

PHOTO BY GREG ROSENBERG  
Wednesday, May 19, 2021; Red Line Greenway by the W. 25th RTA Rapid Station: (L-R) Gabby Fernandez and Mimi Thompson enjoy roller skating on the new trail.

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# Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

## NEXT GEN RTA to launch on June 13 RTA OFFERS FREE RIDES FROM JUNE 13-19

by Bruce Checfsky

Joel Freilich, Director of Service Management, presented the final version of the NEXT GEN RTA public launch to the Greater Cleveland RTA (GCRT) Board Committee on May 11. The redesigned public transportation system consolidates some current routes while eliminating others. NEXT GEN RTA is scheduled for a launch on

June 13, 2021. The redesign was done with community support to determine RTA service priorities, according to Freilich. The community was key in helping RTA make difficult choices and tradeoffs.

"We checked back with the community repeatedly during the process to see if we were progressing along the direction the community was asking

us to," Freilich said. "The community spoke loud and clear."

Prioritize trips to work, education, and health care with more frequent service all day on weekdays, and more direct transportation between downtown and the suburbs were among leading concerns, while adding more frequent service on Saturdays and Sundays was also needed.

Kristie Cox, Marketing Manager, Greater Cleveland RTA, explained how the new service would be communicated to the RTA employees and to the public during the rollout. Internal communications include email signature, screen savers & ScreenCloud, posters of maps and reference table, messages in SelfServe, HASTUS, and Ultramain, along with Q&A sessions and an upgraded NEXT GEN RTA webpage.

"These are various tactics to let all employees know the changes going into effect," said Cox.

External communications include printed materials-- route books, posters, interior car cards, and stickers at shelters, transit centers and train station. Cox pointed to a new webpage, social media posts, media conference and press kits, onboard audio messages, and community outreach to inform the public on the changes.

Interactive maps on the RTA webpage will provide passengers with ex-  
continued on page 3

## Hingetown continues to grow as new apartment complexes attract new residents

by Brian Love

Construction sites seem to be a permanent fixture of Hingetown, a booming area of Ohio City seeing not only a growing supply of apartments but also businesses, a brewery, and soon a public park linking the neighborhood to the Cuyahoga River.

On a typical day, you can see people on the streets looking for a place to have a cup of coffee, a pizza, or a beer, while others are on their way to work or workout, maybe visit an art show at



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN  
Monday, May 10, 2021; Blessing of new St. Vincent de Paul Society Box Truck, Brookside Hunger Center, Pearl & Archwood: Cleveland Catholic Diocese Bishop Edward Malesic blesses the St. Vincent de Paul Society's (SVDP) new box truck.

the Transformer Station.

Hingetown also is noted for murals that decorate buildings, one featuring a colorful tiger and another of a blazing truck that is now obscured by a neighboring apartment complex but still visible on the eastern wall of Saucy Brew Works if you peek between the structures.

Hingetown is located in the area around West 25th Street and Detroit Avenue. It got its name from business owner and developer Graham Veysey, continued on page 6



PHOTO BY GREG ROSENBERG

Wednesday, May 19, 2021; A sign on Columbus Road marking an entrance to the Red Line Greenway.



PHOTO BY GREG ROSENBERG

Thursday, April 8, 2021; Church + State Apartments, 2818 Church Avenue at W. 29th (formerly State Street) in the Hingetown neighborhood: This 158-unit apartment building is one of several new apartment buildings in the Hingetown neighborhood. Rents range from \$1,450 to \$3,500 per month.

## \$6M Red Line Greenway opens after more than a decade of planning

by Lee Chilcote

Beginning at the eastern edge of Zone Recreation Center and threading through Ohio City before connecting to the Centennial Lake Link Trail, the \$6 million Red line Greenway connects the near west side to downtown Cleveland while offering views of industry, nature and the city along the way. After more than a decade of planning and construction, fences were removed Monday, and Cleveland Metroparks held a ribbon cutting event on Wednesday, May 12th at the trailhead near Abbey and Columbus Roads in Ohio City.

Sean McDermott, chief planning and design officer for the Metroparks, said the trail provides transportation and recreation options while helping to connect urban neighborhoods. "We're threading the needle," he said. "It's not only a unique experience to be next to a rail line, but also knowing that we've got six connection points into the neighborhoods and the ability to further those connections in the future. That's a very important aspect of the trail. We're not just setting it and forgetting it. We're

planning to build on it in the future."

Right now, the trail connections are located at West 53rd, West 44th, West 41st, Abbey and Columbus, West 25th Street, and Franklin Boulevard. McDermott said future trail connections are being considered at Urban Community School, St. Ignatius, and Fulton Road. More than 50,000 people live in communities located directly along the trail, he said.

"The percentage of car ownership in these neighborhoods is relatively low," he said. "This provides a safe, enjoyable mode of transportation."

The idea behind the trail was birthed in the 1970s, when volunteers with a group called Rapid Recovery began cleaning up the areas along the RTA rapid transit tracks, which were frequent targets of dumping. That effort eventually grew when the Rotary Club, helmed by volunteer Lennie Stover, began helping to maintain the area along the future trail.

That dream came one step closer to reality when Metroparks snagged a

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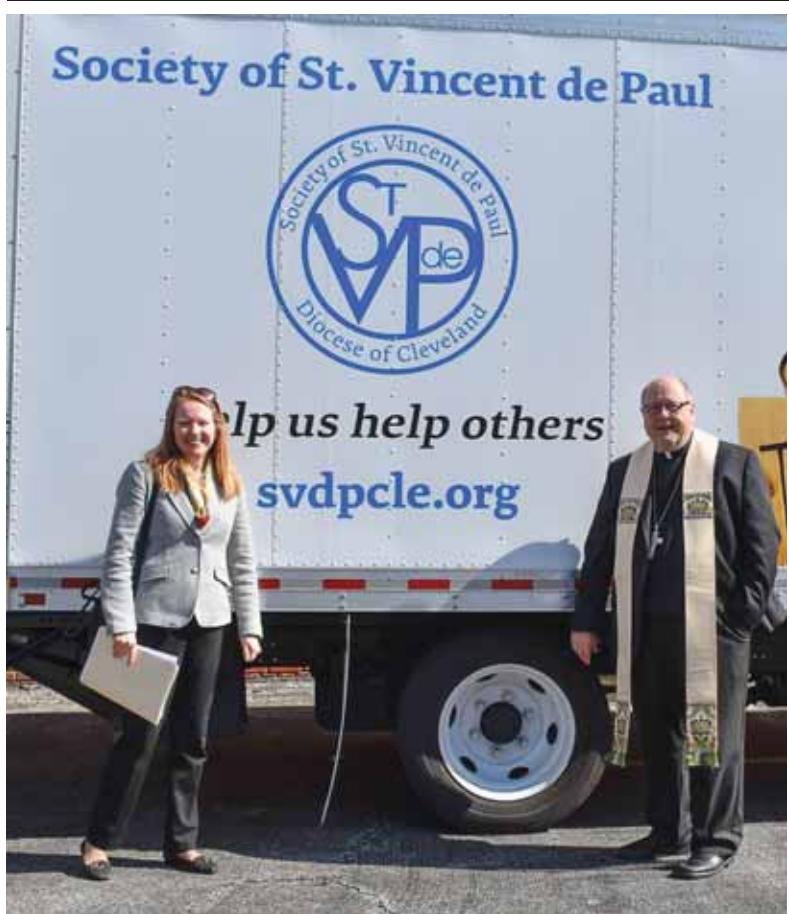


PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Monday, May 10, 2021; Blessing of new St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP) Box Truck, Brookside Hunger Center, Pearl & Archwood: St. Vincent de Paul Society Chief Executive Officer Anelize Nader and Cleveland Catholic Diocese Bishop Edward Malesic stand in front of the newly blessed box truck. The truck will be used to pick up and deliver food for SVDP hunger centers and to deliver supplies to families in need.

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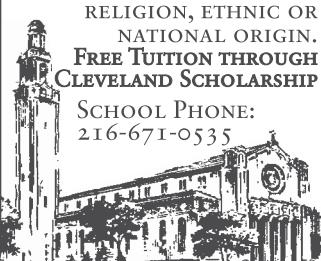
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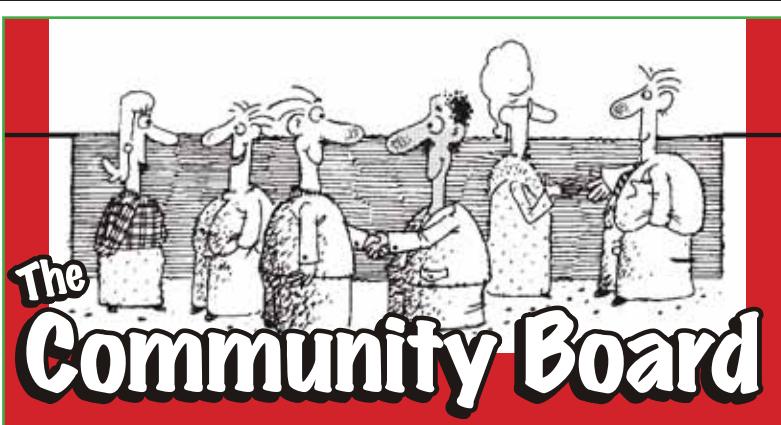
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#### ARTS/THEATRE

##### CLEVELAND PHOTOTHON 2021:

Satellite Exhibitions during June 11<sup>th</sup> Walk-about Tremont from 6-10 p.m. at Crust Tremont, 2258 Professor; Doubting Thomas, 856 Jefferson Avenue; Edison's Pub, 2373 Professor Avenue; and Treehouse, 820 College Avenue.

**78<sup>th</sup> STREET STUDIOS:** Various studios open on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in June.

**COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER VIRTUAL GRAND OPENING:** The Cleveland Museum of Art will open a Community Arts Center in the Pivot Center for Art, Dance and Expression at 2937 W. 25<sup>th</sup> Street. (former home of Astrup Awning Company). The opening ceremony will be virtual ceremony on Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m., for more information visit [www.clevelandart.org](http://www.clevelandart.org). The Community Arts Center will feature art displays and free hands on art activities and experiences.

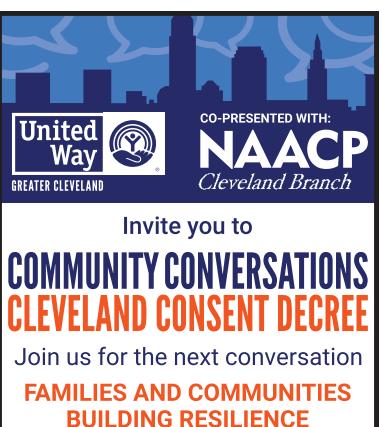
The hours of the Community Arts Center will be 2-7 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is free.

#### COMMUNITY

##### CONSENT DECREE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS:

The next meeting is at 6:00 pm on June 9th. To offer your input on police reform in Cleveland, or to express your concerns and ask your questions, register for any of the Consent Decree public meetings by visiting [unitedwaycleveland.org](http://unitedwaycleveland.org).

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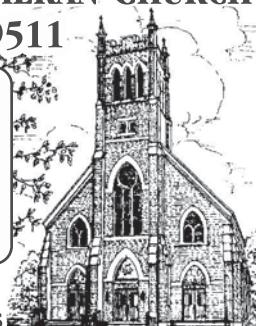
#### SUNDAY SERVICES:

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**GRANTS**  
**NEIGHBOR UP COMMUNITY GARDEN AND FARMERS MARKET GRANTS:** grants available for community gardens, farmers markets, and for garden art in the cities of Cleveland and East Cleveland. Grants will be reviewed on a rolling basis each week through June 15th. Find details at [neighborupcleveland.org/garden](http://neighborupcleveland.org/garden)

**HEALTH**  
**LEAD SAFE RESOURCE CENTER** of the Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition would like you to know the sources of lead, and how to prevent exposure. The Lead Safe Resource Center can help you to: protect your children from lead hazards, receive support to achieve Lead Safe Certification, attend Free lead safe workforce trainings, find out about financial assistance for landlords and property owners, understand more about screening and testing, learn more about lead poisoning prevention. For more information visit [www.LeadSafeCLE.org](http://www.LeadSafeCLE.org) or call 833-601-5323.

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**COVID-19 VACCINATION SIGNUP:** Appointments can be made at [gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov). Have questions about the mass vaccination clinics, or need assistance scheduling an appointment? Call 1-833-4ASK-ODH/1-833-427-5634 between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. for assistance.

