

# WINNETKA REPORT

## FALL 2005

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### Post Office Committee Update

The Post Office Committee invites all interested Winnetkans to attend its October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, which will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Village Hall. At this meeting the Committee will receive a preliminary depiction of several ideas regarding the redevelopment of the 1.9 acre Post Office site. Audience members will be encouraged to comment on these ideas.

During June and July members of the Post Office Committee and the Village's consultant, The Lakota Group, held two general, community-wide meetings to solicit residents' ideas regarding the site's redevelopment. In addition, focus groups were conducted with members of the Chamber of Commerce, Park District, various Village committees, non-Chamber merchants, commercial building owners, local realtors, nearby residents, local design professionals, and Dwyer Park users. Drawing on these meetings with interested persons and the Committee's discussions over the past six months, the consultant has been asked to present some alternative, preliminary blocking diagrams, showing generalized land uses, open space, parking, and circulation patterns on and adjacent to the site.

The Post Office Committee will continue to assess the public input from the June and July meetings at its September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting and discuss the principles that should guide redevelopment of the site. The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers at Village Hall beginning at 7:30 p.m. The Committee will also submit its first report to the Village Council at its Study Session on September 13<sup>th</sup>.

The Ad Hoc Post Office Committee was appointed in December 2004 to explore redevelopment options for the Village-owned Post Office site located on Chestnut Street between Elm and Oak Streets. This Committee has been charged with the tasks of recommending (1) proposed uses for the site, i.e., institutional, commercial, residential, or some combination thereof; (2) the appropriate role of the Village with respect to ownership, financial participation, and regulatory oversight; and (3) a process for selecting the developer(s) for the project. In addition, the Committee has been asked to outline design guidelines for the proposed project. The Committee expects to complete its work by December 2006.

## WINNETKA CAUCUS 2005 ANNUAL SURVEY

The Caucus will mail its 2005 survey on September 2 to all Winnetka households. Residents should return the survey by **September 23**. The survey can be mailed in, dropped off at more than a dozen boxes located in public places throughout Winnetka (see survey for exact locations), and, new this year, picked up by the Caucus' free-on-wheels service.

There are important Village issues that need input from residents, including Park District plans for the shelter in Hubbard Woods Park, residents' satisfaction with the District 36 curriculum, creation of voluntary National Register Historic Districts, the regulation of cell phone use while driving, and the services the library will maintain or restore after the successful referendum.

The future of Winnetka is in the hands of each resident. For decades, the Caucus survey has enabled residents to express their views to elected officials. Survey responses impact all residents because they are used by the Caucus to prepare policy platforms for the Village Council and Parks, Schools and Library Boards.

Every survey counts, just as every vote counts. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and have your voice heard. Any questions, contact Gene Greable, Caucus Chair, at 446-6356, or greable@aol.com.

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### Village Council Exercises Home Rule Powers

In the months before the home rule referendum, Village officials conducted information sessions to inform Winnetkans about the nature of home rule powers and how they could benefit the Village. As soon as the results of the successful referendum were certified, the Village Council put the new home rule powers into action.

First, the Council readopted the Village Code, adding amendments stating the Council's intent that the entire Village Code is an exercise of the Village's home rule powers.

Second, the Council adopted an amended affordable housing plan now that the Village is not locked into the "one size fits all" requirements of the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act. In addition, the Council directed the Plan Commission to develop customized affordable housing goals, standards and implementation tools that will be relevant to Winnetka's land use patterns and real estate values.

Finally, the Village amended the Village Code to grant the Board of Fire and Police Commission additional flexibility when hiring and promoting police officers and fire fighters/paramedics.

The Council is now in the process of streamlining the zoning variation procedures by establishing a less formal procedure for minor variations. Under the new procedure, certain applicants would no longer have to appear before the Zoning Board of Appeals, but could have the variation adjudicated by the Zoning Administrator. This type of informal process is not specifically authorized by statute, and so was not available to the Village before it became a home rule unit. The Council began a public hearing on the proposed amendments at its August 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. The hearing will continue at the Council's September 6<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

Next on the Village Council's home rule implementation agenda is exploring ways to gain more control over construction contractors and construction sites, including possible licensing of contractors. Watch for the scheduling of these discussions by checking the Village's web site and posted meeting agendas.

## Is Your Tree Thirsty?

During the growing season (spring, summer, and into late fall), trees need water every 7-10 days. If trees are not getting the water they need naturally from rain, then they need help from you. The best method is with a soaker hose or a drip irrigation bag such as a Tree Gator™. If you would like to use a sprinkler, only one to two inches of water are needed. Placing an empty tuna fish can near the sprinkler is a good gage of how much water is needed. When the can is full, enough water has been used. Younger trees may need to be watered more often than older trees. For more information, call the Public Works Department at 847-716-3568.

