



# September 2006 NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the Jefferson Westside Neighbors

## SEPTEMBER 12, 2006 MEETING NOTICE

### GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

McNail Riley House

**Northwest Corner of 13th Avenue and Jefferson St.**

**General meeting called to order. 7:00 p.m.**

Introductions and announcements.

7:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

**Meet your neighbors and find out the latest on:**

**Community organizations, proposed zoning changes, and other important neighborhood issues.**

If you have an announcement for the meeting, please provide the information to one of the Co-chairs by noon the day of the meeting. In order to provide as much meeting time as possible to conduct neighborhood business and offer informative programs, announcements at the meeting are limited to one minute. We recommend bringing 50 copies of a handout that includes details about events or organizations.

**New agenda items from members. 7:15 to 7:25 p.m.**

Members may introduce topics for deliberation and possible vote at the next general meeting, which is October 10. By two-thirds vote during Agenda Adjustments (see below), a motion related to a topic not on the current meeting's agenda may be considered and voted on at the same meeting.

If you have a new agenda item, please notify one of the Co-chairs by Noon the day of the meeting.

**Agenda adjustments. 7:25 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

By two-thirds vote, the current meeting's agenda topics and allocated times, as well as the scheduled adjournment time may be adjusted.

**Reports from Co-chairs and Treasurer. 7:30 to 7:40 p.m.**

Members' questions/comments for the Executive Board.

### DOOR PRIZE DRAWING

**!!! Free "Ultimate Car Wash" from Elite Car Bath**

**Neighborhood actions. 7:40 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

o Motion to endorse NLC recommendation for Planning Division priorities. (See "infill standards" article on page 4.)

o Motion to endorse action to temporarily prohibit upzonings in Jefferson "redesignated" residential area. (See "Viewpoint" article on page 2.)

**General meeting adjourned. 8:00 p.m.**

By two-thirds vote, the general meeting can be extended.

**DOOR PRIZE DRAWING!!! Free One-hour massage**

**PROGRAM — 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

**Creating a Vision for**

**Jefferson and Westside Neighborhoods**

Neighborhood discussion and goal-setting. Share your major concerns and aspirations. Help set the JWN Executive Board's goals for the coming year. Special guest Eugene Police Chief Robert Lehner will join us to offer his insights from a wealth of experience working with neighborhood organizations in Eugene and other cities.

**TWO DOOR PRIZE DRAWINGS!!! Free Oil and Filter change (import car/truck) from Sandpiper Import Service, and a Free "Ultimate Car Wash" from Elite Car Bath!**

*Can't make this meeting or have an idea for a future meeting's program? The JWN Board would like to hear from you. Send an e-mail to either JWN Co-Chair (see page 4).*

## Westside Residents Fear Lot Partition Threatens Neighborhood

The absentee owners of the rental property at 933 W. 13th Ave. have applied to divide the current lot into two lots, one of which would be occupied by the existing single-family house and the other would be used to build a new four-plex and parking onto W. 12th Alley. The application unambiguously states the four-plex will be accessed only from the alley, which directly violates the motion City Council adopted in 2000 prohibiting the creation of new alley access lots.

What's more, the developers seek to have the City either exempt them from the legal requirement to pave the alley (since it will be the only access to the apartments) or require the other property owners on the alley to pay over half the cost of paving the alley.

The JWN Executive Board held an emergency meeting and voted unanimously to oppose the application. The JWN Board subsequently filed opposing testimony that incorporated a 28-page legal brief prepared by the law firm of Hutchinson, Cox, Coons, DuPriest, Orr & Sherlock, P.C. on behalf of Paul Conte, one of the JWN co-chairs. (The attorneys fees were paid by private funds, and the JWN incurred no expense.) Over thirty adjacent and nearby residents also filed opposition testimony during the public comment period. No one filed any supporting comments.

The legal brief argues the owners are attempting to use a misinterpretation of the zoning code to circumvent Council's intent and the legal requirements for minimum lot width. (Initial discussions with Planning Division staff indicated they accepted the owners' interpretation of the relevant code.)

In addition, the JWN and residents have filed extensive testimony that a four-plex and parking jammed on an alley access lot, and surrounded by five single-family houses, would be grossly incompatible with the neighborhood character and would therefore conflict with the adopted provisions of the Westside Neighborhood Plan, which prohibits land use actions that would cause "erosion of the neighborhood's residential character."

