

Neighborhood News

The Official Newsletter of Jefferson Westside Neighbors

2010 Neighborhood of the Year

July 2010

JWN Meeting and Events Schedule 2010-2011

General Meetings

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday in September, October, November, January, February, March and April (JWN board elections). Meetings are held at the First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street.

Events

- Neighborhood Picnic (June)
- National Neighbors Night Out (August)
- Holiday party (December)
- JWN Executive Board elections (April)

Meeting agendas and event locations are posted on the JWN Web site jwneugene.org

JWN Moves to "Subscription-Based" Announcements and News

To provide more timely information, better service and save money and paper, the JWN now offers meeting announcements and regular news on a subscription basis. The JWN will continue to mail all JWN residents and businesses several printed newsletters each year. However, meeting and event announcements, and news which won't fit into the printed newsletter, will be provided in either electronic or printed form only by subscription.

Subscribing is simple: For e-mail delivery, simply sign up for the JWN e-NEWS at jwneugene.org. Your e-mail address is secure and never shared, and you can cancel at any time.

If you don't have access to e-mail, you can request that printed information be mailed to you at no cost. Just call 541.344.2552 and leave your name, address and phone number. This service is available only to JWN members.



Jefferson Westside Neighbors

JWN Wins City's First Neighborhood Award

In April, our neighborhood was honored with the first ever Eugene Neighborhood of the Year Award. The award recognized the JWN for

"demonstrated leadership, responsiveness to neighborhood needs, and commitment to membership outreach and engagement. Their work on the S-JW infill standards overlay zone was considered to be an exceptional model of neighborhood advocacy.

Other achievements included public workshops funded with a neighborhood matching grant, participation in Opportunity Siting work sessions, well-attended meetings and events, and effective use of print and electronic communication tools."

The award included \$500 for JWN to use in future publications and events.



Jefferson Westside Neighbors 2010 Neighborhood of The Year

From Where I Sit

Paul Conte, JWN Chair

A lot is going on in our neighborhood, but space in this newsletter is tight, so I'll just hot some high spots. First of all, many, many thanks to outgoing JWN Chair, Della Perry, who gave the most precious gift of her time to lead the JWN board last year. Thanks also to Vice Chair, Ilona Koleszar, and board member Carol DeFazio, who are taking a breather after several years of service. And thanks to returning board members, Tony Rosta, Sue Cummings, Rene Kane and Garrick Mishaga for their past and continuing help. I'm also thrilled to welcome "new faces," Josh Bolton and Tom Happy. I feel very lucky to return to a JWN board with so many capable and dedicated volunteers.

My one hope and goal for the next year is that many more of the talented neighbors who share my love the JWN will say "Yes, I'd like to take a turn," rather than "I'm really busy," when asked to volunteer for a board position or other neighborhood association role. I'll stay out of my pulpit, but just point out that the JWN is a heavy-weight player in very serious matters that affect JWN households and businesses, including quality of life, public safety and property values.

All of us have benefitted greatly from the JWN members who've served on the board, volunteered for the Infill Compatibility Standards Task Team, organized to address crime and threatening behavior in Monroe and Charnel Mulligan Parks, and led or supported many other efforts that have made our neighborhood a better place to live, work and play.

Our organization is stretched too thin; however. Most of the load is being carried by a small number of individuals, and I'm seeing unmistakable signs of "burnout" among some of our best volunteers. I know from prior experience that once a neighborhood organization's board slips into disarray, a downward spiral occurs. Recovery becomes very hard because capable residents don't want to waste time in disorganized or contentious meetings.

The current board is focused on building a durable and functional neighborhood organization. We can do a lot to expand ways for people to be informed and have a strong voice in local decisions that affect their lives. But no changes in organizational structure or use of technology can substitute for volunteers who are willing to lead or coordinate neighborhood actions. Over the next months, your seven neighbors on the board will be reaching out to ask your help. I hope we'll hear a lot of you say: "Yes, I'm really busy, but this is my chance to take a turn."

