

No Frills opens on Pleasant

In neighbourhood described as ‘food desert,’ new option puts groceries close at hand

By Luisa Ensslin

After 16 years without a neighbourhood supermarket, Pleasant-Woodside residents can now shop for groceries within walking distance. No Frills, the franchise-based discount chain affiliated with Loblaw Companies, opened a second Dartmouth location on Feb. 6 at 375 Pleasant Street, next to Value Village and diagonal to the Woodside Ferry Terminal.

No Frills is open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Monday through Saturday and 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Sundays. The store is in the process of implementing a student discount; after that, owner and franchisee Roy Gouthro told *The Post*, No Frills will be looking at ways to help seniors.

Construction on the store began four months before opening — but rumours of the new location first emerged through Halifax ReTales in October 2022. Reactions to the store’s long-anticipated arrival have been quite enthusiastic.

“People are really excited to have the No Frills here,” said Candice Saccary, pharmacist at the nearby Guardian Pharmacy. “There’s been no grocery store in this area for a long time.”

Indeed, the neighbourhood has lacked a supermarket since Sobeys

shut down its Pleasant Street location (in the complex now home to the Pleasant Street Diner) in 2009. With that closure, Pleasant-Woodside earned a reputation as a “food desert,” as reported by CBC News in 2019 and discussed in the 2021 documentary *Deserted*.

With No Frills offering a food oasis, residents may notice increased activity in the store’s parking lot and on nearby roads. While the lot in front of and beside No Frills has approximately 50 spaces more than the lot outside Sobeys Penhorn, this carpark serves customers for Value Village, McDonald’s, and the Guardian Pharmacy. Even at mid-afternoon on weekdays, spots are limited. During peak times it can get very busy indeed, often with lines of cars waiting to exit the lot.

No Frills’ arrival marks a busier time for the area, with new stores and apartment buildings potentially shifting traffic patterns. Drivers and pedestrians will need to stay vigilant as they travel down and across Pleasant Street, which has a history of vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Noteworthy is the the 2021 death of Sute Chan, 27, who was struck and killed by a car at a Pleasant Street crosswalk near the Nova Scotia Hospital.

Councillor Becky Kent offers residents assistance with traffic issues in the area, telling *The Post* that she is willing to act as a “conduit to HRM staff regarding parking and area concerns as they become apparent.” □

Construction firm ramps up legal, political efforts in bid to infill cove

The fight to protect Dartmouth Cove is ongoing. After strong community opposition and legal challenges, the federal government rescinded its April 2024 approval of Atlantic Road Construction & Paving’s (ARCP) plan to infill nearly seven acres of Halifax Harbour. However, the company is now pursuing legal action against federal agencies, attempting to force a decision in its favour.

Meanwhile, ARCP has hired a provincial lobbyist. In a climate marked by increased tension between province and municipality, this raises concerns about whether provincial authorities could be convinced to undermine or override community efforts to stop the infill.

Meanwhile, Halifax Regional Municipality is actively working on bylaw amendments to strengthen protections against infill, ensuring that future development prioritizes environmental sustainability and public access. These changes are a crucial step in preventing similar projects from threatening Dartmouth Cove and other waterfront areas.

While progress has been made, this issue is far from over. The community must remain engaged to ensure that Dartmouth Cove is not lost to private interests. Stay informed and get involved by visiting savedartmouthcove.com.

—Submitted by Save Dartmouth Cove

Community Notes

The [annual neighbourhood clean-up](#) is set for Sat., April 26, from 1 to 4 p.m. Come to the North Woodside Community Centre parking lot for supplies and directions.

Come for an hour or even longer if you can.

[Got a story to tell?](#) *The Post* is a new, all-volunteer effort to bring local news, photos, and art to light. Contact us with ideas (info on back).



Tina Bierbach bakes dozens of loaves and treats to stock her Sourdough Stand every Friday. (Photo by Kate Crane)

Hazelhurst Street hides baby boulangerie

By Kate Crane

If you avoid dead-end streets on your neighbourhood strolls, you might want to reconsider your route on Fridays — especially if you’re hungry.

Tucked into Hazelhurst Street is The Sourdough Stand. The stand, which is really a tiny, walk-in shed, houses the home-baked sourdough goods of Tina Bierbach. On its tidy shelves you’ll find items like country loaf, savoury focaccia, raspberry custard buns, pesto asiago knots, and tahini chocolate chunk cookies.

“I do lot of experimenting at home,” Bierbach told *The Post*. “I try to keep a variety of things.”

Bierbach, a trained and professional baker who began working in kitchens 13 years ago, started the stand after the birth of her first child, during the pandemic. Having just returned after eight years in B.C., and home with the baby, she started to miss baking. “We moved here during COVID, and it got me talking to my neighbours,” she said. “I was shy to talk, others were shy to talk, and so it got us talking.”

The first stand was an old kitchen cupboard modified by her

carpenter partner, Joe, who also built the new shed. Bierbach requires no permit or kitchen licensing for her “microbakery,” as she sells low-risk products directly to consumers.

Unmanned, the stand operates on the honour system. Bierbach realizes there is risk, but it is important to her that it remains this way. “Having it based in the honour system allows it to show the good in people,” she said.

