



Winter 2023 Edition

The Leaflet

The official newsletter of your Maple Leaf Community Council

Calendar of Events

March 8

MLCC Board Mtg.*
7:30 - 9 pm | Zoom

April 8

Easter Egg Hunt
10:30 am | Maple Leaf
Park Lower Level

April 12

MLCC Board Mtg.*
7:30 - 9 pm | Zoom

April 26

Community Mtg.*
7:00 - 8:30 pm | Zoom

June 9

Spring/Summer
The Leaflet edition

June 14

MLCC Board Mtg.*
7:30 - 9 pm | Zoom

July 12

MLCC Board Mtg.*
7:30 - 9 pm | Zoom

July 19

Summer Social
5:30 - 8 pm | Maple
Leaf Park Play Area

August 9

MLCC Board Mtg.*
7:30 - 9 pm | Zoom

Sept 8

Fall edition of
The Leaflet

President's Message

by Alex Benson, Maple Leaf Community Council President

Hello!

For those of you who are new to our community, let me first welcome you. We're glad you're here. If you are a long-time resident, you may have noticed that we have been struggling to meet your community expectations and make your membership valuable. I would like to share what happened and what we plan to do moving forward.

A confluence of events including the pandemic and the retirement of several board members after a decade of service left the MLCC hanging on by a thread this past summer.

Efforts were made to pull together the Summer Social in 2022, but we failed. We also failed to properly notify the community, and we failed to deliver *The Leaflet* newsletter on time. We apologize for those mistakes.

These failures really hit the board hard and almost lead to the Council's disbanding. Board members have spent the fall and winter asking what the Council should be doing, or if we should even still exist. What inspired us to keep going was the community we saw around us. We all agreed that this community is at an inflection point. With new businesses moving in and growth happening all around us, the effort to build deeper connections within our community is vital to its future. I want to share what we plan to do moving forward as your Community Council.

In this edition of *The Leaflet*, you'll read about building those deeper connections. The Council will maintain our core

historic functions: Newsletter, Summer Social, and Emergency HUBS. Additional connections will come from you, our neighbors, telling us what our community should be like, how we should come together, and how to work with us to build a vision for our community.

We invite you to bring your new ideas and join with others to make them happen. The Council will give you the support and resources you need to be successful, and to connect you with other neighbors, businesses, and organizations.

So, ask yourself, what is something you wish was happening? Do you like bingo? Let us know and we can make a Bingo night happen. Do you want to see a safety patrol out in Maple Leaf Park after sunset during the winter months so you can feel safe while getting in your evening walk? We can help you get that started.

One thing that has touched me living here the past four years is seeing what just a few neighbors can do when they work together and care. Seriously, it's the only reason a Summer Social happened in 2021, and the only reason one will happen this year. It's the reason you're reading the newsletter in your hand right now. Communities are made by those who show up.

Get more involved by connecting with us on Facebook. Or you can reach us via email at hello@mapleleafcommunity.org.

We also want to hear your ideas. Take the Maple Leaf questionnaire (see page 5) and make your voice heard.

*For a link to any meeting, email treasurer@mapleleafcommunity.org

Maple Leaf Tree Groves

by Susan Su, Chris Gaul and Sandy Shettler

What's a Seattleite to do on a grey and rainy Saturday in January? Go on a neighborhood tree walk of course! Over 40 neighbors attended the first Maple Leaf Mother Grove tree walk, organized by Maple Leaf residents and *The Last 6000*, a group which documents Seattle's majestic trees. We learned about the unique role Maple Leaf's Mother Groves play in Seattle's ecosystem, why they are threatened, and how we can help protect them.

Led by Diana, a "tree ambassador," we practiced identifying trees by shape, needles, leaves, and cones. We learned that Maple Leaf has an amazing variety of trees. Natives like cedars and hemlocks sprung up or were planted over a hundred years ago, while species like cypress were brought from Europe and Asia and now thrive in the Pacific Northwest. We admired a majestic sequoia, viewed a handsome young Douglas fir, and made a stop by a hardy birch that has withstood the bronze birch borer beetle that is devastating Seattle's birch canopy.

Our final stop was at one of Maple Leaf's largest Mother Groves. The City of Seattle's definition of a grove is eight trees with trunks at least 12" in diameter, with a contiguous canopy. The Mother Groves span most of the properties on their blocks, and function much like intact native Pacific Northwest ecosystems. They are reservoirs of biodiversity for iconic native species relying on forests to survive. Aerial views show about 22 of them in the Maple Leaf neighborhood, making Maple Leaf a rare habitat in Seattle!

