

# PLATT PARK *Post*

The Official Newsletter of  
Platt Park People's Association  
Feb. /Mar. 2019  
[www.3pa.org](http://www.3pa.org)



## ***Nextdoor NIMBY:*** **Dissecting Neighborhood Debates for your Infotainment**

If you're like me, you love the idea of Nextdoor, but you just don't have time to keep up with the incessant flood of posts. We get it—your dog/cat/keys/garden gnome are lost, and you are looking for a nanny/housekeeper/night stand/car seat. I find myself mostly drawn to the Crime & Safety posts. Reading these posts has the angst-producing side effect of making me believe that living in Platt Park is akin to living in the heart of Soweto. But, from time to time, Nextdoor throws us a pearl. The kind of incandescent discussion that makes you laugh, shake your head in disbelief, and marvel at the things that get people riled up. So, in the spirit of neighborliness, I bring you this new column for the Platt Park Post, "Nextdoor NIMBY". This column will focus on the microcosm of humanity encapsulated in the Nextdoor posts of our very own neighbors. I'll dissect the issues, recap the discussions, and decide who "wins". That's right! Nextdoor NIMBY is here not only to regale in the mundane and banal issues of urban life, but also to sit as the sole arbiter of who is right. Conjecture? Opinion? Ethics lesson? Of course! Just the kind of thing that whips nosy neighbors into a tizzy.

Sincerely,  
*Nextdoor NIMBY*

*More from NIMBY on page 4*

The Platt Park People's Association, a city of Denver Registered Neighborhood Organization, serves more than 3,000 homes and businesses in the neighborhood bounded by Broadway on the West, Downing on the East, I-25 on the North and Evans on the South. 3PA membership is open to all neighbors and business owners who live and own property within these boundaries. Have a voice in your neighborhood and with the city: Join 3PA.

Check out our website. Stay informed, learn about upcoming events, and more!  
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Creative - Ann Michelle Hill

### **This Month's Contributors:**

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Lauren Slawson  
Tom Snyder  
Nora Weiser

## WANTED

### **Call for Contributions!**

The Platt Park Post is always looking for new articles and neighborhood updates. If you are a Platt Park resident interested in writing an article, please email Lauren Slawson:  
[lslawsonfreelance@gmail.com](mailto:lslawsonfreelance@gmail.com)

### **HELP WANTED: DESIGNER**

The Platt Park Post is on the hunt for a **new designer**. If you, or anyone you know, is savvy with digital design and interested in helping us tell the stories of the community, please reach out to me directly at [lslawsonfreelance@gmail.com](mailto:lslawsonfreelance@gmail.com).

# Neighborhood Notes: *An Opinion*

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First month of 2019 is already in the books, which among another things has likely been plenty of time to blow all your New Year resolutions. Not to despair as lots of good things are going on around the hood, especially if one of your resolutions is to eat healthy.

Ben Susnick's new culinary creation **Hoja** is now open over at 1284 S Pearl. Ben is best know around here as the owner of Base Camp Provisions, a frequent food truck seen at the Farmer's Market. I dropped in the other day to see what the new brick and mortar location is all about. The space is cozy but light and bright with wooden tables and cactus decorations on the walls. The kitchen is open like a deli to the seating area. Out back, for when the days warm up is a nice patio area still slightly under development.

The food is the main draw here of course offering a rather eclectic menu all made with fresh ingredients. The menu ranges from the decidedly south-of-the-border, breakfasty Chilaquiles to Matzo Ball Chicken Noodle Soup. I tried The Farmers Burrito, which Ben said is a favorite item—lots of fresh veggies, Scrambled eggs, chili, hash browns and other assorted yumminess. Currently they offer an assortment of hot and cold drinks (check out the Hoja cold brew coffee—yum). Ben also shared they have received approval for their liquor license, which will enable them to offer beer, wine and select cocktails all hopefully by the time you are reading this. Hoja is open every day except Mondays for Breakfast and Lunch. You can visit their website [Hojadenver.com](http://Hojadenver.com) for more information.