To get a loaf or a pastry, stop by on Fridays between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Inside the stand you’ll find tongs and bags to help yourself, and instructions for making payment. Expect to spend about \$8 on a loaf, \$4 for a pastry, and \$2.50 on a cookie. She also sells pizza dough for \$5/lb. bag. To ensure you get what you want, email to place a pre-order.

Bierbach and her partner are currently pregnant with their second child, due in June. She tentatively plans to close the stand for about two months.

To receive updates and a weekly list of available items, subscribe to the stand’s newsletter by emailing sourdoughstand@protonmail.com. □

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NSCC music festival kicks off in April

By Brian Foster

Halifax’s student-led music festival returns to the neighbourhood in April — with many performers who live and work in the Dartmouth South community.

Each year, NOVAfest brings fresh energy to the city’s music scene, showcasing local and emerging artists. The month-long festival serves as a work term for second-year students in the NSCC Music Arts program at the Ivany Campus.

“It’s a hands-on introduction to the local music industry, giving us experience in everything from booking to performing to marketing,” said Cameron Corey, a second-year percussion major at NSCC and NOVAfest’s venue manager for Woodside Tavern shows.

Beyond education, NOVAfest plays a crucial role in helping to enliven and diversify Halifax’s music scene. It helps new and underrepresented artists connect with key industry personnel, creating opportu-



A NOVAfest performance from a prior year. (Photo: NOVAfest)

nities that might otherwise be inaccessible. “NOVAfest introduces the local scene to new artists, and new artists to the local scene,” Corey said. “It’s a catalyst for the evolution of arts and culture in our province.”

This is particularly important for students who would benefit from new community, social, and industry connections.

By creating a space for students to collaborate, learn and gain exposure, the festival is becoming an important part of the local music scene, helping with a constant flow

of fresh talent that keeps Halifax’s music culture innovative and evolving. “Every year we grow, and this time we’re bringing themed shows and fresh approaches to the live music experience,” Corey added.

This year, NOVAfest runs from April 16 to May 23, with local performances at the Woodside Tavern. Other festival venues include The Basement of the Shoe, Montes, The Rox, and Maxwell’s Plum.

Visit nscnovafest.wordpress.com or follow @novafesthfx on Instagram for updates. □

WHAT IS WITH... That loud droning noise at night

By Hannah Main

Sometimes, on an otherwise peaceful night in Dartmouth South, there is a noise.

No, I am not talking about the ambulances that go back and forth to Dartmouth General, nor am I talking about the fireworks that inevitably cause someone to post “Was that gunshots?” on the local Facebook group. I am talking about something different, more nebulous: A hum. Every once in a while, there is a low, persistent, rumbling drone, seeming to come from the harbour. It’s subtle enough that you might be able to ignore it, but loud enough that it disrupts the silence.

This sound has been occurring, on and off, for at least a year, and according to a neighbour who made a noise complaint, the most likely explanation is a ship that occasionally docks at COVE. The ship has an issue connecting to shore power so it keeps its engines running constantly while docked. I reached out to COVE to confirm this, but had not received a response from them at the time of publication.

The International Maritime Organization has rules limiting noise aboard ships, but these rules only apply to ships built after 2012. And even if the ship operated within these noise limits, the laws of physics mean that the sound may still reach us. “Sound travels well bouncing off the surface of the water,” said Emma Carline, acoustic algorithm developer. She added that “low frequencies can bend around corners... you’ll probably hear that further away.”

The geography of Dartmouth South means that for many of us, there is little obstructing sound from the harbour from reaching our homes. Is this just a reality of living in a maritime city, or should we push back against the noise? □

Planning begins on park near NWCC

By Matthew Townsend

Dartmouth South residents will soon see plans to develop the wooded area between HomeBridge and the North Woodside Community Centre (NWCC) into a park.

The Pleasant-Woodside Neighbourhood Association (PWNA) and NWCC surveyed residents last year about the area, with improved access and safety among chief concerns. HRM took note of the interest and recently assigned planner Stephen Cushing to work on the project.

Grant MacDonald, chair of the PWNA board, told *The Post* that the area had been zoned as parkland “but had really been a forgotten little plot in the neighbourhood.” MacDonald, NWCC board member Aaron Taylor, and HomeBridge executive director Ernie Hilton met with Cushing on Feb. 5 to discuss survey results and next steps.

Taylor told *The Post* that the city will now “put some pen to paper.” HRM is also interested in infrastructure renewal, with possible improvements to the nearby playground, sidewalks, and parking lot.

Public consultations could begin as soon as midsummer, Taylor said.

Both Taylor and MacDonald noted a history of criminal activity in the woods, with Taylor explaining that typical youth “shenanigans” have sometimes escalated.

“A lot of this thought process has been about opening sight lines and just getting more foot traffic in the area to discourage that kind of behaviour,” Taylor said. “If we can have a bit of a collective vision as to what we want to see coming out of this, we might end up with something really nice at the end.”

MacDonald agreed. “It could be a human friendly space, a more usable natural environment.” □



Wavelengths of South Dartmouth: Local Music Mixtape

By Trinity Gadoway
Co-Editor, Junkyard

Apple Music:



Spotify:



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