Viewpoint: Current City Land Use Processes Impact JWN

Paul Conte

Several ongoing City land use processes have a significant potential impact on JWN residents, property owners and businesses. Here's a quick guide. For more information, see the JWN Web site or follow the link to the City's Web site.

Envision Eugene. This process will lead to City Council taking one or both of the following actions to accommodate future anticipated residential, commercial and industrial growth: Adopting new development policies and zoning code that increase residential density inside the current Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and/or adding additional land to the area encompassed by Eugene's UGB.

The public process is happening on an extremely compressed time frame (several months) and with very limited City resources. It's critical that JWN members actively participate in the process to be sure our neighborhood -- and other neighborhoods -- are well-served by the outcome. City Web site: www.EnvisionEugene.org.

Infill Compatibility Standards (ICS). This process produced the new S-JW zone covering what used to be the R-2 areas in JWN. Although this effectively addressed the most critical problem with incompatible infill in the JWN, other areas still need code revisions to ensure new development is compatible. These areas include R-1 zones south and east of the Fairgrounds and the high-density and mixed-use east of Jefferson Street. Currently, an ICS group (not including any JWN members) is working on several proposed changes to the R-1 development standards. Nothing is being done specifically for the JWN areas. If you would like to help lead an effort, please contact the JWN Chair. City Web site: www.eugene-or.gov/infill.

Opportunity Siting (OS). OS is a strategy adopted by City Council in 2005 to replace "blanket" upzoning (such as happened in the JWN's R-2 areas) with a process that would protect established neighborhoods (ICS) while providing incentives to locate well-designed, higher-density residential development in appropriate locations. JWN members have been in the forefront of promoting OS and helping to develop a process for identifying sites and approving projects. Many JWN members helped the City test a workshop model for neighborhood engagement. As part of the S-JW zone, the JWN also proposed the City's first "alternative path" model to allow developers more design flexibility in OS projects.

Despite these promising beginnings, without any discussions with JWN leaders, Planning Division staff ignored a formal JWN request to be involved in pilot OS projects and move ahead with the proposed "alternative path" proposal. (As of publication deadline for this newsletter, the City has not explained why they ignored the JWN request or when the JWN can move ahead with OS and "alternative path" processes in our area.) City Web site: www.eugene-or.gov/oppsiting.

DON'T READ THIS ARTICLE!

Instead take just two minutes to sign up for JWN e-NEWS at jwneugene.org. Your e-mail address is secure and never shared. You can opt-out at any time.

You'll get timely alerts, meeting and event announcements and concise summaries of important issues affecting you and your household or business.

News from the JWN Board

The new JWN board has met several times since April elections to work on the top priority for next year, which is to strengthen the JWN organization and increase participation. The board has established both short-term (April 2011) and long-term (ten year) criteria to assess the organization's health, key obstacles to meeting objectives, and specific actions to overcome the obstacles and build a durable, functional neighborhood organization.

Maintaining a thriving, broadly supported neighborhood association is a challenge in neighborhoods across the City. In the recent neighborhood survey, among 474 JWN respondents, 44 percent said they had participated in the JWN while 49 percent had not and 7 percent weren't aware of the JWN. JWN participation compares favorably with city-wide responses of 31 percent who participated in their neighborhood organization, 54 percent who did not, and 15 percent who weren't aware of their organization. Nevertheless, the board recognizes from direct experience that active participation in the JWN and volunteering for JWN board positions are below levels necessary for a durable organization that can effectively serve JWN members' interests.

Survey respondents listed the top ways to encourage greater participation in the JWN as: Knowing other people who participate, more information about the organization, relevant meeting topics and meaningful opportunities to influence decisions that affect my neighborhood. The board will focus on these areas as we work to strengthen the organization to address the many major challenges and opportunities for JWN residents, property owners and business principals over the next year. (See "Looking Ahead for Your Neighborhood" on page 3.)

Please share your own observations and advice with the board by sending an e-mail to: execboard@jwneugene.org

A financial note: The JWN has a current balance of approximately \$1,360 in our checking account. In addition, the City account for JWN publications and events during the 2010-2011 fiscal year stands at approximately \$8,200. The board intends to use these funds to publish and mail four newsletters (approximately \$1,500 per newsletter), host four neighborhood events and support other communications and outreach over the coming year.

