



PARK BEAT

The Pulse of Greater Boulevard Park

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association # Box 163179, Sacramento 95816 # May 2021

The Proposed “20th Place” Project Is Out of Place

As stated in an email sent to the Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association membership on April 7, the members of the BPNA Executive Board are strongly opposed to the construction of a five-story, fifty-unit market-rate apartment building on the west side of 20th Street between F Street and Eggplant Alley (called “20th Place”). Sponsored by Cassidyne Properties, a real estate investment company, the structure would be larger than allowed under the current General Plan designation for this site. Although the developer claims that the exceedance is justified by the “community benefits” offered by the project, the fact remains that the building as designed is too large and does not suit the location. Towering over neighboring structures (most of which are one or two stories in height), it would create a wall between our two historic districts, New Washington School and Boulevard Park.

After meeting with the developer and a project architect on April 1 (see article on **page 2**), the members of the BPNA Board sent [this](#) letter to them, expressing their concerns. Residents also are encouraged to voice their opinions. To learn more about the 20th Place Project and the City’s preliminary responses to the application, go to the City’s Development Tracker website (<https://sacramento.civicsinsight.com/>) and type in the address, **1925 F St** (as written, without a period). Comment emails should be sent to Patrick Molloy, the developer (pmolloy@gavden.com); to Sean de Courcy in the City Planning Department (sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org); and to our City Councilmember, Katie Valenzuela (kvalenzuela@cityofsacramento.org). Please copy BPNA on your correspondence (BoulevardParkNA@gmail.com). The deadline for sending comments is **May 24**.



2020 Income Tax Return Filing Deadline: **May 17**

As of this writing, the deadline for filing and paying 2020 income taxes (both state and federal) is **Monday, May 17**. Individuals earning **\$66,000 or less** last year are eligible for free online filing and/or tax preparation assistance through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA). Just go to the “MyFreeTaxes” website (<https://www.myfreetaxes.com/>), sponsored by United Way.

As reported on the City website (<https://www.cityofsacramento.org/HR/Volunteer-Opportunities/VITA>), the MyFreeTaxes website “allows taxpayers to complete federal and up to 2 state returns for free, electronically file, and have their refund directly deposited into their checking and savings accounts.” For more information, go to the United Way website dedicated to taxes (<https://yourfreetaxprep.org>). Residents also can call **800-500-4931** for updates about in-person events and drop-off options in Sacramento County. **Important Note:** Because it is taking the agency longer than usual to process paper returns, the IRS is urging taxpayers to file their 2020 returns **electronically**, and to choose **direct deposit** if they are eligible for tax refunds.

A Brief Report from the BPNA Board

The April 1st Board meeting, held virtually using Zoom, opened with a guest presentation by Patrick Molloy of Cassadyne Properties, with assistance from architect Sam Sanderson and staff member Kristen Dronberger. They came to share information about a new 50-unit, five story apartment building proposed for the northwest corner of 20th and F Streets (20th Place Project), between the historic Boulevard Park and New Washington School neighborhoods. The proposal involves the merging of smaller lots, the conversion of an existing warehouse into a parking garage, and a request for a General Plan deviation from the City to allow for the greater mass of the apartment building, citing “community benefit.” The project would provide 31 parking spaces for the 50 units and market rate rental pricing (project website: <https://20thplacesac.com/>). After the meeting, as reported in the article on **page 1**, Board members sent a letter to the developer and architect (for a link, go to the BPNA Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/BPNABoardMember/>).

Next on the agenda was a joint presentation by Lisa Culp, Executive Director of Women’s Empowerment, and Chantay White, a graduate of the program. Lisa told Board members about the work done by her organization, an independent nonprofit that provides unhoused women with a variety of social and educational services, as well as a pathway out of homelessness (website: <https://womens-empowerment.org/>). Chantay then described in detail how she found work, a home, and a newly discovered self-respect through the program.

