



Notes to Meeting of

June 25, 2002

Meeting # 68

Westminster Neighborhood Association

A. Introduction

We had fourteen people attend 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 May 23, 2002

The Treasurer was not able to attend the meeting so no report for May/June was submitted. The following report was presented at the May 28, 2002 WNA meeting.

Balance as of April 23, 2002			\$2,018.77
Receipts			
	Dues & Donations	\$190.00	
			\$190.00
Disbursements			
	Flowers	\$55.00	
	Checking Acct Service Charge	\$8.00	
			\$63.00
Balance as of May 23, 2002			\$2,145.77

D. Guest Speaker

Mr. Robert Horton of the District Department of Transportation was invited to be the guest speaker to follow up on the status of the list of items needing repair in the WNA area, which was compiled and submitted by Ronnie McGhee. Mr. Horton was not able to attend the meeting. Denise Wardlaw volunteered to follow-up with Mr. Horton.

E. Committee Updates

➤ Community Enrichment - Call Box Grant Process – P. Williams

Paul Williams runs the citywide fire and police call-box project, a program of the DC Heritage Tourism Coalition (DCHTC), the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCAH), the DC BID and the District of Columbia Mayor Williams. The purpose of the project is to identify protect, renovate and reuse the city's fire and police call boxes, which are currently abandoned and deteriorating. Under the program individuals adopt call boxes by to decorate and fill with historical information. The DCHTC provides grants of \$250 per adopted call box to be applied toward project materials. In order for the citywide project to fulfill funding sources it needs local nonprofits to funnel funds through. Ten call boxes will be adopted in our area. At the last WNA meeting, a motion was passed that the WNA be the depository for a total of \$2,500 in grants for the ten adopted call boxes. Paul was invited to speak on the call box grant process.

Paul estimates that each call box actually costs about \$400 to decorate and fill with historical information. There are no stylistic restrictions on adopted call boxes.

Paul told us that the applications process was very easy. Once you come up with an idea for a call box you can apply to adopt it by filling out an easy to complete Request For Proposal (RFP) application. The RFP

application requires a basic budget with historical and artistic components. RFP applications are reviewed three times a year. One RFP application can be used for multiple boxes. A RFP application completed for the ten call boxes should be given to Paul and once it is approved, the call box grant funds will be released to WNA.

Paul suggested that WNA maintain some basic accounting to keep track of where the \$250 grants go. Chuck suggested that WNA not keep detailed accounting since that WNA will be acting as a funnel for the call box grant funds.

➤ Streetscape – Tania Shand

Tania Shand reported on the efforts of several WNA members to present community opposition to the ANC on a request by the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Lodge to expand and operate a parking lot at 1902 and 1906 Vermont Ave., NW. With the exception of our ANC representative, Glenn Melcher, the ANC was non-responsive to their efforts. The Zoning Board will decide the Prince Hall Lodge's request for a variance to expand the parking lot on July 23, 2002. A Neighborhood Stabilization Project meeting was held on June 16, 2002 to organize opposition to the Prince Hall Lodge's request. Those in attendance were hopeful that the Prince Hall Lodge would work with the community to address its concerns; that it adhere to the R4 zoning district and convert the vacant land, currently being operated as a parking lot, to row dwellings. The project members will meet again to develop points for consideration by the neighboring community.¹

A motion was presented and passed that the WNA write a letter of opposition on

¹ A fact sheet, opposition letter and petition were subsequently developed for community response.

Prince Hall Lodge's request to the Zoning Board.

➤ **Playground - Wall Repair and Bollard – Patti Anderson**

Patti Anderson reported that the bollard has been ordered. Patti also reported that she is waiting for an estimate on the cost of repair of the damaged playground wall from one contractor and expects to follow up with a second one. She has had difficulty getting repair estimates from contractors because of the size of the job. Lynn Johnson said that the playground wall contractor might be able to work on the repairs but they would have to work around their own schedule. [*Post-script: The playground contractors did replace the broken bricks on the wall for us. We are now waiting for the arrival of the bollard and will work on getting that installed.*]

➤ **Playground - ANC Grant – Chuck Baxter**

Chuck reported that WNA applied for and received a grant from the ANC for \$3,900 to buy and install the bollard, to repair the playground wall and to install a front gate. A discussion followed on the preference for gate height and whether the front gate should be self-closing. The parents generally preferred a self-closing gate. Chuck will obtain an estimate for both a medium and a tall gate with various closing options.

