Historical Bushaway Road: Historical, Cultural, and Environmental Concerns

Dec. 1, 2008 Presentation to Wayzata City Council

Outline

- Intangibles overview (scenic, historic, cultural)
- Sesquicentennial Celebration of Road
- History of historic Bushaway Road
- Study of Historical Significance, Mead & Hunt
- Role of Wayzata Historical Preservation Board and the Bushaway History Project, Irene Stemmer
- Implications of Wayzata’s Comprehensive Plan for Bushaway, by Nancy Kehmeier
- Conclusion on Bushaway Road: honor its history & splendor
Bushaway is more than a road and houses

Note the beauty in this picture of the lower Bushaway from McGinty Rd to Grays Bay

The Important Intangibles:

First, aesthetics:

Some say that Bushaway is the most beautiful road in Wayzata.

It is loved for the dense trees along the roadway in all seasons.
Second, historical treasures including the:

- Road with character
- Residences with architectural distinction
- Historic District - Bushaway is a long standing community

Third, cultural assets:

- Bushaway community members (past and present) are leaders in Wayzata and Minnesota history
- Many descendent of Bushaway pioneers remain in Wayzata
- Bushaway community members have strong ties with other Wayzata neighborhoods.
- Together with other neighborhoods, Bushaway makes Wayzata strong

The First Road Survey of the Shakopee to Dayton Road (Minnesota River to Mississippi River)

Discovery of this map led to activities to celebrate the sesquicentennial.
Bushaway Community Sesquicentennial Celebration Party, Oct. 2008

"This is fun. What else can I cut up?"
Bushaway Historical Timeline:
-- The Early 19th Century

- Pre 1700 – Native Americans lived and traveled in Bushaway area; fire pits have been unearthed in Locust Hills
- Late 1700 - Trappers cabin built at 324 Bushaway for storing furs, and still standing (see photo)

- 1851 - Dakota Sioux in a treaty gave up Hennepin County
- 1853 - Frenchman John Bourgeois built the first house in the Bushaway area overlooking Wayzata Bay
- 1858 - Minnesota became a State; later that year there was an official survey by the State of the "Shakopee to Dayton Road" and a map filed
The First Road Survey of the Shakopee to Dayton Road (Minnesota River to Mississippi River), a twisting collection of wagon trails

1858 map of Bushaway Portion of this first road survey

The map was certified by Franklin Cook, Surveyor and County Commissioner, in October, 1858, and later that year filed as an official State Road map.

Bushaway Historical Timeline: -- The Late 19th Century

- 1867 - Railroad began serving Wayzata
- 1874 - Herbert M. Carpenter bought "Carpenter's Point," the lower portion of Bushaway
- 1878 – the first map, published by Cooley, showing a bridge over the Gray's Bay channel
30 years after the first Road survey, this map shows Carpenter’s Plat in Lower Bushaway plus bridges

1878 Survey map (Carpenter’s era)

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- 1893 – an early County map shows a City park, 92ft in diameter at the Bushaway /McGinty intersection
1893 – an early County map shows a City park, 92ft in diameter at the Bushaway /McGinty intersection

• Note new angle and location of railroad crossing.

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• 1890 - Wayzata railroad depot temporarily moved adjacent to Bushaway Road
Holdridge Railroad Depot

- Built about 1890 by James J. Hill when he removed Wayzata’s Depot
- Just northwest of the Bushaway-McGinty Intersection in Wayzata Yacht Club parking lot

Even at the turn of the century, road building was not easy.
Bushaway Historical Timeline: 
-- The Early 20th Century

- 1906 - Present Wayzata railroad depot built
- 1906 – “Leeward” House of Dodge Farm built at 218 Bushaway by Edwin and Anne Dodge.
- 1910 (approx.) - construction of Henry Piper house at 421 Bushaway
- 1912 - "Decker Farm" House built by famous Purcell and Elmslie architects

"Leeward" Dodge Farm House: 
218 Bushaway

- Original house built in 1906 by Dodge family
- Remodeled in 1963 by Noland family
- Remodeled in 1990s (all remodeling retained original style, windows, and flagstone foundation)
- Photos show on the left the 1906 house in the early 1960s and on the right, the current house, which has an addition on the west side
Bushaway Historical Timeline:-- The Early 20th Century

