



## Notes to Meeting of

April 23, 2002

Meeting # 66

### Westminster Neighborhood Association

#### A. Welcome/Introductions

We had twenty-two people attending our meeting, all of whom introduced themselves to their neighbors.

#### B. Review of Agenda

Two announcements and a suggestion for a fundraiser were added to the agenda.

#### C. Treasurer's Report

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

Balance as of February 15, 2002		\$ 1,901.77
Receipts:		
Dues	\$ 90.00	
Donation (Seaver)	\$ 35.00	
		<u>125.00</u>
Disbursements:		
Checking acct		
Service charge	8.00	
		<u>8.00</u>
Balance as of April 23, 2002		<u>\$ 2,018.77</u>

## **D. Guest Speaker -**

### ***Your House, Your Neighborhood***

Clarence Davis of the DC Public Records/Archives was invited to speak on conducting house research.

The District of Columbia Archives is one of three divisions of the Office of Public Records. The Office of Public Records is located at 1300 Naylor Court, NW (between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets, NW and N and O Streets, NW). The public office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and the research hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM by appointment only. Mr. Davis may be reached at 202-671-1108.

Archives stores DC government historical and permanently valuable records. Another division, the District of Columbia Records Center, collects and stores both permanent and temporary records of the District government. The Library of Governmental Information, the third division of the Office of Public Records, collects, stores, and maintains studies, reports, monographs, printed materials, books, and other publications printed on or about the District government. The Archives and Records Center develop finding aids, indexes, registers, and other resources guides to their holdings. These resources are available for use when conducting research. Archivists, records analysts, records technicians, records clerks, and other staff members of the Archives, Records Center, and Library of Governmental Information provide assistance to researchers who request access to the records in these repositories. You can learn more about what records are held by the Office of Public Records by visiting their office or by visiting their website at

[www.os.dc.gov/info/pubrec/pubrec.shtm](http://www.os.dc.gov/info/pubrec/pubrec.shtm).

Mr. Davis described the types of files found in the of DC Archives, including records of

the Commissioners (which go back one hundred years and include Commissioners' orders and directives), corporations records, genealogical records and city directories. We learned that the most useful information for house and neighborhood research comes from the engineering files, referred to as the "ED" files, which were started during the time of Boss Sheppard when one of the Commissioners was an engineer. The ED files contain building permits, notes, blueprints, annotations, and other documents related to public works projects and would today be compiled by the Department of Public Works. Information relevant to research on call boxes would be included in the ED files. Mr. Davis explained that the ED files are difficult to access but that they are working on a grant to index the files. Mr. Davis brought some original documents from the ED files that are relevant to the WNA neighborhood for everyone to see.

Mr. Davis told us that the WNA neighborhood was located in the last tier of old Washington, which extends to Florida Avenue. The most recent study of old Washington took place during the urban renewal of the 1960s. Before coming to the WNA meeting Mr. Davis asked one of the archivists to determine whether an athletic field or stadium had been located in the WNA neighborhood. Mr. Davis concluded that more research was needed. He said that the ED files indicate a public works project concerning an athletic park, but it is not clear that the location of the athletic park was in the WNA neighborhood. Kevin Dailey said that he had seen a notation in a reference book on baseball stadiums that said that Westminster Street ran through what used to be an athletic field or stadium. Chuck Baxter indicated that he also saw a reference to a stadium or athletic field in the WNA neighborhood. Mr. Davis asked that Kevin and Chuck send him their findings and that he

would share his findings from additional research with us.

### **Follow-up from Council member Graham**

Tania Shand circulated the Homeownership Group Status Report promised by Council member Graham at the March 26, 2002 WNA meeting. The report provides information on the North Capitol Neighborhood Development Corporation projects, including the property address, the draw date, the start date for construction, the completion date and the sale date, with comments.