➤ **Playground – Mural – Chuck Baxter/Lynn Johnson**

Lynn reported that installation of the outside concrete fiberboard would be complete by the end of the week. Jessie and Ron have been watching over the project since the scaffolding went up. The construction fence will be moved closer to the wall once the artist begins working on the mural. The artist hopes to be done with the mural by the end of July/early August.

➤ **Playground - Other – Patricia Crisman**

- *Water Feature* - Patricia said that several parents would like to extend the water feature in the playground from 7:00pm until 8:00pm. Chuck raised two concerns on the proposed extension. First, when the water features shuts down at 7:00pm, the playground empties and creates a quite time for the occupants and the neighbors living close to the playground. Second, WNA recently received a water bill for \$166.00 for water usage through the end of May, a period when the water feature was not used much. Chuck is looking into whether the city will pay for the playground water usage. The water company agreed that WNA does not have to pay the bill until it is determined that the city will or will not pay for the playground water usage. After some discussion it was generally agreed that for now the cut-off time for the water feature remain 7:00pm.

- *Dog Waste* – Patricia asked whether the WNA could place a small trash receptacle outside the playground for dog walkers. Dog walkers have been depositing their bags of dog waste in the trashcans in the playground. This creates a very bad smell on very hot days. Jessie mentioned that Mitchell Park uses special containers for use by dog walkers. He volunteered to find out more about the containers. Someone suggested that such a container could be attached to the one side of the front gate.

➤ **Refuse – Chuck Baxter**

Chuck circulated an excel spreadsheet prepared by the trash committee which shows houses with trashcans left in the alleys after 7:00pm on trash pick-up days for the period since the last report. The purpose of the spreadsheet is to remind everyone of the importance of taking in trashcans. More trash tends to collect where trashcans remain

in the alleys, and rats collect where trash collects.

A problem with trash at 1810 9th Street was noted.

A problem with trash on 10th Street was also noted. The back yards of some houses on Vermont Street open onto 10th Street. When trash is not properly set out, trash collects in front of the houses that face 10th Street.

F. Public Safety

Officer Schwartz came to our meeting. He could not provide us with crime statistics but he did tell what had been happening on the street. In the past month PSA 306 had officers working plain clothes on theft from auto and that three arrests were made. He also told us that the burglar arrested in May confessed to a large number of burglaries going back a number of years in our area and that they were able to close down several stolen property storehouses. If anyone has questions about recovering stolen property they can contact Detective Swenson at (202) 673-6815. Documentation showing ownership, such as a serial number, is needed to recover property.

Denise Wardlaw pointed out that the patrol car working radar photos on 9th Street that sits on the corner of 9th and Westminster Streets obstructs the view of turning cars. She felt the patrol car should park somewhere else and asked what department was responsible for radar. Officer Schwartz did not know the answer but someone pointed out that the 3rd District has a website where you can communicate concerns that need addressing.

The problem of cars speeding at night on 9th Street was raised. This problem had been brought to Lieutenant Dike's attention at last month's meeting. Officer Schwartz told us

that the speed police were usually stationed at the edge of the city at night. Joyce said that there was also a problem with speeding cars on 10th and S Streets. Officer Schwartz said that they could set up roadblocks to stop the speeders. He explained that roadblocks are a good tool because stopped cars can be legally searched.

Joyce also mentioned that two of her neighbors with multiple cars drive down the sidewalk to park in their yards. This is a problem because the grass strip along the sidewalk is being torn up and because young children live and play in the area. She said that she had called the appropriate department to report this problem but that either no one had come in response to her call or whoever responded could not find the addresses. Officer Schwartz encouraged Joyce to keep calling and that eventually someone would come out to investigate her complaint.

Tania asked about illegal activity around the new homes at 9-1/2 and T Streets. Officer Schwartz said that they made two arrests there last week.

Denise Wardlaw wanted to mention a good police response when their burglar alarm went off accidentally. This police responded within minutes of the alarm.

