



## Notes to Meeting of

**July 23, 2002**

**Meeting # 69**

# Westminster Neighborhood Association

## A. Introduction

We had fifteen 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 July 19, 2002

The Treasurer presented the following report.

<b>Balance as of May 21, 2002</b>		\$2,126.77
<b>Receipts</b>		
Dues & Donations	\$75.00	
ANC disbursement	3,901.00	
		\$3,976.00
<b>Disbursements</b>		
Barry Plumbing & Heating (playground)	\$85.00	
Checking Acct Service Charge (6/30 & 7/31/02)	\$16.00	
		\$101.00
<b>Balance as of July 19, 2002</b>		<u>\$6,001.77</u>

A motion was passed to reimburse Lynn Johnson \$25.00 for the cost of a permit for scaffolding used for painting the mural in the playground.

## **D. Guest Speaker – Glenn Melcher - What’s Happening in Our District?**

Glenn Melcher, ANC Commissioner and our ANC representative gave an update on the Prince Hall Lodge special exception application for a 9-space parking lot at 1906 Vermont Avenue. The Zoning Board was to vote on the special exception request at their July 23 meeting, but Prince Hall Lodge withdrew the application to combine it with another related to the existing 29-space parking lot at 1902 Vermont Avenue and then reapply. Glenn told the Zoning Board that the ANC does not support the application and that Prince Hall Lodge did not properly post notice of the special exception request. The withdrawal means it will be 90 to 120 before which any decision is made.

We also learned that Howard University purchased the Peoples Involvement Corp. (PIC) property at 1800 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. The property was originally developed as a senior citizens health care facility but Howard intends to use the building as a temporary dorm. Howard also purchased the adjacent lot, the site of the CVS drugstore and its adjacent lot. The CVS store may move up Georgia Avenue across from Howard University and an African American History Museum may move into the CVS building.

There were about 20 liquor license applications between T and U Streets, mostly by restaurants and. Glenn was not aware of any objections to the applications. The establishment at the southwest corner of 9th and U Streets had its license suspended for eight to nine months and will reopen as a restaurant under a new name. Glenn asked us to call him if we have any problems with a liquor license holder.

The following additional projects have been or are being considered for our area:

- 1) A 60-foot high condominium with 50 units at 14<sup>th</sup> and V Streets,
- 2) Housing at 13<sup>th</sup> and U Streets,
- 3) Possible expansion of a Bethesda-based hardware store to the building formerly housing the Black Cat,
- 4) An ACE hardware store may move into the site of the P Street CVS store,
- 5) Office space above the Giant Food Store at 9th and O Streets,
- 6) Renovation of the O Street Market,
- 7) A shopping area at 14<sup>th</sup> and Irving Streets, across from the Columbia Heights Metro station, to include a Target Store, Bed, Bath and Beyond, and Best Buy, as well as 1500 parking spaces, and
- 8) Request for Proposals for property at Shaw Howard University Metro stop and the U Street Metro Stop.

## **E. Committee Updates**

### **➤ Streetscape – Tania Shand**

Tania Shand discussed the Prince Hall Lodge’s parking lot at 1906 Vermont Avenue and told us that the Neighborhood Stabilization Project would gather more signatures on their petition in opposition to the expanded application. The Prince Hall Lodge application claimed the support of one neighborhood association. Tania submitted a FOIA Request to the DCRA for information on the association to present an opposition statement.

Kevin Dailey suggested that the Prince Hall Lodge incorporate underground parking with affordable residential housing on the property. Glenn said that the cost of creating underground parking would probably be too great.

➤ **Playground – Chuck Baxter/Lynn Johnson/ Jessie Foster**

✓ *Bollard*

Chuck reported that the bollard for the rear gate has been ordered and the people who built the wall for the mural will probably install it.

✓ *Dogipot*

Jessie presented a report on his research on the dogipot installed in Lincoln Park. He said the dogipot could be purchased for \$400. Chuck Baxter suggested as an alternative that the WNA purchase a general utility box and create a dogipot. There was some discussion on where to install the dogipot. A motion was passed to spend up to \$75 to purchase and install a box to use as a dogipot. Donations will be solicited to pay help defray the cost to the WNA if such cost is significant

✓ *Water Bill*

Chuck Baxter reported that he had not heard anything new on the playground water bill.

✓ *Mural and Tile Completion*

Lynn Johnson reported that the mural was close to completion. Once the mural is completed, two coats of sealer will be applied. The wall tile art will be inserted after the mural is completed. The tile insertion should take two days and will be done in August. [*Postscript – As most of you are aware, the mural is now completed and the scaffolding has been removed.*]



*Mural in progress*

✓ *Mural and Tile Dedication*

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCAHA) has set September 7 as the date for dedication of the playground mural and tile projects. The Director of the DCCAHA, the mayor, various council members, and other city officials will attend the dedication. Glenn Melcher suggested that the WNA write a letter to the Washington Post reporter who writes the cityscape column about the dedication. Susan Ousley volunteered to ask the Shaw Junior High School Band to play at the dedication as well as to organize the neighborhood children in singing.

