



The Witherbee Buzz

Newsletter

Winter 2006

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



This structure recently appeared within the Witherbee Neighborhood boundaries. It appears to be a tri-plex.

Zoning—Why should you care?

Do you know that the value of your home could severely plummet due to unattractive development next to you or on your street. You don't think it could happen next to you? Is your home and street protected from greedy developers? Do you know if your home is located in an area currently zoned in a category that allows construction of unattractive apartments? Join us at the next WNA meeting and find out how vulnerable you are and how easy things can change and you could be helpless to do anything about it.

A significant part of the Witherbee Neighborhood is in this situation. The investment you've made in your home may be at risk of a developer buying a lot or two next to you or near by and building an apartment that brings traffic, parties and downward pressure on property values. It has happened throughout Lincoln as well as within the Witherbee Neighborhood.

A primary role of the WNA is to protect and enhance the character of the neighborhood. Construction of out-of-

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Partnerships to Help with Home Fix Ups and First-time Homeowners in WNA

The topics of presentations and discussion planned for the WNA February and March meetings are related, but different. They each address important efforts to help protect and enhance the neighborhood. The February meeting will be about WNA seeking a change of zoning from the City Council to protect against further construction of unsightly apartments in our neighborhood (See zoning article to left.) The March meeting will be about creating a partnership involving homeowners, WNA, lenders, public agencies and non-profit organizations to help with home fix ups and assist first-time homeowners purchase properties in the neighborhood. Come, join us and see how you can benefit from these programs.

Participation by each of the parties listed above has been a win-win-win approach in other neighborhoods. Here's how everyone wins. Current property owners can get assistance with needed fix ups. First-time homeown-

Continued on Page 7

Have a complaint for the city?

Have you ever called in a complaint to the city or asked for a service? Trash, junk cars, weeds, barking dogs, pot-holes, trees need trimming, over grown alleys and much more. Ever wondered if it was taken care of or why it took so long to get something done?

Now the City of Lincoln, with encouragement of neighborhood leaders, developed an on-line system (at www.lincoln.ne.gov) for you to file a Complaint / Service Request. Through this system you can track your complaint and see what the status is and where it is stuck and maybe even why. You will also see when it is resolved and still stay anonymous if you choose to do so.

Come and Join us at our April 6th monthly meeting and see Terry Lowe from the City Information Service Division do a live demonstration of how this system works. You will learn the key features for successful reporting. This system is for non-emergency requests and includes all city departments. No more getting transferred to the wrong number. If you deal with the City at all you don't want to miss this meeting. The Information Services Department received a National League of Cities digital cities award for their innovative ideas. They deserve a big hand for this.

About the Witherbee Neighborhood Association

Boundaries:

33rd to 56th & 'O'
to Randolph Streets

Web Site:

www.WitherbeeNA.org
Meetings: 7:00 p.m. first Thursday
of each month at Tabitha Lifequest
Center, 48th and J.

Executive Board:

Fred Freytag, President
435-2465
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President's Message

Happy New Year to all. With a new year many of us make resolutions to do something different and/or something better in the new year. We want to take better care of our health: fitness or weight loss; our families: more time: and get along better; our job...well and so on you know.

The same goes for the neighborhood association. We, the WNA board and active members, have planned a variety of activities for this year. We hope to expand the variety a little each year and draw more residents to become active members. For the short time we have been an organized association we have done a lot of great things. We worked on preserving the neighborhood, participated in helping City Departments on the O Street widening and supporting development of the blighted area at 48th & O. We have organized activities like the annual Spring Neighborhood Cleanup, Neighborhood Wide Garage Sales, out-ing to a Salt Dogs game, a great annual meeting, a Holiday Lighting contest with super prizes and maintain a web site to keep neighbors informed besides having monthly membership meetings with great speakers. All this is done by volunteers, neighbors that care, and neighbors that take time out to show their support.

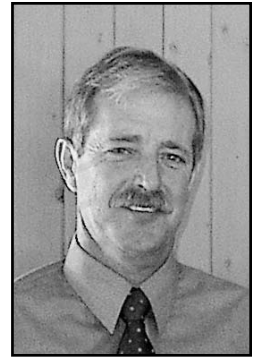
The year ahead looks great. Our plans are to do all the activities we did last year and add a 'Plant Sale Fundraiser', same day as cleanup, a small street tree planting project, a neighborhood wide fall garage sale and a 'Yard of the Month' award program. I invite you to take part in at least one project and find out how great it feels to do something to help your neighborhood and meet the BEST neighbors in Lincoln.

Who will take care of our neighborhood if we don't? You can show your support by becoming a member. Memberships are renewable each year and if you have email we will put you on our list and keep you well informed. Your dues will help pay for operational expenses like postage, copying, filing fees etc.