JWN is having a Tree Party this Fall!!!

JWN Members Elect New Executive Board

At the April 13, 2010 General Meeting, JWN members elected a new Executive Board. Paul Conte, a former JWN co-chair, will serve as the new Chair; with Sue Cummings, a returning board member, serving as vice chair. At large board members include returning board members Tony Rosta, Rene Kane and Garrick Mishaga, and new volunteers Josh Bolton and Tom Happy. JWN board members serve one year terms.

We all offer a big THANK YOU to outgoing board members Della Perry (former chair), Ilona Koleszar (former vice chair) and Carol Defazio.

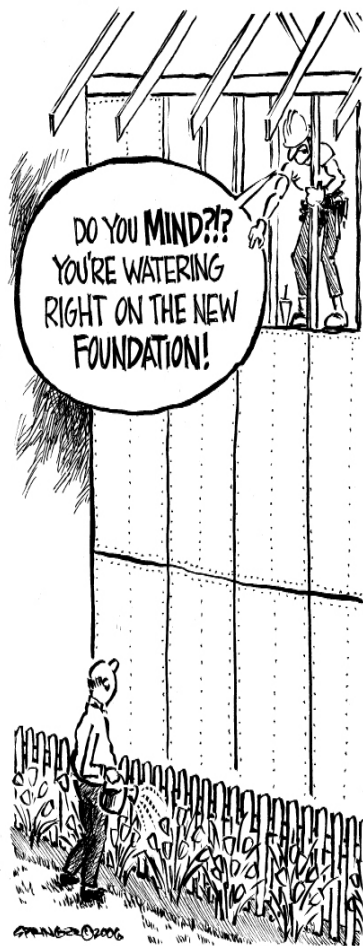
Public Safety, Incompatible Development and Traffic Issues Top Concerns in JWN Survey

Paul Conte

Over 500 JWN members voiced their views in the neighborhood survey conducted by the City in summer and fall 2009. Among home owners, renters, non-resident property owners and business principals the top two concerns were incompatible development and public safety. The third-ranked concern overall, and among all groups but renters, was traffic issues. For renters, the third ranked concern was not feeling connected to the neighborhood.

The top three JWN functions that respondents wanted were: keeping neighbors informed, representing neighborhood interests and sponsoring neighborhood projects. The JWN had one of the top response rates among all neighborhood associations and earned a \$200 prize from the City for our survey outreach success.

You can view survey results on the JWN Web site.



Viewpoint: Important Decisions Coming for West Eugene EmX

Ilona Koleszar

Planning for the west Eugene extension of the EmX system for a line from Eugene Station to a likely terminus at Commerce Street moved into the fast lane, the “locally preferred alternative” likely to be chosen this October or November. At the time of this writing, alternative route alignments include two routes that travel on W. 11th Ave., Jefferson St. and W. 13th Ave. from downtown to Chambers St. and continues west via either Chambers St. and W. 11th Ave. or along Amazon Creek and W. 11th Ave. Two other routes travel on Charnelton and/or Lincoln Sts. to W. 6th and 7th Aves., then on Garfield St. to either W. 11th Ave. or to the W. 7th Place couplet.

At its June 9 Open House LTD Staff published the results of studies of over 58 design options, along with their recommendations that the Amazon Channel and W 7th Place options be eliminated, and that the Commerce Street terminus be retained. LTD Staff will make those recommendations to the LTD Board on June 23, and ask for the Board’s approval. As a result, by the time you read this article, the LTD Board will have made decisions as to which options will be retained or eliminated.

Based on the Board’s decisions on June 23, LTD Staff will finalize its Alternatives Analysis Report, which will examine route and design alternatives with respect to the project’s purpose, need, goals and objectives; environmental impacts (built and natural); cost and ridership. The Alternatives Analysis will be submitted to and reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration prior to release to the general public sometime in September this year. There will be a 60 day public comment period, during which I encourage JWN members to weigh in on the alternatives. Comments can be made on line at weemx.ltd.org, or by e-mail at we.emx@ltd.org.

