



LONGFELLOW HERALD

Newsletter of the Longfellow Community Association

FEBRUARY 2008

Mailing Address: LCA, 909 E. 30TH St. Apt 12, KC, MO, 64109

E-Mail: www.longfellowkc.org

Meeting Place: New Ronald McDonald House, 25th St. and Cherry, first and last Monday of every month

STEERING COMMITTEE and GENERAL MEETINGS FOR DEC, JAN, FEB.

Here is a recap of neighborhood meetings for the past three months.

CAN Officer C. Pickens reported there were no major issues in the month of December and additional police coverage for our area would continue, just as it had the past several years. There were several arrests made in January because the officers switched their hours around and caught criminals off guard. In February, the Officers encouraged citizens to continue to call the police when anything seems out of the ordinary. More information about how to help your self will follow in this newsletter.

In December, the **TREASURER** reported that the tax bill was due and it was paid. The city was not being responsive to our neighborhood needs and was not printing our **NEWSLETTER** in a timely fashion. This issue was resolved with a visit to city hall. The **DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT** committee has been creating a neighborhood plan and a blight study was ordered. The study has since been completed and it should be available for review next month. It will be presented to all residents who live within the plan's boundaries in the future and presented to the city council this quarter. The current plan is working towards ten-year tax abatement.

NPC- The neighborhood preservation committee has been addressing several properties in the area that needed to become codes compliant. One has been taken to court and has since begun working on his property. In December, Larry Hamel, a Western MO Legal Aid lawyer, attended and offered his experience with problem properties and options for addressing property owners' resistance to being codes compliant were explored. In January, the abandoned cars in our area were towed away. Ms. **Elsie Quagraine, Codes Officer**, reported that the city was no longer issuing warning letters, and instead will issue tickets right away. The NPC reported on progress with working with other neighboring groups about a proposal to implement zoning law changes. The city would be required to notify neighborhoods when there were zoning changes for a property and liquor licenses get renewed or issued. **Councilwoman Beth Gottstein** is working with us on this issue.

NEW BUSINESS: The Cherry Hill project was finally completed. There are 15 units, with 2 sold and 6 being rented. There is a finder's fee for anyone referring people who move in. Father David Altchul visited us in February and talked about the **TROOST AVE. FESTIVAL** scheduled for April 19, 2008. The festival begins with a 5K run at 7am. The run will cover the old Porter slave plantation that was in this area in the 1860's. The festival site will be open from noon to 10pm. There will be music, artisans, and speakers, including speaker Naomi Davis. It is still being planned and anyone wanting to help may attend the planning

committee meetings at 3101 Troost, 7:00pm, every Thursday. Visit their web site at www.creativeprocess.net for some history of the festival and the area.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE- a committee was formed to improve the communication of our neighborhood and to build a web site for us. Look for more information to follow in this newsletter.

Councilwoman Jan Marcason visited us in January. She makes regular appearances at our group and is always welcomed.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be on February 25, at 6:30pm and the General meeting will be held on 3/3/2008 at 6:30pm at the Ronald McDonald house. Please sign in and out at the front desk. They need an accounting of who is in their building and they graciously donate the space and time to us. Thank you for cooperating with them.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

VIEW FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PORCH

Hello Everyone,

I hope everyone is making it through winter. February can be a long month. But spring is coming. Slowly, the days are getting longer. And new good things are happening in Longfellow. For me, it is very exciting. New people have become involved with the community association over the last year, and combining these new faces with the "veterans" of the group has created some important new projects.

Mona Turner has stepped up and is leading a group of neighbors towards creating a new development plan for Longfellow. This new plan will be an important addition. It has the possibility of addressing many issues that are not in other plans, including incentives for residential homeowners. For example, a key possibility involves tax abatement for properties that undergo restoration. If you want to know more about this, come to one of our general meetings.

Another example of the vitality of the Longfellow Community Association is the work being spearheaded by Brian Spoonemore and Eddie Crane on the neighborhood's website www.longfellowkc.org. There are many opportunities to contribute to this ongoing project. I think it has great promise for the neighborhood, because not only is it a visible point of interaction for those outside of Longfellow, but it can be a place where neighbors can communicate. This is a crucial component of building community, people communicating with people, and the website can provide a new means for this to happen. Please consider coming to a meeting or going to the website and finding out how you can contribute to this important project.

AREA SURVEY

You should have received a survey by now. The neighborhood group needs your feedback and ideas on what is important to you. We believe that increased resident involvement will create a stronger alliance and

neighborhood. Please take a moment to fill it out and equally important, return it to us. It can be returned to any board or committee member, brought to the general or steering committee meeting, or turned in at the Filling Station in care of Robin. If you prefer, you can also access

the survey or leave ideas on line at www.longfellowkc.org. Thank you for your time and ideas.