Here is what we learned about the Mother Groves:

Groves are greater than the sum of their individual trees

Groves work as mutual aid networks for their individual trees—sort of like a tree trade association. Trees in groves are resilient and much less likely to decline and become hazard trees. Growing together, trees take care of each other in a few key ways:

1. The underground root and fungal network is a "superhighway" for trees to send each other key nutrients and disease-fighting chemicals.

Trees that have high resources—those blessed with lots of light, nitrogen, water—can transfer some of

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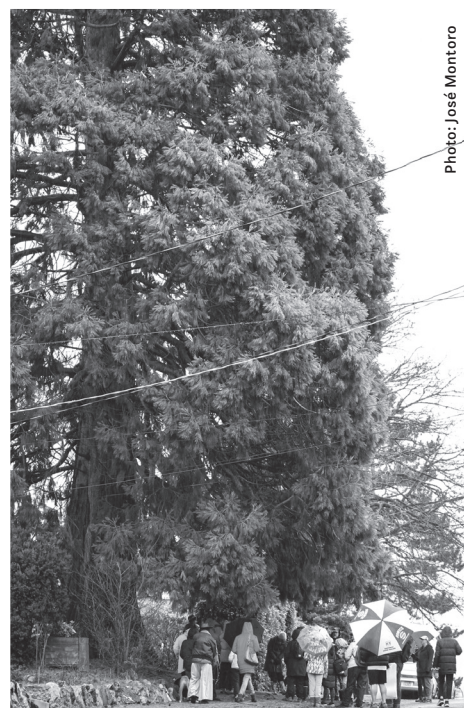


Photo: José Montoro

Maple Leaf Mother Grove Tree Walk



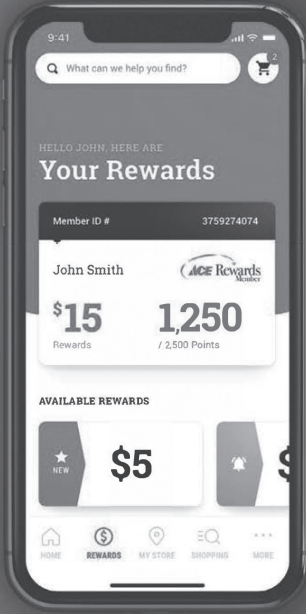
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their abundance to the trees who are resource-constrained and residing in shady or dry spots.

2. Trees in groves keep each other—and us—cooler in the summer.

On days when temperatures are in the 90's, groves have measured temps 15 degrees cooler than street temperatures. This is an increasingly critical benefit not only for the trees themselves, but also for the birds and wildlife who live in the groves. It is a great benefit to the trees' human neighbors as well.

3. Trees are more storm-proof in groves, and soak up storm water, reducing flooding.

Groves work as a team. They are better able to withstand wind and other extreme weather. They clean pollution from the air, filter storm water, reduce flooding, and mitigate urban heat islands.

Why are Maple Leaf's Mother Groves and large trees at risk?

Maple Leaf is attractive to developers building new homes. Seattle's 2019 zoning changes allow up to three homes (a primary residence and two accessory dwelling units) on every lot. Further, because many of Maple Leaf's lots are large, they can be split into two. Adding homes to an in-city neighborhood close to light rail and amenities makes sense. Developers often want to remove trees to increase profits. With thoughtful planning, large trees and groves can be retained while adding housing, especially since most grow on the periphery and back portions of the lot.

Unfortunately, the housing currently being built in Maple Leaf rarely retains any of the large trees which are so valuable for public health and ecosystem benefits. Current code allows the three new homes to be built distinctly separate from each

other, spread widely across the lot. This design eliminates even the trees growing on the edges of the lot, as well as any space for planting new trees. Even when trees are retained, they often decline due to construction damage or homes built too close to their roots.

Removing a single large tree results in a loss of its public health and ecological benefits, but if that tree is removed from within a grove, the loss is magnified exponentially and can result in the eventual loss of the entire grove. With a key large tree gone, formerly sheltered trees are exposed to the elements, and no longer have the support of interlocking roots and the fungal network. As those trees decline and become hazard trees, they must also be removed. Eventually the grove is gone, sometimes replaced with small ornamental trees. Many Neighbors are monitoring Maple Leaf projects which propose to remove "a small number" of trees within a grove, and asking the key trees remaining to maintain the integrity of the grove.