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**PUBLIC POLICY**  
**LAKE EFFECTS: PROGRESSIVE THINKING FOR THE CLEVELAND WE WANT:** A website created by David Beach is now online at: [www.lake-effects.org](http://www.lake-effects.org). The goal of the site is to create a resource for citizens and candidates for Mayor and City Council that will provide a useful collection of issues and ideas while stimulating a discussion about what a progressive city can be like. David Beach is the founder and former director of the GreenCityBlueLake Institute and served as the editor of the Plain Press in the early 1980s.

**THE AFRICAN AMERICAN POLICY COMMITTEE (AAPC)** encourages all those who will, to come to the table to seek out solutions, rooted in public policy, that will help solve these myriad crises facing African American communities in Northeast Ohio. The AAPC meets the first Monday of every month from 2-3 p.m. For more information visit: [www.noebblackhealthcoalition.org](http://www.noebblackhealthcoalition.org), call 216-295-0283 or email: [neohc@gmail.com](mailto:neohc@gmail.com).

**RALLY**  
**ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE AGAINST LETHAL DRUGS (APALD):** We are APALD. A call to all. Cleveland Rally continued on page 7

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2012 W. 25th STE 500  
Cleveland, OH 44113  
Phone: (216) 621-3060  
email: [plainpress@gmail.com](mailto:plainpress@gmail.com)  
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**Editor:** Deborah Rose Sadlon;  
**Copy Editor:** Craig Bobby  
**Reporters:** Bruce Checfsky & Jack Barnes  
**Photo Editor:** Coriana Close;  
**Photographer:** Greg Rosenberg  
**Advertising Sales:** Ed Tishel  
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## NEXT GEN RTA

continued from page one

act bus routes and compare them to previous routes. A visitor to the site can toggle back and forth from the maps to get a clear picture of before and after the changes.

Printed materials will include a route book of maps and route reference chart, posters, and paladin screens at the transit centers and transit stations which contain a QR code.

"When you scan the QR code with your smart phone it will take you directly to the NEXT GEN page. We also have on board messaging and route specific GeoTargeted communications," she said, adding, "in conjunction with the June 13 launch, RTA is offering free rides on bus, rail, Park-n-Ride, and paratransit from June 13 through June 19."

Freilich responded to questions by the GCRTA board members on how decisions were made on routes to keep and which to eliminate. RTA held three rounds of public involvement and community input hearings back in 2019 that ultimately led to the changes, he explained. Public involvement included opportunities to respond to the NEXT GEN proposals online as well as to respond in-person at community meetings. Ridership was measured and analyzed at every stop.

"We eliminated bus stops recognizing that the community wanted to get home from work and school faster even if it meant they had to walk four or eight minutes more to get to their neighborhood," said Freilich. "Frequency of service was our priority."

The NEXT GEN RTA rollout is likely to cause problems for people unfamiliar with QR codes or without a smart phone and access to the Internet. Digital technology is needed to access the information, Freilich acknowledges, saying that he is "particularly sensitive to the issue".

"All of our publicity emphasizes a call-in answer line. We have customers that communicate with us by calling the same telephone number RTA has been using for over fifty-years," he said. "216-621-9500."

Chris Stocking with Clevelanders for Public Transit (CPT) is satisfied that GCRTA is moving forward with NEXT GEN RTA. He believes that taking service from the suburbs, like the Park-n-Ride lines that are express service for downtown commuters, and increasing frequency to jobs will benefit residents that live in dense areas of the city as well.

"Overall, it's a win and not perfect but the current plan will double the amount

of people living within a half mile walk of high frequent transit by 100%," said Stocking, chair of CPT. "That translates to 167,000 more people in Cuyahoga County having better access which is significant."

Stocking supports the expanded funding redesign concept for public transit, which calls for frequent service seven days a week. NEXT GEN RTA focuses on frequent service Monday through Friday, leaving weekend service underserved. Some essential workers require frequent service seven days a week.

"We like the expanded funding concept because it would make seven day-a-week service work," said Stocking, adding, "but RTA currently doesn't have the funding to do it."

A recent Brookings report found that the Cleveland metro area experienced the largest drop in the number of jobs near the average resident among the 96 largest metropolitan statistical areas in the United States, according to the Cleveland Federal Reserve Bank. The most accessible employment centers in the region are the Downtown, University Circle, Ohio City corridor and Clark/Fulton district in the City of Cleveland, followed by commercial districts in Lakewood, Independence, and Parma, all located in Cuyahoga County. Over 60% of all jobs in Cuyahoga County were not accessible within a 90-minute transit commute.

Employment centers with higher concentrations of low-skill jobs tend to be less accessible making low-skill and low-paying jobs the hardest to get to. Metros that provide job access will likely have a leg up in the twenty-first century economy, the Cleveland Federal Reserve Bank report concludes, with job access an important component for regional economic success.

Stocking would like to see a more diverse public outreach strategy when it comes to collecting information from riders. Most of the outreach for NEXT GEN RTA was based on online surveys that don't necessarily represent the demographics of the average RTA rider.

"We live in the poorest large city in the country with some of the worst high-speed Internet and access rates in the country," said Stocking. "We need to be more focused on talking to riders in person."

The NEXT GEN RTA public outreach program has come under criticism for relying heavily on responses from non-RTA ridership. Despite the social media blitz, 47% of responses came from frequent or semi-regular RTA riders categorized as one ride per week or more, while 41% came



PHOTO BY GREG ROSENBERG

Wednesday, May 19, 2021; W. 25th at Lorain Avenue: The Regional Transit Authority's (RTA's) 51B Metro-Health Line takes on some passengers.

from infrequent or non-riders. Compared to the population at large, seniors were the most underrepresented in the survey population. People ages 25-34 and under 24 were the most overrepresented.

Public approval rating for Cleveland transportation ranked nationally near the bottom according to a separate report by the Brookings Institute. Share of workers who use public transit was below 3% and less than 65% of RTA stations are ADA-accessible.

"The expanded funding concept could add 25% more revenue into the system, with over 340,000 people within a half mile of high frequency transit service," said Stocking. "It's all about running buses to

more places more frequently and getting you to where you need to go."

