

AT A GLANCE: MAGNOLIA

Magnolia aims to beautify town, improve safety

By Sarah Barban

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The past

The town of Magnolia was officially incorporated in 1885. Its founders chose to create a circular boundary for the town, which is said to represent brotherhood. The boundary measures a half mile in diameter, according to the town of Magnolia's website.

When it was founded, the area was known as Croon Manor and was land that had been given to the Duke of York. Magnolia was named after the Duke's favorite tree, which was the Magnolia.

The present

The town of Magnolia still has its circular boarder, which stretches a quarter-mile in every direction from the four-way intersection that contains the town's only stop light. The town council has decided unanimously not to tamper with that circular boundary

by annexing additional property, according to Magnolia's Mayor James Frazier.

Magnolia's town government currently consists of five city council members, one the mayor and one vice mayor. Magnolia does not hold mayoral elections, rather the council members are elected and then they select a mayor from among themselves. Magnolia has an annual budget of roughly \$120,000.

The town hasn't changed very much over the years, according to Councilman Bud Faircloth.

"I was on council before in the late '80s and early '90s," Faircloth said. "The town is still the same as it was back then. It's just a little round town and nobody wants us to change."

The future

The top priority on Magnolia's to do list is addressing abandoned and poorly maintained properties, Frazier said.

"We are working with Kent County planning and trying to address these properties

BY THE NUMBERS

Population (2012): 233

Median Income (2000): \$39,917

Median Home Value (2011): \$201,930

Size: 0.2 Square Miles

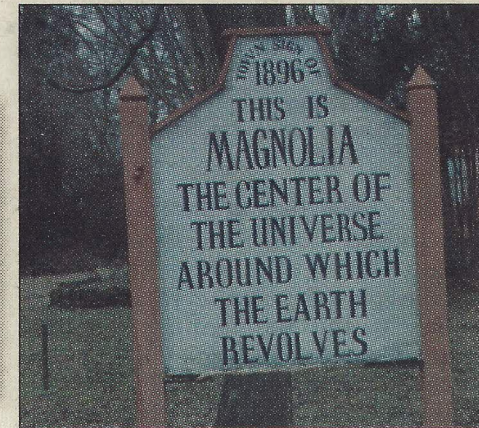
Did You Know? In 1928 Magnolia became one of the first towns in the state to form a volunteer fire department.

as they detract from the physical look of the town and property values of people that live next to them," Frazier said.

The town is working to either have abandoned houses rehabbed by the owners or in the most extreme cases torn down, he said.

Another problem the town is grappling with is traffic. The area around Magnolia has become developed, with many people now commuting through Magnolia to get to and from their homes.

There is not much the town can do about the volume of traffic, but it's working on controlling speed. The town has already installed



A sign at a historic house in Magnolia makes some serious claims about the town. SARAH BARBAN PHOTO

two digital signs that inform drivers how fast they are going and also show the posted 25 mile per hour speed limit on the west side of Magnolia. The town is hoping to get two more signs installed.

Other goals for the town include increasing parking, expanding police presence and addressing the space constraints of the town's current post office.