the six holidays—New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas—falls on a weekday, collection may occur on FRIDAY of that week.

Permits required for some landscaping/yard projects

With spring around the corner you may be thinking about making some landscaping or yard improvement projects, such as a fence, driveway, parking pad or an outdoor irrigation system (lawn sprinkler). If so, keep in mind that some landscaping and yard projects require a permit by City Ordinance.

Fences: If you're planning on building a fence, contact the Inspections Department at City Hall to obtain a fence permit handout and to complete a permit application. As part of the permit application, you will prepare a site plan. Property lines must be verified prior to fence installation; if you have a property survey, please include a copy of it with your permit application. A fence permit is \$25 for fences four-feet and under in height. Permits for fences greater than four-feet in height are based upon the fence project cost. Both permits include a plan review to help reduce the likelihood of inconvenient and expensive, after-the-fact enforcement that occurs when fence installation inadvertently violates city ordinance requirements.

Fact: A properly placed fence will aid in preventing neighbor disputes.

Irrigation Systems (Lawn Sprinklers): A plumbing permit is required as these connections are made to your domestic water supply. As part of the permit application, you will need to provide information that provides details to the system you propose to install, along with a site plan that clearly shows the location of the system being installed. You may be required to submit a property survey if property lines and easements are not readily clear. An irrigation system permit is \$75 plus MN State Surcharge. A plan review is included in the permit to ensure code compliance. Upon installation, an inspection is required to ensure proper water supply connection and proper installation of backflow preventers to prevent contamination.

Fact: A common mistake is that sprinkler heads are placed at the curb line which typically is in the public right-of-way. These sprinkler heads are then destroyed by the snow plow; so always stay away from the City streets with sprinkler heads.

For more information on these types of permits or other projects you may have in mind, contact Building Official, Jim Butler at 439-4439 or jbutler@cityofoakparkheights.com.

Summer Park Programming

The City of Oak Park Heights will again offer the summer park program to Oak Park Heights Residents! Please look for a full schedule of events and locations in the next City newsletter, to be mailed in April 2011. Events will run from the end of May to the first week in September.

If you have any questions or comments, please e-mail the Summer Park Programming Coordinator, Gina Zeuli, at gzeuli@q.com.



Oak Park Heights Police Files

From the desk of Chief Brian DeRosier



As the year 2010 came to a snowy end, 2011 has been doing its best to keep up the tradition and we have seen deteriorated driving conditions. I urge you to use caution as a motorist or pedestrian during these conditions as well as throughout the year. The snow banks are high limiting your view at intersections and crosswalks and the view of the other motorists to see you while attempting to enter the intersections. The roads have narrowed leaving less room for motorists and pedestrians. Pedestrians use the marked crosswalks and do not step off the curb until you can clearly see the oncoming traffic has seen you and is stopping. The snow covered roads increase stopping distances for motorists as well as the inattentive and distracted drivers all year long. Be proactive on your part – do not rely on the other person to be compliant with the law, put your own safety first.

The police department has begun using a new information notification system called NIXLE. The system can be subscribed to by residents to receive information via email or text messages. We can use the system to notify all residents city wide or down to a neighborhood level for public safety and emergency public works issues such as water main breaks in the neighborhood affecting service, missing persons, criminal activity in the area, emergency management notifications, and other issues that may affect the peace of your neighborhood or public safety. The system is not intended to be a guarantee of notification and should not be relied upon by you as such. If you would like to subscribe to the notifications go to the web site: www.nixle.com. You can register to receive the alerts or just enter our city name to see the current posts without registering. This is a secure system through National Public Safety Network and the department does not have access to, or collect your email and cell phone information. This system is not expected to be used routinely as a blog or face book type platform, rather it will be for periodic public safety or public works information we feel can help us help you and vice versa to keep our community

Winter Parking Restrictions

Winter parking restrictions are put in place in an effort to enable snow removal equipment the opportunity to do a top quality and efficient job in removing snow from city streets. Please be aware that these parking restrictions are in place AND ENFORCED regardless of whether or not there has been recent snowfall. Please help us by obeying the winter parking restrictions.

