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MARCH 2018

We hope to see
you there!

- **Meet the Artists** on Tuesday, March 6th at 6 p.m. See article on back page for more information. Location: Marshall Early Learning Center, 743 24th Street.
- **Youth Leadership Academy:** interested teens ages 13 - 15 are invited to attend kick off meeting on Wednesday, March 14th at the Boys and Girls Club on Hampton Avenue. See back page for more information.
- **People Task Force Meeting** on Wednesday, March 21st at 10 a.m. Location: Family Investment Center at 600 C Ridley Place.
- **Mural Dedication and Unveiling:** Join City leaders for the mural unveiling and dedication event honoring Pearl Bailey on March 29th at the Pearl Bailey Library. Stay tuned for more information.



NEWPORT NEWS CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD

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For questions or to **VOLUNTEER**, please contact: Garrett Morgan, Senior Planner at gmorgan@nnva.gov
Phone: 757.926.8761 (Department of Planning)
Britta Ayers, Manager of Comprehensive Planning at bayers@nnva.gov

**Transforming Vacant Building
into Co-Working/Makerspace
and Business Incubator**

The City of Newport News Economic Development Authority (EDA) is taking important first steps to help implement one of the Choice Neighborhood's Critical Community Improvements (CCI): establish a co-working/makerspace/incubator space for small businesses and new entrepreneurs. The community envisions this to be a space where current and future small business owners can go for technical assistance, business management workshops, and expert advice on various topics including business planning, industry research, accounting, and capital sources.

As a first step, EDA staff collaborated with Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NNRHA) to assess several properties located within the Choice Neighborhood to identify a site that is walkable for neighborhood residents and accessible to business partners and clients and can be rehabilitated to meet program requirements. They selected the 5,419-square-foot building at 2506 Jefferson Avenue. This building, owned by the NNRHA, has a history of



2506 Jefferson Avenue - owned by the NNRHA - is a vacant commercial property proposed for rehabilitation to support a workspace for small businesses and new entrepreneurs.

commercial use, but has been vacant for some time.

To open a workspace in this building, the EDA will solicit services from a design/architecture firm to assist with space programming with the coworking end use in mind, while preserving the unique architecture of the building. Once the scope of the project has been determined, the EDA will contract for renovation and rehabilitation of the property, using both City and EDA funds.

Additional assistance is being sought from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF). The IRF Program awards funds for the redevelopment of vacant and deteriorated industrial properties. "Industrial" includes any

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non-residential structures considered significant to a community due to size, location, and/or economic importance. Matching funds for this project will be provided through funds available from the City's Fiscal Year 2017 Bond Authorization within the Community Development category. The funds were appropriated by Newport News City Council on November 28, 2017.

Funding from the IRF will advance the ability of the EDA to implement this project. The application was submitted on March 2, 2018. The Hampton Roads Community Action Program (HRCAP) is also seeking funds to help implement this CCI. HRCAP will submit an application for the CommunityWINS Grant Program through the U.S. Conference of Mayors in collaboration with Wells Fargo Bank and the Wells Fargo Foundation. Their application will request funding to program the services and operation of the workspace at 2506 Jefferson Avenue. Grant winners for both programs will be announced this summer.

Comprehensive Renovation of Lassiter Courts

The NNRHA will be undertaking a \$6.7 million comprehensive renovation of the Lassiter Courts property, which is part of a federal Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. RAD is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program that helps public housing authorities preserve and improve public housing properties.

Lassiter Courts improvements include new roofs, HVAC (heating,



Renovation of Lassiter Courts is made possible through the federal Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Work will start late spring.

ventilation, and air conditioning systems), interior paint and flooring, as well as new energy efficient plumbing and appliances. The work also includes construction of a new 3,000 square-foot management office and community facility on the east side of Ivy Avenue at the entrance to the property. The Boys and Girls Club will serve residents out of the new community space.

NNRHA anticipates that renovation work will start in late spring. Repairs will require **temporary** relocation, the cost of which will be borne by NNRHA. Those residents that are temporarily relocated will have the right to return to Lassiter Courts once construction is completed. NNRHA has met with all Lassiter Courts households to discuss the project and temporary relocation activities. If you have any questions about this project, please call **NNRHA at 757.928.2644**.

Peninsula Worklink Orientation

Calling all **interested job seekers** to the Peninsula Worklink Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Orientation at Marshall Courts Recreation Center. The WIOA

Orientation will be held on Tuesday, March 13th and Tuesday, March 27th at 3301 Marshall Avenue from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Anyone interested in attending this orientation **must reserve a spot** with the Newport News Redevelopment & Housing Authority's **Family Investment Center at 757.928.3680**. Seating is limited to 20 people, so register early!

The four hour orientation, which is open to the general public, introduces job seekers to the career and training services available through Peninsula Worklink and its One-Stop Career Centers. Peninsula Worklink provides a range of services to job seekers and businesses, which are funded through the U.S. Department of Labor. **Services are free of charge**, although eligibility may apply for some services.

One-Stop Career Centers, also known as American Job centers, offer three types of services to job seekers that provide a range of resources and services. Basic Career Services include work skills assessments, assistance with job and training searches, access to job banks, internet access, networking skills workshops, and interview



Sign up for the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Orientation at Marshall Courts Recreation Center for career and training services.

techniques workshops among others. Individualized Career Services offers more comprehensive assessments of skills and service needs, development of an individual employment and career plan, intensive career counseling, computer workshops, and more. Training Services include a range of activities and programs such as on-the-job-training, skill upgrading and retraining, and adult education and literacy activities.