In the eyes of residents who filed opposing testimony, approval of this request would have a tremendously detrimental impact on much of the Jefferson and Westside neighborhoods (all the area that's zoned R-2 and has alleys). According to the legal advice provided the JWN co-chairs, approval would essentially void the Council's prohibition against alley access lots, and it would render meaningless the pivotal policy in the Westside Refinement Plan that protects neighborhood character.

A decision from the Planning Director is due in early September. The JWN Board has voted to appeal the decision if the partition is approved, contingent on sufficient funds being donated or a subsequent vote to authorize payment of the appeal fee.

The brief and more details and analysis are available on the JWN Web site or by contacting either co-chair. If you would like to pledge a tax-deductible contribution, small or large, to the appeal fund, please contact either co-chair.

## VIEWPOINT

### City Fails to Address Risks to Jefferson Neighborhood

By Paul Conte

As reported in the April issue of the JWN newsletter, a 15-block, single-family area of the Jefferson neighborhood was – without forewarning – redesignated earlier this year to allow “upzonings” that would permit intensive, multi-unit development throughout the area. This means a healthy, stable part of our neighborhood that has stood the test of time for more than fifty years has suddenly become vulnerable to triplexes and four-plexes being jammed in backyards and alleys, ruining the privacy and peace of adjacent families.

The JWN adopted a motion in March calling for a moratorium on upzonings until effective infill compatibility standards were in place. In July, the independent advocacy group, Jefferson and Westside Residents for Healthy Neighborhoods (JWReHN) submitted a petition to City Council with 286 signatures requesting action to prevent upzonings until standards were in place. The JWN co-chairs (who are both also members of JWReHN) and many other residents have testified before City Council in support of this effort.

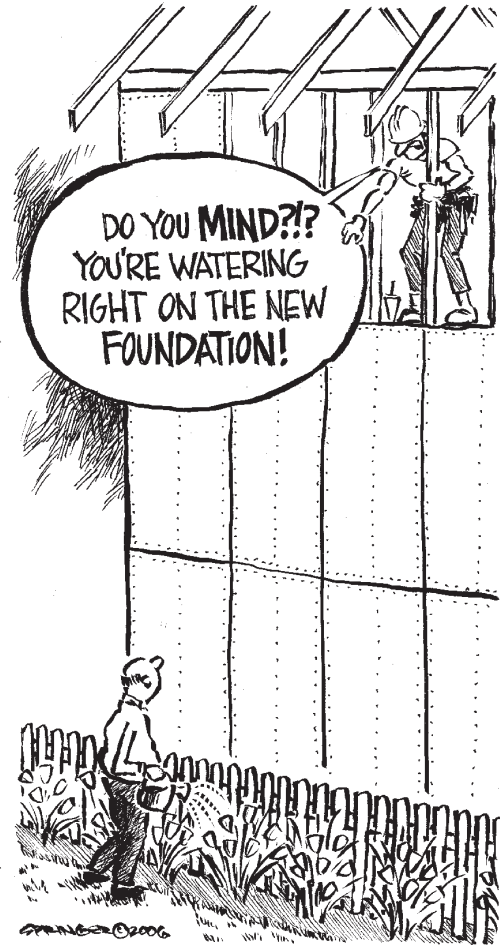
On several occasions, our City Councilor, Bonny Bettman sought solutions from the City’s Planning staff. Instead, staff refused to acknowledge the problem and resisted any action to address residents’ concerns. Residents relentlessly took their case to the City Council, and on July 24, Council voted 6-1 (David Kelly cast the only opposing vote) to direct staff to work with the JWN to bring back solutions.

After several weeks of frustrating effort, the JWN co-chairs thought we had an agreement for a simple approach that wasn’t perfect, but would mitigate the problem if implemented in good faith and without delay. The proposal was basically to amend land use plans and zoning code to designate the area back to single-family until effective infill standards could be adopted. As a stop-gap measure, while these amendments worked their way through the hearings and adoption process, the Planning Director would issue an “interpretation” that limited the allowable density to well below the R-2 zone maximum.

