



## Notes to Meeting of

March 26, 2002

Meeting # 65

### Westminster Neighborhood Association

#### A. Welcome/Introductions

We had eighteen people attended our meeting, all of whom introduced themselves to their neighbors.

#### B. Review of Agenda

No new items were added to the Agenda.

#### C. Treasurer's Report

##### Westminster Neighborhood Association Financial Statement for February 2002

Balance as of February 15, 2002		\$ 1,021.77
Receipts:		
Dues	\$ 95.00	
Contribution (Ditttrich)	\$ 85.00	
Matching Gift (Fannie Mae/Laird)	\$ 700.00	
		<u>880.00</u>
Disbursements:	\$0.00	
		<u>\$0.00</u>
Balance as of March 26, 2002		<u><b>\$ 1,901.77</b></u>

## D. Guest Speaker -

Councilman Jim Graham, DC City Council Member for Ward 1, was invited to speak and he addressed the following topics.

- ***Scattered Site Properties***

Councilman Graham has been working on getting the scattered site properties rehabilitated. He said he felt that the issue was about “hammers and nails financing” rather than “poor versus not poor.” He said that the community development corporations responsible for rehabilitating the properties have been slow (Manna to a lesser extent) in completing their projects.<sup>1</sup> Councilman Graham gave as an example the New Columbia Land Trust, which to date had completed only one property out of eight. Councilman Graham added that the New Columbia Land Trust was a long established organization with a good history of putting rehabilitated low to moderate-income homes on the market – they continue to hold the land in trust once the home is sold. Councilman Graham said that he asked for, and was promised, background on each of the scattered site properties, including any new deadlines, who owns each property and where each project stands, and he will make this information available to us.

- ***Public Safety***

Councilman Graham spoke briefly about what appeared to be a targeted shooting in Garfield Terrace in which five individuals were

wounded. He said that the five shooting victims were not talking but that the police thought that the shooting might be retaliation for a shooting that occurred at 14<sup>th</sup> and Euclid Streets, NW. Councilman Graham said there has been an increase police presence on foot patrol in the 4<sup>th</sup> District. Generally, deployments have been taken from special forces. PSA 306 currently has seven assigned officers. The highest number of police officers assigned in Ward 1’s PSAs is twenty.

The most recent shooting occurred in PSA 305 and Councilman Graham reported that Commander Peacock was considering reassigning the 5 officers assigned to the Boys & Girls Club to the street.

- ***U Street Development***

- *Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Joint Development Program*

Councilman Graham reported on several projects being developed under the WMATA Joint Development Program. Under this program, property interests owned and/or controlled by WMATA are marketed to office, retail / commercial, recreational / entertainment and residential developers with the objective of developing transit oriented development projects. Projects are encouraged that integrate WMATA’s transit facilities, reduce automobile dependency, increase pedestrian/bicycle originated transit trips, foster safe station areas, enhance surrounding area connections to transit stations, provide mixed use including housing and the opportunity to obtain goods and services near transit stations, offer active public spaces, promote and enhance rider ship, generate long-term revenues for WMATA, and encourage revitalization and sound growth in the communities which WMATA serves.<sup>2</sup> One such project will be directly above the 13<sup>th</sup> and U Streets subway station, which will include retail on the first floor and office space above. DC Mental Health Ser-

<sup>1</sup> On March 27, 2002, Ronnie McGhee sent an e-mail to let everyone know that NCCLT had begun construction on 923 S Street and that 924 S received a permit and construction would begin in 60 days or less. NCCLT also has 1325 R Street under construction. Several other houses are in design and will have construction started by late this summer. If you have questions you may contact Ronnie (via email) or Pam Jones at NCCLT, 202-986-9225. They hope to have them all under construction or completed by December 2002.

<sup>2</sup> WMATA Joint Development Policies and Guidelines, adopted February 21, 2002

vices will use some of the office space. It was explained that the DC Mental Health Services workers will not receive clients at the offices but would travel to clients in the community. Other projects include surface parking lots in the northeast and southeast corners of 14<sup>th</sup> and V Streets.

○ *Howard University*

Councilman Graham discussed the sale by The Peoples Involvement Corp. (PIC) of several properties to Howard University. The properties sold to Howard University include 1900 Seventh Street, NW, the site of a CVS drugstore, a newly constructed building at 1800 Seventh St., NW, which PIC had planned to use as a health care facility (which Howard will use as a dormitory), and a vacant parcel in the 2900 block of Georgia Avenue NW. Howard University is interested in having an African-American Museum in the building at 1900 Seventh Street, NW. Howard has been lobbying for an African-American Museum at 7<sup>th</sup> and Florida. Howard University did not offer to purchase the Howard Theater but several developers are in negotiations with PIC for the theater. Councilman Graham said that Howard Theater would be soon the subject of another Request for Proposals (RFP). He said he felt that the area around 7<sup>th</sup> and S Streets, NW was on the verge of substantial development.