- 1906 - Present Wayzata railroad depot built
- 1906 - Leeward House of Dodge Farm built at 218 Bushaway
- 1910 (approx.) - construction of Henry Piper house at 421 Bushaway
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House built in 1910 by H. C. Piper at 421 Bushaway

Henry C. Piper was one of the founders of Piper Jaffray.
Bushaway Historical Timeline:
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Decker Farm: 250 Bushaway

- Decker Farm built in 1912 by Edward W. Decker, President of Northwestern National Bank in Minneapolis
- House re-built in 1952 by Hill Family (of Janney, Semple & Hill)
- Photo shows original 1912 Breezeway & Garage on left and Hill House on right
Decker House built in 1912 by nationally famous architects, Purcell & Elmslie

Note prairie style, spacious architecture, blending with the Big Woods by the lake

Decker Farm: 250 Bushaway

This carriage house and breezeway are the only parts of the original Decker house remaining.

In winter it can be seen through the trees from Bushaway Road
Bushaway Historical Timeline:
-- The Early 20th Century

- 1915 - construction by Piper family of house at 623 Bushaway, currently Pflaum house
- 1916 - Carpenter's Point was sub-divided into nine lots "A through I" fronting on Wayzata Bay
- 1919 - the Brooks House began construction by Architect Harry Wild Jones.
- 1920 - the Brooks estate carriage house and gardener's cottage constructed
- 1926 - The Piper/Hawley House was constructed by Architect Andrew Schuehle for George F. Piper.

In 1915 the Piper family built this house at 623 Bushaway, now owned by well-known, prolific author Rosalynd Pflaum
Bushaway Historical Timeline:  
-- The Early 20th Century

- 1915 - construction by Henry Piper family of house at 623 Bushaway, currently Pflaum house
- 1916 - Carpenter's Point (Bushaway peninsula) was sub-divided into nine lots "A through I" fronting on Wayzata Bay
- 1919 - construction began on the Brooks House and estate under supervision of prominent architect Harry Wild Jones.
- 1926 - The Piper/Hawley House was constructed by Architect Andrew Schuehle for George F. Piper.

Brooks House: 601 Bushaway

- Built in 1919 by
- Harry Wild Jones (famous architect)
- Remains intact (see current photo below)
Brooks (Gardener's) Cottage

- Now 620 Bushaway across Road from Brooks Carriage House
- Photos show 1919 original and house in 2008

Brooks Carriage House

- Also designed by architect Harry Wild Jones in
- Photos below show original & current building
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Piper/Hawley House: 555 Bushaway

- Historically designated house
- Built in 1926 by George Piper
- Perfect example of “lake cottage” architecture
- Hawley residence since 1937

John Hawley was one of the largest employers in the Twin Cities area during the 1940s.
Zita Hawley Ice Boating

- Zita Hawley Wright holds record for years lived (62) on Bushaway
- Zita is still making major contributions to Bushaway and Wayzata

Bushaway Historical Timeline: -- The Early 20th Century

- 1925 (approx) – Construction of Thomas/Yasmineh house at 271 Bushaway
- 1925 (approx) – Construction of Eide house at 321 Bushaway
- 1925 (approx) – Construction of Field house at 324 Bushaway
More Historically important houses

- Thomas/ Yasmineh House
- 271 Bushaway at corner with La Salle
- built in 1928 by Thomas

More Historically important houses

- Eide House
- built about 1925
- 321 Bushaway
More Historically important houses

- **Field estate; house built by Fields about 1925;**
  Now Westlund residence at 324 Bushaway
- **Half of front yard to be lost by County’s draft plan**

Adjacent to house is this trappers cabin dating back to the 1700s.

Bushaway Historical Timeline:
-- The Early 20th Century – 1930s

- **1930** - construction of Wilcox/Nash/Berman house at 433 Bushaway
- **1933** - Carpenter family transferred farm property to the Locust Hills Association
- **1934** - MN/DOT took over maintenance of Hwy 101
- **1936** - the Westward House of the Dodge Farm was built at 100 Bushaway
- **1939** - Charles B. Sweatt bought Locust Hills
Ralph Wilcox built this flying machine in 1907, and did other historically important activities such as drive the first car from Chicago to Minneapolis. He built the old Wilcox fire truck that leads all of Wayzata’s parades.

