

P.O. Box 760042
Lathrup Village, MI 48076

Cambridge Village Association

Established 1952

www.cambridgevillageassociation.org

The Official Newsletter of the Cambridge Village Association – Spring 2018

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CITY OF SOUTHFIELD! 60 years 1958-2018

ANNUAL MEEETING 2018

Cambridge Village Association will host its **annual meeting** at 7:15 pm on Tuesday May 15, 2018 at the Parks and Rec Building at the City of Southfield complex. It is a good opportunity for all residents to meet neighbors and enter the dialogue about issues in the city and the subdivision, and make plans for the year ahead.



MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Most of the Board attended one of the two state-of-the-city addresses given by the mayor in March. It is quite exciting to hear about the booming growth again in Southfield after some quiet years from the 2008 recession. Existing office space is being leased, and there are many new buildings under construction or total renovation. For example, Beaumont Hospital is building a sleep center on 12 Mile west of Greenfield on what was underutilized land. Most important was the description of the City's role in redeeming tax foreclosed homes and renovating them for resale via Habitat for Humanity. Upon sale, the City and Habitat are refunded, so no tax dollars are used. Several houses in Cambridge and Canterbury have been beautifully improved for new permanent residents through this process. The City is also planning to inspect rental apartment complexes not just single-family homes to assure quality living for all residents. Southfield Rd. north of us is really quite hot for new retail development, and for an upscale condo project.

HOME AWARDS 2018

As discussed at the 2017 Annual Meeting, we are moving the **annual home awards** judging forward from August to mid-June. It should be easier to attract outside judges and local judges at that time of year, before summer vacations are in full-force. If you would like to be a judge this year, let a board member know.

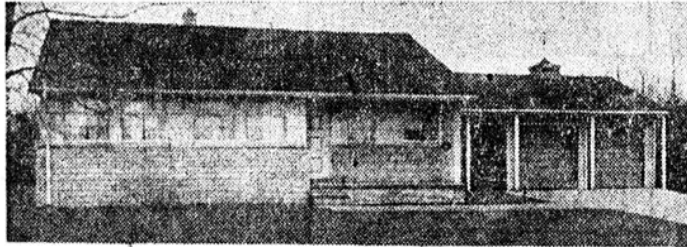
WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

Before the summer, CVA hopes to launch an improved website. In addition to being the place for any subdivision news, the goal is to make the website to go-to place for contact info for City departments, and as an archive for recent news and announcements.

FRONT LIGHT GREMLINS

The Board has been flummoxed with the behavior of our front lights. Sometime during the darkest, snowiest, and coldest part of the winter, they went out. Since it was illogical, when the weather moderated a bit, chief sleuth Senora Leonard concluded it had to be due to the disturbance of the DTE electric pole replacement work. CVA hired an electrician who got it working again, only to have it fail again. Stay tuned for more details. There is little use fixing it until the wires are transferred to the new pole; they have not been yet. We will follow up on this and get them working again soon.

KEEP IT NEAT: Residents are reminded that all trash cans and recycling bins need to be kept out of sight from the street. That usually means behind the house or in a garage. It is a City ordinance and could mean getting a ticket if ignored.



YOU'LL FIND THESE HOUSES IN CAMBRIDGE VILLAGE
Subdivision is opened off W. 11 Mile, Southfield Twp.

ON SHAGBARK LANE . . .

Cambridge Village
Opened by Lockwood

Cambridge Village, a quaint but modern community in the Greater North Woodward area, is being presented to the public Sunday by Rodney Lockwood.

On an 80-acre wooded tract off of Eleven Mile Road between Greenfield and Southfield, the village is ringed by a white picket fence, and is dotted with Colonial lamp posts and rustic street signs.

There is a wide variety of home styles in the village. Some are brick, others a combination of brick and cedar shakes. Some have two bedrooms, others three. Some have basements, others not.

