



THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

October 2021

Visit us at

www.missionhillsks.gov

SAVE THE DATE



ANNUAL HOLIDAY TREE
LIGHTING
November 28th
@ City Hall
5:30pm

Contents

Out on a Limb p.3-4

**Tomahawk Road
Project** p. 4

**Planning for a Better
Tomorrow** p.5

SeeClickFix p.6

A Letter from Mayor Dickey

Fellow Residents:

Public safety will continue to be THE top priority in Mission Hills.



Earlier this month, we had a frightening incident where a resident was assaulted at the Verona Columns during his morning walk by two armed assailants. As the resident fled, those assailants fired two shots, which thankfully missed. I want to wish our fellow resident well and reconfirm the Council's, Police Department's, Staff's and my commitment to finding these men, and public safety overall. There can be no higher priority.

We talk at my employer that "the truth has to be good enough." And over the summer we saw an increase in home burglaries, particularly at homes undergoing construction. While this has also been the trend in all of our neighboring communities, any crime is one too many. Our PD was already taking additional actions prior to the aforementioned incident, and this will continue.

But we still need your help! 90+% of the auto crimes in our community are unlocked vehicles with the keys inside. Please, please, please lock your cars. Don't leave your keys or valuables in plain view. Finally, if you see something out of the ordinary that does not rise to the level of emergency, please call the police non-emergency dispatch number at 913-642-5151. Our police chief will tell you that these early calls stop crime. Put the number in your speed dial – seriously! We are fortunate to have the resources to follow up on these types of calls.

On a much more positive note, autumn has arrived in Mission Hills and was kicked off by a fabulous event – Diner à Verona. Almost 200 residents gathered at the Verona Columns for a beautiful evening of camaraderie, music, food and fun. This represents the penultimate event coordinated by the Community Engagement Committee and I want to thank them for a great year. Two talented residents came to the Council in 2018 with what has become a fantastic idea, and they and their committee have just completed our second year of events! Thank you again.

Switching gears once again, the Council passed a budget that continues a 15+ year approach of maintaining a flat mil levy. Staff continue to be aggressive, yet thoughtful, about expense control, without sacrificing the quality of service we all expect. I want to thank the Council for their continued thoughtful approach to budgeting and spending.

For more information, visit www.missionhillsks.gov

Letter from the Mayor (continued)

Three final items for the fall:

First, the Council approved a final plan for Tomahawk Road for 2022. We will be fully re-doing the entire road from Mission to State Line. After a great deal of public comment, the key changes you will see are:

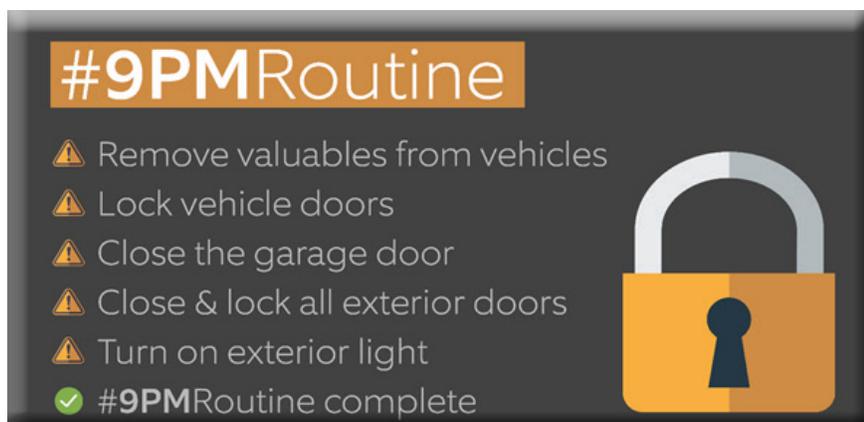
- Reduced speed limit to 25mph (this has already been put in place and now every street inside the City is 25mph).
- Reconfigured intersection at Tomahawk and Mission Drive by the City playground to make a much safer crossing for children and parents.
- New, signaled and striped crosswalks in several places along Tomahawk.
- Widened "lanes" on both shoulders to create additional space for walkers and bikers (even after the widening of the pedestrian lanes, Tomahawk will still be wider than Mission Road by the Indian Hills middle school).

Second, we continue to have infrastructure providers doing work in our City. As many of you have heard me lament, several years ago the legislature in Topeka took away a great deal of cities' ability to control their rights-of-way. This does not mean we are not aggressive and forceful with providers and their subcontractors. But it means we have far more orange fencing and dead grass than we would like. If you have ANY issue with work being done in the right-of-way in front of your home, please contact City Hall. The more we know, the better we can work with these providers to be better partners.

