



The Witherbee Buzz

Vol. 18 No. 1 Newsletter

Winter 2021

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association includes the area bounded by 33rd to 56th and Randolph to "O" Streets

March WNA Meeting is all about Trees!

Jay Seaton, forester for the Lower Platte South Natural Resource District (LPSNRD) & interim forester for the Nebraska Forest Service Southeast District, is the featured speaker at the March 4th WNA meeting. Jay will give a presentation on Lincoln's urban forest concerning conservation, diversity, Emerald Ash Borer and selecting the right tree for your yard. He will provide an overview of the Community Forestry Program (CFP) and the Conservation Tree Seedling Program. The CFP improves the community forests by planting trees to improve biodiversity, health and aesthetics of communities throughout the district. The Conservation Tree Seedling Program is statewide and provides trees to Nebraskans to plant for windbreaks, wildlife habitat, field borders and other uses. Find out how you can purchase seedlings from the LPSNRD. Plan to attend the March 4th WNA meeting at 7:00 p.m., Jay will be ready to answer all of your tree questions.

This meeting will be held via Zoom. To receive an invitation link for this meeting, please send an email to witherbeena@gmail.com. Please note "March Meeting" in the subject line and include your full name. If you will be joining the Zoom meeting by telephone, in addition to your full name, include the phone number that you will be using to call into the meeting. The invitations will be sent out on March 3rd, the day before the meeting.

We hope you will join us! Questions about the program or Zoom, please contact us at witherbeena@gmail.com.

SEE INSIDE STORIES:
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Randolph Circle - Prime Example of WNA Making a Difference!

By Mike Fitzgerald

South 41st Circle, added last fall north from Randolph Street, and the houses planned for the development called Randolph Circle are strong examples of why it is important to support and maintain a vibrant neighborhood association – Witherbee Neighborhood Association in this case.

The homes soon to spring from the ground along the new cul-de-sac capped street likely would not have been as attractive of a neighborhood asset had WNA not existed and persevered in working with the developer and city officials to limit the number of lots and advocating for acceptable home design elements.

Matt Olberding's summary article published January 23rd last year in the Lincoln Journal Star captures much of how South 41st Circle came to be. He wrote: More than 15 years ago, a plan for redevelopment near 40th and Randolph streets so riled up area residents (in early 2003) it led to the formation of the Witherbee Neighborhood Association to oppose it.

Wednesday (January 22, 2020), that same association gave its blessing to new plans for the same site.

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission gave its blessing, too, voting 9-0 to approve a special permit allowing 13 new homes on just more than 4 acres at 41st and Randolph.

That's much less of a footprint than the 2003 plan, which called for a child care center and 32 condo units. After sparking neighborhood opposition, that plan was unanimously voted down by the Planning Commission.

But this time around, members of the commission praised the developers, Ken and Lana Rosburg, for being willing to work with the neighborhood to make the project acceptable.

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About Your Witherbee Neighborhood Association

Boundaries:

33rd to 56th & 'O' to Randolph

Meetings:

7:00 p.m. first Thursday of each
month, VIRTUALLY, until we can
safely meet in person again.

www.facebook.com/witherbeena

www.WitherbeeNA.org

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President's Message

Our annual meeting was held November 5th virtually, like most meetings for the last 9 months of 2020. Despite the circumstances we came together to celebrate the accomplishments of WNA, to honor Ed Zimmer with a Friend of Witherbee Award (see below) and to elect new Board members and officers for 2021. We had two individuals term-limited who went off the Board. The good news, we had three individuals who agreed to serve and were elected to the Board.

And so, we begin 2021 with vaccinations in progress and hope for a time when we can again gather together! We hope you will choose to gather with us and other residents of Witherbee sometime in the near future. We look forward to sponsoring our annual neighborhood cleanup in May, neighborhood garage sales in June and our Ice Cream Social/Pool Party in August. (Specific dates to be determined.) In the meantime, please keep in touch by signing up for WNA email blasts announcing meetings and other important events at www.witherbeena.org and by checking our Facebook page regularly.

Stay well!

Kathy Holland, 2021 President

Friend of Witherbee Award

Ed Zimmer was presented a "Friend of Witherbee" award on November 5, 2020 in appreciation of:

- Years of supporting WNA efforts to protect and enhance this neighborhood's historic character and quality of life.

- Sharing a unique combination of local history knowledge and city planning experience.

