

Westside Improvement Association Inc.

"Pointing Westward"



Outlaw
Westside
Litter

Volume 16 - Issue 11

www.westsideimprovement.org

Nov-Dec, 2011

From the President *by Fred Padgett*

As I mentioned last month, Dot Berning received the WIA's Sparkplug Award at the recent United Neighborhoods of Evansville 16th Annual Sparkplug Awards Banquet. It is a well-deserved award and I was proud and humbled to present it to her. The accomplishment she's performed with our Adopt-A-Spot is awesome. Thank you Dot. You can see some pictures of Dot receiving her award on our Facebook page.

Likewise, you can see pictures of our recent planning seminar on our Facebook page. I sincerely thank all who participated and a very special thanks to Leslie Townsend, director of Historic Southern Indiana, who was fantastic as facilitator. She did a great job keeping us on track. See page four for more details.

I'd also like to thank Bill Jeffers for agreeing to chair our Environmental Committee which has been vacant since our previous chair, Dave Rockwood, relocated to Michigan. Thanks, Bill.

Fall Festival is over, I've finally recovered from shear exhaustion and the BBQ odor has mostly dissipated. Although we don't have final results, we do know it was very successful, ranking near last year which was our second best sales year ever. Good weather was a major factor but those who volunteered and worked so very hard were also a major factor. It doesn't happen by magic. Hard working volunteers make it happen. A big "thank you" to

all. And a "very special thank you" to DeAnna Outlaw who once again pulled off the whole effort without a hitch.

The next big event is our annual Awards Banquet and General Meeting. We'll be giving several awards to some well-deserving people for their outstanding efforts. Come out enjoy a meal at the Old Mill restaurant and be with enjoyable company. See page five for more details.

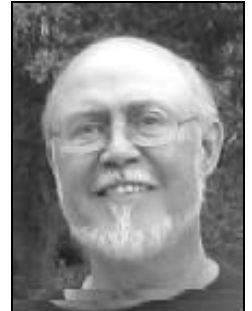
Cindy Francis, author of a recent newsletter article "Incredible" woodland treasure needs TLC, and I recently met with representatives of the Sycamore Land Trust to learn about the organization and the possibility of it helping to preserve some of the west side land "treasures." We met with Christian Freitag, its executive director, and Greg Meyer, a board member. SLT is a non-profit organization whose mission is preserving the disappearing natural and

agricultural landscape of southern Indiana. Founded in 1990, SLT protects scenic beauty for the aesthetic enjoyment of present and future generations. SLT also saves healthy, beautiful habitat for both humans and wildlife, creates outdoor learning experiences for all ages through SLT's Environmental Education Program, provides valuable ecological services that improve air, water, and soil quality, and provides economic benefit by helping attract families, businesses, and visitors to southern Indiana.

Although there was no assurance SLT could help us preserve the property in question since the land had been left to the state, it is pursuing the possibility. We will try to get Christian and Greg to one of our meetings where they can help us learn more about land trusts. You can learn more about the Sycamore Land Trust at its web site <http://sycamorelandtrust.org>.

Since this will be our last newsletter of the year, enjoy the rest of the beautiful fall season, get ready for winter and have a very happy, satisfying holiday season.

Until next time as always, be involved.



Fred



Dot Berning receives Sparkplug Award from Fred

Fred Padget on Land Use Planning, Part XXX

In my last article about land use planning I talked about the trend to require owners of large commercial buildings to post energy ratings on their buildings or report to a national data base where the information could be found.

The September 2011 issue of *Governing* talks about how important energy savings are for local governments and that more than half the governors are focusing on saving dollars by making energy use more efficient. Cities or other local governments can also benefit by finding energy savings.

When Ann Arbor, Mich. was putting together its 2005-2006 budget, it saw an opportunity to save money on its streetlights. The city's energy program manager pointed out that street lighting is a big target for saving energy and saving money. It is the single largest line item in utilities and costs the city \$1.5 million per year. With that in mind, the city stopped putting up new street lighting and set about finding ways to reduce public lighting costs. The answer the city arrived at was to replace traditional streetlight bulbs with LED lighting. Using a \$630,000 grant from the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority, it replaced more than 1,000 downtown lights for a savings of more than \$100,000 a year. By 2008 the entire downtown was converted to LED lighting for an annual savings of \$375,000. Ann Arbor, the home of the University of Michigan, has a population of about 114,000 which approximates the Evansville popula-

tion of about 117,000. According to a spokesperson, most of these savings come from a dramatic decline in maintenance costs. LED lights have a 10-year lifespan, five times longer than the previous lights and the city saves \$100 per year on each of these bulbs, with \$80 of that coming from maintenance. There are other examples across the country and it seems pretty certain that states, cities and counties are going to continue to follow the energy trail in search of some kind of way to save money. The approach has one other powerful advantage. Not only does it please fiscal watchdogs, it also makes environmentalists happy resulting in a nice daily double.

