

# Westside Improvement Association Inc.

## "Pointing Westward"



**Outlaw  
Westside  
Litter**

Volume 16 - Issue 1

[www.westsideimprovement.org](http://www.westsideimprovement.org)

January, 2011

I think Yogi Berra had it right when he said; "It's like deja-vu, all over again." I was privileged to be president of Westside Improvement from 2002 through 2005 and felt much satisfaction working for the betterment of the West Side as well as the total community. We'll leave for others to decide the success of those efforts.



**Fred**

There is no doubt about the success of our outgoing president, DeAnna Outlaw. She along with Dot Berning and others were instrumental in getting our Adopt-A-Spot initiated and improved upon every year since inception as well as developing some long range plans for exciting improvements in the near future and beyond. DeAnna was the primary planner and force behind our successful fall festival booth operation over the last several years which is the primary fund raiser for the WIA. The income from the booth operation along with members' dues supports two scholarships each year, one to a Reitz senior and one to a Mater Dei senior, five scholarships to Burdette Summer Day Camp Recreational Program each year, our Adopt-Spot-Activities, participation in National Night Out, our civic and community awards presentations, our "Pointing Westward" newsletter, our website [www.westsideimprovement.org](http://www.westsideimprovement.org) and normal operating costs of the organization. That is success and I thank DeAnna for her four years of leader-

### **From the President** by Fred Padget

ship as President of the Westside Improvement Association, Inc.

The officers and board also deserve a big "thank you" for their efforts and dedication over the year and past years for those who've been involved for many years. Paul Farmer's willingness to step forward and accept the Treasurer's responsibilities in the New Year is also much appreciated. But the biggest thank you is to you, our members who continue to support the organization though your dues, comments, guidance and continued membership. That makes our efforts well worthwhile. Thank you.

You'll notice in looking at the listing of board members, we have several new members and we appreciate their willingness to help lead our organization. They along with our continuing board members will be vital in determining our future course of activity. I look forward to all the board members input as well as all of your input, suggestions and help in continuing the successful mission of the Westside Improvement Association.

Yogi also said "You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there." It may take a month or two, to get our goals and objectives well-thought out and programs developed to accomplish them. No defiance to Yogi, we do intend on knowing where we're going and when we get there. One of

our most important goals will be to continue increasing our membership. A growing membership will help us accomplish even larger goals than we've accomplished in the past and allow us to be involved in more activities benefitting the West Side and total community. A second goal will be to increase our visibility though various activities including participation with like-minded groups and involvement with community decision making benefitting the West Side. We, along with input from the board and you, our members, will also look at several other programs and areas of involvement where the WIA can contribute to our mission. And we'll continue to work hard to improve the many successful programs from our previous administration. We'll keep you informed of our activities and listen for your feedback.

With that said the WIA hopes that you all had a Merry Christmas, a happy Holiday Season and have an especially happy and successful New Year. But I can't leave without another Yogi quote "I just want to thank everyone who made this day necessary."

Perhaps I can rephrase that, I do sincerely appreciate the confidence you've placed in me to lead this great organization once again and thank you very much for the opportunity to do so.

And always, be involved.

## Fred Padget on Land Use Planning, Part XX

As I mentioned last month, we want to look at a concept gaining considerable attention by many cities, communities and states. That concept is termed “complete streets.”

From the beginning of motorized transportation our roads and streets have been primarily designed for efficient operation of motorized vehicles. Sidewalks and crosswalks are generally provided for pedestrian traffic but often times sidewalks are not well maintained and become obstacles to the physically challenged and others. As the National Complete Streets Coalition says “places with complete streets policies are making sure that their streets and roads work for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as for older people, children, and people with disabilities.” A complete street includes the obvious such as well maintained sidewalks but also bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible transit stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, a recognition of those with challenged abilities and other features supportive of alternative methods of transportation and people of all abilities.

We do recognize the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization, Indiana Department of Transportation, the Evansville schools corporation, the city of Evansville, Vanderburgh County and other groups are working toward some aspects of complete streets such as the Safe Routes to School program, New Freedom Initiative Grant Program, Job Access and Reverse Commute Program as well as continuing work on the Pigeon Creek Greenway, Burdette Park-USI National Recreation Trail and similar

projects. Although to the best of my knowledge we don’t have a local complete streets policy nor an active effort to do so, while 196 jurisdictions across the country including Bloomington, St. Louis and Louisville have adopted policies or taken some specific action.

Why are these communities doing this? There are many benefits for complete streets. While many of us would think first about traffic flow efficiency, most of the reasons are otherwise. One main reason is for improved health and physical activity. Obesity in America has reached epidemic proportions. Recent data show that 32 percent of adults are obese and the number of overweight or obese American children nearly tripled between 1980 and 2004. Most health experts agree that a major factor is inactivity. Fifty-five percent of the U.S. adult population falls short of recommended activity guidelines, and approximately 25 percent report being completely inactive. Inactivity is a factor in many diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

Incomplete streets do not allow many people to be active. Incomplete streets are often difficult to navigate for people who use wheelchairs, have diminished vision, can’t hear well, or move slowly. Nearly one in five Americans faces at least one of these challenges. Complete streets allow everyone to travel to and from work, school, and other destinations with increased safety and convenience. Complete streets help people cope with disabilities. They help those pushing strollers, pulling wheeled luggage, or carrying large packages. One study found that 43 percent of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels while only 27 percent of

those without safe places to walk met the recommendation. Residents are 65 percent more likely to walk in a neighborhood with safe sidewalks.

