

## Former Boston Store at Brookfield Square torn down



Brian Huber / Freeman Staff

BROOKFIELD — Workers from NBG Demolition Services begin tearing down the former Boston Store site at Brookfield Square, where the iconic brand stood for decades before closing in 2018. There has been no announcement for plans to redevelop the site, with Tom Irgens, executive vice president of Irgens, the developer that owns it, saying recently his team is still finalizing ideas to present to the city and its residents. “Our team is thrilled about the possibilities,” he said.

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# Fire destroys Oscar’s Frozen Custard

**By Karen Pilarski**  
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TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — A fire ripped through Oscar’s Frozen Custard in the Town of Brookfield on Nov. 19. Oscar’s sign had fallen down and what remained was the skeleton of the restaurant.

The Town of Brookfield fire and police departments responded to Oscar’s Frozen Custard, 21165 E. Moreland Blvd. at 12:12 a.m. on Nov. 19 after a passer-by noticed flames coming from the restaurant. When firefighters arrived, they found flames coming out of the roof. Crews battled the blaze for an hour and a half before bringing the fire under control and were on scene for approximately three hours checking for any extension. The structure was a complete loss, according to a release from the Town of Brookfield Fire Department.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. Seven other fire departments from Waukesha County also were on location to assist. A firefighter was injured, taken to a local hospital, treated and released for minor injuries, the fire department said.

Oscar’s co-owner Susie Taylor told The Freeman on Tuesday that the Taylor family is relieved no one was seriously hurt but felt devastated over the loss of the business.

Oscar’s Frozen Custard also has locations in West Allis and Franklin.

In August all three Oscar’s held a 40th birthday celebration. The Taylor family also owns People’s Park in downtown Waukesha and Taylors in Milwaukee.

The business released a statement on Facebook:

“As most of you already know the building was ravaged by fire early this morning — at this time we have no further details to share as to how the fire started, we are happy to provide more information on that side of things when we have more. At this moment, what stands out as the most important part of this tragedy is that it happened without injury to anyone — thank goodness no one was in the building.

We are incredibly thankful to the emergency crews that responded to fight the fire and equally thankful that none were hurt in the process. The Taylor Family wishes to thank each and every one of you for your kind words, your prayers and your well wishes. We are a bit shaken this morning but rest assured we



Karen Pilarski/Freeman Staff

A fire destroyed Oscar’s Frozen Custard in the Town of Brookfield in the early morning hours on Nov. 19. Extensive damage from a fire at Oscar’s Frozen Custard brought down the building’s awning.

will be back! Please continue to support us by visiting our West Allis and Franklin locations — we will keep you posted on what’s next for our Waukesha location,” the statement said.

### Reaction to fire

For some, Oscar’s has been the place where they had their first job, held hands on a date, celebrated a team win or just headed to satisfy a craving for frozen custard.

Megan Swanson-Haynes said the news is sad for the community, owner and staff.

“Been going there since I was 6, and loved taking my girls there. Hoping they can rebuild. Oscar’s is

a treasure,” she said.

Heather Jean Uzowulu remembered going to Oscar’s on her first date with her now husband.

“My husband and I went there for custard after our first date and held hands for the first time. I am so sad to hear of this,” she said.

Sarah Ruiz Alarcon said she ate there weekly when she was pregnant.

Angela Medina said her daughter is a current employee.

“She has worked there since she was 15 and will be 20 next month. I feel so bad for her and all the other employees. The Taylor family is so nice to all the employees,” Medina said.

Angela Thull said the news broke

her heart.

“I worked there in my teens. My first real job. So many memories. Glad no one was hurt but so sad,” she said.

Sharon D’love had a fond memory.

“I remember when we were moving some furniture and stopped on the way to get shakes, and we were using a mini school bus to do this. My cousin tried to go through the drive-thru but was conscious of the height — thank goodness— because we would not have fit! So, they were awesome and worked with us running back and forth with the cars for payment and then bringing our order out to us,” D’love said.

Theresa Erdman remembered going there when she was younger. She lost her mom in July, and had hoped to return for a treat.

“I have been so busy the past few months helping my dad that I had not had the chance to get over there for one last ‘special treat’ in her honor,” Erdman said.

Stephanie Pearson said it made her sad.

“I attended Carroll from 1998-2002. My friends and I would have some late nights there. Not only was their custard amazing but so were their sloppy joes. I hope they rebuild. It’s a staple in that community.”