Interested in finding out more? Then ***don't miss this opportunity!***

Notice of Upcoming Street Resurfacing

Several Choice Neighborhood streets will be resurfaced through the City's Residential Resurfacing and Concrete Program starting this spring. The streets to be resurfaced in the Choice Neighborhood are:

- 16th Street (from Jefferson Avenue to 16th Street Bridge)
- 20th Street (from Jefferson Avenue to Marshall Avenue)
- Marshall Avenue (from 16th Street to 14th Street)

Work should be begin on these streets in late March and end around late June. The exact schedule is undetermined at this time. We will update schedules through the newsletter as they are finalized.

If you have any questions about the resurfacing program, please call the **311 Contact Center at 757.933.2311** or email at **311@nnva.gov**.

Lower Jefferson Avenue Construction

The City of Newport News will advertise Lower Jefferson Avenue Streetscape Phase II in April with intent to award construction of the \$7.6 million project in May. Construction will address storm sewer, sanitary sewer, streetscape, and road reconstruction between 12th and 24th streets.

As with Phase I, the goal is to improve the safety and appearance of Lower Jefferson Avenue to improve quality of life for area residents and attract businesses to the commercial corridor. This project was initiated prior to the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) planning process through the *Lower Jefferson Avenue Corridor Study*. Construction completion is estimated for spring 2019.

King-Lincoln Park Trails

The City anticipates awarding a construction contract for improvements to King-Lincoln Park this spring. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism received a Recreational Trails Program Grant from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to replace the broken and crumbling walking trail within the park.

Project implementation will reduce trip hazards and improve the overall quality of the park. The project will remove the old 5-foot-wide trails and replace them with 8-foot-wide concrete trails and install trail signs, benches, and water fountains. Construction should start by the end of March and be completed by the end of May.

This project was initiated prior to the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) planning process. One of the priority Early Action Activities identified through CNI will build on these initial park improvements and provide a boardwalk from the park trail to the waterfront. Planning staff anticipate that the boardwalk project will start in early summer.

Driving Health Lifestyles: A Success

On February 20, 2018, the Hampton Roads Community Action Program held Driving Healthy Lifestyles, a community event that provided information on creating healthy outcomes for local residents, both physically and financially. The BB&T Bus was on site, coordinating with local VITA tax sites to provide free tax preparation services and financial literacy information. HRCAP's Housing Services Office provided resources on Housing and



Fair Housing issues. Other vendors also participated, providing information on finances, health, fitness, education and aging. Children from HRCAP Head Start Centers were there to learn about fire safety from the Newport News Fire Department, and to sing a few songs to entertain those in attendance. Thanks to the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, the event also provided food distribution to Southeast Community residents. Over 130 local residents attended.



Youth Leadership Academy

Introducing the Youth Leadership Academy, a three-day session of creative problem solving and innovative solutions for issues youth decide to address. Calling all teens ages 13–15 who live in the 23607 zip code! Come out and participate in this free academy and learn what it takes to be a leader and present to City Council. Food will be provided and transportation is available.

The academy will take place during spring break, April 3 – 5 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center. To reserve your spot, call **Garrett Morgan at 757.926.8761** no later than March 16th. A kick-off meeting for interested teens will take place on March 14th at the Boys & Girls Club (639 Hampton Avenue) from 3:30 to 5 p.m.



After the mural unveiling, Mrs. Sample-Jones and Ms. Grace met Billy Thompson, Mr. Thompson's son, who is also an attorney.

Thompson Mural Unveiled

On Saturday, February 10, 2018, family and friends of W. Hale Thompson joined residents and City staff at the unveiling of the mural celebrating the local African American attorney. Mr. Thompson, who pushed to integrate the Newport News Public Library System, was honored with a mural at 611 25th Street (Esquire Barber Shop), the former home of his law office. The Newport News Economic Development Authority (EDA) commissioned local artist Asa Jackson to paint the mural.

Meet the Artists

Come join the Department of Planning on **Tuesday, March 6th** to meet the artists who hope to be selected to create the next community mural. The mural is planned for the wall of the Boys and Girls Club on Hampton Avenue, facing Jefferson Avenue. The purpose of this mural is to transform the blank wall into a showpiece for the community's culture and history. This is one of three Early Action Activities identified through the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) planning process and is identified in the *Marshall-Ridley Choice Neighborhood*

Transformation Plan.

At this meeting, artists will interact with community members to learn more about the history of the area and to share their initial vision for the mural. PLEASE bring photos and articles that can be shared with the artists regarding the community's history.

The meeting will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Marshall Early Learning Center at 743 24th Street. **RSVP to Brian Pierce at 757.926.8761 or bpierce@nnva.gov.**

Other Events This Month

- **Race of the Ozobots (Teen Tech Week)** at Pearl Bailey Library on Wednesday, March 7th at 4 p.m. This program is open to ages 11 and up.
- **Sole Expressions: Young Energy Sessions** at Downing-Gross on Saturday, March 24th at noon. **Get your ticket by emailing theyoungenergy@gmail.com.**

Entrepreneurs and Aspiring Entrepreneurs, We Want Your Input!

Here is your opportunity to share with the City of Newport News Department of Development how they can assist you with growing your small business!

Join us on **Monday, March 19, 2018, from 6 to 8 p.m.** at the Pearl Bailey Library in the W. Hale Thompson Meeting Room located at 2510 Wickham Avenue. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information, please call Elizabeth McCoury at 757.926.8428.