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## Residents of Fulton and Denison would like some peace and quiet

To the editor:

Dear City of Cleveland Officials:

We are writing to you asking for relief from the noise problem that the residential community in the area of Fulton Road, and Denison Avenue experiences day and night. This involves cars and motorcycles with loud radios and mufflers waiting at the light at the intersection or just hanging out at the BP station on the corner, ATVs and dirt bikes racing up and down Fulton Rd. and Denison, popping wheelies, gunning their engines, and weaving in and out of traffic. This has been a problem for the last few years, and we have asked for relief from this in the past. Now it has hit epic proportions which is why we are writing an official complaint to address the matter properly.

### LETTER

Due to COVID, many of the residents in our neighborhood work from home and the loud noise is disruptive when they are working online. Many of us work varied shifts and need to sleep during the day. Some have young children that need to take naps. We have waited all winter for

a chance to open our windows, sit on our porches, enjoy our yards and our neighborhood and now we have to dread the outdoors again. All of us just want to have some peace and quiet inside our own homes. We all understand that living in the city we will be subjected to normal traffic noise, however this has become above and beyond normal and greatly impacts our everyday lives and routines.

The very loud sounds, at all hours, of revving engines, squealing tires, music that rattles house windows, and vehicles that sound like they belong on a race-track is unhealthy and unacceptable, as has been recognized by the legislative body of the City of Cleveland in the Code of Ordinances. Now these ordinances must be enforced: § 437.20 Muffler; Muffler Cutout; Excessive Smoke, Gas or Noise; § 605.10 Unnecessary Noise; § 683.01 Playing of Sound Devices Prohibited, When ...; § 683.02 Playing of Sound Devices in Motor Vehicles Prohibited, When ...; and § 615.12 Dereliction of Duty.

Editor's Note: The letter was signed by 20 neighborhood residents.

## Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization and Cudell Improvement Incorporated members vote to approve merger

To the editor:

We are excited to announce that the members of Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (DSCDO) and Cudell Improvement, Inc. have voted to APPROVE a merger of our organizations! Membership of both entities voted overwhelmingly to adopt the merger agreement, with over 91% of all votes cast in favor of unifying, showing that there is a clear mandate for us to move forward together.

### LETTER

The official date of merger will be July 1, 2021, at which time the organizations will move forward as one with a single board of directors. A new name for the organization will be developed and announced over the next 60 days in advance of the official merger date.

Community development services in your

neighborhood will continue on as normal. As you know, the staffs of the organizations had previously been unified under the existing shared services agreement that covered the Cudell, Detroit Shoreway, and Edgewater neighborhoods. Following the official merger date, we look forward to embarking on organizational strategic planning to set the future vision and goals of the unified community development corporation.

Thank you to all of you who participated in the surveys, meetings, and community outreach leading up to this, and to those who made a point to vote and make your voice heard. We appreciate your dedication as members and look forward to serving you all as we come together to improve the quality of life for everyone in our neighborhoods.

Charles Slone, Board Chair, Cudell Improvement, Inc.

Patty Jurca, Board President, DSCDO

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## Ohio's 11th Congressional District Primary Election date set for August 3rd

by Bruce Checfsky

Ohio's 11th Congressional District is heavily gerrymandered to favor Democrats. The district is shaped by irregular lines as it snakes south from city of Cleveland and its prosperous eastern suburbs through Summit County and parts Akron and represents more than 700,000 Ohioans or roughly 6% of the state population. In 2018, there were 1.39 times more Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) residents in Congressional District 11 than any other race or ethnicity. Households in the district have a median annual income of \$38,747, which is less than the median annual income of \$61,937 across the entire United States.

When Marcia L. Fudge resigned from her seat in the United States House of Representatives after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as the 18th United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development under President Biden, Governor Mike

DeWine set a date of August 3, 2021 for the primary election where voters will weigh in on who will represent their party in the general election. Winners of the primary elections will then face off in the general election on November 2, 2021.

Nina Turner, a former State Senator, and Cuyahoga County Councilwoman Shontel Brown have been raising funds for their campaigns ever since rumors surfaced about the vacant Congressional seat. As the election nears, both candidates have been spending at a brisk pace. Turner has raised more than twice the campaign funds than Brown. The field of candidates includes 10 Democrats and two Republicans all from Cuyahoga County.

### Nina Turner

Nina Turner made history in 2005 as the first African American woman to represent Ward 1 in Cleveland City Council, and again in 2008 as the first

woman to serve as a state senator in Ohio's 25th District. She became a national representative for Bernie Sanders' 2016 presidential campaign and national co-chair for Bernie 2020. Turner is campaigning for Congress on the strength of her experience as a politician, and her commitment as a community activist, she said during a recent phone conversation.

Turner believes poverty is a policy choice. Protecting and expanding Medicaid is a priority and providing Medicaid for all is a needed policy change. Health care is a basic human right, she acknowledges, and pharmaceutical companies have to be more responsive to the economic disparity that exists across the country. Bringing the price of drugs down and negotiating with pharmaceutical companies will prevent companies from gouging customers. She has a personal story to back up her concerns.

"My mother died when she was 42 years old. She was on and off of Medicaid for years. It's like being on a roller coaster. It definitely diminishes your quality of life. We need to get the cost of health care under control," said Turner.

Immigration reform needs more funding to ensure that people get a fair opportunity to immigrate to the United States. Children should not be kept in cages or taken from their caretakers. Preventing separation between families requires humane immigration reform.

"It's long overdue," said Turner. "We have the power and resources to reform the system."

Climate change on a global level has an impact on immigration as people seek higher ground and places of safety. Industrial nations like the United States and other industrialized countries should find a way to collectively solve the climate change problems. Famine and food insecurities impact everyone.

"Whether substantive or political, people are being pushed and/or pulled from their country. We have to do something about it."

The Colonial Pipeline, which delivers about 45% of the fuel used along the Eastern Seaboard, shut down a few weeks ago after a ransomware attack highlighting cyber security vulnerabilities in the nation's aging energy infrastructure. Turner would like to see the Federal government do more to protect consumers and businesses from cyber threats.

"Data is the new gold. We need regulations to protect consumers and hold businesses accountable, and ensure they have the best technology



**Congressional Candidate Shontel Brown**

available to protect that data."

Restoring transparency and accountability in the communities where police violence takes place requires a comprehensive investigation from outside entities, according to her. Police have been reluctant to release videos. Reports are often misrepresented and inaccurate. That has to change.

"If you talk to people in the Black community, the conversation is, 'but if not for camera phones' a lot of police violence would go unchecked," said Turner. "We need to make sure the Federal government does the investigation on any police shooting, along with the State Attorney General, local government and police departments."