Residents for Responsible Rapid Transit (3RT), whose members have spent many hours studying potential West Eugene EmX routes, believe the W. 6th/7th Aves, W. 7th Place alternative will have the least impact on homes, businesses and wildlife, cost less and provide superior connections with neighborhood feeder routes. We recommend retaining the 7th Place option and eliminating the Amazon Channel, and urge you to submit your own comments to LTD regarding elimination or retention of options even if formal action has already been taken by the LTD Board. Such comments also can be made at the sites listed above.

Detailed route alternatives section maps are available on the LTD website at www.ltd.org. (Click on the EmX icon, then West Eugene EmX Extension.) I encourage you to use the maps to walk, bike or ride the route alternatives and imagine EmX buses, guideways and station infrastructure along the way. Consider which route segments pass in front of homes, close to the Amazon pedestrian and bike path or would impact businesses’ access and frontage. You can also take a virtual tour on the LTD Web site by clicking the footprint icon labeled “Proposed EmX Route Walking Map Tours.”

Ilona Koleszar is a member of 3RT and a member of LTD’s West Eugene EmX Extension Corridor Committee. The contents of this article are the opinions of the author.

Looking Ahead for Your Neighborhood

Our neighborhood faces some major challenges and opportunities over the coming year. Here are some of the unfolding issues and events that could have a large impact on the neighborhood quality of life: The route and design of LTD’s EmX (bus rapid transit); ongoing problems with property and drug-related crimes; establishing a new Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for Eugene and possible new policies to increase density in existing neighborhoods; changes to the R-1 (“low density”) zoning standards that cover large portions of the JWN; new alley right-of-way and paving standards and changes to how alley paving costs are allocated to adjacent property owners; potential new, large-scale buildings in the area between downtown and Jefferson St.; new uses or redevelopment of the Fairgrounds.

There are also many opportunities out there, including: Expanding infill compatibility standards to additional neighborhood areas; promoting local business vitality in areas such as Blair Island, Midtown and the commercial sections of W. 11th and W. 13th Avenues; improving maintenance and upkeep of buildings, especially rentals; tree-planting to bolster our “urban forest”; habitat improvement of Amazon Creek.

As one of Eugene’s officially-chartered neighborhood organizations, the JWN is a powerful vehicle to make good things happen and to protect the neighborhood. All it takes is you and your neighbors to supply the time and energy to make it happen.

JWN Volunteer Opportunities

Share the work and the joy! Here are some specific ways you can help your neighborhood. And, don’t worry – you won’t be on your own. For all of the positions, an experienced board member will provide technical or organizational help when needed.

Web site manager. Use the Yahoo! Web page design tool to add and revise content on the JWN Web site at jwneugene.org. You don’t need to be an HTML expert, but should be comfortable with Web page design elements, such as text boxes and images. An experienced neighbor will provide technical help when needed.

E-mail editor. Use the iContact e-mail design tool to add content to the JWN e-NEWS e-mails that are sent to subscribers. You should be comfortable with Web page or document layout. An.

Newsletter editor. Use a document layout tool to edit and create four-page, quarterly newsletters from content supplied by other people. You should have a good grasp of grammar and punctuation. An experienced neighbor will provide technical help when needed.

Contact list coordinator and helpers. Coordinator updates the JWN contact list, using basic spreadsheet tools (e.g., Excel). Helpers enter data from meeting sign-up cards, etc.

Meeting setup coordinators and helpers. Coordinators supervise and help setup (6:30 to 7:00 p.m.) and breakdown (9:00 to 9:30 p.m.) for monthly JWN general meetings. Helpers assist.

Event coordinators and helpers. Coordinators work as a two-person team to organize a picnic, party or other event. Helpers assist. You can work on one or more projects in either role.

Outreach coordinators and helpers. Coordinators organize outreach to groups of JWN members to determine members’ interests, inform members of JWN benefits and encourage participation. Helpers assist. Coordinators can choose to focus on a particular segment of the JWN membership, including cultural groups, business principals, renters, etc.