2ND ANNUAL YARD SALE

Get ready! Only three months until the annual neighborhood yard sale. It will be held on Saturday, June 14th. One way to pass these cold winter days is to find those treasures in your storage that others want and you no longer need. More info will follow in the months to come.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

A new committee was formed to build a working web site for the Longfellow/Dutch Hill neighborhood. The plan is to have a local site to pool information and improve the quality of life for our residents. The goal is to be able to access the site to find out the latest crime report, newsletter, alerts, upcoming events, block parties, and other pieces of important information. We also hope to have photos of our beautiful tree lined streets and fantastic traffic circles (thanks again, Rhonda). To get us started, we need people to collect and gather information, photos, submit history, famous people's addresses that lived in our area, etc. If you want to volunteer by helping provide these items, contact the NPC at npc@longfellowkc.org. Thank you for your help and we look forward to your great photos and news.

IF YOU CALL, THEY WILL COME

The CAN Officers have done a great job of staying on top of the criminal activity in our area and continue to make arrests. The only way we can win our streets back and keep them safe is through community action. We have

been told to call the police if we see anything out of the ordinary. And they DO mean anything. Through the diligence of some alert neighbors, drug houses have been shut down, dealers have been arrested, and burglaries have been interrupted.

SOME ACTIVITIES TO LOOK FOR:

If you see someone walking down the street looking in car windows, if someone is walking through back yards and they do not live in that house, if you see couples "parking" and they do not live on the block, CALL.

As the officers remind us each meeting, we have done a great job reducing our crime in the area. We can continue to reduce it by sending a message to the negative elements that they need to move on; Longfellow/Dutch Hill is not the place to be! If we keep those items thieves want to steal out of sight in our cars, we can reduce break-ins. Most crimes are crimes of opportunity. If we eliminate the opportunity, we will reduce the crimes. Please call 9-1-1 for crimes in progress. You can call the CAN officers' cell phone and report suspicious activity that needs investigating (things that are not a crime in progress) at **816.719.8297**.

Some examples of those are: excessive foot and car traffic at a house or apartment complex, a person walking up and down the block for no apparent reason, or chemical smells coming from a house. Remember, we need everyone's help to keep our area safe.

LIGHT RAIL

Mayor Funkhouser held a town meeting on the issue of light rail on 2/2/2008. He described his concept and what it would take to implement it. Briefly, here is what he said:

KC needs a mass transit system to compete with other cities and draw young people and corporations to our city. KC has invested billions of dollars into the downtown area and parking structures will not fill the bill. We need to repopulate the urban core so we need incentives for development. Unemployment rates in KC are climbing to the national average, about 40% for young black males, and the men need to get to where the jobs are. To make this concept happen, he would propose an agency of 12 elected officials from MO and 12 from KS. They would get their cities on board for support and would also hire the builders, create the specific stops, etc. A regional ½ cent sales tax would pay for it all in 25 years. To get federal help, KC cannot touch bus money, per the feds. There would be regional stops at downtown, Olathe, Village West, KCI, and Independence. Individual stops, at what corner, what street, etc. would be left up to the planners. It would be built all at once so that it would have an immediate impact on people in the area. It needs to happen now since federal funding will probably not be there in the future. Construction costs are also on the rise, so the sooner we get started, the better. The bus tax would need to pass in April and the regional plan needs to pass in November.

If the regional plan did not pass, then a local KC plan would be implemented. For more information, you can go online to www.funksfrontporch.com or to www.kcmo.org/subscription to receive "News from the Mayor's Office."

CAN YOU SPARE FOUR?

There are 720 hours in an average month and we are looking for someone that can spare four. Due to life circumstances, there is now an opening on the steering committee. If you want to become part of the solution and join the neighborhood group, please come to the next General meeting and be elected.

HELP INDEX	
CITY SERVICES.....	311
POLICE.....	911
Non-emergency.....	234-5111
CAN Officers.....	719-8297
cpickens@kcpd.org ,	
nathanparks@kcpd.org	
TIPS hotline.....	474-TIPS 474-8477
NPC.....	npc@longfellowkc.org
BOARD/STEERING MEMBERS	
Paul Scott, President.	960-7244
Allen Norman, Vice P.....	914-5549
Dan Nash, Treasurer.....	561-5476
Kim Dixson, Secretary.....	471-7919
Share Bane	Sandae Custard
Eddie Crane	Bobbi McCanse
Mark Weins	Ryan Wolf
Brian Spoonemore	_____

We thank the Neighborhood and Community Services Department for printing this newsletter.