- Being a frequent, dependable, and trustworthy writer and resource for WNA Buzz articles, and answering our questions about planning proposals.

- Giving informative and interesting tours of WNA's three districts.

- Providing authoritative guidance on WNA's proposed design standards, approved by the City Council, which will ensure the Randolph Circle development will be congruent with the neighborhood's 1920-1950-style community attributes.



*Mike Fitzgerald presents WNA award
to Ed Zimmer.*

*Thank you to the following individuals & businesses who support the activities of the
Witherbee Neighborhood Association with their sponsorship donations.*

Organization Sponsors:

- Calvary Cemetery
- Jacobson Veterinary Clinic, PC
- Redeemer Lutheran Church

Individual Sponsors:

- Richard Bagby
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- Mary Jo & Rick Shibata

The Rosburgs, who own more than half of the land bounded by Randolph, J, 40th, and 42nd streets, agreed to limit the number of homes on the site to 18 — 13 new ones and five existing ones — even though zoning laws allow them to have up to 24. They also agreed to home designs the association recommended.

Those changes came after concerns were raised during a neighborhood meeting that the Rosburgs organized earlier this month (January 2020).

“This is a model that I’d like to see replicated” by other developers, said Commissioner Deane Finnegan. Commissioner Cristy Joy called the proposal “a wonderful infill project.”

Olberding also described part of the property then as an urban acreage with a house and outbuilding. The Rosburgs bought the acreage property and several others out of foreclosure after the previous owner — who had proposed the failed 2003 redevelopment plan — defaulted. The current redevelopment plan calls for new homes surrounding a circle drive off Randolph Street.

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association gave the development its conditional approval.

In a resolution sent to its members and the Planning Commission, the association’s board said the scale of the proposed development was “in line with (neighborhood) goals.” The group said its support was dependent on limiting the number of units and (only using) home styles that would fit in with existing structures.

Not all neighborhood members were in favor of the plan, however. Though no one testified in opposition at the January 2020 hearing, five people sent emails to the commission expressing their opposition. Their general concerns included, among other things, an increase in traffic, loss of trees, loss of privacy, and a possible increase in storm runoff.

The flurry of meetings, phone calls and emails led by WNA leaders and involving the developer, engineer and city officials in the days leading up to the January 22nd Planning Commission hearing culminated with WNA sending a letter to the commission to spell out its views regarding Special Permit # SP 19056, Randolph Circle, South 41st St. & Randolph St.

The letter stated WNA’s preference is for the property to be developed with single-family dwellings that are congruent with the 1920-1950-style homes within the neighborhood. WNA attached photos of 10 homes, which included examples of design elements WNA preferred to see featured in the new dwellings to be built on South 41st Circle.

The letter which explained WNA’s reasons for approval was based on a resolution,

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approved by the WNA Board, which listed more than a dozen reasons for its support. Specifically, WNA’s support was conditioned on a) the developer amending the permit application to reduce the total number of dwelling units from 24 to 18, and b) the developer amending the permit proposal to include specific design items in the Community Unit Plan (CUP) application. These design items developed in consultation with now retired but then senior Planning Department staff person, Ed Zimmer, specified that Randolph Circle be built with single-family dwellings that meet Neighborhood Design Standards by four