"Law enforcement personnel need to have regular psychological reviews to make sure they're fit for the job. We need to make it a felony if an officer lies on a police report."

For Turner, jobs and healthcare are the biggest issues facing the 11th District right now. With the poverty rate among the highest in the country, she would like to see poor people and working-class people get a chance to live their American dream. Increasing the minimum wage, health care as a human right, and canceling students' debt are among her top priorities as a member of Congress. She would also like to see the Democrats win back a majority in the state legislature.

Turner is endorsed by MoveOn, a federal political committee which primarily helps members elect candidates who reflect their values through a variety of activities aimed at influencing the outcome of the next election; Progressive Democrats of America, Democracy for America, Our Revolution, Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1, as well as actors, activists and producers Susan Sarandon, Danny Glover, and Mark Ruffalo.

### Shontel Brown

A native of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County Councilwoman Shontel Brown began her service as a Warrensville Heights city council member in 2012. She went on to be elected to Cuyahoga County Council where she currently serves. Her district is one of the most diverse in the County with constituents in the City of Cleveland, and inner and

outer-ring suburbs. In 2017, Shontel was elected Chairwoman of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party. She made history as the first woman and the first Black person to serve in this role.

Brown is endorsed by The United Auto Workers Region 2B—the union that covers both Ohio and Indiana autoworkers. She has also received endorsements from U.S. Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH), Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish, Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan, and several other major political figures in Northeast Ohio.

Brown has been critical of Turner's stance on Israel and for her 'lukewarm support' for Biden in the presidential election. Turner did not back Hillary Clinton against Donald Trump, according to her.

Against the backdrop of a campaign contrasting the candidate's qualifications, Brown believes the top priorities for Congressional District 11 include health care, jobs, and justice. Without a healthy society, jobs and justice won't matter. Free, regular, and reliable COVID19 tests are needed along with equitable distribution of the vaccine.

"We have to provide lower health care costs and expand coverage," said Brown by phone. "When it comes to jobs, we have a labor force here that would benefit from these once in a lifetime investments and opportunities around replacing our decaying infrastructure. Communities need access to broad band internet service."

Justice is a multi-pronged effort, according to Brown. Racial, social, and environmental justice is integrally connected. A holistic approach at addressing these issues is needed.

"I led the initiative for the resolution to declare racism as a public health crisis for Cuyahoga County. It wasn't just a symbolic gesture," she said. "The legislation was designed to make meaningful change."

If elected to Congress, Brown vows to support the lowering of health care costs. She wants Medicare to negotiate with drug companies to lower drug costs. The Affordable Care Act is on the right track, but health care costs must be controlled so everyone can afford care.

**continued on page 6**



**Congressional Candidate Nina Turner**

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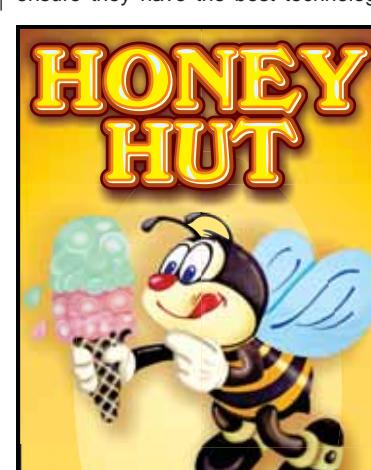
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## Former Cleveland City Councilman Zack Reed will run for mayor

by Bruce Checfsky

Zack Reed, former Councilman, Ward 2, City of Cleveland, announced his mayoral campaign last month. Reed was appointed to the council in 2000 and served until 2017. He ran as a nonpartisan candidate for mayor of Cleveland and lost the election to Frank Jackson by 19 percentage points. Reed campaigned on the position that struggling neighborhoods needed more attention than development in downtown Cleveland. He wanted to hire more than 400 new police officers back then. He doesn't feel that way today.

In an online streaming interview with Dan Moulthrop, City Club of Cleveland, held on August 5, 2020, Reed explained his change of mind.

"I campaigned on hiring more police in 2017. I don't feel that way today," Reed said. "The status quo clearly has not worked. The black community has more police, in fact is over policed, yet it's the most violent community in the City of Cleveland and around the nation. That approach is not working."

"I made a mistake," he continued. "We're not going to add 400 police officers on the streets under my administration, but we will have more well-trained police officers in our communities. Anthony Sowell didn't stop until Anthony Sowell got caught. That's what killers do. The vast majority of people that are killed in Cleveland, don't get killed near downtown. We need to find new approaches, not the old stale approaches of yesterday of putting more police in our community, but by finding new organizations and neighborhood groups to support in helping us solve crime."

Reed said that he has a different approach to his current mayoral campaign and points to changes in the social and political scenario as the motivating factor. Getting the pandemic under control tops his list of concerns. He said the leadership coming from City Hall should be emphasizing, on a daily basis, that everyone has to get the COVID-19 vaccine. In a public town hall meeting held by Mayor Frank Jackson last November to discuss the pandemic, Reed found the four-term mayor's performance and message underwhelming.

"The mayor said you should get the shot, but he also told people that there's a controversy over whether or not you should get it," Reed said, referring to the November 19, 2020, Tele Town Hall meeting where Mayor Jackson talked about COVID-19 and public safety.

"There's no making a decision here," continued Reed. "It's clear. Either you get the shot, or you get the virus, get sick, and you might die. If you can get everyone the vaccine shot, then we can start opening up our businesses, churches, and schools."

While the scenario is different from the mayoral run in 2017, Reed said his commitment to the city hasn't changed. Working as Minority Affairs Coordinator with the Ohio Secretary of State's office for the past two years has given him a unique perspective on community building. As Minority Affairs Coordinator, he traveled around Ohio and witnessed firsthand minority businesses working

together to create jobs and spur economic opportunity. Last month, he stepped down as Minority Affairs Coordinator to explore his political future. He said the experience was helpful in making a decision about running for mayor. Now, he's focused on prioritizing the needs of the Cleveland community.

"I want to take my experience as Minority Affairs Coordinator and bring it back to the City of Cleveland to show that minority, female, and veteran entrepreneurs are out there. They just need more opportunity and resources, and we need new investments to come into areas like the Mount Pleasant, Union-Mills, and Buckeye neighborhoods to rebuild our communities."