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## Firewood Warning

As Autumn approaches, nothing may seem as appealing as gathering around a toasty fire in a wood-burning fireplace to help keep warm. Indulging in such a treat requires the obvious fuel – firewood. Many people may bring firewood in from out of state, as it may be less costly or more readily available. **Importing firewood from out of state is potentially hazardous to the tree population in Winnetka.**

Illinois is under quarantine for several harmful wood-boring insects that are thriving in nearby states such as Michigan and Wisconsin. Bringing firewood back from out of state may accidentally cause an infestation in your own yard. Some of the nasty insects that may be hitching a ride on firewood include Asian Long Horned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Gypsy Moth, and Elm Bark Beetle (which is a carrier of Dutch Elm Disease). These insects and diseases are a serious threat if the local tree population is exposed.

In order to help keep our trees insect and disease-free, please do not bring in any firewood in from out of state. Many of the local tree service companies can supply local firewood along with several businesses which sell pre-split firewood. For more information, contact the Village Forester at 847-716-3535.

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## Annual Leaf Collection Program Begins October 17

**The last day to place leaves on the parkway for pick up is November 21.**

Winnetka's annual leaf collection program will begin on October 17 and continue through November 21. To be assured that they will be picked up, leaves need to be on the parkway by 7 a.m.

***There will be no callbacks if leaves are not on the parkway when collection crews pass through.***

Collections begin on Scott Avenue west of Green Bay Road and continue south in a counterclockwise direction, ending at Whitebridge Hill Road east of Green Bay Road. Depending on the weather, it takes up to seven working days to complete one leaf collection trip through the Village.

*After November 21, leaves need to be bagged in Village yardwaste bags or in bags with Village stickers attached to them in order to be picked up by Public Works Department crews. Yardwaste bags can be purchased at the Cashier's Counter at Village Hall for \$2 each. Stickers to use on non-Village bags can also be purchased at the Cashier's Counter at the same price.*

Avoid creating a hazard by raking leaves one foot back from the curb. Leaves piled on the street are a hazard to small children who may be tempted to play in them and may not be seen by motorists; cars that park on them can catch fire due to heat from exhaust pipes, and vehicles driving over them may lose traction due to the slippery condition that leaves create. (Drivers: be alert to these concerns during the autumn leaf collection period.) Also, leaves raked one foot onto the parkway will not clog sewer drains or reduce the width of traffic lanes.

The Public Works Department asks that you:

- Avoid putting branches, plants or any material other than leaves in the piles;
- Avoid piling leaves around boulders, mailbox posts, trees, and any other objects;
- Avoid parking on top of or adjacent to piles of leaves. Vehicles can ignite dry leaves.

Call the Public Works Department at 847-716-3568 for more information about the Leaf Collection Program.

## Has It Been Hot & Dry?

The Water and Electric Department thinks so. Both utilities have seen record levels of consumption.

On Sunday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, when the temperature reached 102°, the Winnetka Electric Utility set a new historic peak for one-hour sales of electricity. The prior peak was set on Friday, July 30, 1999. It wasn't just July 24th that was hot. June and July had monthly electric consumptions that were among the highest ever seen. Near the end of July, the Midwest electric system reached a level of demand that required the Village's Power Plant to generate electricity.

It has also been very dry. The historical average for rainfall in Winnetka during May, June and July is 10.5 inches. This year, we have received 4.7 inches or about 44% of the normal amount. More water was produced by the Village's Water Utility in June and July than in any previous similar time periods.

Winnetka is fortunate to own its water and electric utilities and to have dedicated plant operators who work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to keep your air conditioners humming and water flowing.

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## HANDGUNS PROHIBITED

As a reminder, the Village Code prohibits the possession of handguns and handgun ammunition in Winnetka. Only law enforcement officers, authorized security personnel, and licensed firearms collectors, whose possession is limited to curios and relics, are exempt from this prohibition.

The Code states that no person within the Village shall possess, harbor, control, transfer, offer for sale, sell, give, deliver or accept any handgun unless it has been rendered permanently inoperable. The term "handgun" includes any combination of parts from which such firearm can be assembled. It also includes what are commonly called pneumatic or "air" guns and "BB" guns if they are capable of firing a globular projectile exceeding .18 inches in diameter.

Transportation of a handgun within the municipal limits of the Village of Winnetka is also prohibited unless the weapon is broken down and in a non-functioning state.