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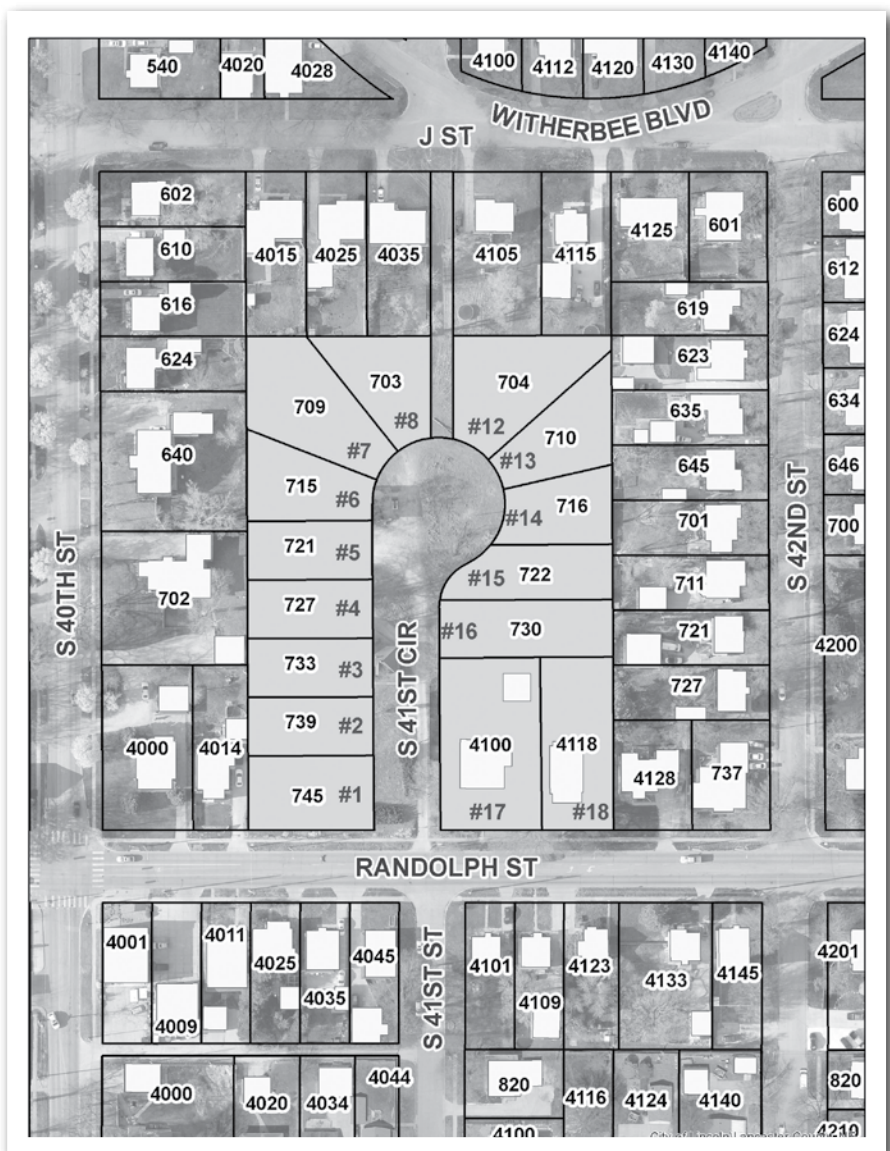
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stipulations. 1. Homes will face the street and include an entry door and at least one window per floor in the side facing the street. 2. Garage doors may face the roadway, but the house side facing the street must include a front porch that extends at least 6 feet forward of the wall containing the garage door. 3. The front porch will extend the width of the home, excluding the garage, and the porch will include a roof. 4. The house to be built on lot 1 adjacent Randolph Street, must meet Neighborhood Design Standards pertinent to homes which face Randolph Street.

WNA asked the commission to approve the amended permit request so the further enhancement of the Randolph Circle property could begin as soon as possible.

Testifying during the Planning Commission hearing, WNA President, Kathy Holland, commended the developers, Ken and Lana Rosburg, for improvements they had made to the residences and landscape within the Randolph Circle properties area over the past several years and their willingness to work with the Witherbee Neighborhood Association.

As noted above the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Commission did approve the WNA-brokered plan on January 22nd, 2020, but Covid-19 put the brakes on most everything in Lincoln for much of the rest of last year. However, the developer, its engineer consultant, and city officials continued working on plan details, which allowed grading to be done in the fall and South 41st Circle to be built before the end of the year. WNA will continue to provide updates as home construction begins.



Randolph Circle lots are ready for homes. The development is north of Randolph St, between 40th & 42nd Streets.



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Little Free Pantries in Witherbee

By Julie Flodman



Kind Lincolniters have formed a network of Little Free Pantries across the city. The concept is much like Little Free Libraries and people are free to take what food, personal or household essentials they need, day or night. The pantries are often managed by individuals or families who have built the weather and animal proof structures. These pantries are stocked by local church and neighborhood donations or by individuals or families who locate the pantry on their property.

In our Witherbee neighborhood we have four Little Free Pantries that we are aware of at the time of publication. The people and their stories show what a great neighborhood we have. The stories tell of people who care about their neighbors.

Chris Booe has had his neighborhood library up since 2017. When the pandemic started in 2020, Chris saw his neighbor, Spoons Clark, at 380 South 44th St, dedicate her library to non-perishable items in addition to books. Chris agreed that neighbors might need food as much or more, so he started putting non-perishable food in his Little Library. Chris's Little Free Library/Pantry is located at 4115 Lenox Avenue. Interestingly, Chris's Library/Pantry started its life as a dollhouse neighbors had thrown out. That same week Chris found a post another neighbor had discarded and those

two items were repurposed to become his Little Free Library! Chris believes that if you have a good heart and care about humanity, then "do this, that's why we are here". Chris shared that he is always taking donations. If people find the pantry is full, they can just leave items on his porch & know that ALL DONATIONS will get distributed to other neighborhood pantries and will get to people in need.