THERE IS A furnished model, "Cambridge House," at 27030 Lexington Parkway, which will be open to the public daily and Sunday to show how attractively the homes can be furnished. The R. L. Pope Co. has decorated the house in contemporary modern, with striking ebony and silver grey furniture in the living room.

The floor plan features a two-way entrance from the front door. One archway leads into the living room, the other to the bedrooms and bath.

The hall is papered with a Swedish import in geometric design.

A glass brick window in the bathroom is fitted with a venti-

lating fan. An over-size mirror is above the washstand.

THE SUBSTANTIAL size of the house is apparent in the basement, where the 1,200 square feet of uncluttered floor space will make a fine recreation room.

Lockwood plans to accommodate about 1,000 families in Cambridge Village. The area will be easily accessible to Detroit when the John C. Lodge Expressway is completed. It is also handy to Birmingham and Pontiac. The Northland Shopping Center will be a short distance away.

Lending a quaint flavor to the village are the names of its streets, like Shagbark Lane and Johnnycake Lane.

Watch for Sag

In applying glossy points and wall enamels, make sure the final brush strokes are up and down. If sags appear, stroke them upward with the brush tip.

JUST 65 YEARS AGO...

While searching for something else, it was fascinating to find this article in a February 1953 *Detroit Free Press* about the opening of Cambridge Village subdivision.

These "models" were two of the twenty floorplans from \$14,000 to \$20,000. The article infers there will be "1,000 families" which is curious, since we have only 288 homes, but with the original platting, there might have been 350 homes. Many homes on Spring Arbor and Red Leaf straddle more than one originally-sized lot, reducing the numbers. Canterbury Gardens north of Catalpa was not developed yet, so perhaps developer Lockwood had his eyes on that property. Three years later, the larger Cranbrook Village would encompass many more homesites while using many of the models developed for Cambridge.

Remember, Southfield was not a city yet (1958), and Northland (1954) and subsequent development was not underway yet. This was considered "way out" but was convenient to Royal Oak, Birmingham, Berkley, and to Detroit via Northwestern Highway and James Cousins (no freeway yet). Southfield Rd. had no freeway either. Oak Park was growing concurrently.

Lathrup Village was started in the 1920s, yet was still being developed through the early 1970s. No doubt the Lathrup development added cachet to the area. Cambridge homes' unique styling and subdivision layout was more in tune with quaint Lathrup than with other subs being built at the time in the Detroit area.

The relative value of Cambridge homes in 1953 in 2018 dollars is \$130,852 to \$186,931, so those sale prices are not as inexpensive as they sound.

By the way, at the time, the street signs were made out of wood for a rustic look. These were replaced some years later with City signs, as the wood could not stand the test of time. The Lockwoods had previously built more modest homes in Royal Oak ("Olivia St.") and bigger ones like ours in Beverly Hills. In fact, it is likely that the homes pictured in Cambridge Village's earliest brochure hand-out were actually pictures of homes built at 14 Mile/Greenfield in the Beverly Hills subdivision.

One other claim to fame: if you look at the map of Southfield subdivisions, it is clear that Cambridge Village was the first fully-planned "builders" sub, based on models, not based on custom homes built by different builders. This created a harmonious look and feel. And our subdivision was the very first one in the township to be designed with one central entrance, a style that would be the hallmark for subdivisions to come.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE HERE IN 1953?

The early residents were pioneers of sorts. While it is true Lathrup Village was under development from the 1920s, and had enough residents to become a city in 1953, it still continued to fill in until the early 1970s. The section closest to Cambridge Village was likely the most developed by Cambridge's early years. The only other well-known sub was the Magnolia area in the Southfield/8 Mile area; most other developments were custom homes. The area north of Catalpa and east of Pierce (we call it Bonnie Acres but actually it is a different development) was settled from the 1920s, but with older-style modest homes. All of the brick ranches in those subs followed along after Cambridge. The area east of Cambridge ("Tanglewood") was not started until the late 1960s so it was vacant land.

