

# The West End

By and for the  
West End Neighborhood

May 1992

". . . AND THE HISTORICAL SENSE involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence . . . ."

T.S. Eliot, *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1917)

WHY YOU DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE MEETING TO PRINT NEWS OF THE OUTCOME: On Thursday, May 14th, the City/County Planning Board was to consider the "historic overlay district" text amendment. This addition to the zoning regulations provides the general authority for, among other things, a specific West End Local Historic District plan. Lots of your neighbors planned to show up to demonstrate their support. Well, responding to a request from the Board of Realtors (which seems to be taking an open-minded look at the proposal), the Planning Board tabled the question until its next public meeting on June 11th. Sigh.

What happens next? We are hopeful that the Realtors will be persuaded by the merits of the Plan and will voice their support. Given the delay, the Board of Aldermen will probably consider this text amendment in July. If it passes, then the West End request would be presented to the Planning Board in August. At its public meeting on September, the Board would probably vote on our Plan. And in October, the Aldermen would do the same. Please be prepared to demonstrate your support for this Plan.

YEAH, BUT WHAT I WANT TO READ IS THE MINUTES OF THE MAY MEETING!!

OK. The Tuesday evening (May 5th) meeting was supposed to be held in Grace Court, but it was driven inside (to Prez Merschel's abode) by a big, dark cloud that stayed until Sunday. ["Oh great! The guy's talking about the weather."]

OK. OK. A considerable amount of time was spent discussing the status of our effort to achieve Local Historic District status. Of central concern was how best to present the general overlay case to the Planning Board on May 14th. Several people voiced the feeling that there exists significant, but half-hidden, opposition to the project. Among the responses believed constructive was for some of us to meet formally with the Board of Realtors, in order to head off misperceptions that property values decline when a neighborhood achieves local historic status. We believe we share a common cause with the realtors, indeed with most interest groups in Forsyth County. (See opening blurb re progress.)

Mary Beth Blackwell-Chapman invited the West End Association to be one of the sponsors of the tutoring program at Brunson Elementary School. Our function would be to help publicize opportunities for volunteers to help kids improve their basic reading, writing and math skills. The Board formally accepted Mary Beth's invitation.

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**MO' MINITS:**

Due in significant part to the continuing generosity of W.A. Armfield, aided by the planning efforts of City landscaper Joe Jackson, extensive planting is scheduled to begin in Grace Court on May 25th. The irrigation project is presently on hold.

In addition, the West End Garden Club wishes to "adopt" Grace Court. The Association's Board resolved to support the Club's effort.

Chris Yarborough described several civic events the West End Garden Club has participated in recently. And she showed the group her design for a ceramic tile plaque which could be affixed to your house, identifying the original owner and the year it was built. The tentative price is about \$35, and the tentative ceramicist is the most excellent Ron Probst.

Several people in the West End have expressed concern and dismay about what appears to be a heavy-handed approach to the Hanes Park waterways. Their laments have inspired this Kilmeric "Ode to Rip-Rap":

I think that I shall never dream  
A vision lovely as a stream.  
Unless that stream is crammed with rock  
To stop erosion. What a crock!

Apparently, the State engineers have been able to override the preferences of both the city landscapers and your Association. [As Teddy Roosevelt once said, "One man's stream is another man's trapezoidal storm water conduit."]

Your Board resolved to encourage and support any efforts by the State, the City, the Postal Workers (who have adopted Hanes Park), and others to apply soil and plant material to heal the scars. The Board feels it to be of critical importance that the Hanes Park Plan, hammered out in 1991 by a variety of public agencies and citizen groups, be attended to by all public authorities. This includes you, State of NC! [Wendy, the West End Windbag, blamed the disaster on the policies of former Presidents Andrew "Michael" Jackson and Edgar Allen Polk.]

The House Tour Committee reports that four houses have been lined up, and we only need two or three more. The tentative date is Sunday, December 6th.

Bill Sugg proposed that the Association create an Historic Preservation Trust Committee, to formally consider ways people in the West End can bid on, buy and preserve historic properties in the neighborhood. This topic will receive continued attention during the next few months.

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Notice: Robert Hill has lived in the West End all his life. He believes his 70 years of continuous residence makes him #1 in the Stick-Around-for-the-Show Department. Do you know someone who has him beat? Drop us a line.

Notice: Remember, the next board meeting will take place at Ben and Julia Wilson's house, on June 2nd at 7:30. The July meeting will be on the 7th, location to be announced. Maybe we'll try Grace Court again, if only to get some rain and cool weather.

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Editor: Bill Gibson -- 724-0776  
Business Manager: Bill Wise -- 761-0906  
Circulation: Brenda Penney -- 722-2905

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