

The West End

By and for the
West End Neighborhood

March 1992

THE CONSENSUS -- "QUALIFIED DISAPPROVAL"

The final topic for discussion at the monthly meeting of the West End Association on March 3rd was the ongoing struggle over the "text amendment" to the City/County Zoning ordinance proposed by FIRST ("Forsyth Initiative for Residential Self-Help Treatment"). FIRST wants to use the "text amendment" as a device to convert, at the minimum, the Dorminy Studio on Fourth Street into a large treatment program for serious substance abusers.

Like most communities, the West End is home to a variety of people with a variety of needs and a variety of opinions on any given subject. Whether voiced during open meetings or in chance encounters among individuals, the active listener naturally hears a spectrum of opinion about FIRST's proposal. Opinions range from a few "qualified approvals" to many more "unqualified disapprovals." That there are numerous voices in the West End is a healthy thing.

Despite this variety of opinion, there exists a consensus among those neighbors who have taken an active part in finding out all they can about FIRST. Perhaps the most accurate way of describing this consensus is "qualified disapproval." Indeed, following an extensive discussion, your Association's Board unanimously passed the following Resolution on March 3rd:

"RESOLVED: The West End Association opposes Text Amendment WT-196 and FT-154 proposed by FIRST."

The focus of the Board's opposition is the perceived harmful effect of FIRST's gambit on the integrity of both our neighborhood and the City/County zoning scheme. The text amendment would serve to pre-emptively silence the voices of sensible people who commit their treasure as well as their hearts to their neighborhoods. All over town, neighborhoods are full of men and women who make thoughtful inquiry about, and sometimes raise generous-spirited opposition to, well-meaning but inappropriate programs plopped down in the middle (or, in this particular case, the southern edge) of their community.

Is the West End a voice crying in the wilderness? Hardly. Such pre-emptive silencing of inquiry and appropriate opposition could be inflicted on every residential neighborhood in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. A zoning system establishes a "social contract," which gives rise to reasonable expectations, rights and duties. The direction of zoning in America has generally been toward greater protection of the integrity of neighborhoods, not less. The whole thrust of politics in Forsyth County and Winston-Salem has been toward listening to what neighborhoods -- all the neighborhoods -- have to say about their own destinies.

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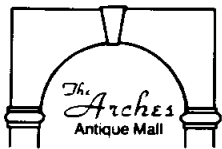
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APRIL 9TH -- 2:00 p.m. -- PLANNING BOARD MEETING AT CITY HALL --
PLEASE BE THERE!!!

THE FIRST SHALL BE LAST, and the Last First, at least in these Minutes:

In addition to passing the Resolution opposing FIRST's proposed tax amendment, members of your Board described other "response activities" at the March meeting.

New President Wanda Merschel described a small working session with FIRST representatives in late February. At that session, FIRST suggested that three public meetings be held at Dorminy Studios. Our resident Zoning Guru, Bill Wise, offered a counter proposal: since FIRST's text amendment affects the entire county, the three public meetings should more appropriately be held in Kernersville, somewhere else in Winston-Salem, and Clemmons. The Board agreed to one meeting, but not at Dorminy. And everyone was urged to attend the Planning Board meeting on April 9th to embody our opposition.

Glenn Eisenbrandt has been leading a concerted effort involving several West Enders. These hard workers plan and conduct information meetings with other neighborhood associations in the City to explain the West End's opposition to the text amendment. Billy Keith Jones offered to present our views to, among other groups, the Realtors' Association. Other West Enders volunteered to join these efforts, as well as to lobby local political decision-makers.

MEANWHILE, LIFE GOES ON -- The Rest of the Minutes, Albeit in Reverse Chronological Order


Local Historic District: Lea Loftis reminded us that the Commission has scheduled three meetings at the YWCA -- at 7:30 p.m. on March 11, 19, and 24. The purpose of these meetings is to provide information and encourage public comment. Please attend one of them. And, the Planning Board is scheduled to consider the West End Historic Overlay Request, again on April 9th. So, you have 2 reasons to be there!

Wanda Merschel, whip-cracker extraordinaire, set up several committees to help do the essential work of the Association. Missy Vaughn and Teri ~~Anderson~~ agreed to co-chair the House Tour, planned for December '92. Wanda, Bill Welsh and Warren Sparrow will head the Festival at Grace Court, set for early September. Billy Keith, Lea, and Valerie von Isenburg will berate you about Membership and organize Block Captains. Tim Nichols and Missy V. will head Social. Now, all we need is your help.

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* * * * *

A FEW MORE MINUTES - (It was a long meeting.)

Speaking of Meetings: There will be/was a special meeting of the Board on March 17th, at the Vaughns, to keep up with the FIRST affair. Did you go?

Next month's regular Board meeting will be at Bill Gibson's house, 1315 Brookstown Ave., at 7:30 on Tuesday, April 7th.

The May 5th meeting is tentatively set at the YWCA on , and the June 2nd meeting at Ben & Julia Wilson's house on West End Boulevard.

Grace Court and the Water of Life: Teri Johnson gave us an update on the City's plans to improve irrigation. The City wants us to chip for the keg. Your Board discussed the appropriateness of using the Barbara Smitherman Fund to help finance this project.

Housekeeping: The vote on the "Crystal Towers" Amendment to the By-laws was tabled until next month. (zzz) The Board approved a change in bank signature cards allowing Wanda, Missy, Bill Gibson and Glenn Simmons to sign checks. (zzzzzz) Glenn, our New Treasurer, reported that as of 12/31/91, we held \$1,851 in the General Fund; \$7,976 in the Historic District Fund; and \$2,695 in the Barbara Smitherman Fund. The bills are paid. (zzzzzzzzzz) Former Treasurer Becky Sparrow ran off to Mexico with 50,000 of our dollars. (WHAT????????) [Just kidding -- Becky would never do such a thing.]

NEWS FLASH!!!: Another public information meeting with members of FIRST is tentatively set for Thursday, March 26th, at the YWCA, at 7:30.

APRIL 9TH -- 2:00 p.m. -- PLANNING BOARD MEETING AT CITY HALL -- PLEASE BE THERE!!!

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DON'T FIND YOURSELF IN DEEP DUES DUE! If you have not yet re-joined the West End Association, please fill out the "Membership Application" just below. Cut it out, write a check for \$15 (or \$5, or \$25), and gently place both documents into a stamped envelope. Put this in the mail. With so much stuff flying into the fan these days, your neighborhood needs your support, financial and otherwise.

Editor: Bill Gibson -- 724-0776
Business Manager: Bill Wise -- 761-0906
Circulation: Missie Vaughan (724-4579), Carol Wells & Brenda Penny

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