



Garden Update

By Dot Berning

Things . . . they are a'changing, and I am not only talking about the weather but our park-like area in front of our Adopt-A-Spot at Maryland and St. Joe.

We will discuss the gardens later but now let's talk about the big change I am



sure most of you who pass that corner often have already noticed. The two large mulberry trees have been removed and the roots ground out.

Later this month the plans are to plant three Autumn

Dot Blaze maples that will replace the trees removed. From what I'm hearing the closest neighbors are happy that red bird dropping will no longer be staining their homes. With water now on site we should be able to adequately water the new trees and other plantings.

Future plans could include trees planted along St. Joe and several blooming bushes along Maryland. Of course, how many of these plantings come to fruition will depend on how much cooperation and assistance we receive from others interested in preserving this small historical corner.

The other change planned for this area is the spring planting of evergreens along the fence bordering the firehouse property. These evergreens should grow from eight- to 10-foot tall providing some sight and sound barrier between properties.

Wouldn't it be great if we could work

Garden . . . Continued on page 5

As this year comes to a close, I would like to thank the officers, board members, the general membership of Westside Improvement, as well as other organizations such as Keep Evansville Beautiful for your guidance and support the past four years.



DeAnna

I came to the presidency knowing very little of how things were run 'Downtown' as well as within our organization. This has been quite the education.

I'm proud that we initiated and maintain an award winning Adopt-A-Spot at St. Joe and Maryland that flourishes due to the continued hard work of dedicated WIA members. This corner, the gateway to the West Side, will continue to grow into a destination spot for individuals and families alike to enjoy for generations to come.

WIA is a strong, positive force in our community and will continue to be so. I wish the best to our in-coming President, Fred Padgett, and in-coming Treasurer, Paul Farmer, as well as to the officers and board of directors.

May everyone have a safe season and a wonderful New Year.

WIA banquet focuses on videos produced by Reitz students

By Brenda Jeffers

"Feel the History" was the program theme for WIA's 2010 Annual Awards Banquet at USI's Carter Hall.

Lauren Barnett, USI student, introduced videos produced by Reitz high school students under the direction of Jon David Carl of historic Westside and Downtown landmarks. The attendees viewed clips from the series about Reitz Bowl, Mesker Park Zoo, Greyhound Bus Station,



Brenda

and Old Courthouse. Several WIAs members noted that these videos illustrated community commitment to preserve landmark history.

Awards of Excellence were presented to Roberta Heiman for

Banquet . . . Continued on page 4

Fred Padget on Land Use Planning, Part XX

I had planned on discussing Complete Streets programs today but have some final thoughts on our current Comprehensive Plan that I'd like to share. Complete Streets programs are an important issue and a potential major benefit to most communities but we'll get back to that later.



Fred

Over the past several months and in many of the conversations I've been a part of several land use concepts have been mentioned or discussed. One of those is design criteria for new buildings. What has been suggested is that based on some criteria (a trigger point) such as a building's footprint square footage, a development's acreage, total cubic feet of capacity or some other criteria, design standards would be required. That could be as simple as window space and treatment, brick or other façade cover other than

cement block, entry and exit designs and so forth. Not picking on Wal-mart but in some towns you see a Wal-mart

and hardly recognize it because it has a brick façade rather than the familiar gray cement block. There are many other examples around the country. Most residential buildings with the exception of large apartments, group homes, etc., would be excluded.

Another thought is that buildings in commercial and industrial areas should require a front-like façade facing both the main highway as well as bordering side streets or internal streets. This would provide much better aesthetics than looking at the back of a building when driving, biking or walking past the building.

In commercial and industrial zones, cross-access between parcels should be required to limit access to secondary corridors and prevent congestion along those corridors. This would help traffic flow on surrounding streets. In other articles, we've talked about connectivity between subdivisions and neighborhoods. This should also apply to commercial and business areas.

Air conditioners, heat pumps, garbage and trash receptacles and other unsightly equipment should be shielded from public view for all zoning classes. Along with that, requirements should be in place for light pollution controls for all zoning classes. Recently I discussed "dark sky" philosophy and what was being done in some parts of our country. Both of these items contribute to an improved quality of life.

This has been somewhat of a laundry list of things I've heard or read about and is somewhat controversial but as any area develops and expands, good quality of life helps that economic development to take place. It's pretty much a fact that commercial development follows rooftops meaning residential development. Good, well-designed, stable residential development requires good, well-designed commercial development in the proper locations if the area is to prosper and a tax base is to be created to maintain needed infrastructure. We

Good, well-designed, stable residential development requires good, well-designed commercial development

understand the reluctance for more zoning restrictions and additional regulations of any kind but if properly thought out this can lead to improved quality of life for all residents and visitors.

