

July 1983

MOVING CARS, PARKED CARS, MOBILE HOMES, FIXED HOMES,

NEW BUILDINGS, OLD BUILDINGS, AND A FEW TUNES . . .

The June 14th meeting at the Fennings was marked by an unexpectedly large turnout, with 12 board members and over 20 other West Enders present. Because the newsletter announcing the time and place of this meeting was not delivered until the next day, we are considering getting the blurb out late every month in order to encourage attendance. If you get this letter prior to the third Tuesday in July, i.e., July 19th, the day of the next meeting (which will be at the Harpers' house at 909 West End Boulevard, at 8:00 p.m.) please ignore it until the 20th.

Perhaps attendance was so good because there were a number of issues people were hot to talk about. Here's a review:

TRAFFIC CONTROL

Brent McKinney, City Traffic Engineer, and Ken Kroohs, Transportation Planner, met with us to discuss traffic flows into and through the West End. Obviously, such developments as the new Wachovia Operations Center are going to make a difference. With the Center, shift patterns, shift sizes, public transportation, and parking costs all will affect traffic flows. Notice that 4½ Street has been truncated for construction purposes, but it has been made two-way as well.

An improved I-40 will help make a difference re the West End's not surving as a conduit for fleeing suburbanites. Trouble is, that ain't gonna happen for several more years. In the meanwhile, such areas as 5th & Glade, Summit between 4th and 6th, and all along 4th Street are going to present jam-up problems if the number of vehicles should increase markedly.

Another problem is traffic speed. Brookstown and Clover seem to tempt downhill racers. Such additions as 4-way stops might help that situation some.

McKinney and Kroohs pointed out that so far the West End has not been a "high accident" area, as contrasted with several other sites throughout Forsyth County. They also warned us that such things as crosswalks and 4-way stops can create a false sense of security which is counter-productive. They urged a continuing dialogue between a neighborhood traffic committee and their department. They want to know what we consider to be the <u>problems</u>; they appear less interested in our ideas for solutions at this point.

If you have problems that bug you about traffic, and solutions, as well as some interest in serving on a traffic committee, please notify an association officer or board member; better yet, drop us a card at Box 161.

PARKING CONTROL

You've heard a lot about YMCA parking problems. This is still being monitored by your board. Bob Fenning serves on

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the Y's Additions Committee. He described several alternatives now being considered -- closing Sunset between Glade and West End is one of the more striking ideas. It appears to be in the hands and on the drawing boards of the architect at this time.

A committee of the Y has also met with the school system about relocating the afterschool day-care program in the schools where parking and traffic problems are not so severe. This would certainly free up parts of Hanes Park as well.

We discussed the desirability and difficulty of obtaining "permanent parking" or "residential parking" permits for near-by residents who often come home to no-place-to-park.

THE WEST END TRAILER PARK

Glenn Gravlee, the only President you've got (in the words of the late LBJ), has been in touch with Alderman Martha Wood, concerning our neighborhood's feelings about the mobile home ordinance now being debated by the powers that be. At the 14th meeting, Chuck Hotchkiss moved that the Board come out in favor of no changes in the present zoning as related to mobile homes; the motion was passed.

On June 16th, significant steps were taken by the Zoning Board to roll back or significantly slow down the adoption of a county-wide ordinance allowing double-wide mobile homes in most neighborhoods. This situation will bear watching, as it is not yet settled.

ZONING WAIVER SOUGHT BY NATURE'S EMPORIUM

Nature's Emporium, on Summit just off 4th St., is seeking a variance for three off-street parking places. The building presently houses the store and five apartments. During the discussion at the June meeting, someone pointed but that the property is also up for sale, and that the waiver is being sought for sale reasons. Cort Meador moved that the Board oppose the waiver being sought by the current property owners; the motion was passed, with some reluctance.

Perhaps underlying some of the resistance to the waiver was our Association's support in principal for the Hawthorne merchants in the dispute with Robert Dalton's seeking parking waivers for his restaurant. We have taken a very conservative approach in these matters when it comes to zoning changes which would encourage a higher rate of commercial activity and vehicle traffic within and on the borders of the West End. Just as we have no particular quarrel with Dalton's wanting to run

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PPERT D • (919) 722-3457 a business in what is clearly a commercial area, we have no quarrel at all with the income-producing character of the Nature's Emporium building, except as it puts additional external pressure on the area around it.

Another underlying consideration might have been the efforts of some of the other nearby businesses, most notably the Zevely House and Joanna Shober's, to invest in land and grading to create sufficient spaces to comply with existing zoning laws. This kind of investment must be encouraged throughout the West End, and to support the Nature's Emporium request would be to fly in the face of this principle. Yet opposing the requests of good neighbors is no fun, either

NEW TOWNHOUSES UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Not all of the light you see coming from the direction of the center of downtown is being generated electronically. Some of it comes from the sparks which are flying around the construction activity at the corner of Summit and Sixth Streets.

George Chrysson of Chrysson Brothers
Realty Company is the developer of the project, which envisions twelve units. He
presented a plan and some drawings to assemblage on June 14th. In general, people
were complimentary toward the plans and
toward his being there ahead of the beginning of the work to present his ideas to us.
Strong sentiment was expressed, however,
about parking. Chrysson's plans called for
parking to be on Summit Street -- this was
an unpopular idea.

After the presentation and discussion, it was moved and passed: (1) to commend him for showing up with his plans; (2) to recommend that the parking be provided in the rear of the building and not on Summit Street; (3) to officially support a setback waiver, if necessary, to move the complex as close to the front of the lot as existing structures in that area are situated, so as to help accommodate parking in the rear.

All well and good. But the next day, bulldozers and chainsaws came in and appeared totally to ignore the recommendations of the people living in this neighborhood. Not only were some fine trees on the lot itself cut

down, but some of the workmen indicated that trees along the border of the lot on city property were to go as well. Workmen also indicated that they were going ahead with plans to stick the parking at the Summit Street front. Needless to say, a lot of people felt angry and ripped off. As of June 29, it appears that an agreement has been reached between the Summit Street residents and the developer to modify the site plan by moving some parking behind the building. We await final approval of the revised plan by the West End Board.

"CONSERVATION DISTRICT" -- AN INTERIM STEP?

On June 22nd, several Association Officers and members met with Laura Phillips and Alderman Martha Wood to discuss the impact of the legislation currently being considered in Raleigh to create "Conservation Districts" in neighborhoods that may or may not meet the criteria for "historic district" status and the protections that come with it.

The legislation is known as House Bill 914, "An Act to Enable Cities, Towns and Counties to Provide for Neighborhood, Community and Rural Preservation." It creates a commission to administer the program in "community conservation/preservation districts," which are defined as areas that possess "form, character, and visual qualities derived from arrangements or combinations of topography, vegetation, space, scenic vistas, architecture, appurtenant features, distinctive natural habitats, natural formations, or places of natural or cultural significance, that create an image of stability, comfort, local identity, and livable atmosphere." I.e., us.

We don't know much about it yet, but it appears that qualifying to be such a Conservation District would be quicker and considerably less expensive than becoming a Historic District (either National or Local). On the other hand, there appears to be fewer advantages and protections inherent in such a designation than exist with Local and/or National Historic Districts. The analysis will continue--do you have any insights?

TUNES

Don't forget the Band Concert by the British Brass Band at Grace Court on Saturday, July 16th, at 6:00 p.m. Bring a picnic and some friends.

There will be other musical events in Grace Court during the summer. Keep a look-out in the newsletters and for flyers which might be tacked up heralding these events.

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