If you wander around the corner from Hoja and cross the street you'll see Platt Park's other new, healthy offering, **Chook Charcoal Chicken** located at 1300 S Pearl St (Corner of Louisiana and Pearl). Chook is the creation of, sort of a local dream team of Adam Schlegel, co-founder of Snooze Eatery and Alex Seidel, 2018 James Beard Best Chef SW and creator of acclaimed restaurants Fruition and Mercantile. They are joined by Randy Layman described by Adam and Alex as "the best barman around".

Gone from the location are any carryovers from the Village Cork as all things have been made new. When I dropped in for dinner I felt the space had sort of upscale fast food feel, which seems is not by accident. The root of Chook, which is Aussie lingo for "Chicken", is found in neighborhood Chicken eateries in Australia where Adam lived for many years. Evidently such eateries are common and typically feature charcoal cooking. Adam wanted to bring the food and feel back to Denver.

The menu is fairly simple with Chicken being the prime feature. Each chicken order comes with some tasty sauces and gravy. The fun comes in the sides, which features a number of Aussie inspired side dishes all of which were excellent. You can also order any number of salads and sandwiches if you prefer. The bar selection is limited but good, offering beer, wine and cocktails, the latter are premixed and served in a small "pot". There is adequate seating if you want to dine-in but part of the spirit of Chook is to take the

whole thing home and impress your family. Check out their website at [Chookchicken.com](http://Chookchicken.com) and you can read all about how they source their food for freshness and sustainability. Chook is open daily from 11am till 9pm.

Leaving the confines of Pearl Street and wandering down to the southeast corner of the neighborhood you'll find our third new eating establishment **Devour the 303**. The location has been a bit of a revolving door over the years saying goodbye to the likes of Boone's Tavern, Latticus and The Rosedale, to name a few. Hope springs eternal in the restaurant business and here's hoping new owner Sam Armatas finds a winning formula. Sam is best known as the co-owner of Cap City Tavern in the Golden Triangle. Sam sold his share of that business to begin this new project.

Sam chose the name with the "303" reference to because he wants to use as many local ingredients as possible. The menu has a decidedly comfortable-pub feel to it featuring a variety of burgers and sandwiches but Sam has woven in some interesting variety as well with the likes of Truffle Gruyere Mac and Cheese and Avocado Chicken Fettuccine. The decor is warm and inviting with exposed brick walls, wooden tables and beetle-kill pine accents. Sam is hoping Devour will become your "Go to neighborhood spot". Devour is open daily for lunch and dinner and serving brunch on the weekends. Visit their website [Devourthe303.com](http://Devourthe303.com) for more information.

On January 7 the **City of Denver released an updated version of Draft Denveright**. This is the plan, which will be used to guide future development, parks and mobility options all with a goal to build a more inclusive, connected and healthy Denver over the next 20 years. You can view the plan by just searching "Denveright" on your browser. As of this writing the updated plan is being showcased at a series of public meetings, which will conclude in February. Insights from those meetings will be used to create one final draft with a goal to adopt the final plan later this year. This blueprint will perform a key role in future Denver development for decades to come.

Spring is not far down the road so when you are out there shoveling the walk be sure to enjoy a serene moment gazing around at our beautiful little neighborhood with it's winter covering—and then maybe start a (civil) snowball fight with the neighbor kids.