We need a proper balance of government and good, sound development for an area to prosper with good, well thought-out infrastructure.

The current Comprehensive Plan is being reviewed and will likely move into a stage of revision. The process will involve the ability for public input and I wholeheartedly recommend you participate in the process as the opportunity presents itself. Additionally, the revision process will likely be impacted as census data become available, probably early to mid-2011. Your input and all public input are valuable to the process.

If you have comments, we'll include them in upcoming articles if you would like and if you have any questions feel free to contact me at fcpadget@aol.com or 428-2529 anytime. This series of articles as well as previous land use articles dealing with a variety of issues can be found on our web site at www.westsideimprovement.org.

Land use update *by Fred Padget*

The October agenda for the Area Plan Commission included two requests for rezoning within our boundaries. The first was at 3041 Claremont Ave. where the petitioner, Earl Chumley, requested a rezoning from Commercial, C-4 to a Manufacturing, M-1 zone. This is a building behind Chilly Willie's Tavern actually on Center Avenue just off Claremont in the Poplar Grove Neighborhood area. There had been a complaint filed with the APC that auto body work was being performed at that location with the current zoning of Commercial, C-4 which does not allow for that type activity. The APC did vote unanimously to recommend approval of the Manufacturing, M-1 rezoning request which provides for collision and auto body repair. Subsequently at its Nov. 8 meeting, the City Council unanimously approved this request to rezone.

Also on the APC's October agenda was a request to rezone 1501 Keller St. which is on the west side of Seventh Avenue between Cedar and Keller from Manufacturing, M-3 to Commercial, C-2. This location is in the CHAIN Neighborhood area and, as we always do when a rezoning petition or other matters involving a neighborhood association within our boundaries arise, we coordinate our position with it. This is a 2.8 acre parcel of vacant land previously used for industrial and commercial activity. The proposed use is for high density residential apartments and will be known as Cedar Trace III. In early 2008, a five-acre tract just north of this area was downzoned to Commercial, C-2 for a similar project known as Cedar Trace I and II. What has been completed so far has been very successful, of great benefit to the area and well accepted by the surrounding neighbors. A question does come up as to why a request for a C-2 zoning when a Residential, R-3 or R-4 is all that's needed. The response was, and my notes bear it out, that the original project financing was not complete and the petitioners wanted to keep their options open in case the financing fell through. This zoning was to be consistent for the entire project. In any case, it is a downzoning from the current zoning and in an area needing development. The WIA supported this project as did the CHAIN Neighborhood. The APC recommended approval unanimously. The City Council also approved the rezoning at its Oct. 25 meeting. The Council also approved a Preliminary Resolution declaring an economic revitalization area for property tax phase-in for the Cedar Trace III project.

The October Board of Zoning Appeals agenda included a Special Use request for an electronic message sign at Rally's Hamburgers at 611 N. St. Joseph Ave. The request

was approved, however it was noted that the property contained several non-permitted signs which are to be removed before the electronic sign is installed.

Also on the BZA agenda for October were several variance requests for Royal Inc., on Fulton Avenue between Missouri and Florida owned by Rupp Properties. This property is also within the CHAIN Neighborhood and includes a Wessleman's grocery, a liquor store and some other businesses. The variances requested include: 1—relaxation of corner side yard setback from five feet to one foot for a commercial addition at 1200 N Fulton Ave., 2—relaxation of side yard setbacks on proposed new parking lots on Fifth Avenue to zero feet, 3—relaxation of zoning code to allow parking lot access through the required front yard setback for the new parking areas on Fifth Avenue and 4—relaxation of the number of required parking spaces from 188 to 175. A Special Use was also requested for parking lots.

I met with Heath Rupp, a fifth generation owner of the property, and spent a couple of hours walking the property, learning about his plans and expressing our concerns. His plan includes: a renovated facade, a new Dollar General Store, upgraded roofing and improvements to parking, security, energy efficiency, pedestrian safety, paving and traffic flow.

All in all, it's quite a comprehensive plan to improve that block of Fulton. Some homes in dilapidated condition will be removed with enhanced landscaping to benefit the remaining homes. We also met with CHAIN Neighborhood representatives and talked with other nearby neighbors. With our concerns being satisfied and general support of others, we did support this project. As a side note, Heath Rupp handled this in almost class book fashion. He talked with most, if not all, the nearby neighbors, met with the CHAIN Neighborhood, initiated contact with us, addressed our concerns, was available for follow-up questions and was willing to meet with anyone who had concerns. The project was approved by the BZA at its Oct. 21 meeting.