Becky Tegeler, 612 S.42nd Street, installed her pantry in December 2020. You might have seen her announcement on the Nextdoor App or the WNA Facebook page. Michael Reinmiller, who has had a Little Free Pantry since 2019, helped Becky install the pantry, including helping dig the post hole and cement it into the ground. Goldenrod Printing & Mail supplied the adhesive door decals for free. Most of her initial pantry costs were paid through a Go-Fund-Me pantry build donation site. Becky's motivation to install the Little Free Pantry comes from a desire to help others, to pay it forward. She has been pleased with the number of people who are using her Little Free Pantry and has been overwhelmed by the generous donations of neighbors who have helped stock her pantry.

Redeemer Lutheran Church at 510 South 33rd Street has started a "little food pantry" for the church's neighborhood, called the "Blessings Box". It is located on 33rd Street on the northeast corner of the church parking lot. The goal of the "Blessings Box" is to reach out to those who have need of food or household items for one reason or another. Redeemer invites those who avail themselves of items in their Little Free Pantry to, when their circumstances permit, replenish items to share with their neighbors. Church members will see that the Blessings Box is stocked with nonperishable items such as cereal, beans, rice, ramen noodles, pasta, macaroni and cheese, bread, flour, etc. Hygiene items such as Kleenex, toilet paper or bar soap will also be supplied. With winter temperatures upon us they ask those wanting to help to avoid can or glass food items or liquids because they might freeze (& burst). Redeemer welcomes residents of the Witherbee neighborhood to visit the Blessings Box and tell their friends about this new resource close to home.

It just warms your heart on these cold winter days to know that people are willing to share what they can, when they can, with their neighbors. Thank you, Witherbee neighborhood, this is a wonderful effort, and one more way-- We are working together, to help one another!

Editor's Note: For a list of the most needed items to donate to a Little Free Pantry and where to begin if you would like to install your own Little Free Pantry, please see our post on the Witherbee Facebook page or check out the Little Free Pantries Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/LittleFreePantriesLNK>

Lincoln Community Learning Centers Presentation on April 8th

Lincoln's Community Learning Centers (CLCs) provide a delivery model to support youth, families, and neighborhoods as they strive to be successful, thriving, and strong—CLCs are about the process of people and programs working together to create a culture of learning that serves our entire community. The CLC initiative supports 29 schools in the development and implementation of high quality extended learning opportunities, weekend and summer enrichment programs, and other supportive services for children, youth, families, and neighborhood residents.

At the April meeting, Jenée Kucera and Emmarý Lunberry will share examples of the work the CLCs are currently doing within the schools located in and near Witherbee. Following the quick presentation, a guided conversation will welcome Witherbee residents to share any needs or thoughts on how the nearby CLCs can support the Witherbee neighborhood.

Holiday Spirit Shown in Witherbee Light Displays

The neighborhood pulled out all the stops to provide amazing lights for everyone to enjoy. Our judges received many, many nominations and took to the streets as a convoy to determine this year's winners. It was a tough choice; we had a couple ties and added a couple new categories to help celebrate the hard work that went into it. We also wanted to note a few streets that seemed to come together and decorate as a community as honorable mention. \$25 gift cards to local grocery stores were mailed to first place winners on December 26th. This year, especially, we appreciate everyone's efforts to help bring some joy to the season. Thank you to everyone!

Winners for the 7 Categories for 2020 were:

- Traditional Elegance: 4410 Randolph St and 735 S. 44th (tie)
- LES Award(Most lights): 600 S 53rd and 4811 L St. (tie)
- Visions of Sugarplums (Kids' favorite): 3940 Randolph
- Reason for the Season: 3600 J St
- Christmas Story, The Movie: 4840 J St:
- Over the Top: 4200 Randolph
- Community Spirit Award:

-Median on Laura Avenue -M Street, 50th to 53rd
-N Street, 33rd to 35th -Woods Avenue



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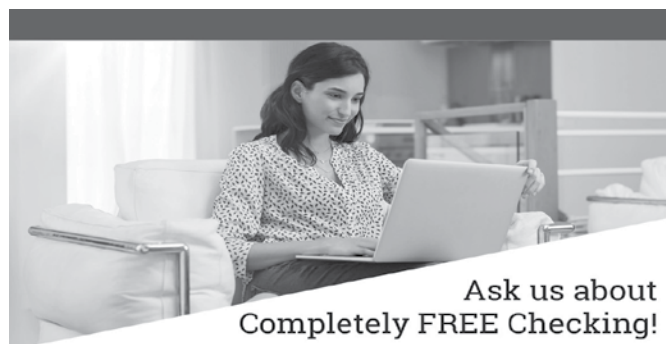
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Welcome New Board Memebers!

