



# Alexandria ECHO PRESS

www.echopress.com | \$1.50 | Wednesday, November 28, 2018

## ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL

### Big plans for corner of Broadway

#### \$14 million project adds retail, apartments

By Al Edenloff  
aedenloff@echopress.com

A \$14 million project proposed for downtown Alexandria would completely change the look of the 300 block of Broadway.

The project includes a building footprint of 37,200 square feet and would replace vacant buildings that last housed Bello Cucina restaurant and Blue Collar Bob's.

The new four-story complex would consist of commercial and retail space — including a new, unnamed restaurant — along with 75 apartments, ranging from studios to one- and two-bedroom units, according to the developer, GoodNeighbor Properties, LLC, represented by Rob Thompson and Ted Christianson.

It would also include 162 parking stalls, 112 of them underground.

Plans for the property were discussed at Monday night's Alexandria City Council meeting.

The developer is applying for tax increment financing to help pay for the project. With TIF, property taxes are frozen at the current rate for several years, and the future tax savings are used to help cover site development costs.

The developer is requesting to receive \$3.5 million in TIF over a 13-year period.

The council didn't take action on the request but scheduled a public hearing for Monday, Feb. 25, at 7 p.m.

If approved, the project could start in March and be completed by June 2020.

In its TIF application, GoodNeighbor Properties noted the development would be located on the busiest intersection in Alexandria and would replace buildings that are in bad shape and beyond their useful life.

"The existing businesses on these lots have struggled and changed hands multiple times over the past 10 years," the application noted. "This project will clean up the corner and provide a facility that will be something more representative with the long-range goals of the city."

The developer said TIF is needed to make the project financially feasible because of the high cost of acquiring the properties, demolishing buildings and developing the site.

The rental rates for the apartments haven't been calculated yet, but are expected to range between \$1,200 and \$2,500 a month, slightly above the standard market, according to the developer.

The Alexandria Planning Commission tabled GoodNeighbor Properties' request for a planned unit development at its Nov. 19 meeting. It asked several questions about parking and wanted more time to digest the details of the project.



Lowell Anderson / Echo Press

Anita Garner, left, is waging a 60-day tribute for her husband Mike, who is turning 60 on Nov. 29. Each day has brought a gift or new experience. On Day 47, they donated items for the Echo Press' mitten tree.

## 60 FOR 60

Wife arranges 60 days of gifts, experiences for husband's 60th birthday

By Karen Tolkkinen  
ktolkkinen@echopress.com

Day 1: Mike Garner gets a surprise in a bottle on Oct. 1. It's a barrel-aged oat wine made by Minnesota-based Surly Brewing Co.

"He loves beer, so I bought him a really good one," says his wife, Anita Garner.

On Thursday, Nov. 29, Mike will turn 60. It's one of those milestones that can beat up on a person. Sixty? No freakin' way. It doesn't really bother Mike, though. He doesn't think about it much. He does realize that in a few years, he will qualify for Social Security and Medicare. He doesn't feel old enough.

The idea of aging bothers Anita maybe a bit more. But she has a plan. She loves Mike, so much it makes her tear up. They've been married for 31 years and their three



Contributed

Mike Garner holds up the gift for Day 1 of the 60-day tribute leading up to his 60th birthday: a wine-style beer from his wife, Anita.

kids are all grown up and living on their own.

Her plan is this: Every day, for 60 days, she is going to do something

wonderful for Mike.

She's been planning it for a year.

The Surly wine-style beer is the first.

Day 2: A wooden chessboard.

"It's something we've talked a lot about learning," Anita explains.

She has decided to document every day of this amazing 60-day declaration of love for the guy she calls "my big beautiful man."

After 31 years, some couples might despise being in the same room together. These two even have a joint Facebook account. They first met in Wadena, when he was assigned to be her electronics tutor at college.

Day 3: Anita takes Mike to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lowry for a church meatball dinner with a pair of good friends.

Day 4: This one is kind of a joke. It commemorates the many moves the family made

60 FOR 60: Page A8

## No one hurt in drive-by shooting

By Celeste Edenloff  
cedenloff@echopress.com

No one was injured when a half-dozen gunshots were fired into a house and garage shortly before midnight Friday, Nov. 23, in Hudson Township, southeast of Alexandria.

According to the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, a caller reported hearing several gunshots and a vehicle leaving the area near County Road 17 and County Road 31, northeast of Forada and southwest of Nelson, traveling northbound at a high rate

of speed.

When deputies responded to the residence they believed was involved in the shooting, at 5951 County Road 17 SE, they found two individuals outside the home who stated that someone had just shot up their house.

While searching the area, deputies found one 9mm shell casing on County Road 17. Deputies returned the next day and searched the area again in daylight, finding three more shell casings and six bullet holes in a garage and the residence.

It was determined that the shots came from County Road 17.

The evidence was collected and will be processed by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in St. Paul.

According to the sheriff's office, this was not a random incident and there is no ongoing threat to the general public.

Anyone who was in the area at the time of the shooting or who has any information is urged to call the sheriff's office at 320-762-8151.

## Powers pleads guilty in kidnapping case

### Sentencing set for January

By Celeste Edenloff  
cedenloff@echopress.com

Steven Powers, the last of three men charged in connection with the 2017 abduction of Jasmine Block of Alexandria, entered a guilty plea Wednesday afternoon in Douglas County District Court.

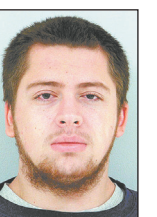
Block, who is now 16, gained

national attention after police say she escaped from three men while being held captive for nearly a month.

She disappeared from her Alexandria home in August 2017.

An amended complaint was filed with the court that dropped Powers' criminal sexual conduct charge from

POWERS: Page A8



Powers