The rest of the April Board meeting covered a range of topics. Board members discussed the District 4 Neighborhood Meeting hosted by our Councilmember, Katie Valenzuela, on March 31. At this virtual meeting, Katie asked for support of her proposed District 4 Homelessness Task Force Plan, which will address finding temporary and permanent homes for unhoused people in our district. She is also asking the County to provide the homeless with more social services, essential for making meaningful progress. The Board meeting concluded with discussions of the “Slow and Active Streets” initiative now being tested in three areas of Midtown (*photo below*) and a new residential building project proposed for the lot behind 2714 D Street in the New Era Park/Marshall School Neighborhood. This would involve splitting the backyard lot and constructing a two-story duplex on Democracy Alley.



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Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association's purpose: The BPNA was created to support, promote, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the greater Boulevard Park neighborhood. By achieving this goal we strive to improve the quality of life for others who work and live in and around Boulevard Park, and therefore in Sacramento as a whole.

Committees

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May 2021:

Places to Go, Things To Do (Really & Virtually)

NOTE: As of April 23, very few live public events were listed on the City's Sac 365 website (<https://www.sacramento365.com/>). Check individual organization websites for announcements and updates. Below are a few events, programs, and dates to remember.

Every Wednesday: "Wednesdays at Winn," a certified farmers' market in Winn Park, with artisans and food trucks (28th and P Sts., 3-7 p.m.; website: <http://exploremidtown.org/wednesdays-at-winn/>).

Every Saturday: Midtown Farmers' Market (8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 20th Street between J and L Streets).

Online and streamed events in Sacramento: Go to Sac 365's Online/Virtual space site for information about online programs (<https://www.sacramento365.com/venue/online-virtual-space/>).

May is Bike Month! Read about it on: <https://mayisbikemonth.com/#/>

May 1 & 2: Sacramento Cactus and Succulent Sale, Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. (9-6 on Sat.; 9-4 on Sun.; please wear face masks)

May 1 & 2: "Fiesta en la Calle" Cinco De Mayo Festival, Southside Park (7th and T Streets): 4-9 p.m. on Sat., noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday. Music, dance, vendors, refreshments, and more. Free admission. *Please note: no pets, outside food, drinks, or ice chests are allowed.*

Sun., May 2: "Different Kinds of Minds Have Different Talents," a Zoom webinar with Dr. Temple Grandin, hosted by Friends of the Sacramento Library (1-2 p.m.; free). Register in advance via the website: <https://saclibrary.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=347376&backTo=Calendar&startDate=2021/05/01>

Places to Go, Things to Do (cont.)

Thu., May 6: BPNA Board Meeting, via Zoom (6:30-8 p.m.). Open to BPNA members and other interested residents. Contact Dave Herbert for information or to suggest agenda items.

Fri., May 7: B Street Theatre presents Six Feet Apart: Virtual live concert by Fado singer Ramana Viera (7 p.m., followed by a Q&A with the artist). Free, but advance registration is required. Website: <https://bstreettheatre.org/six-feet-apart/>

May 8 & 9: East Sac Garden Tour, to benefit the David Lubin Elementary School: virtual tours of gardens in the Fab Forties neighborhood. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. Website: <http://davidlubingardentour.com/>

Sat., May 8: Sacramento Chrysanthemum Society Show & Sale, Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. (9-4; please wear face masks)

Sat., May 8: Grand opening of Amatoria Fine Art Books, 1831 F St. (11 a.m.-6 p.m.): art book sale, booth by the Art of Toys, live music, free portrait drawings, food, and more.

Sun., May 9: Sacramento Antique Faire, now being held at a new location (2500 Broadway; 6:30 a.m.-3 p.m.). Face masks and social distancing are required. Website (with parking lots indicated): <https://www.sacantiquefaire.com/new-location>

Sun., May 16: Sac Open Studios 2021: Deadline for artists' registration. For information, go to: <https://sacopenstudios.com/>

Sun., May 16: The Alexander String Quartet performs Mozart (virtual event; 2 p.m.; \$15 admission; free for UC Davis students). Website: <https://www.mondaviarts.org/event/2020-21/alexander-string-quartet-7>

Mon., May 17: New deadline for filing and paying 2020 income taxes (extension announced in March). See also the article on **page 1**.