As our population ages, incomplete streets become more of a problem. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2025, nearly one in five Americans will be over 65. That’s 62 million Americans. Incomplete streets can have deadly results for older people. A 2008 study found that older pedestrians were overrepresented in fatalities; while comprising 13 percent of the population, they accounted for 18 percent of the fatalities. That may be why a majority of people aged 50 or older support complete street policies. Fifty-four percent of older adults who reported an inhospitable walking, bicycling, and transit environment outside their homes would walk, bicycle, and take transit more if those problems were fixed.

There are many compelling reasons for complete streets. We’ll look at some in future articles as well as what complete streets look like in other communities. I recognize it can be complicated and expensive to retrofit streets. But as we develop new areas or reconstruct existing areas, complete streets should be policy. Much of the material for this article came from the National Complete Streets Coalition with its permission and can be viewed in its entirety at

[www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org).

If you have comments or questions feel free to contact me at [fcpadget@aol.com](mailto:fcpadget@aol.com) or 428-2529.

This article as well as previous articles dealing with a variety of issues can be found on our web site at [www.westsideimprovement.org](http://www.westsideimprovement.org).

## Land use update *by Fred Padget*

The Area Plan Commission agenda for December involved one request for a rezoning within our area from Commercial, C-4 to Residential, R-2. An R-2 zoning allows for a single family or duplex residence. This involved a property at 3004 Mt. Vernon Ave. and previously housed Melanie's Blue House Emporium. The request was recommended for approval by a unanimous vote 8 in favor, none opposed and was to be heard by the City Council on Jan. 10.

The December Board of Zoning Appeals agenda was very full and included eight Variances within the WIA boundaries. Four of the Variance requests included structures larger or taller than the house. The zoning code requires that a use which is clearly incidental to a principal structure on the same lot be subordinate in height, area, and purpose.

One of these four involved 7704 Marx Rd. to allow construction of a pole barn larger than the house. Another was at 13125 St. Wendel Rd. for a new accessory building larger than the house. There was no opposition to either and they were approved unanimously. A third was at 1726 Johnson Lane for construction of a detached garage taller than the residence along with a request for reduced front yard setback to allow two driveway entrances. Again it was unanimously approved with no opposition. Lastly, a request to allow an accessory structure larger and taller than the residence along with a request to allow two driveways within 200 feet of each other involved 601 and 605 Mels Dr. In this case, it was a much different outcome. Several of the nearby neighbors remonstrated against the project contending that property values would be detrimentally affected, that

the character and aesthetics of the neighborhood would be destroyed and that other detrimental effects would be caused by this project. The neighbors were well organized and prevailed with the request being denied unanimously.

Other requests for zoning variances involving our area included 1321 W. Illinois St. where the owner wanted gravel access and parking in lieu of the required paved parking and access. This request was approved.

Three other requests involving the WIA were continued. They include a request at 2728 Mt. Vernon Ave. to relax the required parking from 18 spaces to 10 and allow a change of use to a consignment shop. This location also has some other issues that must be addressed including the installation of a gravel parking area and the erection of signage without approval along with a couple of other items. Another request that was continued includes relaxation of the fence requirement and to allow a gravel parking lot and access at 9301 Big Cynthiana Rd. Finally, a request at 6611 New Harmony Rd. to reduce the rear yard setback for construction of a barn was also continued.

Last month I wrote at length about improvements being made at Royal Inc., on Fulton Avenue between Missouri and Florida owned by Rupp Properties. This property includes a Wesselman's grocery, a liquor store, a new Dollar General Store and other businesses. The project required rezoning for a portion of the property from residential, R-2 to Commercial, C-4 and included a Use and Development Commitment limiting use to ancillary and accessory for the shopping center such as commercial parking, loading and

other associated uses. The APC heard this petition on Nov. 11 and voted to recommend approval. The City Council approved this request last month.

Although the agenda for the January BZA meeting is not available at the time of this writing, the APC agenda does include one rezoning request within our boundaries. This is a request to rezone 6011 New Harmony Rd. from Agricultural to Residential R-3. An R-3 zoning allows for single family homes, duplexes and apartments. At this point, that's all the information we have concerning this request.

We've told you of the current effort to update and revise the existing Comprehensive Plan. The first of several meetings to gather input and comments took place Dec. 15 at USI and despite warnings of an ice storm, several individuals did attend. The APC staff presented an overview of what the Comp Plan is and does, solicited input and answered several questions. Despite reduced attendance because of the ice storm much good discussion took place. There will be additional meetings and we'll keep you informed as to when and where. In the meantime, there is a form for public comment available at the APC website. If you have thoughts about the Comp Plan and future of land use within the city and county, I'd encourage you to attend one of the meetings or make comments at the APC website.