See you around the neighborhood  
Tom Snyder





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This is a:  Renewal  New Membership

# Next Door NIMBY: Dogs. Leashes. Entitlement. Oh my!

Here's a perennial favorite topic on Nextdoor... Off Leash Dogs. You'd think that given there are actual laws about this in Denver, it would be a non-issue. But NO! Not on Nextdoor. On Nextdoor this is a hot topic open to debate and regular rehashing, as is the case with neighbor Clarisse's\* recent warning of an impending sweep for off-leash dogs. Pleas began to come in from the entitled few who feel they and their fabulous mutts are above the law... like Max who boasts "I walk my dog off leash a few times a week... some dogs can handle, most can't. Should be case by case." Really, it should be case by case? Based on the discretion of Max and his wunderhund, I presume? Just as the entitled few seek exceptions, there are the neighbors who recognize the inanity of laws-that-apply-to-everyone-but-Max, for example, Clarisse. Yes, inexplicably the same Clarisse who started the thread. She extrapolates on Max's argument by asking "So I should run a stop sign because it is more convenient for me?" Based on Max's assessment, YES, yes you should Clarisse... as long as you "can handle it", stop signs should be at your discretion on a "case by case" basis. Cheers to Theo who sat back with a tub of popcorn at this point to queue up the ensuing conflagration, "Another Nextdoor dumpster fire in 3...2..."

The posts continued to fly, with Max ultimately admonishing Clarisse, "The car references are a bit much; driving and walking dogs are two different worlds." Having none of it, Clarisse restated simply "The law is the law." Of course, scofflaw Max did not care for such truth and accuracy. "It's just a discussion Clarisse... why do you feel the need to scold?" Poor Max. Scolded. Such unfair treatment. He probably wasn't walking his dog off leash at all; his calendar shows he was at the gym with Squee that day then met Moose for a beer.

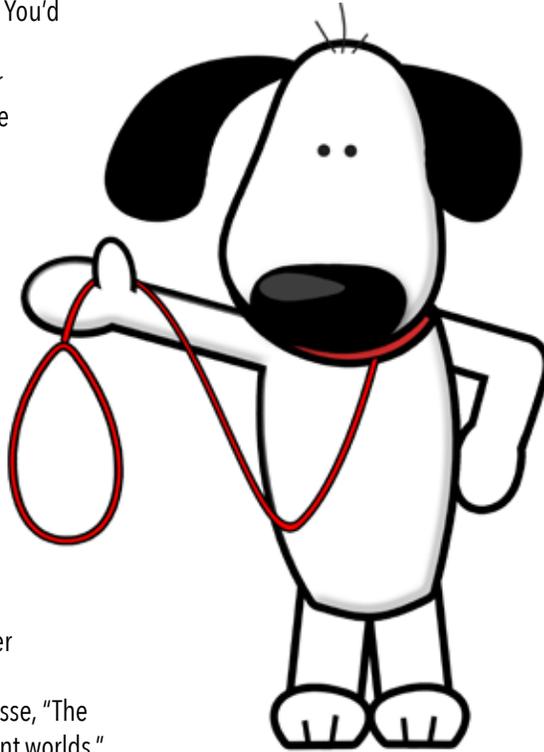
I would be remiss if I did not point out the valiant role of Andrew who popped in to provide the requisite logical fallacy by inventing hypothetical laws that people would surely break. He conjectures that if the city of Denver "makes it illegal to use your left foot", people would break that law. Touché, Andrew. Touché.

An honorable mention goes to Mike. Every Nextdoor topic needs a Mike for comic relief: "I once saw an off-leash dog poop on a lawn and not pick up after itself, then proceed to run down the street without coming to a full stop at the stop sign and went on to walk down an alley in a highly suspicious manner. I am 90% sure it peeked over a fence too. This dog was a maniac and I was legit scared. I confronted the owner who went on to say, "My dog has never done that before, it's usually very well behaved. (this story may or may not reflect actual events that occurred)." I actually think I saw this dog too, and it stole an Amazon package off my porch.

Okay, the winner in this debate is... THE LAW. Keep your dogs on a leash, folks, and certainly don't point out on Nextdoor that you are the neighborhood douche who doesn't.

See you in the next issue,  
Nextdoor NIMBY

\*Please note: all names have been changed since Nextdoor NIMBY is all snark and no bite.



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# What's Next on South Pearl?

With the space formerly housing The Boulangerie at the corner of Iowa and S. Pearl now sitting vacant, what kind of business would neighbors like to see move in? A few ideas are below that could address what we might be lacking on this unique retail street.