Handguns and ammunition may be voluntarily delivered to the Chief of Police for destruction. Call 847-501-6034 for more information.

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## Fire Prevention Week 2005

Open House

Saturday, October 15

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Winnetka Fire Department invites all Winnetka and Kenilworth residents to attend its Fire Prevention Week 2005 Open House. Visitors will have an opportunity to learn about this year's Fire Prevention Week theme, *"Use Candles with Care!"*

In addition, members of the Fire Department will be on hand to display fire apparatus and equipment, answer questions, and help youngsters make fire safety pin-on buttons.

There will be balloons and refreshments too!

## *"Use Candles with Care!"*

**Candles provide a warm and festive atmosphere, but they also can be a fire hazard if left unattended or placed near anything flammable. The Winnetka Fire Department encourages families to keep fire safety in mind when enjoying the warm and inviting atmosphere of candles:**

- Never leave burning candles unattended. Extinguish all candles before going to sleep or leaving the room.
  - Do not permit children to keep or use candles and/or incense in their rooms. Candles should only be used when a sober adult is present and awake.
  - Never use lighted candles on or near a Christmas tree or other evergreens.
  - Keep candles at least three feet away from anything that will burn, including other decorations and wrapping paper.
  - Always use stable, nonflammable candle holders.
  - Place candles where they will not be knocked down or blown over.
  - Always keep burning candles up high, out of the reach of children and pets. If you have children in your home, store candles, matches, and lighters out of sight and reach.
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### **PAPER SHREDDING OPPORTUNITY**

The Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) is providing a one-day document destruction event for residentially-generated paper, such as medical forms, bank statements, personal files, retired tax forms, etc. This event is open to any resident that lives in a SWANCC-member town – ID's will be checked. Winnetka is a member of SWANCC. No materials from businesses, schools or institutions will be accepted.

Saturday, October 1, 2005  
Commuter Train Parking Lot  
Green Bay Road and Park Avenue  
Glencoe, Illinois

The events will run from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and there is no cost to deliver documents for shredding.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, it is estimated that 10 million Americans were victims of identity theft last year, prompting the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) in Washington to issue new warnings about safekeeping financial information.

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### **Children are back in School**

#### **Be extra alert when driving near schools**

##### ***School speed zones are strictly enforced by Winnetka police***

Watch for youngsters going to and from school. Some will be walking; others will be transported by bus or private vehicle. Motorists have a responsibility to assure the safety of these young citizens.

Be prepared to stop at the direction of crossing guards.

##### ***Watch for school buses!***

When a school bus is stopped for the purpose of loading or unloading pupils and its "stop signal arm" is extended, the law requires that motorists traveling in both directions stop and wait.

## COYOTES IN WINNETKA

Recently some residents expressed concerns about the presence of coyotes in the Village. While it may be disconcerting to see a coyote in such a populated area, it is not an unusual occurrence anywhere in the Chicago Metropolitan area according to State and local wildlife experts. They explain that widespread development has resulted in a loss of their natural habitat while actually increasing their food supply.

Coyotes are typically found in brushy areas, wooded edges, and open grasses, but they have adapted extremely well to living in the “urban wilderness.” They like to travel along paths, trails, and waterways. They are most active from dusk until dawn, but may be seen during the day, especially in the summer when they are raising their litter of pups.

The Winnetka Police Department has been contacted by residents wanting information on the possible threat that coyotes may pose to their pets and young children. The likelihood of a coyote attacking a person is extremely rare. According to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources statistics, only 16 cases of coyotes attacking humans have been recorded in Illinois in a 30-year period. These incidents usually occur when people try to hand-feed the coyotes.

According to the IDNR, the number one rule is: **NEVER FEED COYOTES**. Feeding coyotes completely breaks down their natural fear of humans, and can cause them to become unusually aggressive. Experts recommend securing garbage cans so coyotes don’t become regular visitors scavenging for scraps in the back yard, and bringing in dog or cat food in the evening to eliminate it as a potential food source. While coyotes can pose a threat to cats and small dogs, a simple solution is to keep dogs on a leash and bring cats in at night.

Remember, feeding wildlife is feeding the food chain for coyotes. In order to minimize coyote encroachments on your property **DO NOT FEED WILDLIFE**.

Some people are under the impression that aggressively trapping and killing coyotes will help to reduce the coyote population. However, IDNR Biologist Bob Bluett states that trying to reduce and control the coyote population will not work because the void created by an animal’s death will be filled within three to four weeks. In addition, the animals are very smart and extremely difficult to catch in a live trap. Mr. Bluett suggests that unless a coyote has demonstrated aggressiveness toward a human or a domestic pet, it should be left alone. In the event of aggressiveness, an Illinois Department of Natural Resources licensed trapper should be contacted to address the problem animal.