Lynn indicated that the WNA would be responsible for providing sodas, coffee and homemade desserts for the event and the DCCAHA will provide whatever else is needed. It was suggested that a committee be organized to coordinate WNA's responsibilities for the event and the following individuals volunteered to work on the committee: Joleatha Jordan, Chuck Baxter, Susan Ousley, Jessie Foster, and Lynn Johnson.

Now we need as many members as possible to bring at least a few desserts (homemade if possible, but if you can't cook, let your local grocer/baker do it). We need to know how many desserts are coming, so please call or email committee member

Joleatha Jordan about what you can bring (tele. at work is 202/234-5163 or [JJordan@bgcgw.org](mailto:JJordan@bgcgw.org)), the sooner the better (if she is not there, leave your name and number & she will call you back.)

✓ *Playground Front Gate*

Lynn passed around a design for the front gate. Lynn explained that the gate is in keeping with the height of the existing fence (6 feet at the ends and rising 15 inches at the center to meet the pillars), that it opens to the outside and is not self-closing, and that it is decorated with musical notes. A motion was passed to accept the design, including the height and the note design. There was some discussion on whether the gate should be self-closing. A motion was passed that the fence be a self-closing fence with latches to hold it open, and alternatively, if that option is not available, that the fence be a self-closing fence that can be converted to a non-self-closing fence by removal of a pin. (We hope to have the gate installed by the September 7 Mural Dedication.)

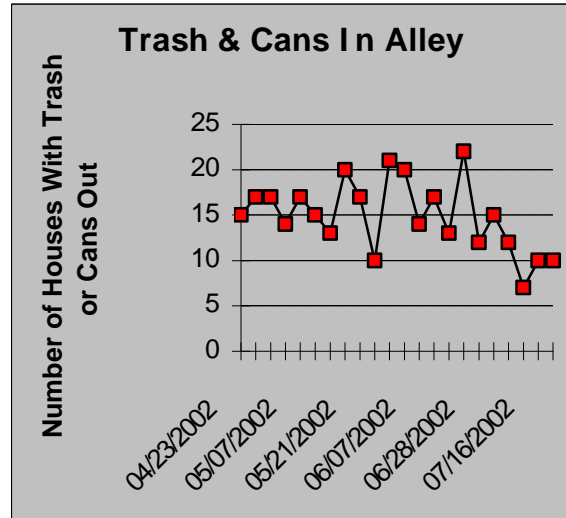
➤ **Playground - Friends of Westminster Playground (503(b)) – Tania Shand**

Tania received an email from Jeff Seaver suggesting a Friends of the Playground Fund 503(b) organization. The organization would be a separate entity from WNA and the purpose would be to raise funds to maintain the playground. Tania said that she would ask Jeff to present his idea at the next WNA meeting.

➤ **Refuse – Chuck Baxter**

Chuck circulated an excel spreadsheet (attached) prepared by the trash committee to remind everyone of the importance of taking in trashcans by 7:00 pm of the day after pickup. Trash tends to collect where trash-

cans remain in the alleys, and rats collect where trash collects.



It was noted that the trash at 1810 Ninth Street had been cleaned up.

It was reported that the residents of 919 S Street put a refrigerator out without removing the door, creating a dangerous situation that can turn deadly. A child playing around the refrigerator could get trapped inside and die of suffocation. As of the date of the WNA meeting the refrigerator was still on the street with the door still on. Glenn Melcher suggested that a call be made to Jose Sueiro, a neighborhood service coordinator for Ward II who lives on S Street. WNA members were encouraged to make calls to the appropriate city officials about such conditions<sup>1</sup>.

**TRASHCAN TIP:** Be sure to not overfill your trashcan. The trash collectors will not pick up trashcans that are either too heavy or overfilled.

**F. Public Safety**

The police were unable to attend the meeting.

<sup>1</sup> The refrigerator was subsequently picked up after about ten phone calls.

Patricia Crisman reported seeing an increase in drug activities. This seems to reflect what PSA officers stated in a previous meeting; that some drug dealers who were locked up are now back on the street. Since the drug dealing is taking place at 9<sup>th</sup> and T Streets, behind the Maya Angelou School, and on French Street, it was suggested that we invite the sergeant from PSA 311 to our next meeting. Drug activity and gambling has also been observed behind the dumpster at 9<sup>th</sup> and Westminster.

