

Riverview Historic District

K A N K A K E E , I L L I N O I S

WELCOME TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

April

4: Easter Egg Hunt
18 & 25: Park Clean Up
Cobb Park
25: Wine Social @Skelly's
859 S. Chicago Ave.

May

7: Annual Meeting
Kankakee Depot
31: Criterium Bike Race/Party
915 S. Greenwood Ave.

June

21: Kilbride Family Classic
Cobb Park

July

4: Kids' Bike Parade
Cobb Park

Beginning with this first issue, we are resurrecting a district-wide newsletter. We hope that YOU will contribute ideas, photos and writings so this is truly a grassroots and inclusive document. Our goal is to bring unity to your neighborhood.

We are creating a newsletter about our neighborhood: upcoming events, local initiatives, newcomers, letters and feature stories. There are many opportunities to get on board. Let your voice be heard right here! Look inside and please complete the attached survey.

ANNUAL MEETING

Come for FUN and Food at the Annual Meeting Celebration!

The Riverview Historic District Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, May 7 from 7-9 PM at The Depot. Snacks and beverages will be served. Show the love of your neighborhood by showing up! You'll catch the Riverview fever for sure. During a wrap up, you'll understand WHY we are celebrating!

Think about what changes YOU would like to see in the coming year and how you would like to participate. You'll have a chance to join in as a leader or a worker bee, short term or long. A short business meeting will be held to elect new board members and present the annual budget, but the majority of the time will be dedicated to getting to know YOU! Grab a neighbor and join us on May 7!

When strangers start acting like neighbors... communities are reinvigorated. ~Ralph Nader

PLANTING THE PARKWAYS

Riverview Historic District is again offering to plant our parkways with trees throughout the district. The project, headed by Chip Rorem, has pledged to plant sixty trees over 3 years. To date, thirty-four trees have been planted in the parkway—the grassy area between the curb and sidewalk.

The committee is looking for more locations and participants to take part in the planting program. Riverview will purchase the tree and the City of Kankakee will plant it free of charge.

The homeowner must agree to water the tree once a week during the growing season. Rental properties and unoccupied homes are eligible if a volunteer is willing to be the caretaker. If interested in being part of this program email Chip at chiprorem@gmail.com.



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RIVERVIEW BEGINNINGS

BY JOANNE SCHWADE

In 1983, Kankakee was losing much of its industry and many residents. The slogan "The last one to leave, please turn out the lights" appeared on signs and bumper stickers around town. A few residents in lower Riverview decided to try to restore pride in our neighborhood and in Kankakee. David and Clare Schroeder had just finished the application to place their home on The National Register of Historic Places and Clare suggested that we apply as a district.

We asked a representative from The Illinois State

Historic Preservation Agency to speak at the library and to survey our neighborhood to determine if Riverview was a likely candidate to become an historic district. After surveying our turf, the group suggested boundaries for our district. Rosalind Lind, Mary Benoit, June Boisvert and JoAnne Schwade interviewed each homeowner as they conducted the historical research. Greg Neblock, architect; Don des Lauriers, local historian; and Mardene Hinton, local historian; became integral contributors.

Guided by state historic district criteria, this team de-

termined whether a structure was contributing. Each edifice that fell into the contributing category then needed to be sorted into architecturally significant, historically significant or both areas.

This dedicated and determined group held fundraisers and garage sales to fund the project. Jim Schwade typed the application. On April 16, 1986 Rosalind presented our application in Springfield while Lura Lynn Ryan, Mardene and JoAnne cheered her on. The results are in the book Riverview Historic

District 1866-1935: Tales of Villas, Bungalows, Parks and Drives (Don des Lauriers and Mardene Hinton; Kankakee County Historical Society, June 1997).

Today Kankakee proudly has other neighborhood associations but the Riverview Historic District was the very first and has been a model for the others.



"We cannot live

only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men."

~ Herman Melville

GETTING TO KNOW YOU YAK? WRITE? EMAIL?

The RHD board is looking for new and old ways to spread the word as well as hear from residents. We do realize that email, Twitter, FaceBook, and texting reach the digital crowd. Others like to phone or receive paper in their doors! To find out HOW you like to communicate we are refreshing our records through a district-wide survey

attached to this newsletter. PLEASE participate. You can fill it out with a pen...and write more on the back OR go to the website or Facebook and fill it out digitally. Whatever works, because we want each and every resident to be included in all district activities. Our web site riverviewhistoricdistrict.org will feature a blog where everyone can jump in with ideas,

comments and questions. Like us on FaceBook, and follow us on Instagram @riverviewhistoric. Other ideas? Tell us HOW to know you better!

Join the movement into a stronger and improved historic district, a place we like to call home.

COBB PARK CLEAN UP SCHEDULED

Cobb Park is the jewel of the neighborhood, but it needs our help to really shine! Our new neighborhood gardening group will clean the park, weed the large flower bed and clean debris from the river bank.

Two initial work days have been scheduled as follows:

Saturday April 18th 9am to noon (weather permitting). Priority projects will be cleaning debris from the park, trimming and cleaning around the gazebo, and cleaning debris and old plant material from the raised flower bed and river bank. Riverview Historic District will provide coffee

and bottled water, you provide your own tools, energy and expertise. RSVP to elisabethdunbar@gmail.com.

Saturday April 25th 8:30am to 2pm. Join Comcast Cares for projects that include spreading crushed limestone to improve the path, painting the gazebo, spreading mulch,

and planting flowers. Food, beverages and a t-shirt will be provided to volunteers, bring your own tools. Comcast Cares will donate \$10 to the Kankakee Valley Park District for each volunteer to be used toward future park improvements. No RSVP required.