We will keep you updated on these and other events as they occur. Agendas and minutes for both the APC and BZA including Staff Reports can be viewed at [www.evansvilleapc.com](http://www.evansvilleapc.com) along with the zoning codes and other information.

## CALENDAR FOR 2011

Sat., Jan. 15, Meet Your Legislators. Central Library-Browning Rooms. 9:15 AM

Wed., Jan. 26, WIA Board Mtg. Red Bank Branch Library. 4:00 PM

Thu., Jan. 27, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., Feb. 5, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Sat., Feb. 19, Meet Your Legislators. Central Library-Browning Rooms. 9:15 AM

Tue., Feb. 22, Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Meeting, 4H Center 6 PM

Thu., Feb. 24, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., Mar. 12, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Sat., Mar. 19, Meet Your Legislators. Central Library-Browning Rooms. 9:15 AM

Thu., Mar. 24, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., Apr. 9, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Sat., Apr 16, Meet Your Legislators. Central Library-Browning Rooms. 9:15 AM

Thu., Apr. 28, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., May 7, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Sat., May 14, Electronics Recycle Day. Civic Center Parking Lot. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Index.aspx?page=469>)

Thu., May. 26, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., Jun 4, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Thu., Jun. 23, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., Jul 9, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Thu., Jul. 28, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

Sat., Aug 6, Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon (Detailed information at <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687>)

Thu., Aug. 25, UNOE General Membership Mtg. American Red Cross Center. 6:30 PM

If you are aware of events of interest to WIA Members, please let us know and we'll add them to the calendar. Another reference of events can be found at the WIA Web Site: [www.westsideimprovement.org](http://www.westsideimprovement.org). Westside Improvement Association practices an "Open Door Policy." Guests are always welcome.

## We'll miss you, Dave

Our Environmental Committee Chair and Board Member, Dave Rockwood is leaving us. Dave has accepted a new position in Northern Michigan which was home to him and his family before moving to this area. Dave added considerably to the WIA mission, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the entire community. We thank him for his efforts. He will be missed. We wish him, Teresa and their family the very best future. And Dave, please keep in touch with us.

### Attention Mater Dei, Reitz Seniors

Scholarship information will be available soon for seniors at Mater Dei and F.J. Reitz high schools.

Seniors should contact their senior counselors for applications which will also be available on our Web site.

Be sure to complete all information by the deadline listed on the application.

### I WANT TO HELP WIA

- General** - Apply my donation where it's most needed.
- Adopt-A-Spot** - Apply my donation toward flowers, plants, and mulch.
- Fall Festival Booth** - Apply my donation to help maintain our booth.
- Memorial for Shirley James** - Apply my donation to this project.
- Scholarship** - Apply my donation to the scholarship fund.

Please send your donation to:

P.O. Box 6172, West Wabash Station,  
Evansville, IN 47719-0172

**Your contributions are tax-deductible**

Join us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Improvement-Association/141710375839566> or go to our web site at <http://westsideimprovement.org> and click on the Facebook link in the contacts and links page.

### Membership Application

Individual—\$10/year	Full-time Student—\$5/year	Corporate/Organization—\$25/year
Household—\$15/year	Century—\$100/year	

Your yearly dues includes all issues of our newsletter and a voice in what happens to the West Side. Mail checks to: Westside Improvement Association Inc., P.O. Box 6172, W. Wabash Station, Evansville, IN 47719-0172

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# Westside Improvement Association Inc.

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**Exerting influence upon public and private sectors to accomplish those objectives which will enhance the natural environment of the west side of Vanderburgh County and serve the common good of the residents.**

## Westside Improvement Association officers

President	Fred Padget	428-2529 or fcpadget@aol.com
Sr. Vice President	Brenda Jeffers	402-5084 or bjjeffers@vanderburghsurveyor.com
Jr. Vice President	Carolyn Stagg	491-3627 or catsaald@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Paul Farmer	963-5153 or wileyfox603@gmail.com
Secretary	Linda Cleek	422-4288 or elcee@insightbb.com
Membership secretary	Dot Berning	424-8307 or djbern@insightbb.com

## Standing Committee Chairs

Adopt-A-Spot	Dot Berning	424-8307 or djbern@insightbb.com
Environment	Dave Rockwood	Daverockwood@yahoo.com
Fall Festival	DeAnna Outlaw	589-1657 or dpoutlaw@aol.com
Land-Use	Mike Lockard	401-5249 or mlockard@wowway.com
Transportation	Bill Hartly	424-1501 or wfharty@wowway.com
Newsletter	Mel Runge	425-4633 or mrunge@wowway.com

## At-large Board of Directors

Scott Anderson	Bonnie Kolb
Jayne Buthod	Joyce Moers
Don Day	Ava Nix
John Dillingham	Phillip Outlaw
Blake Foerster	David Robinson
Wayne Gerteisen	Marty Runge
Matt Hanka	Linda Singer
Gene Hollencamp	Sam Wentzel
Bill Jeffers	