Often, homeowners who sell their property express a desire for the trees be saved. They are falsely reassured to read that Seattle's tree protection code protects "exceptional" (large) trees from removal. Few realize that a key provision in that code allows protected trees to be removed if retaining them would prevent maximizing the development of the lot. City planners frequently approve projects which remove exceptional trees, even though a workaround can nearly always be found to integrate the trees into the new home project.

How Can Maple Leaf residents protect their trees and Mother Groves?

By connecting with neighbors! Over the past year, awareness of Maple Leaf's big trees and Mother Groves has grown exponentially. Maple

Leaf residents are stepping up to watch over neighborhood trees and rally support when needed. Sometimes this is by contacting Seattle's Department of Construction and Inspections to ask why a big tree has been left off a site plan. Other times it is noticing the arrival of a tree cutting crew in an unmarked truck, working quickly on a holiday—sure signs of an illegal tree removal. Some residents are sharing how they placed "tree covenants" on their property deeds. And sometimes, it is going on a tree walk with 40 neighbors, on a cold and rainy January afternoon!

Next Steps

There are many ways to get involved in celebrating and protecting urban trees. Here are a few places to start:

The Last 6,000 is a project to count and protect the last 6,000 majestic trees in Seattle. Website: www.thelast6000.org. Frequent updates are on Instagram: @thelast6000.

Don't Clearcut Seattle is a similar urban tree advocacy group working toward better legal protection for Seattle's trees. Website: www.dontclearcutseattle.org. They have a pre-written letter on their website you can sign and send to city leaders, asking that the Maple Leaf Mother Groves be protected as properties are developed.

How to Advocate for Trees is a great and informative guide from the Chicago Region Trees Initiative, that is relevant to Seattle - chicagorti.org.

Attend a future tree walk, meet Maple Leaf neighbors advocating for trees, or learn more about the Maple Leaf Mother Groves. Contact us at 22grovesmapleleaf@gmail.com.

Neighborhood: What does it mean?

by Scott Andrews, Board Treasurer

About ten years ago, my wife Laurie and I were sitting on our front porch looking at our quiet street. We thought, "It sure would be nice to know more of our neighbors."

So, we started trying to meet the people who live in the 16 houses on our street. Having a big, loud dog who needed a walk every day helped. It's amazing how dogs help start conversations. Over the course of about a year we managed to meet most of the people on the street. We have become friends with several, which is great. They are people we can call if we need the plants watered during a vacation, and who we stop and talk with us in the street.

The folks we only know by face and wave are important also. We are always happy to see them at the summer Night Out BBQ, or the New Year's Bonfire in the street. We don't know them well, but they make this place more than just an address.

So what makes a neighborhood? Why does it matter? How do you make where you live a neighborhood?

I think a neighborhood is a place where you feel you belong. Neighbors see you and you see them as

individuals. There is a comfort in being known and in seeing a familiar face.

As Wallace Stegner wrote, "*No place is a place until the things have happened in it are remembered in history, ballads, yarns, legends, or monuments.*" We need to meet the characters who populate our place and its stories. A neighborhood is a place we create and tell stories. "Did you see the coyote walking down the street last week?" "The rabbits are eating my lettuce before I can." "I am glad Martha and Billy were able to sell their old car." Much of this is the small talk of our acquaintances. Those stories add a richness and vitality to the place we live.

Does it matter? I think it does. I know I am more comfortable now that I have met most of the people who live close by. I am glad the people next door know they can ask for help moving the garbage cans from the curb when they are on vacation. Or that we can stop and check in about those things on our street. The people we know online or in our work are important. They add richness and diversity to our lives. Yet, as the poster at *Reckless Video* used to say, "The internet is not a neighborhood." We are sensory creatures and the involvement with others—in person—is important. Our neighborhood is a safer place when we recognize who lives here. I know it is easier to take on challenges when we are not alone.

As the winter starts to turn into spring, I encourage you to meet the people around you. Plant some flowers in the garden, greeting the people who walk by. Walk to the hardware store and say hello to those you pass. Invite people you already know to join a street or block email list. Share a recommendation for a contractor or other service provider. Or, if all you are comfortable doing is waving, give a wave.