Reed would like to see the closed and boarded up businesses in these neighborhoods thrive, along with other areas of the city, and give energy and vitality back to the residents of Cleveland, but the COVID19 pandemic is making it difficult.

"You cannot do it under this atmosphere of the pandemic," he said. "We have to get this under control in the city."

Reed's campaign platform leading into the election in November is 'experience you know.' He has the experience to be successful as mayor, but his biggest challenge may be convincing voters that he also has a plan, according to him.

"I have a plan to make every neighborhood, community, and ward more viable, moving us in a good direction so that everybody knows they are part of the renaissance going on in the City of Cleveland."

Reed believes that violence migrates from one community to the next because criminals see progress in other neighborhoods and not their own. Criminals need to understand that car jacking, burglary, and homicide harms the entire city, not just individual neighborhoods. Failing to believe in a city-wide renaissance undermines everyone's public safety.

"I'm the only candidate among those that are running for mayor, or even those considering the race, that's been in every ward and neighborhood in the city over the last 17 years. I'm ready to go

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to work on day one at City Hall," he said.

Bringing the community together in the areas of southeast Cleveland that have suffered the most during the pandemic, and even prior to COVID19, with business leaders from downtown, is an important step towards building economic opportunities city-wide. Grooming entrepreneurs is essential to growing the economy for everyone.

"Traveling around the state as Minority Affairs Coordinator with the Ohio Secretary of State's office under Frank LaRose, I saw how community building can work in cities like Cincinnati, Akron, and Youngstown. Everybody understood, whether it was the leadership from downtown businesses, grassroots leadership in the neighborhoods, churches, or schools, that we need to have a collective approach to solving these problems. Cleveland hasn't done that."

Reed points to Sam Miller, the late co-chair of Cleveland's Forest City Enterprise and developer for restoring the Lee Harvard Shopping Center, as a prime example of collective business entrepreneurship. Former Mayor Michael White was convinced at the time that if the shopping center wasn't renovated, he would lose the neighborhood according to Reed's account of the events. Originally built in 1949, Lee Harvard Shopping Center was the first African American-owned and managed shopping center in the country. Forest City Enterprise eventually pitched in



Mayoral Candidate Zack Reed

to help with the renovation. Along with Neighborhood Progress, the development team included New Village, Forest City Management, Amistad, National City Bank, Key Bank and Fannie Mae. Ward 1 Councilman Joe Jones was also a part of the planning process. Excelsior Capital Partners recently purchased Lee Harvard Shopping

Center for \$13 million.

"If we all believe that we are in this together, there should be no lack of interest and opportunity to create a better city," Reed said. "The mayor's office is the second most powerful political office in the entire State of Ohio. When the Mayor of the City of Cleveland speaks, people listen."

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PHOTO BY GREG ROSENBERG

Wednesday, May 19, 2021; Brighton Park, near the trailhead at 4121 Pearl Road – just North of the Burger King in the Old Brooklyn neighborhood. This trail is a new link in a growing network of trails linking Cleveland neighborhoods to the Towpath trail.

## 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

continued from page 4

"The American Recovery Act provided the biggest expansion to Obama Care. During President Biden's special enrollment period, over a million people have signed up. We're moving in the right direction."

Innovation is important for protecting consumers and their data. Consumer protection and data privacy reform is needed. Limiting big tech companies that use private information for corporate gain requires investing in sophisticated private security.

"President Biden's more than \$2

trillion infrastructure and economic recovery package will make sure we have private security imbedded in those infrastructure investments," said Brown

Environmental justice, the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, is part of her campaign platform. Brown supports the principals laid out in the Green New Deal (GND), which calls for public policy to address climate change

along with achieving other social aims.

"I'm committed to plans that promote aggressive action to get climate change with net zero emissions by 2050 and carbon free power sector by 2035. We can provide jobs at the same time as bringing down the cost of electricity."

Brown would prioritize Civil Rights laws if elected to congress along with advancing criminal justice reform, reducing gun violence, and ending the use of private prisons. She supports the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020 and data collection on police officers that use excessive force.

"Some of this is a cultural issue. The

## One man's trash is another man's trail

by Megann Rosecrans

The Ohio & Erie Towpath and the trails that link to it are already impacting neighborhoods on the near west side, from Tremont and Ohio City to Detroit-Shoreway and the lakeside, attracting walkers, runners, and bikers, but also sites for potential development. Now Old Brooklyn is joining in, with a formal opening this June.

The location of the path is in Brighton Park, which is named after the original name of Old Brooklyn, Brighton Village. The 26-acre park will run from Pearl Avenue, across the street from the Metroparks Zoo, to connecting towpaths that stretch for 110 miles.

The path is located on a site that a number of enterprises once called home. A site that was for a time used for disposal.

In the 1960s, this area was utilized as a disposal site during the construction of Interstate I-71. It also served as a dumping ground for foundry sand from the Ford Motor Foundry. Even pieces of the beloved Municipal Stadium ended up

at this landfill.

Residents may also remember this location as home to Cuffari's Go Kart track throughout the 1980s and 1990s before closing shop. Cuffari's was located on the western half of the property, with massive gorilla signs greeting visitors as they entered- a nod to their neighbors, the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

After the go-cart track closed in the early 2000s, with no immediate use and a lot of potential, the land was a hot topic of discussion between the City of Cleveland and other community partners regarding the area's next chapter.

The Old Brooklyn Development Corp., Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and Cleveland Metroparks worked diligently together to create a green space for the Old Brooklyn community to enjoy for years to come.

This did come with a few challenges, says Jeff Verespej, Old Brooklyn Development Corp. executive director.

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## HINGETOWN

continued from page one

east of W. 25th Street and south of Veterans Memorial Bridge. Demolition of the former CMHA headquarters and other buildings is currently underway.

Niche.com has rated the area as being one of the best places to live in Cleveland because of the attractive location, convenient commuting times and the wide range of entertainment. For example, Cleveland Tea Revival offers more than 60 different types of tea. Harness Cycle is another place that incorporates weights and dance music. Jukebox, a restaurant and bar, plays more than 100 albums, ranging from Led Zeppelin

to Kendrick Lamar.

Those are just some of the places that Hingetown has to offer.

Recently, Graham Veysey and his wife Marika Shioiri-Clark announced plans for a new development project.

The project is called the "Longhouses at Hingetown." Located at the corner of W. 28th Street and Church Avenue, they plan to construct seven metal structures designed for people to live in or work at. The idea stemmed from the notion of creating a village with one-and-two story buildings that served as updated versions of Quonset huts, a form of prefabricated buildings created during World War II.