The Village of Winnetka must handle indigenous wild animals within the guidelines of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Fish and Wildlife laws. If a resident encounters a coyote that behaves aggressively toward that individual or attacks a domestic pet, please contact the Police Department. If the Police Department deems the animal to present a threat to the public safety and welfare, it will contact one of the IDNR licensed trapping services for trapping and appropriate disposition of the animal. Residents are asked to call the Winnetka Police Department 911 Emergency Number to report animals meeting these criteria.

### **REMEMBER:**

- **DO NOT FEED ANY WILD ANIMALS**
  - **BRING IN PET FOOD AND WATER**
  - **SECURE GARBAGE CANS**
  - **KEEP PETS ON LEASHES**
  - **DO NOT APPROACH A COYOTE**
  - **AS LONG AS HUMANS DO NOT THREATEN THEM OR THEIR PUPS, COYOTES WILL BE THE FIRST TO RUN AWAY.**
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## **Hungry Deer, Antlers and Plants... a Bad Combination**

You may have seen increased numbers of deer around Winnetka, or maybe you've noticed torn foliage on plants, flattened areas of grass from "deer beds," deer tracks or deer leavings. Deer love to feast on fresh greens, which can do a number on your garden or yard. In the fall mating season, male deer choose young trees of 1 to 6 inches in diameter to rub the velvet off their antlers. This activity can shred the bark off the trees, severely damaging them.

There are a few things you can do to limit the damage done by deer. First, do not invite them into your yard. Do not feed the deer if they are nearby or leave salt licks out. Planting aromatic, non-deer friendly plants may also be a deterrent. Strong-smelling plants such as onions, sage or rosemary are not very appealing to deer. There are several non-invasive products available at local garden centers, such as pepper sprays, and netting, that would help to deter deer. If you are worried about your trees having the bark shredding off during mating season, there are paper tree wraps available. Wrapping the trunk of your tree with this tape is a great way off making it look and feel less appealing to deer.

If you have any questions or would like more information regarding deer deterrents, feel free to call the Winnetka Public Works Department at 847-716-3533.

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## **TEARDOWN AND RECONSTRUCTION REGULATIONS**

The Village understands that as a result of construction, conflicts can occur between residents and builders. To assist in reducing these potential conflicts, the Village has a number of regulations that contractors must follow during the construction period. Following is a list of some of those regulations.

- All new construction sites must be completely surrounded by a 6-foot tall chain link fence, which must remain locked when the site is unattended.
- Construction hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday, and 9:00 am to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No work is permitted on Sundays. (If you notice work is taking place outside of these hours, call the non-emergency Police Department phone number [847-501-6034] during non-business hours or the Department of Community Development [847-716-3576] during business hours).
  - Demolition and excavation work is limited to Monday thru Friday only.
- All sites must be kept free of construction debris and litter.
- During demolition, the site must be continuously sprayed down with water in order to keep the dust down.
- Construction related traffic cannot block access on any street, so as to impede safe passage of emergency vehicles or block any public sidewalks.
- When cutting brick, stone or pavers, a wet saw must be used in order to keep dust to a minimum.

The Village does not know when the construction will be completed on any particular building; however, a building permit is valid for 15 months with the owner having the ability to renew it for an additional nine months.

If you notice that construction in and around your neighborhood is not being done in accordance with the above listed regulations, please call the Department of Community Development at (847) 716-3576.

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## Summer Street Construction Projects

The Village is undertaking a number of street construction projects during 2005. As of this writing, the status of these projects is as follows:

<u>Street</u>	<u>Limits</u>	<u>Status</u>
Chatfield Road	Gordon Terr. to West End	Not Started
Park Lane	Maple to West End	Construction Underway
Rosewood Avenue	Mt. Pleasant to Willow	Construction Underway
Westmoor Road	Green Bay to Rosewood	Construction Underway
Glendale Avenue	Mt. Pleasant to Willow	Construction Underway
Arbor Vitae Road	Pine to Elm	Construction Underway
Hill Road	Hibbard to Chestnut	Construction Underway
Hawthorn Lane	Wilson to Sheridan	Substantially Complete
Winnetka Avenue	Church to Sheridan	Complete

Questions can be directed to the Public Works Department at 716-3568.

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## Village Licenses and Commuter Parking Permits Expire December 31

### 2005 licenses and parking permits go on sale October 3.

Village licenses and commuter parking permits for the coming year will be on sale at the Cashier's Counter at Village Hall beginning October 3. The counter is open between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. until noon on Saturday.