****No parking on city streets from November 1 through March 31**

Notes from Public Works

Winter operations in the Public Works Department

Aside from day to day maintenance and repair of the water system, sewer system, streets and parks, Oak Park Heights Public Works Staff is responsible for removing snow at the City Hall premises and throughout the City trail system. Staff also maintains three skating rinks during the winter months. These rinks are swept each day and flooded as temperature permits.

Warming house hours apply at both Brekke Park and Cover Park

Weekdays: 3:30pm – 9:00pm

Weekends: 9:00am – 9:00pm

Rinks will be closed if the weather is too warm and the ice is melting. Signs will be posted. Use of the rinks when the ice is forming or during times of melting can damage the ice base and require several floodings to restore the skating surface. Please visit the City's website at www.cityofoakparkheights.com for up to the date notifications on rink activity.

Protect your house from frozen meters and pipes

You can take easy and inexpensive steps to prevent the damage, expense and inconvenience associated with freezing pipes and meters. Temperatures are colder along the floor and cement block wall of the basement than near the ceiling. Circulating the warmer air can help prevent frozen meters. In some homes, meters are in separate unheated rooms or boxes; open the doors to rooms or open a meter box to allow warmer air to circulate. Simply keeping your home and basement warm enough will help prevent freezing. In addition:

- Check along the foundation for areas where cold wind can enter the basement or a crawl space and plug them with insulation.
- Close off crawl space vents and doors.
- Replace broken or cracked basement windows or doors.
- Install a storm window or cover basement windows with weather insulation kits
- Make sure basement doors and windows close tightly.
- Seal or caulk cracks in the walls.
- Insulate pipes.
- **Don't forget to turn off the water supply and drain all outdoor faucets!**

Please help keep hydrants visible

Please help your neighbors and yourselves by shoveling around fire hydrants. We hope they are not needed, but critical minutes can be saved if neighbors keep their hydrants accessible for emergency use.

Winter snow forts

Parents, please protect your children by keeping snow forts and play away from streets and drives. Snow removal equipment is dangerous, and during operations, blowing snow and limited visibility can be a deadly combination to children in the path of equipment.

City of Oak Park Heights

14168 Oak Park Blvd. N.
PO Box 2007
Oak Park Heights, MN 55082
Phone: 651-439-4439
Fax: 651-439-0574

Police non-emergency: 651-439-4723
Police Emergency: 911

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
excluding legal holidays

MAYOR
David Beaudet: 439-2582

COUNCILMEMBERS
Les Abrahamson: 351-0807
Mary McComber: 351-7879
Mike Runk: 439-5458
Mark Swenson: 439-1479

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
Eric Johnson

Visit our Website!
www.cityof oakparkheights.com

The Oak Park Heights
newsletter
is published by the City
of Oak Park Heights.
Comments are welcome.
651-439-4439

**CITY OF OAK PARK HEIGHTS DEPARTMENT TO HOST
INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS IMPORTANT ISSUES
WHEN PLANNING A HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

The Oak Park Heights Building Official Jim Butler and City Staff will host two FREE informational seminars in March to offer tips and advice when planning a home improvement project.

These meetings are being offered by the City to highlight and outline key elements of project planning, the permit and inspection process, and important considerations when hiring a contractor.

It is hoped that by offering these brief seminars, your home improvement project can be a great success and will increase protections for the Oak Park Heights community.

When: 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 9 & 23, 2011
Both meetings are planned to follow the same format and will vary by information requested by the meeting attendees. You are invited to attend one or both sessions.

Where: Oak Park Heights City Hall - 14168 Oak Park Blvd. N.
Cost: **FREE** - Advance Registration is requested at least one week prior to the session you plan to attend. If you have a topic you would like to have addressed, please note that at the time of your reservation.

To Register: Contact Julie at 439-4439 or jhultman@cityof oakparkheights.com.

***A variety of informational handouts will be available.
Refreshments will be provided.***

***All attendees will be entered into a drawing to be held
at the end of the meeting at each session.***

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