The Longhouses project is next to one of the largest apartment projects in the Hinge-

town area, the 158-unit Church + State. The apartments range from 699 to more than 1,600 square feet. A courtyard joins the buildings on the 5,200-plus-square foot site.

A construction worker on the site said this is "a massive project that will, hopefully, help to give people in Hingetown a nice home or a decent place to work."

The idea for the Longhouses project came to Veysey from a musician who wanted to use one of the spaces as a recording studio.

Veysey said that recent investments in the neighborhood, including Striebinger Block and the Ohio City Firehouse, will likely top \$100 million. He called the designs as a form of "forward thinking," saying that they would serve to fill in unused space and complement the Church + State apartments.

"The progress has been strong with continued investment and high interest," Veysey explained. "We think they will be

very successful as we believe that they will be an attraction based on their designs."

The project is set to add improvements on the facade of the former Schaefer Printing Co. at the corner of West 28th Street and Detroit Avenue, a site slated to be the home of chef Doug Katz's Indian-fusion restaurant, according to a recent article in Scene.

The Cleveland Landmarks Commission reviewed the Longhouses project when Veysey initially presented it last August. While there are some that expressed interest in the idea, others were hesitant or expressed reservations about the choice of site, feeling that the space could be used for different projects.

This project comes not long after a vote by Cleveland City Council, which made way for tax incentives that would restore the old buildings and the empty lot.

Back in 2019, City Council approved an

ordinance that would involve property owned by Snavely Group, a real estate development company in Cleveland. The ordinance is the first of two steps that provide the tax incentives needed to develop the property on Detroit Avenue.

In exchange for these tax incentives, the city would have to collect nearly \$34,000 a year in new income taxes. These numbers would come from jobs equivalent to up to 20 full-time positions. The total payroll for these jobs would be estimated to around \$1.34 million per year.

"When you create more vibrant communities in Cleveland, you create jobs," Kerry McCormack told Cleveland.com. "If you maintain the quality of life in the communities, people will stay."

For Veysey and Shioiri-Clark, the goal for the redevelopment of Hingetown was to build a more inclusive and social aware/entrepreneur-based community.

"Hingetown is truly a unique place filled with lots of interesting and diverse communities," Veysey said.

Before the redevelopment, the LGBTQ scene of Hingetown was considered dying. Once, there was the Striebinger Block building located on West 29th and the Detroit Shoreway, featuring a gay bathhouse, bars, dance clubs and other queer-centric businesses.

On the corner of the Striebinger Block was A Man's World, which was an old-school styled bar that sported blacked-out windows. There was a buzzer that would let the patrons in. Decorations were set up in an extravagant manner for the holidays such as Thanksgiving and Easter where members of the gay community would go to, out of choice or estrangement.

Hundreds of fundraisers were held in these bars for AIDS charities, political campaigns, sports leagues and other communities. Some of these events were to help people with HIV/AIDS pay their rent, utilities, or even funeral expenses.

The Striebinger Block became the first home of the Cleveland LGBTQ Center. They would host the Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend, which was a charity with more than half a million dollars in donations to its name.

Back in 2013, Striebinger Block closed its doors, and the gay community isn't as prevalent in the area. Club Cleveland ended up closing in 2009, along with Argos in 2010, Muggs, and Bounce.

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## Councilwoman Jasmin Santana to serve as Cleveland City Council's new Majority Whip

Ward 14 City Council Representative Jasmin Santana has accepted an offer to become City Council's Majority Whip and part of City Council's leadership team.

Elected in 2017, Santana is the first Latina council member in the city's history. Councilwoman Santana represents Clark-Fulton, Stockyards and portions of Brooklyn Centre, Tremont, and West Boulevard neighborhoods. These neighborhoods over the last few years have seen an influx of development, including new and restored housing, as well as new businesses and renovations of old factory buildings into retail and housing.

"As a Latina councilwoman with over 20 years of community leadership and organizing, I am delighted to join the Council leadership team," Councilwoman Santana said. "I

look forward to continuing to work with my council colleagues as we restore, rebuild and renew our neighborhoods and our city.

"I want to thank Council President Kevin Kelley for the opportunity, and I look forward to working with him and Councilman Blaine Griffin."

Councilwoman Santana joins the Council President and Councilman Griffin, who moves into the position of Majority Leader. The change in leadership came about after former Councilwoman Phyllis Cleveland resigned her position.

"I'm pleased Councilwoman Santana accepted the offer to serve as Majority Whip," said Council President Kelley. "In her now nearly four years on council she has grown as a council member and as a leader among the other members."

## COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

for Change to raise awareness and advocate for change in combating the synthetic drug epidemic in the United States. Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 3-5 p.m., Public Square.

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## HINGETOWN

continued from page 6

These places have been replaced by enterprises such as Rising Star, a third-wave coffee company that was started by a former Lockheed Martin executive, Cleveland Tea Revival, Avalon Exchange, and Larder Delicatessen and Bakery, which was a 2019 semifinalist for the James Beard Award for Best New Restaurant.

Now, Hingetown serves as an oasis for millennials, families, retirees, and people looking to venture out and grow their businesses.

"It's weird to see all of the changes," said

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a long-time resident living in the area. "It didn't feel that long ago that there was such a huge presence of the gay community. Now, there have been all of these projects that have taken the focus away."

Graham Veysey and Shioiri-Clark credit the feeling of authenticity and vitality of the neighborhood to the residents having taken ownership in the area.

"It's very exciting to see the continued momentum in Hingetown," Veysey said. "Whether it is making sure there are aspects of fun introduced or places to sit and watch the world go by or filling in vacant lots with vibrant uses, we are excited about the evolution of the neighborhood and optimistic about the future."

time, we hosted larger and larger volunteer events with Cleveland Leadership Center bringing 150 college interns as part of their summer intern program. We had to round up 25 'Volunteer Coordinators' to oversee the numerous projects we undertook that day. We once built a 'Park-in-a-day' across the street from Hooples."

Stover said the idea behind the project was formed in 1977 when a man named Duane Sauls "flew to Cleveland and took a train downtown for a job interview. He saw an embarrassing mess along the trackside. People were using the train tracks as a dump. He vowed, if he got the job, he would do something about it. Luckily, he got the job and in 1977 he and RTA launched 'Rapid Recovery' (RR). The purpose of RR was simple — clean up the tracks from the airport to downtown by enlisting organizations of any kind to adopt 200 feet of trackside and clean it up. This effort was very successful, and the tracks were cleaned up in two years."

