

UNAPPROVED CHESTERFIELD NEWSLETTER 33



May 28, 2013

By John Hoffmann

CHESTERFIELD PLANNING STAFF AGAINST FOURTH SIGN AT PREMIUM

OUTLET MALL: On the Chesterfield Planning Commission agenda for Wednesday night May 29 is a request for a fourth monument sign along Olive Street Road in front of the Premium Outlet Mall. This sign was originally suggested if the mall expanded and a new road is built. Wolfe Properties, the major developer of the mall now wants to put up the sign before the first stage of construction of the mall is completed and long before any plans to expand the mall and add a new street.

The city's Planning Department recommends against adding the fourth sign until such a time that the mall actually expands and adds the road.

MONARCH HAS SECOND WORST WORKER COMP FIGURES IN THE REGION:

The folks at Daniel and Henry who handle insurance for most of the fire districts in the region spoke at the invitation of newly elected Monarch Board member and former state Senator Jane Cunningham on Thursday May 23.



Jane Cunningham kept extending the work comp presentation by asking additional questions. On this topic it appeared as if Jane had done her homework.

Steve Wicker of Daniel and Henry spoke for almost an hour. The numbers showed that Monarch spends 5% of its overall budget on work comp insurance because its' poor past loss history. Only the scandal ridden Northeast Fire Protection District has a worse work comp history than Monarch in the last decade.

The Melville Fire Protection has seven fire stations compared to Monarch's five. But their work comp insurance costs are in 2012 were 65% lower than Monarch's. Melville's percentage of work comp cost compared to salaries in 2012 was 4.28%. Monarch's was 9.13%.

Wicker said he was impressed over the last year in the reduction of claims Monarch has had. He added in the first three months in 2013 there have been very few claims. However he told the board that it takes three years of low claims to trigger cost reductions after multiple years of excessive claim losses. Monarch is currently paying a 10% penalty due to the high percentage of claims over the last five years.



Steve Wicker of Daniel and Henry spent almost an hour discussing problems with Monarch's work comp losses and the reasons for the very high insurance rates the fire district is paying.

Jane Cunningham was impressive grilling Wicker on identifying the problem and ways to correct it.

In fairness to Chief Tom Vineyard (who we have written about coming from a North County fire district that operated only one fire station with no ambulance service) his former district, one of the smaller ones in the region, had a very good workers comp loss ratio. The district served Wellston and Pagedale which meant the firefighters saw more working fires and had a greater chance for injuries than firefighters in West County.

CITIZEN COMMENTS CARDS AND ONLINE ACCESS: Fire district President Robin Harris addressed the command staff saying he wanted a system of both hard cards and computer internet access for citizen comments on the quality of service, including inspections the fire district is providing.



District President Robin Harris



Chief Tom vineyard

NEW ATTORNEY STOPS LAST MINUTE AGENDA CHANGES: The Monarch’s new attorney Mike Bakewell has suggested that the official meeting agenda be set and posted at the fire district office and online at least 24 hours before a meeting. According to Monarch President Robin Harris, Bakewell has advised that the board should stop amending the agenda at the start of meetings unless there is a clear emergency issue to be addressed. By not amending the agenda it would be harder for the District to pull any “fast ones” over on the public. (My words not Harris’ or Bakewell’s)



