

The West End

By and for the
West End Neighborhood

September 1983

BOARD ENDORSES BOND REFERENDUM

The Board of Directors met at the Wilson home on September 13. After a moving presentation by board member/city promoter Chuck Hotchkiss (running for office?), the Board unanimously voted to endorse the \$23 million bond referendum slated for early November. The interest payments on the bonds will be funded by a $\frac{1}{2}$ percent sales tax which has already been approved. Most will be used to give a shot in the arm to the downtown area. The lion's share goes for convention center expansion, justified by the fact that it is bursting at the seams. Over \$2 million is earmarked for close-in residential neighborhoods including the West End. No, this can't be used for historic district funding, but it will repave streets and sidewalks, light streets, spruce up public areas, etc. The Board feels that a viable downtown area and heads-up long-range planning are the goals addressed by the bond issue. Several board members will campaign for it. We urge you to support this bond referendum. Please vote for it on November 8. Why not tell your friends in other neighborhoods to do the same?

YOU WIN SOME...

The Zoning Board of Adjustment denied Scott Gwyn's request for a variance to convert 1092 W. 4th St. into an office building. The opposition was bolstered by a petition drawn up and circulated by Felice Avery as well as by Bill Wise's effective presentation. We have nothing against the Gwyn family, mind you. They have been good friends to West End. Their office conversions adjacent to Grace Court Park have splendidly enhanced the buildings. It's just that 1092 W. 4th St. is ill-suited for offices.

YOU LOSE SOME...

At the same meeting, substantial off-street parking waivers were granted for several buildings on Summit St. between 4th and 5th. Included were Nature's Emporium and the Rainbow Newsstand. We opposed some of these waivers on principle, but the Zoning board had little alternative to granting the variances short of putting people out of business. We criticized the Inspections Division for allowing this situation to arise and promised vigorous opposition to future requests for off-street parking waivers in heavily congested areas. Despite the traffic congestion on Summit St., most of us enjoy the businesses there. We trust that the Zevely House and Johanna Shober's will be granted similar waivers in November. They have made a conscientious effort to provide off-street parking for their clientele.

REFLECTIONS ON RECENT ZONING EXPERIENCES

Our regained motivation to organize and speak out is a welcome change. When the "To whom it may concern" signs requesting a zoning variance go up, the Gravlee phone starts ringing. We thank Alderperson Martha Wood for successfully encouraging highly visible public notification signs. We thank West Enders for getting involved in important neighborhood issues. Keep those cards and letters coming!

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SUMMIT AND 6TH?

George Chrysson presented his new plans for townhouses to Glenn Gravlee and Bob Fly. The parking situation is much improved, but the exterior design is probably less attractive than the original one. Overall, the plans appear quite acceptable. We made a few suggestions about exterior appearance. If you want more info, contact Bob Fly or George Chrysson.

HOW ABOUT BROOKSTOWN AND JERSEY?

Jim McChesney and Wayne Yarbrough attended our Board meeting to discuss the proposed six townhouses. The plans are quite similar to those originally proposed by Chris Chapman, i.e. it looks nice on paper.

Does it bother you that most new residential structures in the West End are multifamily dwellings? Obviously these maximize profits in the face of exorbitant land prices. A mixture of single family and multiple family dwellings adds character to the neighborhood. At what point does this jeopardize the property value of single-family dwellings? Can we prevent inappropriate conversions from single to multi-family dwellings? Answer: Not unless the conversion violates the zoning code (Most do not.) Is this a reason to consider a local historic district that could influence land utilization? Answer: Yes. Watch for further developments on historic district designation, and save money for a contribution. We're applying for some grants which may require the West End Association to produce matching funds.

VARIANCE REQUEST FOR 1074 WEST 4TH ST.

Leigh Fultz, owner of the former Bitting House, (the house with the magnificent Greek Revival 2-story portico) wishes to use the first floor for his own office while leaving 3 1-bedroom apartments in the building. He will build a 16-space parking lot in the back yard in an effort to thwart the runaway kudzu plantation. No off-street parking presently exists at this address. The property is zoned R-1, which means that offices are OK. One must have a 100-foot street frontage to have offices, however, hence the need for a zoning variance. Though superficially similar, Fultz's proposed property use appears more appropriate than that requested by (and denied to) Scott Gwyn. Better off-street parking arrangements and preservation of 3 quality residential rental units distinguish this proposal from Mr. Gwyn's. The Board will not convene before this case is heard at the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting on Thursday, October 6. Please direct your comments on this issue to Glenn Gravlee or Bill Wise.

GRACE COURT GARDEN CLUB

Do you enjoy Grace Court Park? Do you like the concerts, the potlucks, a quiet twilight walk? The young plantings require more attention than the city can provide. We'd like West Enders to help with weeding and watering on a rotational basis. We need a coordinator and volunteers. How's about pitching in? If interested, call the Englands (725-3726) or the Gravlees (724-3982).

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POT LUCK DRAWS A CROWD

Some 200-plus West Enders enjoyed each other's company, outstanding food offerings, and the mellifluous harmonizing of the Blue Ribbon Edition on a gorgeous Sunday evening in Grace Court Park. Aside from scattered pediatric bumps and bruises, all appeared to enjoy the occasion. One well-established West End family added a touch of class by placing a staggering array of after-dinner liqueurs at the end of the dessert table. Martha Harper, Joyce Gravlee, and Stephanie Mitchell deserve thanks for orchestrating this event. The tables provided by the YMCA were delivered by Carl Penney and Bill Wise. Chuck Hotchkiss arranged the canopies donated by Vogler & Sons Funeral Home. We attribute the good turn-out to effective door-to-door distribution of notices contributed by Long, Haymes, & Carr (alias Bob Fly). We thank these people and institutions for making this special evening possible.

Too bad if you missed the Pot Luck, but don't forget there's a Christmas Party coming up. Got any ideas for time, place, refreshments, etc.? We solicit your help. Contact Joyce Gravlee or Martha Harper to make suggestions or volunteer.

WEST END T-SHIRTS

Clearance Sale - \$2 each. An oversupply of small adult size (34-36) T-shirts remains. Colors - white, maroon, green, red, navy. Fits many ladies and most children aged 7-12. We have a smaller supply of medium adult (38-40) T-shirts - mostly green. All shirts must go! Drop a check or cash in the mail (Request size and color and tell us your address - We deliver.) or come to the Board meeting. Buy several. Your children or grandchildren will grow into them.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next meeting will be at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday October 11 at the England's, 1109 Glade St.

HEATING PROBLEMS?

Antique heating systems in antique houses can be hazardous, not to mention cold. Maybe Bill Morrison can help you. See enclosed advertisement.

Handwritten note:
Bill Morrison
1109 Glade St.
919-723-0731

Cost -

We need a check for \$30
to YWCA before Dec. 5 to
reserve living room for Dec. 9
WE Christmas party.

-Jojo

ARE WE GETTING THE WORD OUT EFFECTIVELY?

Twice in the last 3 months we have attempted to hand deliver either a newsletter or a special notice. Most recent was notification of the Pot Luck Supper. Did you get this notice? Let a board member know if you're missing out on these distributions.

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