Early in the project, Metroparks faced heavy criticism for cutting down healthy trees for the project, but McDermott said culling these mature trees was necessary in order to comply with multiple industry standards for trail building. He also stated that the Metroparks preserved 43 trees by working around them. The agency has planted a number of trees to replace them, which will take time to mature.

In the end, he said, Metroparks was very pleased with the outcome of the project. "We came in on time, we came in on budget, and we have a high-quality project," he said. "What more could you ask for?"

*Lee Chilcote is a freelance writer and editor of The Land.*

**Editor's Note:** This article was produced and provided to the Plain Press by The Land. The Land is an online Newsletter that reports on Cleveland neighborhoods and inner ring suburbs. To subscribe to The Land visit: [www.thelandcleveland.org](http://www.thelandcleveland.org).

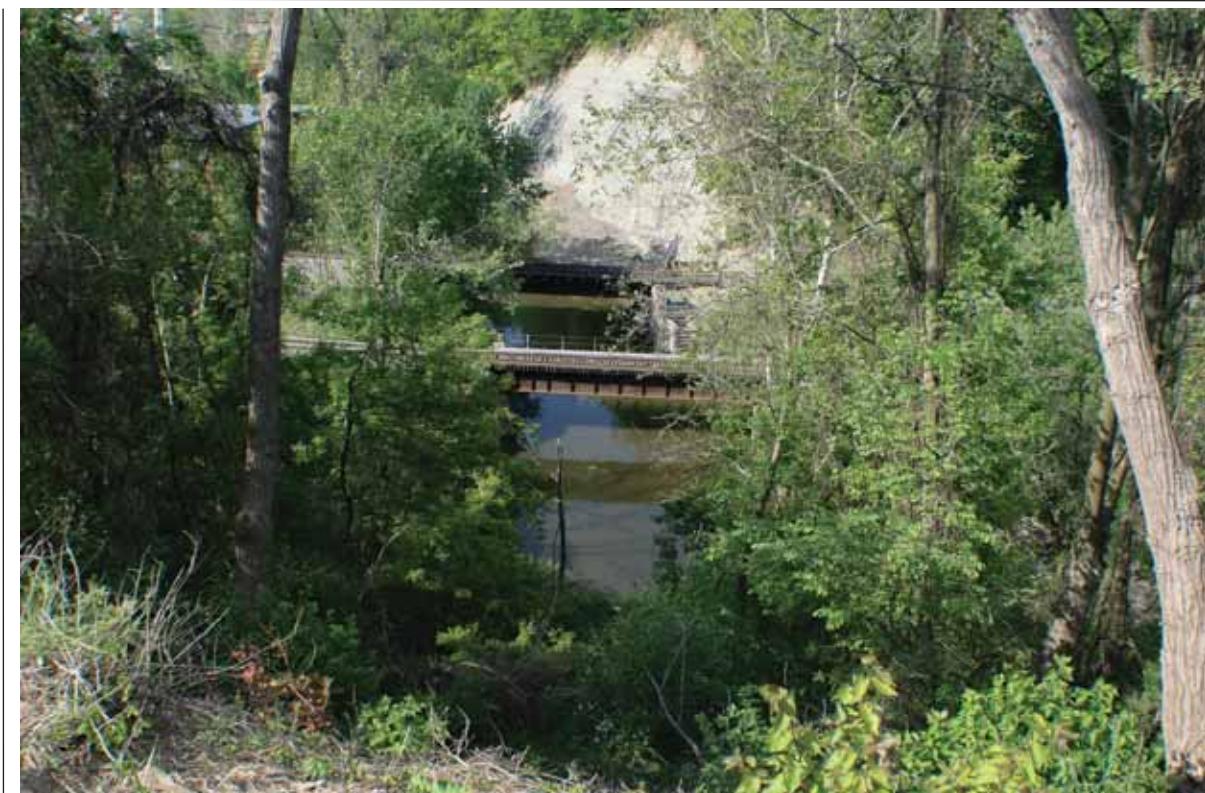


PHOTO BY GREG ROSENBERG

Wednesday, May 19, 2021; Brighton Park, near the trailhead at 4121 Pearl Road: This is a view from an overlook on the trail of a railroad bridge over the Big Creek.

## BRIGHTON PARK TRAIL

continued from page 6

"The owner of the land lived on the beach in California, so it wasn't like we could call them up easily and talk about disposing of their land."

That was when the Western Reserve Land Conservancy got involved in purchasing the land so that the ownership was local, and repurposing of the green space could begin.

According to the Western Reserve Land Conservancy website, the conservancy received a Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grant to obtain the "former Henninger Landfill and adjacent properties along Big Creek" in 2015.

"The project accelerated greatly once Western Reserve Land Conservancy was able to get the land under contract," Verespej credits.

With their help, the remediation process was able to commence, and work was completed by 2017. Funding for the trail was collected over the following couple of years and by August last year, construction was underway.

Now, with the official countdown ticking until the ribbon cutting of this renovated land, the major interest is in encouraging Old Brooklyn natives and lovers of nature to

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consider visiting the historical walk.

Asked who he felt would enjoy this trail the most, Verespej laughed.

"I think empty nester couples are going to love it. I think families out on a bike ride will love it. But I really think that someone who is coming to explore."

Verespej also emphasized that the park was designed for ages 2 to 92, so it is easily accommodating to anyone interested in paying a visit, and the beauty of the land can be appreciated by all.

The area has been transformed from a place of neglect to a natural hotspot you'll never want to leave.

With the cooperation of the Old Brooklyn Development Corp.,

Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and Cleveland Metroparks, the Brighton Park trail is set to officially open this June.

Verespej said that the Old Brooklyn neighborhood is home to so many great experiences, that people should consider not only visiting the zoo but making it a day trip.

"You can get a cup of coffee and a bagel from COFFEE COFFEE and go on a mile hike through the nature preserve all in the same visit."

Or you can go on a hike and then go get something from Irie Jamaican or El Rinconcito afterwards for lunch. You get nature and the city at the same time."

And there's also a vineyard in the neighborhood, Old Brooklyn Winery, at 4103 Memphis Ave.

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