## **E. Committee Updates – Community Enrichment**

### **(1) Scott Pomroy, President, CSNA**

Scott Pomroy spoke briefly to the group about the Cardozo Shaw Neighborhood Association (CSNA). The boundaries of CSNA in are 15<sup>th</sup> Street to the West, 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the East, “S” Street to the South and Florida Avenue to the North. As stated on its “About CSNA” web page, CSNA acts as an agent for change in the community, helps members be heard on issues such as parking, nuisance properties, trash problems and illegal renovations and construction, keeps members informed about what is happening in the community, brings neighbors together, works with city agencies to help to create a safer community, works to preserve the historic character of the area and encourages economic development.<sup>1</sup> Scott gave a brief description of the CSNA Committees, including the Public Safety Committee and the Historic Preservation and Development Committee. CSNA meetings are held the second Thursday of the month in the True Reformer Building at 1200 U Street, NW from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. If

you are interested in being involved in the CSNA you can reach Scott at 667-6524.

### **✓ Spring Clean-up**

Scott reported on CSNA’s 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Clean Up, which will be held on May 4, 2002. CSNA has been holding monthly coordination meetings for the last several months. There will be a Spring Clean Up kick-off at the corner of 13<sup>th</sup> and U Street. The main focus of this year’s Clean Up will be the northeast part of 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the alleyway. Graffiti removal was scheduled for Saturday, April 27, 2002. There are plans for trash pick-up by The Department of Public Works. Items for pick-up should be put at the ends of the alleyway but must not block emergency egress because pick-up may be delayed by one or two days. Although there will be no plants this year there will be tools available for use in the clean up as well as mulch and topsoil.

### **✓ Main Street Applications**

Scott also gave a status report on the application and presentation for the Shaw Heritage Trust for the 14<sup>th</sup> & U Street Business Corridor Main Street proposal. The service area covered by the proposal includes roughly from 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Thomas Circle to Florida Avenue and from 16<sup>th</sup> Street to 9<sup>th</sup> Street (including from 8<sup>th</sup> Street to 9<sup>th</sup> Street on Florida Avenue). The focus of the application is to provide resources to the area. The application received approximately \$125,000 in pledges from area businesses and developers. The Scott passed around a presentation notebook for everyone to view. *[UPDATE: On Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, Scott circulated an email message saying that their application for the 14<sup>th</sup> & U Business Corridor was selected to participate in the DC Main Street Program*

Scott also passed around a new map of the U Street area featuring local businesses and cultural attractions, developed with the DC

<sup>1</sup> [www.ustreet.com/csna/](http://www.ustreet.com/csna/)

Heritage Tourism Coalition and the U Street Business and Arts Coalition.

**(2) Bill Stevens, 9-1/2 Street Project**

Alexa and Bill Steven, who live at 1921 9-1/2 Street, came to the meeting to discuss their interest and efforts getting 9-1/2 Street upgraded from an alley to a street. Bill explained that 9-1/2 Street was probably the only remaining closed alley in the city with dwellings. Bill described the difficulty he and his neighbors have had in getting basic services for 9-1/2 Street. He said that when he first moved to 9-1/2 Street, he had to constantly call the city to get the trash picked up and the street cleaned. In addition, he has had to give detailed directions to 9-1/2 Street on calls to the police and fire departments, resulting in delays of emergency services. He and his neighbors feel that upgrading the alley to a street would lessen these problem.

Bill learned from the Surveyors Office that the alley could be upgraded to a street if the alley was widened from 30 feet to 50 feet. He also learned that he would have to submit an application signed by his neighbors, with a show of support by some of the businesses in the area. The fee to file the application is \$1,400.

During the discussion that followed, a question was raised on the traffic implications for T Street if the alley were upgraded to a through street. Another question was raised on whether the street would be renamed? Bill said that his research on 9-1/2 Street suggested that the alley used to be named Kings Way. Mr. Palmer Jackson suggested that 9-1/2 Street had historical significance that should be taken into account before considering a name change. Mr. Jackson said that, historically, the 1900 block of 9<sup>th</sup> Street was well known as a gambling area with many exits for quick escape. It was suggested that Bill call Clarence Davis at the DC Archive for help in researching the history of the alley be-

fore considering a name change. In addition, Tania Shand suggested that Bill get together with neighbors on Vermont Street who are interested in forming a small neighborhood association. She also suggested emphasizing the historical aspect of 9-1/2 Street to enlist the help of Council member Graham, other city officials and DC historical organizations in getting funding for the project. Tania also suggested that Bill contact Mr. Horton of the District Department of Transportation.