Jessie Crocker Wilcox, renowned member of Locust Hills Association.
Wilcox/Nash House in 1950s

Bushaway Historical Timeline: -- The Early 20th Century – 1930s

- 1930 - construction of Wilcox/Nash/Berman house at 433 Bushaway
- 1933 - Carpenter family transferred farm property to the Locust Hills Association
- 1934 - MN/DOT took over maintenance of Hwy 101
- 1936 - the Westward House of the Dodge Farm was built at 100 Bushaway
- 1939 - Charles B. Sweatt, Vice President of Honeywell, bought Locust Hills
The Locust Hills Association, a social club with property donated in 1933 by H. Carpenter, included the Wayzata Mayor plus many prominent leaders from Minneapolis.

C. B. Sweatt, Vice-President of Honeywell, bought the property and built the farm estate. Many people came to the Sweatt farm for their annual Fair and for horse-related events.

Locust Hills today

The Locust Hills Estate horse barn (1940) and equipment building at 500 Bushaway are preserved and already determined to be eligible for National Register.
Bushaway Historical Timeline:  
-- The Early 20th Century – 1930s

- 1930 - construction of Wilcox/Nash/Berman house at 433 Bushaway
- 1933 - Carpenter family transferred farm property to the Locust Hills Association
- 1934 - MN/DOT took over maintenance of Hwy 101
- 1936 - the Westward House of the Dodge Farm was built at 100 Bushaway
- 1939 - Charles B. Sweatt bought Locust Hills

"Windward" Dodge Farm House:  
100 Bushaway

- *House built north of first house*
- *In 1936 by Edwin Dodge family*
Note: Half of all 35 Bushaway homes are over 50 years old.

The remaining Bushaway houses over 50 years old & potentially eligible for historical recognition:

- 121 Bushaway, built in 1935 (Holst)
- 217 Bushaway, built in 1946 (Pabst)
- 231 Bushaway, built in 1955 (Procter)
- 243 Bushaway, built in 1952 (Evers)

Bushaway Historical Timeline:
-- The Mid-20th Century

- 1952 - most of Decker House was rebuilt by Allan Janney Hill, of Janney, Semple, Hill and Co. The breezeway, garage and servants quarters of the 1912 house remain.
- 1956 - The City of Wayzata annexed the Bushaway/Holdridge properties. Before then lower Bushaway was part of Minnetonka Township
- 1957 – The City Council made Bushaway name official for the Wayzata’s portion of Hwy 101 south of Hwy 12.
- 1980 ~MN/DOT proposed major new causeway and new bridge
Recent History of Bushaway Road Redesign:

- In the early 1980s, MN/DOT proposed a new causeway through lower Wayzata Bay, and a parking area requiring 2-4 acres of land fill in Gray’s Bay.

- Also, in the 1980s, MN/DOT redesigned the Bushaway railroad including a tunnel under Bushaway for McGinty.

- The Wayzata City Council proposed “Bushaway BeBo,” a tunnel for Bushaway going underneath the tracks. The railroad opposed all these plans. The State eventually gave the road to the County in 1997.

Bushaway Historical Timeline:
-- The Turn of the Century

- 1997 - State MN/DOT transferred ownership of Hwy 101 to Hennepin County and County signed an agreement to get local approval before any Bushaway Road changes were made.
- 2006 - first public meeting by County on reconstruction of historic Bushaway Road
- 2007 - County completed preliminary design for historic Bushaway Road reconstruction
- 2008 - official Sesquicentennial celebration for historic Bushaway Road
External historical review of Bushaway's historical significance

- For an outside, professional opinion on the historical significance of Bushaway, the neighborhood contracted with Mead & Hunt for a preliminary study.
- Bob Frame, Historian, and Chad Moffett, History Preservation Manager, conducted the study.
- The results will be summarized next.