Third, there is an election the first Tuesday in November. I encourage you to learn more about the competitive races for school board and water board and get out to vote! We are fortunate to have a relatively high-functioning set of local governing bodies and that happens when citizens engage.

Finally, I want to again thank every resident who serves on one of our Boards, as well as our staff. Our City works because we have residents willing to give of their time and talent, and a staff who executes with aplomb. Kudos, be well and safe, and I hope to see many of you at the tree lighting in November!

As always, please continue to provide us feedback on how and where we can do better. You are welcome to call City Hall at 913-362-9620 or email info@missionhillssk.gov. You are always welcome to email me directly at mayor@missionhillssk.gov.



Out on a Limb; Tree Talk *Jesse Kirk, City Arborist*



Late fall and winter are excellent times to prune your trees. While some residents are concerned that dead wood will not stand out, a knowledgeable arborist has numerous ways of discerning live from dead tissue. With the leaves off, it is easier to recognize and correct structural defects and you do not have to worry about pests vectoring diseases. Oaks specifically should only be pruned during the dormant season to minimize the threat of oak wilt. Traditionally, you may see slightly cheaper costs associated with tree work during the winter as crews are less busy. As I write this in mid-September, tree crews are as far out on work as I can ever recall so discounts may be less this year. We continue to strive to stay on a three year pruning cycle, meaning we prune one homes association each year. We will be going out to bid for the pruning of Tomahawk Road Homes Association in 2022. We generally receive our bids around Thanksgiving and begin work the first week of January.

This winter as you lay out your lawn and garden goals for next year, a good place to start is with a soil test. Knowing where you stand is a good way to prevent adding additional unnecessary chemicals onto your property and ultimately keeps them out of local waterways. Johnson County residents are eligible for one free soil test per year. More detailed information on collecting samples and submitting them to the extension office are available at: www.johnson.k-state.edu/lawn-garden/soil-testing/index.html

Trees are generally slow to show signs of stress. If your tree is beginning to look distressed, it is likely from a disturbance or stressor several years prior. A lot of damage I am seeing in sugar maples I attribute to dry winters we had five or six years ago. Once irrigation systems were off, these surface rooted trees were less able to deal with the extremely moisture depleted soils. This initial stress weakened trees and opened them up to secondary pests. This is what we have termed the decline spiral. Just like people, weakened plants are less capable of fighting off pests and infections that may not be seriously detrimental to healthy individuals. You can help keep your tree and plant vigor high with appropriate mulching and watering through the winter. Mulch helps moderate soil temperature fluctuations allowing roots to grow longer into the winter as well as minimizes moisture lost through the soil. Mulch should be kept approximately 3" deep and avoid letting mulch contact the trunk as prolonged moisture on the trunk can encourage pests and diseases itself. Mulch volcanoes are not good! When we have prolonged periods above freezing without precipitation, soils can become so dry that fine roots responsible for water uptake start to die off. A slow trickle of water throughout the root zone penetrating at least a foot deep can greatly reduce the stress on your plants. You can use a metal rod or long screwdriver to test how deeply you have watered as wet soil is easier to penetrate than dry soil.

Out on a Limb; Tree Talk

Jesse Kirk, City Arborist

Fall and Winter Checklist

- Continue to mow grass as long as it grows. As the weather cools, cut it shorter. Keep leaves off the lawn during fall and winter. Remember to keep your blades sharp on your mower.
- Clear overhead utility lines (house drops) of dead or hazardous overhanging limbs to prevent damage during storms. You will need to hire a licensed tree contractor to perform this work. It is not Evergy's responsibility to maintain the drops.
- Plant spring blooming bulbs. It is important to water them in at planting and during dry periods this winter and into spring.
- Before using your fireplace this season, it is important to have a chimney sweep inspect it for creosote buildup to prevent a potential fire. Avoid burning pine to minimize residual buildup.
- Keep gutters clear of debris that cause water to spill or pool. Debris buildup can force water under shingles resulting in interior damage.
- Disconnect hoses from exterior faucets once freezing temperatures arrive to prevent freeze damage to plumbing.
- Do not blow or dump leaves or snow into the street or drainage channels as these are violations of City ordinances.
- It is important not to allow vines and ivy to grow up into the interior of plants as this can be damaging to the full development of trees and evergreens.
- You should not prune spring flowering shrubs now as they set their buds in the fall. Wait until after they flower in the spring.
- If we are experiencing dry weather this fall and winter, it is important to continue watering your trees and shrubs. Concentrate

Tomahawk Road Project



The City continues to plan for its 2022 capital project on Tomahawk Road. Our standard street projects also include stormwater improvements, new curbs, standard drive approaches in need of replacement and a new asphalt roadway.