If you have questions about the 9-1/2 Street project or if you are interested in helping with the project, please contact Bill at (202) 265-9613.

**(3) Manna Request - Temperance Row Farmer's and Artist's Market (TRFAM)**

David Haiman, representing the Manna CDC, presented a budget for the Farmers' Market that will be held at Temperance Row from June 5 through October 20, 2002 during the hours from 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. David explained that, in addition to the revenue generated from farmers' and artisans' participation in the market, Manna CDC is asking for contributions from the local neighborhood associations to support the market. He told us that Manna CDC is requesting a contribution of \$150.00 from the WNA. In a review and discussion of the budget, David explained that main expense for the market is a Market Manager whose estimated cost (including hours worked prior to the market's opening) totals \$3,240. The Market Manager's duties would include setting up one hour before the market opens each market day and closing down one hour after the market closes. The Market Manager would also be contacting farmers and doing other contact work during the week on non-Market days and would work approximately 4 hours per week for 10 weeks before the market opened on marketing, contacting farmers and artisans and obtaining the proper prior to opening the market. One item

not reflected on the budget was Manna CDC staff salary. In addition to the \$150 contribution, Manna CDC may ask for our assistance in marketing (flyers) and in conversations with the police to help get cars removed from the alleyway where the market will be held. During the discussion a suggestion was made that Manna CDC revise their budget to seek a larger contribution from the ANC, since the ANC was a much larger organization with more resources.

No motion was brought forward on the Manna CDC request.

#### **(4) Seventh & Ninth Streets Business & Property Owner's Association -Main Street Application**

Palmer and Dana Jackson gave a status report on the Main Street application and presentation by the Seventh & Ninth Streets Business & Property Owner's Association. Dana reported that a single application was filed on March 25, 2002 for the service area extending from 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Mass Avenue (south) to one block past U Street to V Street (north), and from 7<sup>th</sup> Street and New York Avenue (south) to Florida Avenue (north), and from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the east and from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to the west. Sixteen individual worked on the application and presentation. They received many letters of support for the application in response to a mailing of 1,300 letters to property owners and businesses in the area, including support from the United House of Prayer (a major property owner in the area) and from the Douglas Development Corporation. The presentation was made before the selection committee on April 18, 2002 and stressed representation of small business owners and property owners as opposed to developers as well as a commitment to the community. The presentation included such examples as the DC Shaw Community website developed by the Ninth Streets Business & Property Owner's Association which provides space

for small business owners to post their business cards free of charge resulting in an increase in business. Palmer said that the focus of the application was to bring in services and business into the area, which will be aggressively developed when the Convention Center is completed. Palmer described some of the development that was already in the works, such as the renovation of the O Street Market; Giant has leased the area to developers who will be developing the entire block.

#### **Playground**

##### **✓ *Maintenance - Brick Wall Damage***

Lynn Johnson reported on a minor disaster that the playground suffered the past week. A vehicle took the turn too sharply from the Westminster/T St. alley and clipped the corner of the brick wall. Lynn said that the broken bricks would have to be replaced. One member suggested the use of a bollard to prevent future disasters; the bollard would be placed in front of the wall and would prevent trucks making sharp turns in the alley. Lynn thought that the cost of bollard might be between \$800 and \$1,000 dollars. He also thought it might cost \$500 to fix the wall. There was some discussion on whether someone in the neighborhood would do the work or whether a professional would be needed. Patti volunteered to get an estimate of the cost for repairing the wall and installing a bollard. It was also suggested that the wall repair and bollard installation be added to the survey Ronnie McGhee submitted to Mr. Horton.