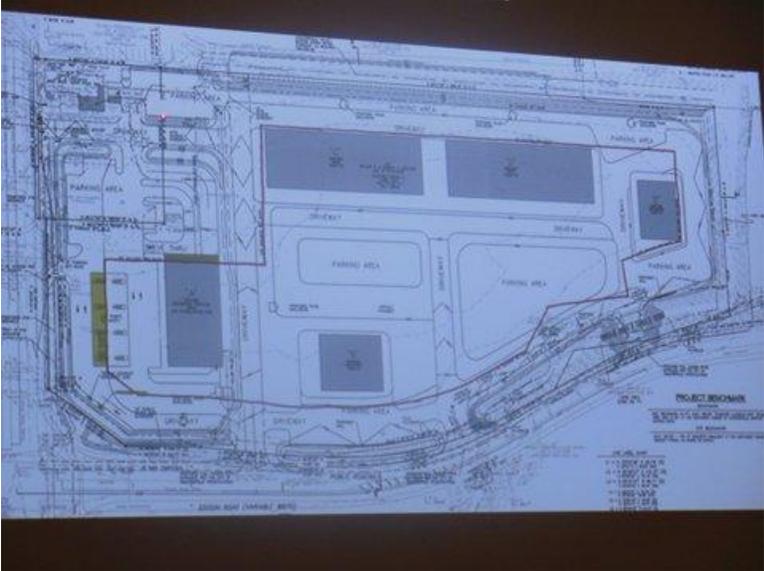
Mike Bakewell, Monarch’s new attorney, has advised the board to change some procedures prior to meetings to avoid not properly advising the public of agenda issues.

12 YEARS AND PLANS FOR CORNER OF LONG AND

EDISON KEEP CHANGING: When the first plans came along by Bill Kerchoff there was no intersection of Long Road and Edison Road, as Edison and Long did not yet exist.

By 2007 there were tentative approval from the Planning and Public Works Committee for a development on the northeast corner of Long Road and Edison Road. At that time there was no gas station or convenience store in the plans. There was also only one entrance along Long Road plus one on Edison.

Now in 2013 Kerchhoff wants to include Dr. Larson’s dentist office into a new development that he is calling the Monarch Center. He wants to add a gas station with two rows of four dual pumps for 16 fueling locations plus a convenience store. He also wants a 4-way entrance exit along Long Road at the north end of the property by the dentist office and a right turn “in-only” entrance by the gas station.



PROBLEMS: The first two clear problems are that the convenience store itself and half of the gas pumps don't meet the city's set back requirements.

Next the right turn only entrance by the gas pumps is unsafe according to city Public Works director Mike Geisel, who said there should be an 80-foot clearance of obstructions for turning cars and the plans only show 30-feet. Geisel believes that people pumping gas at the outside pumps could be in jeopardy.

The developers are also planning at a later date to add a car wash and a drive thru business of some sort.

OFFICIALS WEIGH IN: Committee Chairwoman Connie Fults repeatedly said she was concerned with the right turn only entrance to the gas station would force traffic to slow down on Long Road and become a safety issue.

Councilman Barry Flachsbart said he was voting against any plan that included a gas station.



Councilman Dan Hurt (center) listens to the developer's attorney Mike Doster make a pitch while the tablet computers of Mayor Bob Nation, Councilpersons Barry Flachsbart and Nancy Greenwood illuminate the table.

Councilman Dan Hurt, while being very gracious toward Bill Kerchoff said he had a problem with the building and pumps violating city set back requirements. He also brought up concerns with parking.

Councilwoman Nancy Greenwood said she also had problems with the traffic entrances and setbacks.

Councilman Derek Grier said the committee approved plans in 2007 and should approve these plans also. (Grier was not an elected official in 2007.)

Mayor Bob Nation, who does not have a vote on the committee, stated he was agreed with Grier and thought the plans should be approved.

IS THERE AN EXCESS WHICH WILL SPELL FAILURE? Within two blocks of this plan for a gas station and convenience store there is already the existing BP gas station and convenience store next to Colleen Schoendienst's McDonald's.

Plus there are plans before the city for a U-Gas gas station and convenience store across Chesterfield Airport Road from the BP station. In a completely free capitalistic society people should be allowed to risk and fail. However, is there actually enough customer demand for three gas stations and convenience stores that close together?

Also on the southwest corner of Long and Edison Road the shopping center is about half empty. We counted 12 empty storefronts looking for businesses.

The committee voted to table the matter to their next meeting.