I ask you take a look at the questionnaire inserted in this issue and mail it in. It will help us understand what direction to take and how we are doing.

Please patronize the businesses that advertise in our newsletter. Because of them we are able to bring you this great newsletter. And a BIG thank you to all volunteers, we can't do it without you.

Fred Freytag



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Jon Grenemeier

Jennifer Doll

Second WNA Annual Meeting Draws Crowd

The 2nd WNA Annual Meeting held November 3 at the Tabitha Life Quest Center drew a crowd of more than 60 residents and visitors. Two agenda items commanded the lion's share of the program, one educational and one business.

Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady was the featured speaker. He explained current department challenges and priorities by highlighting changes it and Lincoln has seen during the past 30 years. Alcohol used to be sold only downtown, now it available throughout the city; very few places were open 24 hours/day, now there are scores of places open 24/7; now schools call police instead of taking care of all discipline issues themselves; there are new crimes of holdups and robberies, many resulting from the use of methamphetamine; the department handles more mental health related matters; Lincoln and the surrounding area is growing more than 1% annually – adding 3,700 residents each year which means more work for the police force, and Lincoln has the smallest police force than many other cities of Lincoln's size.

The department has an officer per capita ratio of 1.34/1,000 and a goal of raising that ratio to 1.5. The national average is 2.07/1,000. The department is requesting eight additional officers and Casady hopes they can be added within the next few years. The department is responsible for 80 square miles and is planning to add substations to reduce response time and increase effectiveness. The next substation is planned at 49th St. and Huntington and should be open in November.



Chief Tom Casady speaks on department challenges

Casady's topic generated a wide range of questions from WNA residents. For example, he explained how all calls are prioritized.

The business aspect of the Annual Meeting was the election of board members and officers. Past President Mike Fitzgerald explained the board's goal is to involve more residents from throughout the WNA area to help with the growing list of Witherbee activities, such as garage sales, a holiday lighting contest, a neighborhood clean up, newsletter delivery and monitoring development proposals and projects. He presented the nomination committee's report and candidates for the six open director positions were elected. Fred Zarate (5110 L St.), Steve Schwab (3510 Woods Ave.) and Mike Fitzgerald (3794 H St.) were re-elected to serve two-year terms and Larry Frisch (4105 N St.), Russell Miller (341 S 52nd St.) and Karen Vogeley (3535 Frost Ct.) were newly elected, also for two-year terms


After the 12-member board was determined, election of officers was conducted. Fred Freytag (530 S. 38th St.) was re-elected as President. Rick Bagby (389 S. 47 St.) was elected Vice President. Larry Frisch (4105 N St.) was elected Secretary. Ann Richards (5030 L St.) was re-elected Treasurer.

The annual program included time for visiting and enjoying DaVinci's pizza and a large variety of salads and deserts brought by residents.



Pizza and salad were enjoyed by all

A little one-on-one tutoring can turn a frustrated student into a first rate student.



I try to keep up but...

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WNA Calendar 2006

Check our web site for more and current details.
www.witherbeena.org

All WNA membership meetings first Thursday of each month 7:00 P.M. at Tabitha's LifeQuest Center.

Thu. February 2nd: WNA membership meeting.
 Topic: Zoning; Speakers: Marvin Krout, Jon Carlson, Dave Witters, Jonathan Cook. See article.

Thu. March 2nd : WNA membership meeting.
 Topic: Keeping a safe and prosperous community; promoting homeownership Speakers: Terry Uland, executive director of NeighborWorks Inc. See article.

April: Start of 'Yard of the Month Award'

Thu. April 6th: WNA membership meeting. Topic: City Web Site, on line complaint system. Speaker: Terry Lowe, Systems Coordinator. See article.

Thu. May 4th: WNA membership meeting. Topic: TBA

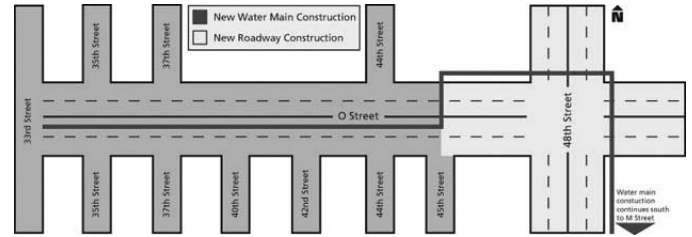
Sat. May 6th: Annual Neighborhood Cleanup. Same location as last year. Details in next newsletter.

Sat. May 6th: First Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser. north parking lot of Hawthorne School 300 S 48th. Contact Fred at 435-2465 for more info

June 1st: WNA membership meeting. Topic: TBA

June 8th to 11th: Neighborhood wide garage sales.