- Cheese/Specialty food shop with lunch menu and prepared foods to go
  - Mini Food Hall with a variety of specialty purveyors and a central communal dining area
  - Old school corner grocery store stocked with the basics
  - Shared work space for remote workers
  - Community Space rentable for events, meetings, nonprofits, groups, clubs etc.
  - Daycare, play space/parents' meet-up, classes for pre-school children, Co-op childcare, etc.
  - Shared commercial kitchen for entrepreneurial food makers/start ups
  - Fitness Center of some kind (yoga, dance, CrossFit, Pilates, etc.)
- What do you think? Do you like the ideas above? Have other thoughts? Email: [slawsonfreelance@gmail.com](mailto:slawsonfreelance@gmail.com) with your thoughts and we'll include the most popular ones in the next issue. Entrepreneurs keep an eye open for this important intel on what Platt Park residents want!



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## ADVENTURES IN HISTORIC HOMES:

# The Old Byers House

by Lucy Graca

When in 2003 the third floor of the old Byers House on the corner of E. Colorado Avenue and S. Sherman Street went up in flames, the long-time owner, Lyle Renken, rebuilt it and repaired the damage to the rest of the house over the next few years. Meanwhile, Nikki Widner and her husband Tom Veitch were looking for something larger than their bungalow on S. Emerson Street for their growing family. Nikki, who says "I love surfing the MLS," saw the Byers house for sale and went to take a look out of curiosity.

"We saw the staircase," says Nikki, "and we thought 'Uh-oh, we're going to have to buy this house!'" The sweeping, five-foot wide stairs curve gracefully to the second floor, with massive paneled oak newel posts and a beautifully turned balustrade glowing softly in the light from two high windows. Their decision was helped by a master-suite that covers the entire second floor, and their two boys fell on their knees and begged when they saw the third-floor open plan suite that would be theirs. So they bought it in 2012, "and we've been doing work on it ever since."

Denver architect William Lang, who also designed Molly Brown's house, designed the Queen Anne style house in 1891 for Frank Byers, the son of *Rocky Mountain News* founder William N. Byers. A Herndon Davis watercolor of it is in Denver Public Library's Western History Collection. In the painting, the house is white,



though now it is brick red with details picked out in green, purple, and orange. Nikki says they're trying to decide on a new set of colors for a much-needed new paint job this summer.

Though the house was livable when the family moved in, Nikki and Tom repainted the entire interior, updated the master and third floor baths, built a garage and a fence and re-landscaped. But, Nikki says, "The kitchen was really, really dysfunctional"—dark, L-shaped, and with virtually no cabinets. Acting as her own contractor between jobs as a publishers' marketer, Nikki has recently remodeled it into a light-filled modern kitchen, while keeping period design elements, such as paneled cabinets and a soap-stone counter, railroaded tiles, simple fittings, and an oak floor. Next, she plans to update the first-floor bathroom — if she can decide what to do with its

1970s-era black claw-foot tub.

One big surprise came when the kitchen sewer pipe had to be replaced. In the process of excavating back from the kitchen to the alley, workers encountered a brick tunnel going — who knows where? Nikki speculates it might have served the former carriage house, or perhaps had some purpose related to Prohibition.

Nikki and Tom plan to apply for a historic landmark designation for the house. "I don't want this house to ever be torn down," says Nikki, "ever, ever, ever."

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## **South Pearl Street First Friday Art Walk**

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## **DECKER LIBRARY EVENTS**

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## **All Ages Storytime, Thursdays, 10:15 a.m.**

Stories, songs, rhymes and fun for children of all ages and their  
parents or caregivers. Craft activity immediately follows the program.

## **Baby Storytime, Wed. and Thurs., 11:15 a.m.**

Stories, songs, rhymes and fun for babies ages 0-18 months and their  
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## **Imagination Station, Thurs. and Fri. 3:00-5:30 p.m.**

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