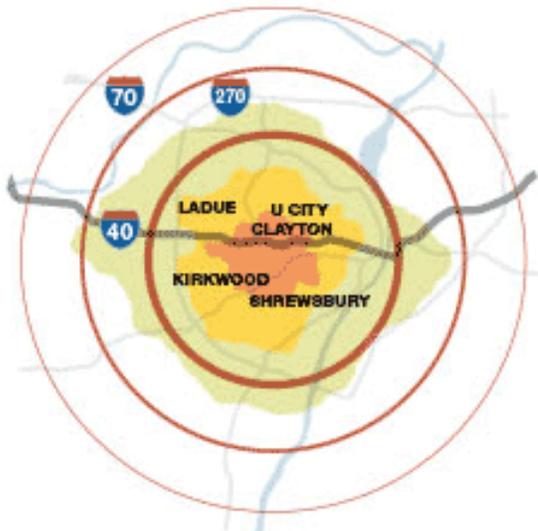
The area being proposed for a development of five buildings including a gas station and convenience store with a later addition of a car wash and a drive thru business. On the left side of the photo is a brick building that was formerly a church and is now a dentist office.

COMMERICAL VEHICLES OUT OF SUBDIVISIONS: This topic was tabled in 2011 but it is back and the committee has instructed the planning department to draw up amendments to the existing ordinances to ban certain commercial vehicles and trucks from being kept on residential property or residential streets overnight.

CLASSICAL RADIO IN THE CAR FOR CLAYTON, LADUE AND FRONTENAC, BUT NOT FOR CHESTERFIELD: The new classical music station has been on the air for a few months, bringing back classical music to part of St. Louis after the Lutheran Missouri Synod refused to accept outside bids in the sale of KFYO two years ago.

There is one problem with the new station and that is coverage. The analog transmitter is low wattage heard on 107.3. The station does not have traditional call letters because it is a special low-wattage station. Technically the call letters are K297BI-LP. The stick, better known to non-radio people as the antenna is hung on the old KADI tower near Manchester Road and Hanley Roads. 250 watts of power gives the signal a clear reception over less than 20 miles. At about I-270 the signal might fade a bit. By Manchester and 141 it can begin breaking up.

Now if you a digital HD radio the coverage area about doubles. The HD signal can be heard at 96.3 HD. Only about 25% of new radios are HD. Some in the industry think HD radio is going to go the way of Sony Beta tapes. I think If you look at the below coverage map you can see the strongest signal is in the Ladue, Clayton, Webster Groves area. The signal begins to erode slightly at about Lindbergh and drops off the table between I-270 and Highway 141.



ANOTHER WANDERING WAVE: I was speaking with the manager the area's last



radio station with a jazz format, WSIE (88.7 FM). While you can hear the station fine almost to Kingdom City on I-70, you cannot here it at all on I-270 between Manchester Road and I-44. WSIE has a 50,000 watt signal broadcast from Illinois.

This originally appeared in our recent Ex-Alderman Town and Country newsletter.
I WONDER IF THIS GUY EVER SAW MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET?



Schnuck's supermarket CEO Scott Schnuck may replace former Missouri History Museum president Robert Archibald as the least sincere person in St. Louis. For Archibald it was the purchase of contaminated land owned by former St. Louis mayor and Museum board member Freeman Bosley, Jr. for \$875,000 (when it was valued at 25% of the purchase price) and wanting \$575,000 for unused vacation time when he resigned.

Schnuck's crime was to knowingly let his customer and their banks get fleeced when he knew there was security breach in the credit card transfers with his supermarket chain.

Schnuck finally hit the airwaves in the middle of May telling tens of thousands of longtime customers who had their credit and debit cards hacked that he was sorry.

If Schnuck had only been watching the original movie, A Miracle on 34th Street every year like I do, he would have immediately recognized a rare business opportunity.



Mr. Gimbel, Kris Kringle and Mr. Macy.