Thur., May 20: "California Conversations: Sacramento's Japantown:" free panel discussion, conducted via Zoom (5:30-6:30 p.m.; attendance limited to 100 participants; advance registration required). Website: <https://www.californiamuseum.org/ca-conversations>.

May 21-23: Verge Fair 2021, a new 3-day art market offering a hybrid array of virtual art lectures, artist Q&As, live stream performances, in-person events, art sales, and more. Website: <https://www.vergeart.com/attend/verge-fair-2021/>

Sat., May 29: DOCO Makers Market (11 a.m.-4 p.m.): local artisans, crafters and makers, plus live musical entertainment, all at the pop-up in West Plaza, near Macy's.

... *And looking ahead to early June:*

Thu., June 3: BPNA Board Meeting, via Zoom (6:30-8 p.m.). Open to BPNA members and other interested residents. Contact Dave Herbert for information or to suggest agenda items.

Sat., June 5: Doggy Dash 2021 (starting at 8 a.m.): annual fundraiser for the SPCA, conducted virtually, with dogs and their owners participating independently at the locations of their choice. Website: <https://www.sspca.org/doggy-dash>

Sun., June 6: The Alexander String Quartet performs Mozart (virtual event; 2 p.m.; \$15 admission; free for UC Davis students). Website: <https://www.mondaviarts.org/event/2020-21/alexander-string-quartet-4-0>

The Several Homes of the Doctors Briggs

Four members of one of the most prominent medical families in Sacramento in the late 1800s and early 1900s owned city homes built by equally prominent architects and contractors. Dr. Wallace A. Briggs was the first of three physician brothers to move from Ohio to Sacramento, arriving in 1877. He was followed by Dr. William E. Briggs, considered the “pioneer of west coast ophthalmology,” and by Dr. Asahel E. Briggs, whose son George A. Briggs, an ENT doctor, was one of the founders of Sutter Hospital. Three homes once owned by William and Wallace Briggs have been included on the annual historic home tours sponsored by Preservation Sacramento: **1830 N Street** (built for William in 1880); **2209 Capitol Avenue** (purchased by William in 1904); and **2015 21st Street** (designed by E. C. Hemmings for Wallace in 1914).

The youngest Briggs brother, Asahel, settled in Boulevard Park. His son George purchased two adjacent lots in the 2200 block of G Street, then hired the architectural firm of Sellon & Pearson to design a house for his parents in 1912 (**2211 G**) while retaining the lot beside it for himself and his wife Hester, a painter and director of the Kingsley Art Club. Their house, **2217 G**, was built three years later by William R. Saunders, a local contractor who was responsible for several structures in Boulevard Park. Sellon, designer of the Asahel Briggs house, had been the first state architect of California and also designed another Boulevard Park house, 2101 G Street, in 1909. E. C. Hemmings, architect of the Wallace Briggs house, was Sellon’s partner at that time.

The Briggs family must have liked Sellon’s work, because nine years after he designed the G Street house, Asahel and Sarah Briggs had a brick contractor, Philip J. O’Brien, build a very similar two-story stucco residence at **3111 I Street** in the new McKinley Park Tract (1921). This became the home of George and Hester Briggs in 1923, after Asahel died and Sarah moved away from Sacramento. Eight years later, George Briggs swapped houses with another East Sacramento property owner, purchasing **1127 45th Street** in exchange for 3111 I Street. Perhaps Briggs chose to buy this stately residence because it had been designed by George Sellon (1922). Although it was built only a year after the I Street house, the 1127 45th Street house is in a very different style, one inspired by old English (Tudor) architecture.

For photos of the Briggs houses at 2211 G and 3111 I, see the article on page 5.



Homebuilders:

Many thanks to Robert Sewell for sharing this photograph of a welcome sight seen at Sutter’s Landing Park: a pair of nesting Swainson’s Hawks.