JWN Special Interest Group (SIG) coordinators. Coordinators organize meetings, communication and activities centered on specific interests related to the JWN, e.g., gardening, bicycling, Monroe Park, traffic calming, etc. The JWN board provides limited assistance (e.g., publication & Web space, e-mail distribution, help with neighborhood matching grant applications, etc.) to recognized SIGs. Some SIGs may become formal JWN committees.

At Last! JWN Areas Covered By Infill Compatibility Standards

Paul Conte

On December 14, 2009, City Council voted unanimously (8-0) to adopt the S-JW special area zone that implements infill compatibility standards proposed by the JWN.

Council's action followed the unanimous recommendation of the Planning Commission in October. Commissioner Randy Hledik commended the neighborhood for its work, saying: "I think this whole effort demonstrates how Growth Management Policy 6 can be implemented – 'increasing density while preserving the character of neighborhoods.' Outstanding job!" Commissioner John Lawless added his praise: "[This effort] has always had a very high bar set for the outcome, and I think that's been achieved. And, I would love nothing more than to have this be forwarded on to City Council for approval"

The new development standards were also supported by the Friends of Eugene and the Home Builders Association, reflecting how these standards allow significant new development while ensuring new development in the area covered by the S-JW standards will be compatible.

You'll find a map of the area covered by the new S-JW zone, a simplified description of the development standards and answers to frequently asked questions on the JWN Web site. (Contact the JWN Chair at 541.344.2552 for a printed copy, if you don't have access to the internet.)

The "Tree Party" Is Coming to JWN this Fall!

Rene Kane

No, not "Tea" Party -- "Tree" Party. Board members are working with folks at Eugene Tree Foundation and the City's Urban Forestry Program to grow our neighborhood's urban forest. A kickoff "Tree Party" is being planned for this Fall, just as the leaves hit their most brilliant colors. The project's goal is to work with residents, property owners and business to plant at least one hundred new trees in the JWN during late Fall and Winter.

To be held in one of our neighborhood parks, the party will include information on obtaining free or low-cost trees; replacing diseased, noxious or hazardous trees; and caring for newly planted trees. In addition, Eugene Wholesale Nursery will be bringing large examples of colorful street trees, including various kinds of maples, ashes and others to help you select the perfect tree(s) for your location. There will also be a walking tour of local trees, including many that have been recently planted by neighborhood volunteers.

The JWN Tree Party will be fun for the entire family, with hot cider, ginger cookies and other treats. So, watch for the specific date, time and location to be announced in September. Sign up for e-NEWS at www.jwneugene.org.

Jefferson Westside Neighbors Executive Board

Chair:

Paul Conte 541-344-2552, chair@jwneugene.org

Vice-chair: Sue Cummings

Treasurer: Garrick Mishaga

Secretary: rotating

At-large Board Members:

Josh Bolton, Sue Cummings, Tomm Happy, Rene Kane,

Garrick Mishaga, Tony Rosta

Newsletter Editor: Rene Kane

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JWN newsletter policy

This is the official newsletter of the Jefferson Westside Neighbors. The newsletter Editor, in conjunction with the JWN Board, is responsible for all content, subject to City approval in City-funded issues. (This issue was printed with City of Eugene funds.) Articles with bylines reflect the opinion of the authors and not necessarily that of the JWN Board, the neighborhood association, or City staff or public officials. We welcome submissions of all types, including articles and letters. All submissions are subject to editing or shortening for publication. All submissions must be accompanied by the author's name, home address, and phone number or e-mail address. (We do not publish authors' addresses, phone numbers, or e-mail addresses unless requested by the author.) To submit an article or letter, or for more information, please contact Rene Kane, JWN newsletter editor at renekane@comcast.net, or 541-343-4309.

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Visit Neighborhoods on the Web:
www.eugene-or.gov




Neighborhood News

The Official Newsletter of Jefferson Westside Neighbors

Learn about important issues that affect you and where you live/work/play! Want to know about the success of JWN's infill standards efforts? EmX in JWN Want to know more about events in the neighborhood, safety, parks, planning and land use... and how YOU can be involved in making the JWN an even better neighborhood??

Open NOW...



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