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Dan Muckelbauer/Freeman Staff

Elm Grove residents on Nov. 5 approved an \$8.5 million referendum to bring Underwood Creek south of Watertown Plank Road, largely in the Elm Grove Park & Shop strip mall, to light. Much of it is under pavement.

## Elm Grove passes referendum to address Underwood Creek

ELM GROVE — Elm Grove voters approved an \$8.5 million referendum created in response to concerns over potential flooding of Underwood Creek south of Watertown Plank Road in the downtown area.

According to unofficial results, 88.2% of voters responded “yes” to the referendum question and 11.8% voted against.

A portion of the creek is buried about 10 feet under the strip mall parking lot with Sendik’s grocery store at the south end. The referendum will remove the asphalt on the eastern end near the railroad tracks, realign the creek, and provide landscaping and a path along the banks.

Elm Grove referendum			
✓ Yes	3,813	88.2%	
No	508	11.8%	

The exposed creek is visible immediately south of Watertown Plank Road at the Elm Grove Park & Shop mall entrance. Past repairs to the concrete wall are also visible.

The state will no longer fund repairs of the concrete channel.

Central to the project is exposing the creek, which is called daylighting. If the stream is not daylighted, the concrete channel and roof cap are broken and would need to be completely replaced.

The village has secured a \$175,000 grant for engineering from the Fund for Lake Michigan and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, a \$250,000 grant for property acquisition from the Fund for Lake Michigan, and a \$300,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for restoration that will need to be used in 2025 or it will expire. The remainder of the money to fund the project will come from stormwater fees that residents already pay.

The village can apply for other grants to lower the cost to residents now that the referendum has passed.

## Elmbrook’s Elizabeth Nelson named Middle School Associate Principal of the Year

BROOKFIELD — An Elmbrook schools administrator has been recognized by the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators. Pilgrim Park Middle School Associate Principal Elizabeth Nelson was announced as the 2024 Wisconsin Middle School Associate Principal of the Year.

“Nelson helps to oversee more than 900 students and 125 teachers and staff. Throughout her five-year tenure at the school, key achievements have included implementing and leading the Behavior Management Team (BMT), establishing comprehensive professional development and engagement opportunities for staff, and facilitating 31 extracurricular student clubs and activities per year,” a news release said.

“We are honored to recognize Elizabeth Nelson as the Wisconsin Middle School Associate Principal of the Year,” said Jim Lynch, executive director of the AWSA. “Her commitment to supporting high standards and fostering a positive and accountable environment embodies leadership excellence. This is a well-deserved honor for a hard-working and widely respected middle school leader.”

Nelson is involved in multiple initiatives, including Project Lead the Way, Advancement Via Individual Determination, and professional learning communities. She also conducts early warning system meetings, where data is analyzed to identify students who require additional support. Additionally, she has implemented a Check and Connect program to engage and motivate at-risk students in a one-on-one setting.

The Wisconsin Associate Principal of the Year program recognizes associate principals whose leadership has resulted in improved student learning, instructional collaboration, and a safe and positive school environment.

Nelson will be formally recognized at the Associate Principals Convention in January. She will also receive \$1,000 for use on a project of her choice at her middle school. Additionally, Nelson will represent the state of Wisconsin at the National Assistant Principal of the Year Celebration in Washington, D.C., in spring 2025, where the Associate Principals of the Year from middle and high schools across the country will be honored.

## DPI report card: Elmbrook Schools rated ‘Significantly Exceeds Expectations’

BROOKFIELD — The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction published school and district accountability report cards for the 2023-24 school year recently.

A district or school’s overall accountability score is rated by: Significantly Exceeds Expectations (five stars), Exceeds Expectations (four stars), Meets Expectations (three stars), Meets Few Expectations (two stars), and Fails to Meet Expectations (one star).

Elmbrook School District, according to the report, has an enrollment of 7,863. It was rated “Significantly Exceeds Expecta-

tions” with a score of 85.1.

The Elmbrook School District released a statement regarding the report card.

“The district’s rating score of 85.1 is the third highest of 4K-12th grade districts in the state with a student population of over 1,000, based on 2023-24 school year data.

“These results highlight the remarkable growth and success of our students, showcasing our educators’ dedication and exceptional efforts on behalf of all our students,” said Emily Greiber, assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, Elmbrook Schools.

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