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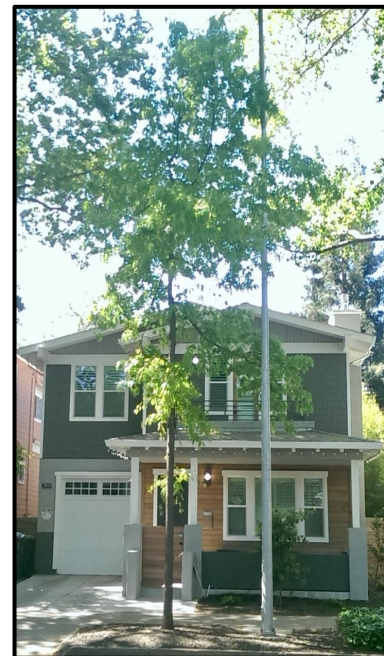
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The Trees of Midtown: Scarlet Oak

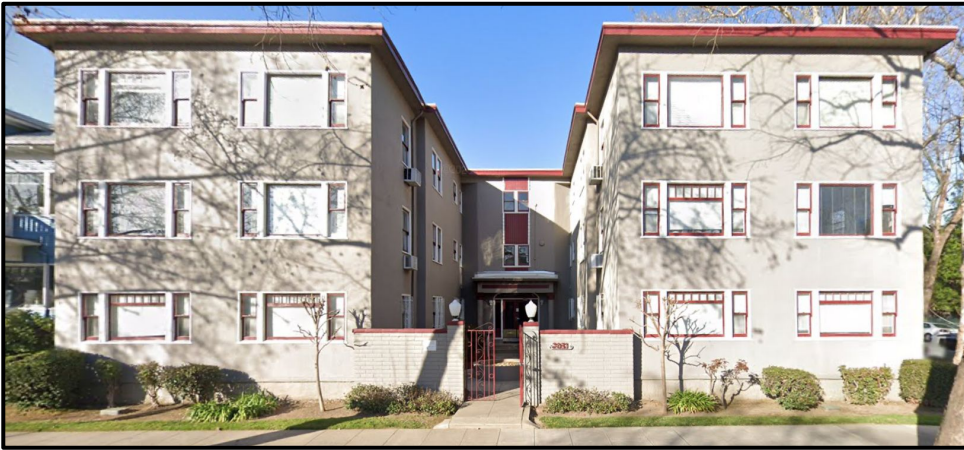
Occasionally planted along Sacramento midtown streets, the scarlet oak, *Quercus coccinea*, is so named for the brilliant scarlet (*coccinea*) color of the leaves in the Fall. This makes for a beautiful autumn tree, but the fact that the dead brown leaves tend to persist through the winter is not so attractive.

The scarlet oak is a round topped and open headed deciduous tree, with a uniform upright shape. Also found in California, it is native to the central and eastern United States. The mature height is generally 50 to 80 feet. The scarlet oak is a suitable street or lawn tree, deep rooted, and adaptable to a wide variety of climates and soils. Its acorns have very bitter kernels and are green in color, turning pale brown about 18 months after pollination. The fairly small scarlet oak shown in the photograph at the right is in front of the house at 2010 F Street, just east of 20th.





In this ninth article of the series, we explore the **Prairie School** style. Popular from 1910 to 1925, the Prairie style was initiated by Chicago architect Frank Lloyd Wright and developed by his students and imitating contemporaries, hence the name “Prairie School.” The style is most recognized by its flat or hipped roof, low-pitched, with broad, overhanging eaves, typically boxed. Most Prairie School homes are two stories with one-story wings, porches, and in some examples *porte-cochères*. Eaves, cornices, and façade details emphasize the buildings’ horizontal lines.



Veress Apartments, 2031 I Street (1923; Contributing Resource)

Porches are supported by massive square, tapered square, or paired square columns. Exterior walls are most commonly stuccoed, but can also be covered with board and batten, wide lapped, or shingled wood siding. Windows are commonly grouped in bands with a common sill, again emphasizing horizontality. Substantial chimneys are also a common feature in houses in this style.