This project will also require approval of a rezoning for a portion of the property from residential, R-2 to Commercial, C-4 and includes a Use and Development Commitment limiting use to ancillary and accessory for the shopping center such as commercial parking, loading and other

Update . . . Continued on page 5

Dave says Goodbye

Dave Rockwood, WIA environmental committee chair, is leaving us.

“I have landed a job as City Planner in Marquette, Mich. (12 miles outside of my hometown on Lake Superior) and will be leaving Evansville next month.



Dave

“ I hope to submit one last, reflective article for the newsletter. I'm not sure that I've done much for the WIA, but it has been an honor to

be part of this organization and to have known the fine people that make it work.”

Dave has produced a number of thought provoking articles for our newsletter as well as taking a leadership role in promoting biking and other green ventures in our community. He will be missed.



WIA's Dave Rockwood worked to arrange the purchase and placement of a “bike event rack” at the recent West Side Fall Festival. Old National Bank providing space for the rack which was purchased by the Welborn Baptist Foundation and given to the City of Evansville for use at various events. Next year, smaller racks will be provided at more locations during Fall Festival.

Banquet . . . Continued from page 1

community service and Blaine Oliver, Area Plan Commission assistant director, for civic service. DeAnna Outlaw, outgoing President, received 2010 Outstanding Board Member for her leadership from 2007 through 2010.

Nominations and election for the 2011 officers and board of directors were conducted. The officers for next year are Fred Padget, president; Brenda Jeffers, senior vice president; Carolyn Stagg, junior vice president; Linda Cleek, recording secretary; Paul Farmer, treasurer; and Dot Berning, membership secretary. The newly elected officers and board of directors will be published in the January newsletter.

Guests were asked to bring non-perishable food items, which were donated to the Tri-State Food Bank.

DeAnna Outlaw closed the meeting by thanking all those in attendance, thanking Variety Village for donating the table decorations, and congratulating the incoming officers and board.



Roberta Heiman receives our community service award from Secretary Linda Cleek. Below, Lauren Barnett, introduces videos about historic sites.



Garden . . . Continued from page 1

with other organizations and businesses and add amenities that could be a network of attractive paths, benches and perhaps even a water feature. That’s reaching high but wouldn’t it be good for the entire area for that corner to become a place where everyone — all the runners, walkers and mothers with strollers — could enjoy a place of beauty and rest.

The existing garden beds are changing too. Our plans are to remove the cannas and move the perennials (the agastache,

daisies, brown-eyed susans and daylilies) back where the cannas were and plant a red Knockout rose bush in front of the stone gates. With the exception of the yellow mums at the front border, all the plants in the front area have been either cut back or dug and removed. At this point, the gardens are well along to being put to bed for the winter.

Enhancing this most southern piece of property that leads to both the Helfrich Hill Golf Course and the new entrance of Mesker Park Zoo and Botanical Gardens, to me, just feels like something that has been waiting to happen, waiting for decades.

Update . . . Continued from page 3

associated use. The APC heard this petition on Nov. 11 and voted to recommend approval. The petition will be heard by City Council on Dec. 13.

Three items within our boundaries to be heard at the November BZA meeting were continued because of a lack of quorum. They include requests for variances for a new pole barn at 7704 Marx Rd., relaxation of parking requirements at 2728 Mt. Vernon Ave. and an accessory building at 13125 St. Wendel Rd. They’ll be heard at the Dec. 16 BZA meeting.

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.

As always, be involved.

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

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

Name: Occupation:

Home Address: Business Address:

City/State/Zip: City/State/Zip:

Home Phone: Business Phone:

E-mail: Membership Category:

Westside Improvement Association Inc.

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

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2023
Evansville, IN 47708

**Return Service
Requested**



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	DeAnna Outlaw	589-1657 or dpoutlaw@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	Fred Padget	428-2529 or fcpadget@aol.com
Secretary	Linda Cleek	422-4288 or elcee@insightbb.com
Membership secretary	Dot Berning	424-8307 or djbern@insightbb.com

Standing Committee Chairs

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
Membership	Dot Berning	424-8307 or djbern@insightbb.com
Transportation	Bill Hartly	424-1501 or wfharty@wowway.com
Newsletter	Mel Runge	425-4633 or mmrunge@wowway.com

At-large Board of Directors

William Allen	Michael Lockard
John Dillingham	Joyce Moers
Paul Farmer	Ava Nix
Wayne Gerteisen	Phillip Outlaw
Bill Hartly	David Robinson
Aphrodite Hudson	Dave Rockwood
Bill Jeffers	Mel Runge
Bonnie Kolb	Sam Wentzel