Historical findings

- **Methods of report by, Mead & Hunt**
  - Using 3 main eligibility criteria of the National Register
    - Association with events/activities contributing to historical trends
    - Association with historically important people
    - Representative of distinctive period, type of construction, artistic character, or architecture
  - Preliminary evaluation of the extent to which Bushaway might meet these criteria as
    - A road corridor
    - Residential properties
    - Historic district
### Summary Conclusions of report by Mead & Hunt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSHAWAY</th>
<th>Overall Conclusions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Road</td>
<td>Important role played in early State transportation, but may not meet eligibility criteria because of road changes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Houses/Properties</td>
<td>A number of residences likely meet eligibility standards of National Register if additional historical work is done.</td>
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<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>As a collection of properties, a possible historic district played a significant role in lake related development and important estates remain. Might well meet eligibility for National Register if additional historical work is done.</td>
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• Next, Irene Stemmer, Chair of Wayzata’s Historical Preservation Board (HPB), will give her perspective on the Bushaway History Project from the standpoint of Wayzata.
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

Section on Historic and Cultural Preservation

Objective 1.0 As stated in City Ord. 607, we as a City should identify and protect historic and cultural resources that might meet local and/or the National Register standards.

For Bushaway this means maintaining the “look and feel” that is part of historic Bushaway Road.
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- **Section on Historic and Cultural Preservation**
  - **Objective 1.0** identify and protect historic and cultural resources

- Secondly, this objective dictates that we should preserve the gates and fences of the historic homes, which is only possible if any new roadways:
  - Retain the 2-lane footprint of the entire corridor
  - Keep the shoulders of the road to a minimum
  - Wave the standard of 10ft “boulevards” for snow removal

These historic objects would be lost under the County's draft road design

This fence at 324 Bushaway is over 100 years old

Gate at 601 Bushaway Rd

Gate at 555 Bushaway Rd
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- Section on Historic and Cultural Preservation
  - Objective 3.0 Promote public education and appreciation of historic and cultural resources.

- For Bushaway this means getting out the message that we have 150 years of cultural heritage

- And it means encouraging our neighbors to appreciate the historical flavor of our houses & fences

The remainder of the presentation identifies principles from the Wayzata City Comprehensive Plan, especially the Section on Natural and Community Resources, and shows how they relate to the future of Bushaway.
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

• Section on Natural and Community Resources
  • Objective 1.0 Protect Lake Minnetonka as the most significant asset for the community.

What this means for historic Bushaway Road is avoiding needless land fill for a trail next to Bushaway Rd. Instead, as needed build boardwalks over portions of Gray’s Bay, the Locust Hills lagoon north-end and the pond at 250 Bushaway.

Bushaway's wetlands are beautiful but vulnerable

Gray’s Bay from Bridge

Marsh at 250 Bushaway

Lagoon at Locust Hills at Bushaway
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

**Section on Natural and Community Resources**

**Objective 1.1 Preserve lake views**

- If a new bridge over the railroad is built, it will be 3 feet higher and a 25ft retaining wall have been proposed on the SW corner of the bridge. This structure will block lake views from some homes on both Bushaway and LaSalle.

![Current Bushaway Bridge over Railroad](image)

Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

**Section on Natural and Community Resources**

**Objective 2.1 Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle routes and road crossings.** (This is equivalent to Transportation Section Objective 10.) This implies that trail design should consider:

- Wider shoulders to the road for bicycles and pedestrians rather than a separate and super-wide trail,
- Boardwalks in any wetland areas where land is not sufficient for wide shoulders,
- Keeping trail width to 4 or 6ft instead of 8ft to reduce impact on the environment.
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- **Section on Natural and Community Resources**
  - Objective 2.2 Encourage safe and convenient pedestrian crossings on streets, roadways, and railroad crossings.
  - No matter what is done to intersection of Bushaway and McGinty, pedestrian and bicycle crossing should be an extremely high priority.

Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- **Section on Natural and Community Resources**
  - Objective 4.1 Evaluate potential impacts on wildlife and critical ecological systems.
  - The Bushaway Environmental Committee has learned from the DNR that Blanding turtles and at least two types of fish are endangered species in our area.
  - Reduction in forest and natural habitat areas by heavy road expansion would reduced wildlife and trees that neighbors now enjoy.
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- Section on Natural and Community Resources
  - Objective 4.2 Ensure the protection, conservation, and maintenance of the natural environment.

  We must minimize the environmental impact of all construction efforts, including
  - Roadway
  - Trails
  - Intersection
  Federal funding may be available

Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- Section on Natural and Community Resources
  - Objective 5.4 Preserve existing stands of mature trees when at all possible.

  It is estimated that if the proposed County draft design were to be implemented, hundreds if not thousands of trees would be destroyed.

  While the County would replace the trees, they would be young trees & not necessarily planted in the Bushaway vicinity.
Many of these trees would be gone forever under the proposed plan.

Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- **Section on Natural and Community Resources**
  - Objective 5.5 Establish green corridors and entrances to the City.
  - This is a City mandate to make roads like Bushaway environmentally “green” showcase scenic lake roads.
    - E.g., for road surface water drainage purposes instead of curb and gutters, we could utilize a natural, leading Low Impact Design (LID) edge infiltration system.
    - Curbs also create crashes when cars get too close and are thrown out of control.
Bushaway is a "green corridor" now, but would it be after most of these trees were cut down?

Or would it look like this?

Hwy 101 just north of hwy 55 with footprint similar to that proposed for Bushaway
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- **Section on Transportation**
  - Objectives 3 & 5 Address roadway improvements and traffic demand

  - Road improvements may be needed, but traffic demand may not warrant widening the road nor adding additional lanes.

Traffic Growth

- Based upon the County/Metro model for population and traffic growth, traffic on Bushaway is projected to grow to from 13,000 to 19,000 daily trips by 2030.

- However actual Daily traffic volume on Bushaway, both above and below McGinty, has been going down over the past 5 years.

- County and Metro Council models have not yet been adjusted to take into account rising energy costs and the economic recession.
Bushaway Traffic has gone down in the past 5 years both above and below McGinty

![Average Daily Traffic Counts Graph]

Data for 2003 to 2007 were obtained from Hennepin County.

Bushaway Traffic also is likely to decline in the future as shown by these projections to 2011

![Average Daily Traffic Counts & Projections Graph]

Data for 2003 to 2007 were obtained from Hennepin County.

Projection model for 2009 & 2011 assumes 150 trips per day added by Lomont Hills and a 2% per year decline in daily traffic due to rising costs of fuel.
Implications of traffic demand analysis

- Traffic demand in the short term (and most likely the long term) do not warrant:
  - Adding lanes
  - Otherwise widening the road
  - Nor building a large, new intersection

Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- Section on Transportation
  - Objective 7  Improve traffic safety
    - Bushaway Road has a relatively crash-free history.
    - For the years 2002-2006, Wayzata had nearly 800 crashes. The McGinty/Bushaway interaction had only 10 crashes during that period. Nine other intersections in Wayzata had higher crash rates, some of them 7 times greater.
Wayzata Comprehensive Plan

- **Section on Natural and Community Resources**
  - Objective 3.0 Utilize sustainable development practices
    - This principle applies to the entire road reconstruction project, especially in suggesting that costly development should not be implemented even if somebody else pays for it. For one thing, big development makes maintenance costs bigger.
    - This principle suggests how to design very modest improvements at the intersection of Bushaway with McGinty.

Bushaway-McGinty Intersection Issues

- A 1- or 2-lane roundabout has been proposed for the intersection.
  - While roundabouts sometimes produce advantages, experts advise that:
    - they should not be placed on a bridge or grade due to ice;
    - they should not be built in areas with many elderly drivers.
  - The biggest argument against a roundabout for Bushaway is the size. It would take up over twice the land used by the current intersection and would require condemnation of two homes.
  - In order to preserve the historic and environmental nature of the road, we do not support a roundabout or other major changes.
The Wayzata Comprehensive Plan is Forward Thinking

- **Section on Natural and Community Resources**
  - Objective 1.3 Investigate Low Impact Design and Objective 3.6 promote **context-sensitive design**
    (These are critical for planning Bushaway's future.)

- The contexts: Bushaway Road and its community have played a major role in making Wayzata what it is today.
- The draft County design for roadway reconstruction is not sensitive to this historical and culturally rich context. It would erode one of Wayzata's major assets.

The Bushaway trees are the contexts of Bushaway living
A Final Suggestion

Take into account the many changes that have occurred in the 2 & a half years since Bushaway reconstruction planning began.

- Price of fuel rose with people driving less
- Housing market and financial crises have left less revenue for roads
- The County has acknowledged financial challenges
- Environmental concerns such as carbon footprint are more etched in public consciousness

And these scenes of Bushaway have become more treasured.
Conclusions

- We are grateful for the push the Bushaway Road reconstruction plan has given us to discover our surprisingly rich and precious history. We will continue to document its significance.
- For City and County decision-makers we simply ask that you honor the history & splendor of historic Bushaway Road and the neighborhood we have discovered.