The two photos at the top show:
Left: Briggs House, 2211 G St. (1912)
Right: Briggs House, 3111 I St. (1921)
(see article on page 4)

Beyond Spandex: Utility Cycling, Explained

by Enzo Arona

If you asked any American to describe a “cyclist,” most people would picture a man, tight clothes, an expensive bike, and an aerodynamic helmet. I have no qualms with this type of cycling and find the strong community that emerges out of it endearing— it’s just not a level of commitment that is feasible for most.

For too long, cycling has been viewed by Americans as either a children’s activity or a pro sport. Bicycle manufacturers perpetuate these perceptions, selling bikes with training wheels and high-tech products to those who pride themselves on knowing the weight of their bicycle.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Consider Copenhagen, for example, the pinnacle of utility cycling. 62% of all commute trips there are made by bicycle. And more surprising yet, those people don’t identify as “cyclists,” they’re just people who use a bike to get around. Nor is this attitude limited to European countries. Domestically, 5.3% of commute trips in Portland, Oregon are made by bike.

Utility cycling, as the name suggests, is cycling for utility. You are taking your bike to work, to meet a friend, to go to the post office, to get some fresh produce at the Saturday Market. And all the while, you aren’t concerned about your speed, aerodynamics, or clothing. You are even allowed to have fun doing it!

What differentiates our cities? Design plays a crucial factor in encouraging mobility behavior. Dutch bikes let riders with less mobility sit upright rather than leaning forward. They also can get on or off the bike more easily, without having to lift their legs over the frame. Most importantly, Dutch bike infrastructure is so well designed and safe that it is comfortably used by all—including small children without supervision, and the elderly.

National surveys find that 51% of Americans are interested in using bikes in place of cars in their daily lives but are held back by safety concerns. Even if you might have zero interest in trying such a thing, those same Americans are people you could avoid being stuck behind in traffic. Something to consider when the City wants to put in some bike infrastructure near you!

As always, please share any thoughts at enzoarona@outlook.com, and check out my street safety petition at streetsarebetter.com.



Roadway Safety: The Pedestrian Perspective

These tips for city pedestrians were provided by WALKSacramento, a nonprofit planning and advocacy organization promoting community-centered policy and systems change in land use, transportation, and community development (website: <https://www.walksacramento.org/>).

Roadway Safety from Two Different Perspectives

By Max Mack

There are three different groups of roadway users: motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Each group has rights and responsibilities. For all groups, observing the rules can make a difference between safety and injury. The guidelines below are for motorists and bicyclists.

Motorists: Should have heightened sense of awareness given the much greater potential for their vehicle's impact to injure or kill members of the two other groups. In California, all motorists must maintain a minimum of three feet of clearance when passing bicyclists. Furthermore, before exiting a vehicle from the door opening onto a street, motorists should look back to check for any approaching bicycle traffic in the street and wait before opening the door or exiting from the vehicle.

Bicyclists: Must know, respect, and adhere to the rules of the road (see the March 2021 issue of [Park Beat](#)) so that they will be respected on the road by motorists. Whether riding inside or outside a bike lane, cyclists should allow for about 3 feet of defensible space to either side of their bikes. This will give them ample opportunity to avoid a collision with nearby vehicles.

- **Stay on sidewalks:** Pedestrians should walk on sidewalks or paths. If someone chooses to use the street because there are no sidewalks, or because they are running or jogging, they should face oncoming traffic and stay on the left.
- **Mind the rules, follow signs and signals:** Obey all traffic rules, signs, and signals, especially before stepping out into a street.
- **Make eye contact:** Never assume that a driver sees you. Make eye contact with drivers before crossing the street in front of them.
- **Be alert at all times:** Heads up! Keep distractions like phones away. Watch for cars that are turning or backing up.
- **Only cross when traffic has stopped:** Look left, then right, then left again before using a crosswalk. Be extra alert as you cross near traffic circles.
- **Be predictable:** Cross at crosswalks or intersections, where drivers anticipate you. Wait to cross the street until you can safely do so, without running across. Be extra vigilant when crossing streets after dark.

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