September 7th to 10th: Neighborhood garage sales.



Street Work to Affect Traffic

by Larry Frisch

While there has been much publicity about the four lane R Street detour around the O Street repaving project, little has been said about the new water main project's effect on traffic.

Work on the new O Street water main will begin in February 2006, and is scheduled to be completed in July. Traffic along O Street will be restricted to two lanes between 31st and 44th Streets. There will be short-term closures of 33rd and 40th Street access to O Street. The narrowing of O street during the project may cause a substantial increase in traffic on Randolph Street as commuters from east Lincoln drive to and from the downtown area.

Spokesmen for the Lincoln Fire Department have assured this writer that steps are being taken so that emergency services to the neighborhood are not affected by the construction projects.

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2005 Holiday Lighting Contest Winners

by Karen Vogeley

Cold days, long nights and leaves spread all over the lawn meant it was time to take holiday lights out of storage and join neighbors in the second WNA holiday lighting contest. Homes nominated were in the Witherbee Neighborhood Boundaries (between 33rd and 56th Streets and 'O' to Randolph Streets).

City Councilman Dan Marvin and Journal Star reporter Jonnie Tate Finn, escorted by Doug Evans and Karen Vogeley, drove through the neighborhood on December 17th, scoring all nominated residences for their creativity, lights, presentation and theme. The winners were contacted after the scores were tallied and ties broken.

The Kaufman family at 5101 M Street won first



5101 M Street

prize and received an Italian table lamp from Lincoln Lighting Center, coupons from Perkins and Runza and the winning yard sign, as well as bragging rights. The runners up at 4300 Witherbee Boulevard and 5041 L Street received gifts from Pink Flamingo and Perfect 10 Nails in addition to their Perkins and Runza coupons.

The website, www.witherbeena.org, has pictures of many houses in the neighborhood with their holiday lights. WNA plans to have this contest every year, so if you want to participate, read the newsletter for detailed contest information, decorate your home with lights, and call the coordinator to place it on the score sheet. We'll provide celebrity judges, great prizes and the sign that the first place homeowners can put in their yard for all to see.

Area businesses providing prizes were Lincoln Lighting Center, Pink Flamingo, Perfect Ten Nails, Runza, and Perkins.


Here is a partial list of nominated residences; 205 S

35th, 3350 N St,
3315 M St, 3353 M
St, 3511 M St, 3706
M, 3400 Woods
Blvd, 619 S 34th,
3330 J St, 3340 J
St, 3612 Randolph
St, 3923 H St, 417 S
40th St, 401 S 40th
St, 140 S 40th, 4300
Witherbee Blvd,
4306 L St, 4436
Witherbee Blvd,
4811 L, 4844 J St,
5041 L St, 5101 M
St, 630 S 52, 5500
L Street, 5511 L
Street, 325 S 54th,
55th & M Street.



5041 L Street





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Hawthorne Elementary 48th and M

Hawthorne Elementary to close?

By Larry Frisch

That is the question Witherbee residents were asking themselves after their monthly meeting January 5th.


Ed Zimmer, speaking on behalf of the \$250 Million LPS bond issue, noted that no renovation funds for Hawthorne Elementary were included in the 10-year plan funded by the bond issue. Mr. Zimmer, a Lincoln Board of Education member, acknowledged that with imminent redrawing of school boundaries, Hawthorne Elementary may close and students sent to other schools.

The revelation came as a surprise to many Witherbee residents at the meeting. WNA will be looking closely at this issue in the future.

Plant Sale Fundraiser

Spring is an exciting time for gardeners. So many plants are in bloom and when we look around the neighborhood we may be envious of what others have. If you need to thin out some beds or just have too many plants crowding each other here is a chance for all of us to benefit.

The WNA is holding their first annual 'Plant Sale Fundraiser' in the parking lot at Hawthorne School, 300 S 48th. It will be the same day we are holding our neighborhood cleanup, Sat. May 6th We are looking for neighbors to donate plants for this sale or use them for bartering. We will make pots available if you need some. More details will be in the next newsletter and sooner on our web site. Contact Fred Freytag at 435-2165 for more info.



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Business Directory

These businesses have a benevolent relationship with Witherbee Neighborhood. Your patronage is appreciated.

Buyers Choice Real Estate

201 S 84th Ste C, 489-0888

Dr. Jacobson Veterinary Clinic

42nd & O Street, 327-0705

Tabitha Health Care Services

48th & Randolph, 483-7671

Nebraska Printing Center

2145 N Cotner, 466-8521

Yard of the Month

By: Josh Sovereign

Are you planning a landscaping project? Are you ready for Spring so you can spend more time in the yard? Here is your chance to reap the rewards of your hard work. The neighborhood association is going to be awarding the Yard of the Month award to worthy candidates during the Spring and Summer months coming this April.