Patsy Mack asked whom to contact in the Third District about traffic around Logan Circle. During morning rush hour it is impossible to cross P Street and Rhode Island Street at Logan Circle. Officer Schwartz suggested she call Lieutenant Michael Smith of PSA 313 or 310.

G. Committee Signup

The WNA now 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 9th 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 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.

H. Other Matters

➤ Masquerade Ball

Tim Mack presented a report on the possibility of using the True Reformer Building at 1200 U Street for a Masquerade Ball fundraiser. The True Reformer building has two event spaces. One is a large Boardroom that is designed for groups of 50 people with permanent fixed board style tables along one wall. The cost of rental is \$250 for non-profit organizations. The second, a banquet hall/auditorium located on the second floor designed to accommodate up to 250 people, would cost \$350 plus an additional cost for renting tables. Fifty percent of the rental fee

is required at least 60 days before the event. Additional fees include janitorial and set up fees, audiovisual services for a sound system, and Class F One Day Liquor License from the DC Dept of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. A COI certificate of liability coverage of at least \$1 million is also required. Guests at any event held at the True Reformer Building are not allowed to use the parking lot at the rear of the building and evening events must end by 9:00pm. Following some discussion it was decided that Tim research other possible locations including the Maya Angelou School at 9th and T Streets, the Whitelaw and the Calvary Baptist Church.

It was suggested that factors used to determine ticket price include to whom the tickets are marketed and the amount of money that needs to be raised. Ongoing playground expenses include the water bill for the water feature and the cost of mulch for the flowerbeds and lawn maintenance.

➤ Memorial Flowers

Joyce Brown-Moore suggested that the WNA plant a flower, preferably a rose, in the playground in memory of Rosa Jackson. Everyone agreed that it would be a nice idea. Joyce will follow-up.

➤ Trees

The Urban Forest Council told Tania Shand that they might plant trees in the triangle along Vermont if someone in the neighborhood would adopt the plot. Tania asked that Jessie and Lynn adopt the plot so that she could report to the Urban Council. Jessie and Lynn agreed.

I. Good Neighbor

This month the WNA would like to recognize The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington Area for the wonderful job they have done planting and maintaining the tree box at 9th and S Streets, NW. Take a stroll

in that direction and you will appreciate their colorful addition to the corner. While you are out, continue up to S to the corner of S and 10th Streets, NW to see another beautiful tree box planted and maintained by Patti Anderson and Paul Hardy. Thank you to the Boys and Girls Club and to Patti and Paul for their contributions to improving our neighborhood.

J. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday in July 2002 (the 30th) at 7 PM in the playground. If the weather is bad we will hold the meeting at 922 Westminster Street. If you want to put anything on the agenda, please call Tania at 588-8060.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ✓ Loretta Johnson has a bag of ready mix concrete for anyone that is interested.
- ✓ Chuck passed along information about the M.O.M.I.E. TLC Summer Camp for preschoolers. According to the brochure, there are have two summer sessions – the first began on June 24 and the second will begin July 29 - and some scholarships are available. For more information call (202) 234-1531 or page (202) 336-2186.
- ✓ Howard University Hospital held an emergency preparedness conference on June 28, 2002. The purpose of the conference was to address issued of emergency preparedness within the local community.
- ✓ A Howard University development committee meets once a quarter to discuss the University development projects. Tania suggested that it would be good to attend to so that we can be aware of development that affects our neighborhood. For instance, Howard University recently purchased the CVS building on 7th Street as well as other property.

Note – This photo was taken during the WNA meeting held in the playground on June 25.

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	Brenda Ntim
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 & Clare Donelan	Mary Jane Jones	Gennet Purcell
Charles Dittrich	Joletha Jordan	Geoff & Lucia Seaver
Reid Dunavant	Kennickal, & Holback	Tania Shand
Charles & Doris Edwards	David & Michelle Laird	Tim Shannon & Page Van Wirt
Philip Fornaci & Michael Geller	William and Michelle Lewis	Leola Smith
Sophia Frimpomaah	Tim & Patsy Mack	Michael & Denise Wardlaw
Lamont O. Hames	Kerry Meyer & Misa Rossetti	Gift dues from Joletha Jordan