The first warning that our agreement was not as solid as we thought came when Planning staff would not let the co-chairs see in advance what they were sending to Councilors for the upcoming Council work session. When we saw the information a few days before the meeting, we understood why. Staff had listed the proposed motions we expected, but they had also included a “poison pill.” A sentence was added to require that the modest effort needed to implement the amendments must be the number one, City-wide priority over all other planning and land use tasks and projects the Planning Division is working on. Staff further explained this would require pulling resources from such important and high priority items as the South Ridgeline Habitat Study (and others). In conjunction with this maneuver, immediately before presenting the motion containing the “poison pill,” staff listed five reasons Council should not take any action at all.

The tactic sewed confusion and concern among some Councilors, and with David Kelly working against the proposal, it went down 5-4.

This was an unnecessary and heartbreaking outcome, and reflects the total “disconnect” of the Planning and Development Division management and lead staff from the real world of



Thanks to JWN neighbor Jesse Springer for this great cartoon!

neighborhood residents. We seem to be just numbers in some “density” scheme they have and lines on their maps.

There is still hope, though. I don’t believe the vote indicates lack of support from the Council majority. If the facts and choices can be brought clearly to the table, I think a majority of Councilors will support the families whose homes and most important financial asset are currently at risk.

What can you do to learn more and join the effort to protect our wonderful neighborhood? Come to the September 12 JWN meeting where we’ll begin to forge a vision for our neighborhood, set priorities, and plan strategies to address this issue and the many other challenges and aspirations we have. For more information, contact either co-chair and/or visit the JWN Web site.

*Opinions expressed are those of the author.*

#### 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 “Viewpoint” in the title 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 rkane@highstream.net, or 343-4309.



Visit Eugene Neighborhoods on the Web at [www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov).

# Jefferson Westside Neighbors News and Announcements

## Neighborhood Association Initiative

Acting on an adopted City Council priority, Councilors, City staff, and neighborhood association leaders have been working on an “action plan” to strengthen neighborhood associations, improve delivery of City services to neighborhoods, and address other neighborhood concerns and aspirations. The JWN Executive Board met with City representatives in August and provided feedback on the current version of the plan. You can also find information on the City’s Web site under “Mayor and City Council – Priority Issues.”

## Planning Division FY 07 Work Plan

Every year the City Council approves a formal work plan for the Eugene Planning Division. This plan includes a list of tasks and projects and ranks them by priority. For instance, last year work on Mixed Use Centers was the top priority and updating neighborhood refinement plans was at the bottom. Although it doesn’t receive much public attention, this work plan is of immense importance because the Planning Division generally doesn’t work on something unless it’s included in the work plan. And low priority items often get little attention, as well. The Council will consider the Planning Division work plan for FY 07 at their September 27 work session. At their August 22 meeting, the Neighborhood Leaders Council adopted two motions recommending infill compatibility standards, refinement plans (or a new form of neighborhood policy document), and preserving the natural environment be top priorities. You’ll find a link to the FY 06 work plan is posted on the City Web site’s “Planning Division” page.

## Amazon Planting Work Party, November 11

The JWN participates in a Stream Team Agreement with the City of Eugene, and has “adopted” the section of Amazon Creek that flows through the Jefferson neighborhood and by the Fairgrounds. This year there will be a work party on November 11 to plant new vegetation along the banks. If you’d like to join the fun, contact Jon Belcher at jbelcher@efn.org or 343-6695.

## Neighborhood Matching Grants

You don’t need money to be happy, but it sure helps a neighborhood! City Council has approved a neighborhood matching grants program that will distribute \$50,000 per year for three years. Selected grants receive a match for every dollar in cash or “in-kind” that they put into the project. If you or your organization would like to apply, visit the JWN Web site or contact either JWN co-chair or Beth Bridges at 682-5272 to learn how.

## Residents’ parking to remain on Polk Street

This summer, the Eugene Public Works Department floated a proposal that would have removed parking from one side of Polk Street from W. 13th Ave. to W. 18th Ave. in association with the resurfacing of that section of the street. The plan was to then add striping for bike lanes on this stretch of Polk Street. Ultimately, the City decided to hold off in response to the JWN Board’s and area residents’ concerns that there needed to first be a reasonable opportunity for public involvement; an adequate assessment of the potential negative impacts on parking, traffic speed, the pedestrian environment, and other impacts on adjacent and nearby residents; and an adequate evaluation of alternative bike routes to serve the intended purpose of the proposed bike lanes. This was a good example of a City department listening to people who live in a neighborhood before they take action that may significantly impact residents.