We encourage you to nominate your neighbor or friend in the neighborhood. Each month one yard will be chosen as the Yard of the Month for the Witherbee Neighborhood. The award winner will be honored with a sign they can keep up all month. We will have pictures of our monthly winners. As history grows for the award we will have a map of the neighborhood highlighting past winners so you can take your own Witherbee Neighborhood award tour.

Please call me, Josh, at 327-9360 if you know a worthy resident for the award. Watch future Newsletters and the website to see who the winners are and what incentives we have developed!



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Zoning . . .

Continued from page 1

character (ugly) houses or apartments is a major threat and a top goal of WNA is to seek a zoning change to prevent any further damage to our neighborhood.

The topic of the Feb. 2nd WNA monthly meeting is down zoning. In other words, "Does the zoning in your area protect the investment you've made in your home?" Come learn what zoning your home is located in, learn what level of protection that zoning may or may not be providing you and learn if you need to help your neighbors and WNA seek greater protection for the homes on your street. There will be zoning maps and people to explain the zoning situation on your street. There will be photos to show construction blight that has occurred in areas where residents weren't paying attention to greedy developers.

We have several speakers on this topic at the February WNA meeting and it will be our main focus. Marvin Krout, Director of City of Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department will be on hand to explain possible changes to the downzoning applications and answer any questions in regard to Zoning. Jon Carlson, chair of the Planning Commission, and resident of Near South Neighborhood took part in the downzoning effort of sections in their neighborhood. Dave Witters, also a resident of Near South will share what strategy and effort it took to accomplish their goal. Jonathan Cook, City Council member, resident of the Country Club neighborhood will also be on hand and share their efforts.

The WNA board encourages you to mark Thursday, February 2nd on your calendar and plan to attend the 7:00 p.m. meeting at Tabitha's Life Quest Center (48th & O).

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Home Fix Ups . . .

Continued from page 1

ers get assistance with their purchase and all WNA residents benefit from properties being repaired and from an increased number of homeowners with a vested interest in the neighborhood. In turn, lenders and other businesses in the area benefit from having a stable neighborhood with which to conduct business. The city benefits from increased property tax revenues. Finally, non-profit organizations fulfill their missions by assisting the process.

Terry Uland, executive director of NeighborWorks, will be the featured speaker at the March WNA meeting. NeighborWorks Lincoln is a resident-led nonprofit organization dedicated to keeping Lincoln a safe and prosperous community by revitalizing neighborhoods and promoting homeownership. Its work focuses on four program areas: Homeownership, Housing Construction & Repair, Neighborhood Resources, and Planning & Development. More information can also be found at www.nwlincoln.org.

The WNA board encourages you to mark Thursday, March 2nd on your calendar and plan to attend the 7:00 p.m. meeting at Tabitha's Life Quest Center (48th & O).

WNA wishes to thank Tabitha for being a great neighbor and providing meeting space for us each month. We appreciate it.

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SOON TO BE A REALITY . . .



This artist rendering is of the development on the south side of O Street, 48th to 50th. The picture above is a view from 50th and O looking Southwest. Watch for updates on our website and next newsletter. Demolition of existing property has begun.

Marcia Murray & Guy Southwick

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402-499-2459

Guy's email

guy.southwick@woodspros.com

Guy's website

www.GuySouthwick.woodspros.com



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Lincolnshire
7141 "A" Street
Lincoln, NE 68510



Public Meeting:

O Street roadway improvements, 45th to 52nd Street

Construction of this roadway improvement project will begin in February. The project includes construction on O Street from 45th to 52nd Streets, and construction on 48th Street from M to R Streets. The project will also include water main construction from 33rd Street to 48th Street.

This public meeting will be held: Tuesday, February 21, 2006, from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. at The Villager, 5200 O Street (Lincoln Ballroom)

Representatives from the City of Lincoln, Olsson Associates (the design firm), and Hawkins Construction (the contractor) will be present to discuss the project.

For questions, please contact Lisa Behrns at (402) 458-5992.

You are invited to be a member of the Witherbee Neighborhood Association

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E-mail: _____

WNA is a Non Profit Association. Contributions of \$35.00 or more will receive a **tax deductible receipt**.

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___ Benefactor	\$50.00 & up
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Benefits of membership: (besides being in the loop of things) Single – one vote; Family – two votes, one per person; Senior Family – same as Family; Additional Household Member -one vote; Sponsor – up to three votes, one per person; Benefactor – same as sponsor and listed in newsletter once Business – one vote as per bylaws, reduced ad costs, one free listing in newsletter, and an ad on our web site.