We live in a great place. Let's meet some people and make some new stories.

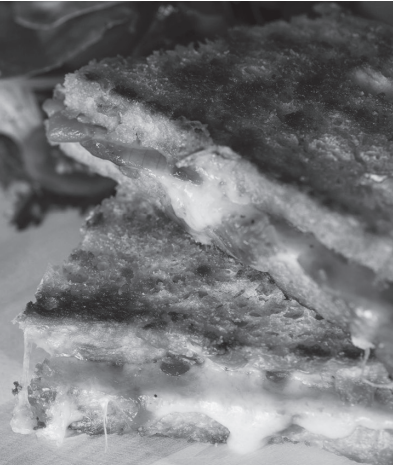
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Get Connected

by Alex Benson

Are you looking for a way to get more connected to your community? Looking for some purposeful involvement? Want to make your neighborhood a better place? We're looking for volunteers to join a Maple Leaf Community Council committee to produce all of the events and activities our neighbors love a reality.

Maybe a board position sounds too daunting, or perhaps you're really interested in a specific topic but aren't sure where to start. Committees are a way for you to give back to your community in a way that fits your needs. Meeting regularly, you'll work with like-minded neighbors running our events, reaching out to neighbors, or helping with this newsletter.

These committees meet about once a month. We are looking for people who are excited and want to commit some time to making these things happen. Since committees are just forming, those showing interest now can help us decide when and how each team will meet.

If you're interested in joining any of the committees listed on the right, please contact us via email at hello@mapleleafcommunity.org and help us make our community a better place!

Maple Leaf Community Committees

Roll up your sleeves, dig in, and get involved. Your Maple Leaf neighborhood supports events, information sharing, and a seasonal newsletter to keep you connected. And we want your help!

Newsletter Committee:

Help plan, edit, and produce this quarterly newsletter, find and write stories, and help coordinate sponsorships.

Summer Social & Events Committee:

Help run our yearly events like the Summer Social and help us create new ones for the community.

Business Committee:

Engage with and support our local business community through promotion and collaboration.

Neighbors Committee:

Help us reach our neighbors better, recruit volunteers and potential board members, and grow our connected community.

Emergency Hub Committee:

Coordinate local events to raise awareness and maintain the local community emergency hubs.

Easter Egg Hunt!

April 8th | 10:30 am
Maple Leaf Park Lower Level

Join us for a morning of fun at Maple Leaf Park. Bring a basket, dress in your most festive spring outfit (bunny ears are encouraged!), and get ready to search for hidden eggs.



We Want to Hear From You...



Help make Maple Leaf a better place for all of us by telling us your thoughts. Please complete our survey by scanning the QR code above.

You can also access the survey at mapleleafcommunity.org/survey.

Found a Problem? Get it Fixed!

by Carly Rowe

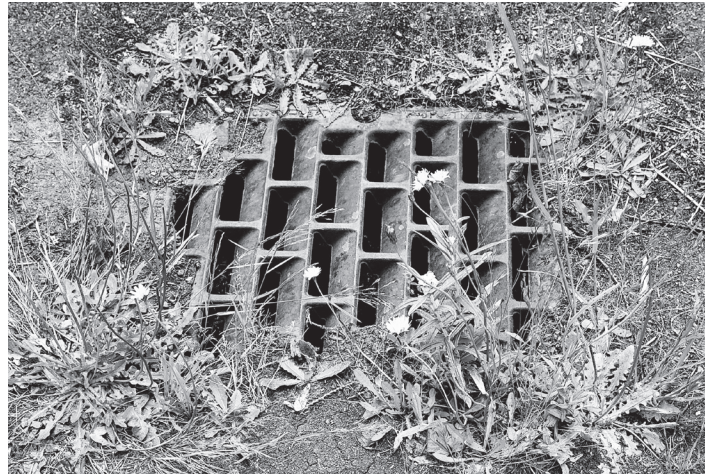
Have you heard of Seattle's **Find It, Fix It** app?

Launched in 2013, the app is a convenient way to report issues to the city, while providing precise location information to help staff respond efficiently.

When users submit a request in *Find It, Fix It*, they're prompted to select one of fifteen categories that best fits the issue. Requests can be submitted for clogged storm drains, park maintenance, public litter like overflowing trash cans, street sign maintenance, and many more.