○ *Other Developments*

Councilman Graham informed us that Manna is working on a U Street facade improvement project. He also said that the administrative offices housed at 1901 Vermont Avenue would be moving to Anacostia in two to three years. The African-American Civil War Memorial Museum has expressed an interest in using one half of the building.

● *Real Estate Assessments*

Councilman Graham discussed the recently approved legislation providing for a 25% real property tax cap. This means that where increases in assessments exceed 25 percent, the real property tax bill will show the credit applied against the tax due. This will limit the increase in tax due on large assessment increases; a homeowner will pay no property tax on the assessment increase that is above the 25% limit. The 25% tax cap credit applies only to the principal residence of the property owner and does not limit the assessed value determined by the Office of Tax and Revenue.<sup>3</sup> The 25 percent tax cap credit will not be granted in the case of new ownership and certain other circumstances. [Property owners may call the Office of Tax and Revenue Customer Service Administration at (202) 727-4TAX (727-4829) for more information.]

**E. Committee Updates -**

*Playground - Mural*

Lynn Johnson reported that the wall will be prepared for the mural and that the DC Commission on the Arts will pay for the wall preparation. It is expected that work on the wall will begin around the middle of April and will be completed by the end of April. The project calls for scaffolding so some of the playground equipment will not be available to the children while the work is in progress.



<sup>3</sup> DC Office of Tax and Revenue Press Release dated March 28, 2002

### *Playground Committee - Maintenance*

Lynn Johnson reported on one item related to playground maintenance. One of the lamp-posts has a crack and needs to be repaired. The lampposts are made of aluminum and the repair will require intense heat. A question was asked on whether the repair is covered by a warranty. Lynn said that they would look into that question as well as the best way to get the repair done.

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## **F. Police Matters**

Police officers from our PSA were unable to attend the meeting. There was a discussion on the increase of thefts and break-ins. It was reported that 908 T Street (which is under construction) had been broken into every night for two weeks. It was also reported that break-ins were now occurring in occupied houses during the morning hours. The owners of 908 T Street asked that the neighbors watch this house for break-ins. One neighbor reported that there have been many complaints about a noisy moped that is being driven at all hours of the night. The police are interested in learning where the moped is being parked because they believe that it is stolen property and they want to take it off the street. It was also reported that two neighbors on 9<sup>th</sup> Street had their tires slashed. A general discussion followed about what one can do about neighbors who are noisy and disturb the neighborhood.

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## **G. Committee Signup**

The WNA has eight committees that you can sign up for to help make the neighborhood the best it can be. The committees include:

- Public Safety (police/fire/disaster-emergency preparedness)
- Community Enrichment (community survey, vacant property renovation, historic preservation)
- Streetscape (trees, tree boxes, tree trimming, signage, call-boxes, U St. Streetscape, Park Service property)
- Playground (mural/alcoves/maintenance);
- Refuse (garbage removal/rat abatement/abandoned cars)
- New Member Packet (about WNA/where to shop, etc./work with 9<sup>th</sup> Street Business Assoc.)
- WNA House Tour Fundraiser
- Membership (recruitment)

When you sign up for a committee you are making a commitment to work on that committee for only the rest of the calendar year. Throughout the year, the WNA will have additional opportunities for those of you who cannot make that one year commitment to participate in short-term projects such as tree planting, bowling, clean-up day, etc.

If you are interested in signing up for a committee or working on a specific short-term project, please contact Tania Shand at (588-8060). Please remember that we all need to stay involved if WNA is to continue making progress improving our neighborhood.

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## H. Other Matters

### **Temperance Row Farmer's and Artist's Market (TRFAM)**

Jennifer Brown, representing the Manna CDC, presented plans for a proposed farmer's and artist's market at Temperance Row. The market will be held from June 5 through October 20, 2002. The market location will be in an open lot on the interior of the block bounded by 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, T and U Streets, NW, adjacent to the U Street/Cardozo metro station. The hours of operation will be on Wednesday afternoons from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. All produce sold at the market will come from farms within 150 miles of the market and all jams and jellies, honey and vinegars will be made from products grown primarily in the DC region. In addition, artisans in the DC region will make all products sold at the market. The vendor fee for participation in the market for the entire season will be \$110; however, single day passes will be made available for \$15 per market day. The booth spaces are 10 feet by 10 feet. Jennifer handed out the "Temperance Row Farmer's and Artist's Market (TRFAM) Rules at Market" and the "Temperance Row Farmer's and Artist's Market (TFRAM) 2002 Market Application."