Denise Wardlaw mentioned that the patrol car working radar on 9<sup>th</sup> Street is still obstructing the view of turning cars. She said that she intends to follow-up with a phone call to the appropriate department as Officer Schwartz suggested at the last WNA meeting.

## 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 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 balance of the calendar year.

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 was unable to attend the meeting so Tania Shand presented the findings to date on a possible masquerade ball fundraiser. The Maya Angelou School appears to be the best place for a masquerade ball fundraiser. There was no issue with the event going late at night or with serving alcoholic beverages. It would cost \$500 to rent the space. A budget including all additional costs will be presented at the next WNA meeting for a go or no-go vote. It was suggested that, if there is a no vote on the masquerade ball, WNA organize a house tour to raise funds.

### ➤ Neighbor Passed Away

Evelyn Watkins, who lived with her daughter Dorothy and her grandchildren in the gray house on the corner of 9th & Westminster Streets since the early 1990's died unexpectedly from a heart condition the second week in July. The WNA sends its heartfelt condolence to Mrs. Whitaker's family. WNA also delivered flowers on behalf of all her neighbors who will miss her presence.

## I. Good Neighbor

This month's Good Neighbor Award must go to Anne Marchand, the artist who is painting our Playground Mural. However, that is not the reason she is getting this award. Remember, the WNA Good Neighbor Award is reserved for those people who have given of themselves to others to make our community a more enriching place to live.

So the story this month starts with none other than our WNA neighbor and prior

president, Chuck Baxter. While we all thought he was invincible, he must have lifted one too many overweight trash cans, boarded up too many abandoned buildings, or planted one too many trees. For he developed a hernia and needed surgery.

Chuck went in for surgery on July 10 at the Kaiser Center in Kensington. What Chuck didn't know was that several hours after the surgery, his right leg would still be numb and unusable. No, Chuck didn't take his recumbent bicycle to the surgery, but he did think that he would be able to take a taxi home from surgery. With only one leg working, he realized that he was in trouble.

So Chuck called Lynn Johnson, our ever-willing-and-able WNA member for assistance. While Lynn was willing to help, he knew he could not carry one-legged Chuck on his motorcycle--nor would Chuck's entire body fit within the confines of his 2-seater MR-2 vehicle. While Lynn was mulling his options, word spread throughout the playground that we had a WNA member down. Anne Marchand heard the buzz, came down from the mural scaffold and immediately informed the group that she had the perfect hospital transport vehicle--a van with removable seats in the rear so that one seat could be taken out and the space used to accommodate Chuck's non-working leg.

Notwithstanding the wet paintbrushes and the 94-degree temperature, Anne immediately set off for Kensington with Lynn. They rescued Chuck and brought him back

to his permanent resting place on Westminster Street. We wish Chuck the best on his recovery and hope, for our sake, to see him back soon doing the many things for our community that make this a better place for us all. And from all of us in WNA, thank you, Anne Marchand, for giving of yourself for one of us.

## **J. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday in August 2002 (the 27th) at 7 PM in the playground. If the weather is horrid, 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**

Margie Perko and two other WNA neighbors have decided to have a yard sale on September 21 on the playground. This should be a great community activity for us all. Anyone interested in selling anything is welcome to join in. You should call Marjorie at 332-7595 to coordinate.

Please remember that this takes some time and effort to publicize, so offer some services here if you can. Also remember that nothing, that is N-O-T-H-I-N-G is to be left in the Playground at the end of the day of the yard sale. If you bring it and don't sell it, take it back to your house and throw it away. Our lovely trash men will not pick up anything either in or outside of the playground.

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## **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	Emily & Stephen Henn	Brenda Ntim
Chuck Baxter	Betty Hightower	Suleika Oakley
Emmanuel Blackwell	Loretta Johnson	Susan, Marquan, Andre & Sarah
Jacqueline Brower	Lynn Johnson	Ousley & Bruhier Stillman
Patricia Crisman	Mary Jane Jones	Timothy Owens & David Cooper
Kevin Dailey & Clare Donelan	Joleatha Jordan	Margie Perko
Charles Dittrich	Daniel Katz & April Fulton	Gennet Purcell
Reid Dunavant	Kennickal, & Holback	Geoff & Lucia Seaver
Charles & Doris Edwards	David & Michelle Laird	Tania Shand
Philip Fornaci & Michael Geller	William and Michelle Lewis	Tim Shannon & Page Van Wirt
Sophia Frimpomaah	Tim & Patsy Mack	Leola Smith
Lamont O. Hames	Amoy McGhee	Dana Voorhees
Paul Hardy & Patty Anderson	Kerry Meyer & Misa Rossetti	Michael & Denise Wardlaw
		Gift dues from Joleatha Jordan