Between January 2020 and November 2021 over 230,000 requests for service were submitted, and the majority (77%) came through *Find It, Fix It*. The app was developed for residents to easily notify the city about issues that can be quickly remedied.*

Response times to requests can vary. I recently used the app to request a replacement for a missing No Parking sign. I downloaded the app and submitted a brief report with two photos under Street Sign and



Overgrown or clogged storm drains create flooding

Traffic Signal Maintenance. Less than a week later a No Parking sign had been placed on the empty post.

New improvements to the app were launched in November 2022 to improve usability. Users can now submit up to three photos with their request and view all past submissions. The latest version also includes a Frequently Reported section displaying the top three most common requests.

See for yourself! Download *Find It, Fix It* from the App store (iPhone users) or the Google Play Store (Android users).

*A recent analysis revealed that about 10% of submissions are directly related to the unhoused, which is an unforeseen and unfortunate use of the app.



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Keeping an Eye on the Rules

by Scott Andrews, Board Treasurer

In a society of laws, knowing what the laws are and how they work is key to a sense of control of the life we lead. Most of us follow the laws, for example, customs of driving make it possible to travel safely. Other laws, like land use planning, are similar but much more complex. Let's take a look at how the parts fit together.

1. ALL regulation is local. It only applies in a specific jurisdiction, which is always a defined geographical space, like a state, county, city, or district.

2. When jurisdictions create regulations, the first step is giving someone in government the authority to impose rules on a segment of society. This is done by elected officials who write a law.

The law or statute sets out the goals of the new authority, the structure of the authority, and who will implement the new structure. The law will also indicate what level of jurisdiction has control—whether it's a state concern, or a county or city issue. The law can be as simple as stating that authority exists and outlining broad goals, or it can be as complex as determining specific procedures, practices, and objectives. The law must go through the legal process and become part of the entity's statutes or code. The statutes or code make up all the laws for a jurisdiction.

3. The implementation of the law is done through regulation. The specific detailed processes of putting the law to work is delegated to staff. Regulations and rules are created administratively and describe the details of exactly who does what when to reach the goals of the law. For example, they outline who reviews a building permit, under what process, and in what time frame. The creation of these rules is one area citizens can have a direct role.

Administrative rules are created by citizen boards on which you can serve. You can also comment on draft rules.

When looking to change your business, remodel your house, or understand why someone is allowed to cut down a tree in the area, it is important to know where you are, what agency has jurisdiction, and how the authority of that jurisdiction is empowered. Knowing this will help assure your efforts to affect change are as efficient as possible.

4. The details matter. Maintaining an awareness of what is being discussed in Olympia, and how the details of those will affect your specific situation, is important for you to be an informed community member. When you review a bill, look at the details of its implementation to see what other rules it may change. Often, laws that will do good things will also strip away important protections.

This year there are a number of bills before the state legislature which justify careful scrutiny. HB 1078, a bill about land use and planning, is one of many that warrants a detailed review and comment by residents.



The flyer for Fairview Child Center features a dark grey background with three circular images on the left: children playing, a building, and a baby. The text is white and includes the center's logo, enrollment status, age range, hours, contact info, and a list of benefits.

Fairview
CHILD CENTER

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Fairview Child Center is a ministry of The Fairview Church that has been serving this community for over 20 years.

AGES: INFANT - PRE-K

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- Proverbs 22:6

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Contact Us!

We always want to hear from you! You are what puts "Community" in the Maple Leaf Community Council. Whether you have a comment, a question, or a new idea to share, please get in touch with us.

Via Email:

Hello@MapleLeafCommunity.org

Via Postal Service:

Post Office Box 75595
Seattle, WA 98175

Maple Leaf Community Council Membership Form

Starting or renewing your membership is easy. You may sign up (or renew) online at MapleLeafCommunity.org. Or send us the completed form below, along with a check payable to Maple Leaf Community Council, and mail it to P.O. Box 75595, Seattle WA 98175. We look forward to having you join us!

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Membership Level:

- | | | |
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| ☐ Student (\$5) | ☐ Household (\$40) | ☐ Additional Donation (amount) _____ |

I would like to be involved in the following ways:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Transportation and Land Use | ☐ Public Safety and Crime | ☐ Emergency Preparation and Response |
| ☐ Newsletter writing and editing | ☐ Fundraising | ☐ Communications and Social Media |
| ☐ MLCC Board of Directors | ☐ Events (Summer Social, etc.) | |