##### **✓ *Tile Art Project***

Chuck Baxter gave a status report on the art tile project. The artist said that he would be able to use three or four of the WNA residents' photographs. The artist said that he was waiting for approval from the Art Commission on the found objects that will be imbedded in the tiles. Chuck reported that the tiles would be installed in mid May; after the WNA meeting Chuck learned that artist de-

cided to wait to install the tiles until after completion of the mural so that both projects could be celebrated at the same time.

✓ ***Mural Art Project***

Lynn Johnson reported that work on parging the wall for the mural was scheduled to begin the April 29, 2002. He also reported that, with respect to landscaping, a watering hose was buried under the azaleas on April 20th.

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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

## **F. Police Matters**

Police officers from our PSA were unable to attend the meeting; the majority of the police force was busy with the various demonstrations taking place in the city. Tania said that she would speak to our PSA about having officers attend our next meeting.

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stay involved if WNA is to continue making progress improving our neighborhood.

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## **H. Other Matters**

### **Projects/Activities**

*Streetscape report to DC DOT* - Ronnie McGhee submitted the survey of items needing repair in the WNA area to Mr. Horton. Mr. Horton said that he would assign two people to visit the sites listed in the survey to make assessments. Mr. Horton will report back to the WNA when contracts are in place for needed repairs.

### **Other**

✓ ***Fund Raising***

Tania Shand asked the group their thoughts on a masquerade ball on a Friday around Halloween from 9:00 PM until 2:00 AM as a possible fundraiser. Tania suggested that such an event could be used to raise funds for WNA (to help pay for the cost of repairing the playground wall, etc.) and funds for another charitable organization. Scott Pomroy said that the ballroom could hold about 350 people. Scott gave Tania the name of the person to contact to find out more about using the ballroom for such an event. It was decided to discuss the topic at a future meeting.

✓ **Announcements:**

Chuck Baxter delivered a note from Mary Jane Jones. Mary Jane's wrote that she was sorry that she could not attend the WNA meetings held on Tuesday evenings and asked that we call her if she could help in any way. Mary Jane would like to have a yard sale the last weekend in May and asked that anyone else on the block that is also interested in having a yard sale to please e-mail her at [mjjones@erols.com](mailto:mjjones@erols.com).

Chuck also announced that The North Capital Neighborhood Development Corporation planned an Open House at 704 9<sup>th</sup> Street for April 28<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

you want to put anything on the agenda, please call Tania at 588-8060.

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## **I. Good Neighbor**

Special recognition this month goes to our neighborhood children, Andre and Sarah Ousley, for their hard work and dedication to keeping the playground clean. They were appointed last fall, along with Patricia Crisman, to the task of making sure the playground was a clean place for kids to play. They have consistently, along with adult helpers, worked very hard in the months following their appointment to get the job done. Andre and Sarah, keep up the good work - the WNA community really appreciates your great efforts!

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## **J. Next Meeting**

Our next meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday in May 2002 (the 21st) at 7 PM at 922 Westminster Street. If the weather is nice we will hold the meeting in the playground. If

## 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	Paul Hardy & Patty Anderson	Kerry Meyer & Misa Rossetti
Chuck Baxter	Emily & Stephen Henn	Suleika Oakley
Emmanuel Blackwell	Betty Hightower	Susan, Marquan, Andre & Sarah
Jacqueline Brower	Loretta Johnson	Ousley & Bruhier Stillman
Patricia Crisman	Lynn Johnson	Margie Perko
Kevin Dailey & Claire Donelan	Mary Jane Jones	Gennet Purcell
Charles Dittrich	Joletha Jordan	Geoff & Lucia Seaver
Charles & Doris Edwards	Kennickal, & Holback	Tania Shand
Philip Fornaci & Michael Geller	David & Michelle Laird	Tim Shannon & Page Van Wirt
Sophia Frimpomaah	William and Michelle Lewis	Michael & Denise Wardlaw
Lamont O. Hames	Tim & Patsy Mack	Denise Wilson
		Gift dues from Joletha Jordan