Evansville has recognized the potential for similar savings although a little differently. From the November issue of the *Sustainable Evansville Newsletter* we learn that Evansville's Department of Sustainability, Energy & Environmental Quality (SEEQ) received approval from the Board of Park Commissioners for a 15-year Guaranteed Energy Savings Performance Contract with Energy Systems Group, LLC. It calls for energy conservation and renewable energy projects at the C.K. Newsome Community Center, Swonder Ice Arena, and the Parks Maintenance facility. The project will include the installation of solar photovoltaic panels on the roof at Swonder which will provide approximately 21,312 KWH annually and at the community center that provides approximately 10,650 KWH annually (about 10% of all the lighting needs of the C.K. New-

some Center). These will be the first municipal solar panel installations and the panels at Swonder will be the largest in Evansville.

Although no specific costs savings is mentioned I would expect considerable savings in the city's electric bill. Environmentally, the effect is also significant. The newsletter article says the Department of Parks and Recreation's carbon footprint will be reduced by 364.2 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per year. The U.S. EPA says this is comparable to removing 71 passenger vehicles or heating 45 homes for a year. Similarly, it would take 9,340 tree seedlings grown for 10 years or 77.7 acres of pine or fir forests to sequester the CO2 reduced by this project.

You can learn more about Evansville's Department of Sustainability, Energy & Environmental Quality (SEEQ) at <http://www.evansvillegov.org/Index.aspx?page=2289>. If you'd like to receive its free newsletter email seeq@evansvillegov.org and request to be added to the distribution.

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 Area Plan Commission agenda for the Nov. 10 meeting includes one rezoning request within our area. It's to rezone a 1.5 acre portion of a five-acre residential site at 13900 Saint Joseph Ave. from Agricultural to Commercial C-4 with a use and development commitment. This property is on the west side of St. Joseph at the intersection with Steinkuhl Road and within the Town of Darmstadt. If approved, it would allow the continuing use as a contracting and construction business. The Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map projects this site as residential and agricultural, no commercial. The owner apparently started a contracting and construction business sometime in the past without requesting the proper zoning. A proposed Use and Development Commitment would limit the use of the site to only a contracting and construction business out of the 182 businesses allowed by the County Zoning Code within a C-4 classification. The C-4 classification would allow signs totaling 300 square feet and billboards of 500 square feet, all of which could be 50 feet tall. A contractor shop requires one parking space for each two employees, one space for each company vehicle, plus adequate parking for customers and visitors. All parking and access drives must be paved.

From my viewpoint, I do have a few thoughts. First, if you are changing the use of property it would seem reasonable to ask around about any requirements that should be met. Sometimes it's not easy to get to the right place the first time but if you ask, you at least stand a chance. With today's internet that's not difficult to do. Secondly, we don't want to jeopardize or take away someone's livelihood if it's honest work. On the other hand this is

within a legal town and in a residential area. It would seem reasonable to me, in addition to the Use and Development commitment limiting the use of the business to only a contracting and construction business that the commitment should run with the current owner and revert the property to the original zoning if sold. Additionally the signage should be eliminated or severely reduced out of respect for the nearby residents. We will follow this closely.

The Board of Zoning Appeals agenda for the October meeting included five items within our boundaries but the meeting was cancelled due to lack of a quorum. The November agenda includes those five requests and another two within our area. In fact there are a total of 26 variance requests on the BZA agenda for the Nov. 17 meeting. We probably need to take a lunch because it could be a long meeting.

Three of the requests for variance within our area are for relaxation of the zoning code to allow an accessory structure larger than the residence for construction of a barn. The properties involved are at 8202 Upper Mt Vernon Rd., 2115 Selzer Rd. and 3337 Orchard Rd. All are zoned Agriculture. The zoning code requires that accessory structures be subordinate in size and height to the residence. Accessory buildings in Agricultural districts may not be used as dwellings and may be used only for personal use.

Relaxation of the required side-yard setbacks is being requested for the property at 3407 Marion Ave. to construct a carport while relaxation of the requirement that a six-foot fence shall surround all swimming pools is being

requested for the property at 4901 Orchard Rd.

Both city and county zoning ordinances require a six-foot impassable fence surrounding all swimming pools. Many people don't know and you often see violations of this ordinance because swimming pools include pools more than two feet in depth at any point. However it does not include lakes. In this case, the petitioner's pool would be partially surrounded by a six-foot fence while other portions have a deck ranging in height from 60 inches to 74 inches with one end abutting the residence.

Continuing on, our local Home Depot is requesting a variance to allow four signs as opposed to the two allowed and to increase the square footage from the allowed 300 square feet to 686 square feet as contained in their public notice. The petition they filed indicates four signs at 457.3 square feet. There is no explanation for the discrepancy in square footage.

And finally, the new Banterra Bank at 705 North St. Joe is requesting a Special Use for an electronic message sign.

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 along with the zoning codes and much other information.