In response to a question about the limited hours of operation, Jennifer explained that the market is being held on Wednesday afternoons because most of the farmers have already committed their weekends to other area markets. Jennifer said that the hours of operation may be expanded in the future depending on how much support the market receives.

With respect to the market's location, Jennifer indicated that the market was conceived of as

a resource for the community and it is anticipated that the market will draw the majority of its customers from foot traffic off 14<sup>th</sup> Street. There will be four alleyway entrances to the market. Jennifer said that they are trying to clean the area prior to opening the market.

The market is expected to run for two seasons, after which time construction of the Temperance Court housing project is scheduled to begin. If the market is a success, another location will be found so the market can continue after construction begins.

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### **Main Street Program**

WNA President Tania Shand presented a letter which was sent to Mr. John E. McGaw, the Commercial Revitalization Coordinator of DC Main Streets, Office of the Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development. The letter expresses WNA's support and endorsement of the Main Street Program application of the Shaw Heritage Trust for the 14<sup>th</sup> & U Street Business Corridor. Five applications will be chosen to get funds for neighborhood revitalization. As expressed in the letter of support, WNA supports the Shaw Heritage Trust for 14<sup>th</sup> & U Street Business Corridor application because it supports shared interests in "[m]aintaining the diverse cultural and historical identity of the community; improving and expanding commercial vitality; expanding multi-modal transportation systems and parking facilities; enhancing the safety, aesthetics, and appeal of our streetscapes, and providing a range of housing and employment opportunities for residents and newcomers..."

### **Spring Clean-up**

Tania Shand reported that Bill Stevens is heading up a group on 9-1/2 Street, which proposes a through street running from 9-1/2 Street to T Street. Tania said that she would invite Mr. Stevens to the next meeting to explain the group's proposal. Polly noted that 9-1/2 Street has never been a through street.

Lynn Johnson reported that the CSNA Ninth Annual Spring Clean Up would be held on May 4, 2002. CSNA has been holding monthly coordination meetings for the last several months. There will be coordination meeting in April and Denise Wardlaw offered to attend the meeting. [The meeting will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, April 10, 2002 in Councilmember Graham's Conference Room at the Reeves Center] The clean up will be scaled down from prior years. Lynn asked whether there was a need for a dumpster and the general consensus was that most of the big items had been discarded during the last clean up. On the day of the clean up, the city will be picking up bulk trash. Lynn briefly explained how neighbors usually participate in the clean up: neighbors may clean their own yards, or work with other neighbors to clean the alleys and sidewalks.



### **I. Good Neighbor**

WNA extends sympathies to the family and friends of our late neighbor, Mrs. Rosa Lee Jackson. Mrs. Jackson was born in 1937 in Washington, DC and departed this life on March 22, 2002.

Mrs. Jackson grew up in Washington, DC and attended DC Public Schools. She dedicated over 30 years of her life working for Children's National Hospital Center and also completed college level courses during her tenure there. She enjoyed cooking, house-keeping, reading and listening to gospel and jazz music. She additionally loved shopping, traveling, and reading the Bible.

Mrs. Jackson was a Westminster Street resident for more than 30 years, and in recent years, enjoyed walking to the playground. She leaves memories for everyone she touched, and her presence will be missed by her neighbors.

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### **J. Next Meeting**

Clarence Davis, Director, DC Public Records and Archives will be our guest speaker for our next meeting, which will be on the fourth Tuesday in April 2002 (the 23<sup>rd</sup>) at 7 PM at 922 Westminster Street. Mr. Davis will discuss how to conduct house research. If the weather is nice we will hold the meeting in the playground. If you want to put anything on the agenda, please call Tania at 588-8060

## WNA Membership List

Please take a moment to find your name on the following list. If you do not find your name it means that you have forgotten to pay us for this year's dues. Get that checkbook out and make out a check (\$15 per household or \$5 if senior citizen) payable to "WNA." You may mail it or just drop it in the mailbox for Margie Perko at 924 Westminster. Get *your name* published.

2002		
Hershel Bagley	Lamont O. Hames	Suleika Oakley
Chuck Baxter	Emily & Stephen Henn	Susan, Marquan, Andre & Sarah
Emmanuel Blackwell	Loretta Johnson	Ousley & Bruhier Stillman
Jacqueline Brower	Lynn Johnson	Margie Perko
Patricia Crisman	Kennickal, & Holback	Geoff & Lucia Seaver
Charles Dittrich	David & Michelle Laird	Tania Shand
Charles & Doris Edwards	Bill Lewis	Tim Shannon & Page Van Wirt
Philip Fornaci & Michael Geller	Tim & Patsy Mack	Michael & Denise Wardlaw
Sophia Frimpomaah	Kerry Meyer & Misa Rossetti	