Julie Flodman

Hello Witherbee Friends! My name is Julie Flodman and I am a new board member. My husband and I moved to the neighborhood after a long search in 2016 & 2017 for our retirement home. After hearing such good things about the Witherbee neighborhood from Realtors & friends we decided to purchase our home on "L" street and renovate it into our retirement home. Before actually moving into our home, while renovating on an early Spring day a very nice young women approached us and extended her hand to greet us, she also then gave us our first Witherbee Buzz Newsletter. Reading that first newsletter and all of the newsletters since has reminded us that Witherbee is a GREAT place to live, the neighbors are kind and care about one another! We also noticed that the WNA is an association served by neighbors who openly encourage everyone to be involved & feel welcomed. They encourage and allow all neighbors to bring their interests and skills to the association, promoting a future toward positive growth!

Thank you Witherbee for trusting in me. It is a joy to serve the people of this neighborhood & to stroll down the lovely streets of homes and kind neighbors!

We are very happy to be a part of this neighborhood.



Ryan Patrick

Hi! I'm Ryan Patrick. While I'm new to the board, I have been attending WNA meetings (and helping with the Facebook page) since moving to the neighborhood in 2018. I moved to Witherbee because I lived in an apartment at 44th and O for the first five years I was in Lincoln and loved the accessibility of the area. Most times that you see me riding my bike through Witherbee, it's to go to work (at UNL), get groceries, play hockey (with the Lincoln Ice Hockey Association), or to do a long loop on the gravel roads outside of Lincoln. Feel free to say hi!



Dawn Bevans

Hello! My name is Dawn Bevans. I moved here from Waverly this summer, and am excited to be back in Lincoln! I'm ready to serve on the board, meet more people, and get to know the area. I've already started diving in to help out, and can't wait to see what comes up. My children and I are looking forward to getting involved in all the great things the Witherbee Neighborhood Association puts on!



Scooping Sidewalks and Corners



We've had a lot of snow recently! Please remember that a lot of our residents walk throughout the neighborhood. Make sure that sidewalks are scooped to make it easy for everyone - this includes scooping corners that connect to the street. Doing so makes it easier for kids and adults alike to reach their destinations.

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Join Us in Making a Difference in 2021!

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association (WNA) continues to help maintain and enhance the neighborhood you call home. In response to Covid-19, we pivoted in 2020. And to help keep your neighborhood strong, we are conducting our annual membership appeal. As your neighbors and WNA volunteers, we hope you will send in your membership (or sign up or renew online at <http://www.witherbeena.org/membership>).

Your membership dues help support the production of our newsletter, help with the cost of hosting our annual neighborhood pool party/ice cream social and other activities. But more importantly, we need your input and your ideas. We need volunteers to help with WNA events and activities. For example, we need help with the Neighborhood Clean-up in May, the Ice Cream Social/Pool Party in August (or another social activity). In addition, we can always



use individuals who would like to write an article for the quarterly newsletter or help distribute the newsletter to the neighborhood. There are many other ways to volunteer. If you are interested in knowing more or want to help, please contact Kathy Holland at 402-310-9153, email: rh30222@windstream.net.

When we each do a little, we all do a lot. Please become a member and participate at whatever level of involvement that fits you and your schedule. Everyone has a talent, skill, idea or area of interest that would be an important contribution. There are many jobs, large and small, within the organization. Please attend a meeting or participate in an activity! You do not need to be a member to participate. Come check us out!

And finally, one of the best reasons to participate in WNA – it is a great way to meet nice and interesting people – from across the street, down the block and throughout your neighborhood.



Become a new member or renew your membership today!

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___ Yard of the Month

___ Holiday Lights Contest
___ Witherbee Connect
___ Government Liaison Committee
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If you don't see something you are interested in here, please tell us your ideas and suggestions.