Welcome new members

Mark and Annette Wright

Strategic planning session identifies goals

By Scott Anderson and Jayne Buthod

Westside Improvement Association President Fred Padgett asked all WIA members, officers and board members to attend a strategic planning session at Burdette Park on Wednesday, Nov. 2. Approximately 15 members attended. Leslie Townsend, director of Historic Southern Indiana, acted as facilitator for the two-hour session. Many issues were discussed and a few ideas were identified that warrant further investigation.

The group first identified goals for the meeting which included increasing membership, increasing member participation, and visibility of the WIA in the community, possible project work, and exposure of WIA accomplishments.

Early, it was suggested that the group review the WIA Mission Statement, which is “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.” Participants felt that members need to be aware of the large boundaries of the area that WIA services. WIA boundaries



include all areas south of Gibson County, east of Posey County, north of the Ohio River and west of St. Joseph Avenue going south to Diamond Avenue to Fulton Avenue. Land use issues have always been a priority of WIA in this area and the group felt WIA has done a good job in this task and should continue to advocate this issue.

The group then began to identify other potential goals. Ideas included advocating for neighborhoods with poor housing, improving and maintaining parks, identifying potential bike routes, establishing further relationships with USI and West Side Nut Club, addressing sidewalk issues, working closer with neighborhood associations, identify further Adopt-A-Spot locations, University Parkway land use, consolidation issues, and mem-



bership. Parks, poor housing and membership were selected as issues that need further discussion and action.

Participants decided that discussion was worthwhile and decided to continue with further discussion on Nov. 9 at 4 p.m. Please feel free to attend and contribute.



**WESTSIDE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.
2011 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET AND GENERAL MEETING**

WHEN: THURSDAY, NOV. 17

Registration begins at 6 p.m.

WHERE: Old Mill Restaurant, 5031 New Harmony Rd

BUFFET STYLE MENU

Two Entrees Three Vegetables

Hot Rolls, Iced Tea, and Lemonade

Dessert

\$12

PROGRAM:

Roberta Heiman with the Evansville Area Trails Coalition will present the video, Blazing Trails. The video describes the beautiful trails of Evansville and surrounding areas. The Coalition's Web site states that "We are here to promote healthy activities on local trails. Our goal is to help develop more safe places for walking and bicycling in our community." Roberta will conduct a short Q&A session following the video.

PLEASE FILL OUT SLIP AND SUBMIT PAYMENT BY NOV. 14

NOTE: Dues can be paid at this meeting.

Name(s) _____

Meal: \$12 _____

Total enclosed: _____

Make check payable to Westside Improvement Association.

**Mail to: Fred Padget
c/o WIA
2345 Skyline Drive
Evansville, IN 47712**

NOTE: Please bring a non-perishable item for food banks.

WIA elections for 2012 to be held at annual meeting

WIA members will elect officers for 2012 at the annual meeting Thursday, Nov. 17., at the Old Mill. The following will be nominated by the nominating committee, chaired by Joyce Moers. Other nominees will be accepted from the floor.

Proposed Slate - 2012 Officers

President	Fred Padget
Sr. Vice President	Brenda Jeffers
Jr. Vice President	Carolyn Stagg
Treasurer	Matt Hanka
Secretary	Linda Cleek
Membership Secretary	Scott Anderson

Proposed Slate - 2012 Board of Directors

Scott Anderson	Michael Lockard
Dot Berning	Joyce Moers
Jayne Buthod	Amy Musia
Donald Day	Ava Nix
John Dillingham	Deanna Outlaw
Paul Farmer	Phillip Outlaw
Blake Foerster	David Robinson
Wayne Gerteisen	Marty Runge
Matthew Hanka	Mel Runge
Bill Hartly	Linda Singer
Gene Hollencamp	Chuck Weisling
Bill Jeffers	Sam Wentzel
Bonnie Kolb	

Continued from page 3...

Calendar 2011

Thu, Nov 17 WIA's Annual Banquet Meeting, Old Mill, registration 6 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 10 Recycle Day. Old Wal-Mart West. 8 AM - Noon**
December No WIA board meeting.

** — For more information: <http://vanderburghgov.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=6687> or call Solid Waste District, 436-7800

Announcements Welcome

Westside neighborhood associations and others are invited to submit announcements of general interest for publication in our Pointing Westward newsletter.

Items may be emailed to Mel Runge at mrunge@wowway.com or to Fred Padget at fcpadget@aol.com.

Join us on Facebook

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

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

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 Westside.
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

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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	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 dot.berning@yahoo.com

Standing Committee Chairs

Adopt-A-Spot	Dot Berning	424-8307 dot.berning@yahoo.com
Environment	Bill Jeffers	435-5117 or cell 568-0757
Fall Festival	DeAnna Outlaw	589-1657 or dpoutlaw@aol.com
Land-Use	Mike Lockard	401-5249 or mlockard@wowway.com
Transportation	Bill Harty	424-1501 or wfharty@wowway.com
Membership	Scott Anderson	scott@boehncamp.com
Newsletter	Mel Runge	425-4633 or mrunge@wowway.com

At-large Board of Directors

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	
Bonnie Kolb	