Here is the script that I would have had CEO Scott Schnuck in ads on March 12, not May 12.

Somehow some of our customers while shopping at Schnucks store have had their credit and debit cards compromised.

We are working hard to find out how this happened and to make sure it never happens again.

In the meantime, effective today to protect customers and their banks Schnucks will no longer accept credit and debit cards until we are sure it is safe to use them again.

We will gladly accept your personal checks with identification. No special check cashing card will be required.

If you have to use a credit or debit card when grocery shopping we ask that you shop at one of our fine competitors' stores, until we are sure it is safe to use them at Schnucks.

The financial safety of our valued customers is our utmost concern. If you can't use cash or checks we hope that you will be back to see your friends at Schnuck's stores just as soon as we have this problem corrected.

This ad would have made Scott Schnuck a retailing hero. Looking out for the little guy before profits! Being a straight shooter with the public! He had that opportunity and either didn't realize it or didn't want to use it. What he ended up doing was driving a large number of formerly loyal customers to Dierbergs, Shop and Save and Wal-Mart. His actions will now affect Schnuck's bottom line for years to come. He could have been Kris Kringle but ended up as Scrooge.

IS THERE A LESSON FOR THE PARKWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM THE WEBSTER GROVES HIGH SCHOOL FIRE: Last weekend there was a roof fire at Webster Groves High School. The origin of the fire was traced to a recently installed solar panel.

We reported how the Parkway School District in 2012 was giving itself a big pat on the back claiming recently purchased solar systems would save the district \$1.2 million over the next 20 years. However the system will cost \$1.4 million.

After the Webster Groves High School fire it turns out that some solar systems have been responsible for starting fires. The solar program with Parkway will not break even over 20 years and it could end up costing the school district even more.



The northwest section of Webster Groves High School at 100 Selma Ave, near Lockwood ablaze!

THE LONG WAIT FOR A BISCUIT: If the big brown truck pulls up in front of the house, even if the packages go to the house across the street...there is a vigil in the hope of getting a biscuit.



ELLISVILLE OPERATING WITH 1913 TECHNOLOGY AND NOT 2013..WHEN IT COMES TO RECORDS REQUESTS: If you remember from our last Chesterfield newsletter, I had filed a Missouri Sunshine Open Records request with the City of Ellisville asking to see Councilwoman Cindy Pool's email for the week prior to her vote against rescinding the impeachment of Mayor Adam Paul. Pool after her vote told reporters part of the reason for voting against rescinding the impeachment were all the emails she had received two days before the meeting from residents asking her to keep the impeachment of Paul in place.

I didn't believe a word she had said and wanted to prove myself wrong or her a liar when I field the request.

Here is the last email I received from the Ellisville City clerk on the matter:

***From: Kate Demeter [mailto:kate@ellisville.mo.us]
Sent: Friday, May 24, 2013 6:31 AM
To: 'John Hoffmann'
Cc: 'Cindy Pool'
Subject: records request***

Dear Mr. Hoffmann

I have examined Ellisville public records which are in my possession and in addition have made inquiry of Council Member Pool as to any disclosable documents in her possession. There are no documents responsive to your request for "all emails to and from Councilperson Cindy Pool from May 8, 2013 to May 15 and including May 15, 2013."

Please note that Section 610.025 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri requires a member of the City Council to retain on a city computer or to copy me on e-mail messages "when counting the sender, a majority of the body's members are copied."

In addition, please note that Section 610.010(6) defines a public record as excluding an "internal memorandum or letter received or prepared by or on behalf of a member of a public governmental body consisting of advice, opinions and recommendations in connection with the deliberative decision-making process of said body, unless such records are retained by the public governmental body or presented at a public meetings."

*Kate Demeter
Ellisville City Clerk*

After my report on the last Ellisville meeting, Pool's vote and her comments I did receive several e-mails from Ellisville residents with copies of emails they had sent to Pool urging her to vote in favor of returning Mayor Paul to office. It is amazing a city government like Ellisville cannot manage to save emails it receives, but regular folks had no problem saving the emails they sent to City Hall.