The house on the corner of 11 Mile/Lexington was a Builders' Association "Ideal Home" for 1953 (later called "Idea Home") and was a sharp example of the Mid-Century Modern movement that was developing in the 1950s and 1960s. No doubt this lot was donated to attract attention to the new subdivision. People would tour this dream home but then would elect to buy our more modest models which shared some of this modernity. The Cambridge models represented the type of more upscale houses that people could actually afford to buy and maintain.

The subdivision grew east to west, with Shagbark first, and Spring Arbor westward last. The homes grew in size as families grew in size too. There are about seven homes of the 288 that are unique, as in just one of each style built in our sub. Four of these were later built in greater numbers at our sister sub, Cranbrook Village. Interestingly, eight of the ten houses facing Red Leaf Lane (the even number addresses) just south of San Quentin are all models commonly found in great numbers in Cranbrook Village (except for one style that didn't make the jump: shown in the lower picture above, representing two of the ten).

Grade schools included Annie Lathrup School and Simms School (now demolished, but was located at Simms Park on Pierce) and Southfield High School was founded in 1951. Southfield-Lathrup High would not open until the 1960s. Police Dept. was established in 1953. There was no major local shopping. Northland was under construction and would open in spring 1954 bragging that it had the largest parking lot in North America (7,500 cars). However, when Disneyland opened in 1955, its lot was 12,000 cars. Royal Oak was the closest big city, and the deed restrictions filed in November 1952 showed a Royal Oak address. We would later have a Lathrup address. Berkley and Birmingham were nearby, including groceries at Hiller's Shopping Center Market on 12 Mile (now closed). Soon there would be a Kroger at Northland with a package pickup conveyor belt to the parking lot.

Most homes here still have a "milk chute". With likely just one car per household, families depended on a milk delivery service for milk, bread, ice cream, and other daily sustenance. Back then, milk came in glass bottles: empty bottles were placed in the chute, the milkman swapped the glass empties for fresh milk and the pattern would repeat.

Nearby movie houses included the Berkley (now a Rite-Aid), the Washington (aka the Baldwin), Main, and Royal Oak theaters. The Birmingham and Bloomfield, just 4 miles north, were not considered part of "Detroit" and could show movies just after they opened downtown and before the

local neighborhood shows including in Royal Oak. The Oak and West Side drive-ins were also close by. Otherwise, off to Detroit or Pontiac for amusement.

Lawrence Tech was planning to be in Southfield by 1955. The college was located in Highland Park with plans to move to a property they bought at 8 Mile, Greenfield, Northwestern Highway. Little did they know that this was to be the hottest piece of property in the Detroit area, as J. L. Hudson needed that land to build the world's first shopping center, Northland. The college sold the land and with the profits, bought a farm at 10 Mile and had enough money from the sale to erect their first building.

Early residents likely did not perceive the controversy that would envelop the area as the proposed I-696 freeway was looking for a place to go, with planning starting in the 1950s. One long-time resident said one of the ideas was to put the freeway DOWN CATALPA (!). Fortunately, that idea went nowhere, and it would take some 36 years for our central section of the freeway to open in 1989 after some years of messy construction. 11 Mile used to be a non-descript 2-lane road before the freeway. However, the gridlock today is just the same in the morning!



**ANY DUES FOR 2018 OR EARLIER ARE NOW PAST THE DUE DATE
AND ARE SUBJECT TO A \$10 LATE FEE**

CVA BOARD:

Gary Cocozzoli, Pres. 248-443-8905 garycocozzoli@earthlink.net
Senora Leonard, Treas. 248-423-7847 ssenora615@gmail.com
Juan Brown 248-423-3670 juanbrown16@ameritech.net
Judy Lewis 248-424-9513 jeweLewis@hotmail.com
Ray Steele 248-423-4238 raywsteele@gmail.com
John Bongort 248-752-4803 sendtojohnb@aol.com