As with all capital projects, the City coordinates with the utility

utility companies to be sure there are no conflicts with their existing facilities. The utilities often use City capital projects as opportunities to upgrade their infrastructure. Thus far, we know that Water One and Kansas Gas will be replacing a large portion of their systems along our Tomahawk corridor. Both of their systems are from the 1940s and are in need of replacement. Their upgrade projects are slated to begin in October and continue through early 2022. The City's project is tentatively scheduled to begin April 1. For continued updates on the Tomahawk Road project, please visit the City's website, www.missionhillssks.gov, where we have a page dedicated to project updates/news.

Planning for a Better Tomorrow Meghan Woolbright



Taken from sunroof.withgoogle.com

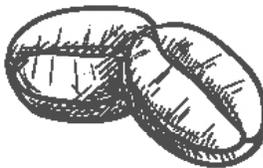
Solar Opportunities in Mission Hills

Advances in energy technologies are having a profound effect on the development industry and an impact on the way we build and redevelop communities. While not anticipated when Mission Hills was originally developed, solar technologies can be an appealing change for property owners to improve operations and contribute to an improved environment.

The natural setting of Mission Hills defines the community experience for residents and visitors. The desire to use new technologies in the design and operation of homes is becoming more prevalent throughout the City. The use of these technologies could contribute to the future development of Mission Hills and its impact on the distinctive character of both the natural and built environments should be understood and mitigated.

To help achieve a balance between the uses of new solar technologies, while preserving the visual character of a community, the following regulations are in place when proposing a solar energy system at your home.

- All solar energy systems plans must be reviewed and approved by the ARB and installed with a building permit.
- Solar energy systems must be mounted onto the roof of a primary or accessory building and directly mounted against the roof or integrated into the roof material. Solar systems cannot be mounted on a detached greenhouse roof.
- Mounting arrangements with panels or apparatus that project above the roof line or at an angle, such as a "stand-off" or "rack" mounting are not allowed.
- Free standing/ground-mounted panels and apparatus are not allowed.
- All mechanical piping, electrical conduits, motors, associated with the solar system must be concealed.

Coffee with a Cop

November 4th from 8am to 10am at Verona Columns
(November 5th will be the rain date)

An opportunity to meet local police officers and discuss community issues.






MISSION HILLS

K A N S A S

6300 State Line Road
Mission Hills, KS 66208

The Columns is published three times a year for the residents of Mission Hills.

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David W. Dickey

City Council:

Bill Bruning
Barbara Nelson
Braden Perry
Eden Thorne
Andy Weed

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Waffles & (Storm)Water

We are excited to announce a new event we are planning for spring 2022! Join us at City Hall for an educational open house on all things stormwater, including: water issues and City policies, how to schedule a complimentary consultation with a stormwater engineer, rain gardens, and the City's environmental grant program. Bring your (Storm)Water questions and we'll provide the waffles...be on the lookout in early 2022 for more information.

SeeClickFix

Mission Hills has recently partnered with SeeClickFix to utilize a new application that will allow residents to report quality-of-life issues and request Mission Hills services.

With the free SeeClickFix mobile app and web tools, Mission Hills residents will now be able to provide City staff with pictures, specific descriptions, and more — valuable information needed to get the job done efficiently. Examples include requesting no parking signs, reporting a pothole, or requesting assistance for a tree issue. In addition, the SeeClickFix platform provides City officials with a centralized issue management system to manage issues from creation to resolution — engaging Mission Hills residents throughout the process.

The SeeClickFix mobile app is available for free download on Android and iPhone. In addition to the mobile apps, residents can send reports through the Mission Hills website and seeclickfix.com.

Solid Waste Contract Going out for Bid

The City's current contract with Waste Management runs through the end of 2021. The City is soliciting bids for solid waste services and hopes to select a provider in November. Once a company is selected for the new contract, a citywide communication will be sent to share that information as well as any changes that lie ahead. Please be on the lookout for future communications with regard to the new solid waste contract that begins January 1, 2022.