THE STATE REPRESENTATIVE GETS CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE: I don't know if you have noticed but over the years I have made it a point to show how much money Representative John Diehl was collected to run unopposed for the state house. Over 4 years it has totaled a mere \$1.1-million. I have also written about some of the fine special interest groups that hand him large checks on a regular basis. Big tobacco, gambling, the Virginia ham and pork company that needs special legislation in Missouri to keep from getting sued for polluting Missouri properties, all like to give Diehl big dollars.

I was happy to see that not only a conservative like me has noticed Diehl, but so have the liberals at the Post-Dispatch editorial board. I know a lot of West County residents have dropped their subscription to the Post-Dispatch so I thought I'd share this with you. Here is an editorial about Rep. Diehl that appeared in the Sunday May 26 Post-Dispatch:



Editorial: Corruption in the Legislature? Republicans say yes

May 25, 2013 6:15 am • [By the Editorial Board](#)

When Missouri Republicans [level the charge](#) of corruption at members of their own party, it's time to start paying attention.

Such was the case not once, but twice on the last day of this year's session of the Legislature.

In the upper chamber, Sen. Brad Lager, R-Savannah, blamed corruption in the House for the annual stalling of bipartisan tax credit reform.

In the House, Rep. Doug Funderburk, R-St. Peters, lobbed a similar charge against House leadership, for trying to sneak through last-minute changes to a utility bill.

Mssrs. Lager and Funderburk were hardly the best messengers for such important news. [Neither is exactly squeaky clean](#) in the ethics department.

But their charge is still a strong indictment of the culture of corruption in the Missouri Legislature. While they didn't name him, both men were targeting, among others, Majority Floor Leader John Diehl, R-Town and Country. The name is pronounced "deal."

Mr. Diehl's [campaign finance reports](#) help identify a key reason for the Legislature's current dysfunction.

Among those Mr. Diehl is paying for political advice are three Republican political consultants who also double as lobbyists. Mr. Diehl, who is in line to be the next Speaker of the House, has been paying lobbyist/consultant James Harris a \$500-a-month retainer. He's been paying lobbyist/consultant David Barklage \$1,000 a month. And he has paid lobbyist/consultant Steve Tilley (the former Speaker of the House) \$2,000 a month.

Mr. Diehl is paying them to help keep him in power. Their lobbying clients are paying them to advance or block legislation. As lobbyists, Mr. Barklage and Mr. Tilley represented opposite sides of the same utility legislation that got Mr. Funderburk [so upset](#) on the session's last day.

Ethics laws exist to help taxpayers see the flow of money that is used to influence legislators. In the case of Mr. Diehl and many others, the money is flowing so many different directions that ethical lines are blurred — precisely the point made by Mssrs. Lager and Funderburk.

At least in Mr. Diehl's case, the money trail, however blurry, can be followed.

That's not the case with Tom Smith, the chief of staff for Speaker of the House Tim Jones, R-Eureka. Mr. Smith runs a political consulting firm that gets paid by the very lawmakers who, if they want access to Mr. Jones, have to go through Mr. Smith. Then he bills taxpayers for comp time he takes from his state job to do his political work.

State law doesn't require him to file a personal financial disclosure, so taxpayers can't see who's paying him.

It's legal, but it's wrong.

Two years ago, we published a series called ["Fix the Legislature"](#) that identified three principal problems with the General Assembly: term limits, the redistricting process and campaign finance/ethics reform.

Each of them in its own way helped make this year's one of the most forgettable legislative sessions in recent memory. Yet Republicans didn't lift a finger to address ethics and campaign finance reform. They made only a half-hearted attempt to limit the damage of term limits. And the evils of gerrymandered districts were on full display as they traipsed from one conspiracy theory bill to another, all in a naked attempt to please the tiniest sliver of right-wing voters.

The Missouri Legislature remains a very broken place.

Don't take our word for it. Listen to the Republicans who run the place.

SMITTY'S WAITRESS UPDATE: I spoke with Nancy Seaman the popular waitress and bartender at Smitty's who has been off work since January 28 when she was attacked by a drunk customer.

Nancy, who has worked at Smitty's for 23-years, said she still has medical issues. She is facing more facial surgery to repair the damage when the drunk customer slashed her faces with a broken glass after Seaman refused to serve her.

Her most recent problem is that she cannot shut her left eye which received nerve damage from the attack. The eye doctor is now treating her for "dry eye" and wanted her to wear a patch over the eye, but her cheek is still so sensitive that the patch caused too much pain. She still does not have feeling in three teeth, is having headaches and blurry vision.

She also added that 90 days after the attack her work comp insurance carrier has not paid the initial hospital bill for the emergency treatment at St. Luke's Hospital on the night of the attack.

MUSIC AND FOOD: Speaking of Smitty's it was the Anita Rosamond Show on the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend at Smitty's. Now the youthful looking Rosamond has been in St. Louis for a few years and has been playing for the high end fancy-smancy crowds. She used to be a popular piano bar entertainer at Al Bakers at Clayton Road and Brentwood Blvd. After Baker's vanished, for a number of years she held forth on weekends behind the piano at the Danielle Hotel in Clayton and was a regular at the Ritz. She does play monthly at Il Bel Lago in Creve Coeur.

Believe me the demographics are slightly different when she plays at Smitty's. There are not a lot of BMWs and Mercedes in parking lot. The place fills up 30 minutes before she starts. The crowd is informal and is the age you would expect to find on a Holland America or Cunard cruise ship during the off season. The crowd consists of exactly who Pat Boones is trying reach with the walk-in bathtub commercials.

Here is what makes it such an event. They are all there to have a great time. They clap, chant the names of guest performers or songs, they sign along and the get up and dance.

Anita always has her regular friends who show up and perform. The one friend you are most likely to see is retired high school coach Jerry Moser, who specializes in songs written before 1960.



Bob Johnson of North County was at Smitty's last Weekend and did several Johnny Cash songs.



Jerry Moser and Anita do a duet as customers dance At Smitty's back in 2012.



Perhaps the two youngest people in Smitty's last weekend were Anita and a regular customer's granddaughter, Callie.



Jerry Moser knocks out Old Wedding Ring as people with old wedding rings push the tables back and dance.



One of my favorites of Anita at Smitty's because everyone was having such a good time. It was the big close as everyone sang and danced to New York New York with Moser and Anita taking turns on the vocals.

Anita will be back at Smitty's on Saturday June 22 from 3-6.

Culture Clash: The night before Anita will be playing at the loft at John Mineo's. That will be a very different crowd...like the ones Anita charmed at Al Baker's and The Danielle. Since she is playing the next day at Smitty's I doubt many of her Smitty's followers will show at Mineo's (come on...some of them don't drive at night anymore) but if they did it would be an interesting mixture of people. She will be at Mineo's from 7-10 on Friday June 21.

BIG BAND SUNDAYS: The Dave Dickey Big Band features college music deans plus professors and local musicians. It is a fixture at the Kirkwood Station Brewery on Jefferson just east of Kirkwood Road on the fourth Sunday of each month. The band will be taking June off, however big band jazz music will be at the Kirkwood Station Brewery on Wednesday June 19 from 7-9 when the Route 66 Jazz Orchestra will take the stage.



The Dave Dickey Big Band just before kicking things off last Sunday.

One of the treats of the 6pm-9pm performance by the Dave Dickey Big Band is that when the band takes a break talented local high school and college musicians take the stage and play during intermission. Another treat is the number of other well known St. Louis area musicians who show up and hear this group.



A sextet of student musicians take the stage during the big band's intermission.

CARTOONS:





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