## McNail-Riley House Improvements

This summer the City repaired the main meeting room floor of the McNail-Riley House and replaced the kitchen and bathroom floor coverings. The City also provided new chairs, chair rack, and tables. Viva la différence! Thanks to all the people, including our board member Erika Seiferling who coordinated all the effort.

## Fun in the Parks at JWN Picnic, National Neighbors Night Out, and Monroe Park Grand Opening

JWN’s two neighborhood parks — Monroe and Charnel-Mulligan — were party central this summer! On June 13th, we held the annual JWN Neighborhood Picnic at Monroe Park. Children almost outnumbered adults and we ate, met new neighbors, played games, ate, threw water balloons, and ate. Thanks go to Jennifer Barwood, Kyle Burns, Joan McDonald and Garrick Mishaga for party planning, set-up and hauling. Angela Rooney stayed until the last errant paper cup was retrieved. Thanks to Hiron’s, Sweet Life Patisserie, New Frontier Market, Monroe Street Café, Café Ma’am, Allan Brothers Coffee, Steve Norris from Neighborhood Services, Eugene Police Bike Patrol and Public Safety Station staff, and the many JWN neighbors who made the picnic a great success!

On August 1, JWN joined thousands of other neighborhoods and communities in celebrating National Neighbors Night Out at Charnel-Mulligan Park. Representatives from the Eugene Police Department visited with neighbors, shared information on neighborhood and home security and listened to our concerns. Everyone (including McGruff the Crime Dog) enjoyed ice cream generously donated by Cornucopia. Thanks, Allison!

A monumental and well-organized effort by neighborhood residents to reclaim Monroe Park has succeeded! Monroe Park celebrated its Grand Re-opening on August 22nd. Changes to the park were funded through \$50,000 from the 1998 city park bond and an additional \$50,000 came from a Community Development Block Grant. A new sandbox, new landscaping and increased police bicycle patrols have resulted in a safer, more family-friendly park. Thanks to all of you who worked so hard to reclaim Monroe Park for the neighborhood!

## JWN Planning Greater Involvement of Neighborhood Businesses

The JWN Board recognizes that our neighborhood businesses are a valuable part of our community, so board member Glenn Smeed, who owns Smeed Sound Systems on the corner of W. 8th Ave. and Monroe Street will be spearheading the board’s effort to help residents get to know and support their business neighbors and vice-versa. As a first start, we’re creating a business directory on the JWN Web site and Glenn will be talking to local business owners to get their ideas for ways they can be involved with the JWN. If you’d like to be involved or have your company included in the directory, contact either JWN co-chair.

If you would like more information on any of the news items you see here, contact one of the JWN Co-chairs.

Do you have a news item or announcement you’d like included in a JWN publication? Just contact Rene Kane at rkane@highstream.net or 343-4309.

*I like nonsense; it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it’s a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I like to do, and that enables you to laugh at life’s realities.*

-- Dr. Suess

**JWN minutes, financial report, and board actions summary**

The JWN held no general meetings in June, July, and August, but the Executive Board took a number of actions over the summer. The following provides a brief summary. Because of space limitations, we don't print complete minutes in the newsletter. However, full minutes of all meetings are available on the JWN Web site or by requesting a printed copy from either co-chair.

**Financial report:** As of August 23, 2006, the JWN cash balance was \$2,619.55. Expenses for July and August included: \$25.00 for annual membership in Eugene Neighbors, Inc. and \$135.69 for supplies for the JWN annual picnic and the Neighbors Night Out event.

**May 15:** Recommended public (rather than private) sale of surplus Lane County property near Polk Street. Opposed removal of parking on Polk Street until adequate consideration of impacts.

**June 19:** Approved sponsorship of Amazon Canal. Adopted a standard agenda structure for JWN Executive Board meetings. Approved Co-chairs taking action before City Council to further the March 14 JWN motions to prevent zone changes in "redesignated" area of Jefferson neighborhood.

**July 17:** Adopted a standard agenda and program structure for JWN General meetings.

**August 1:** Opposed approval of lot partition and four-plex development at 933 W. 13th Ave. because it conflicts with Council prohibition against alley access lots and is incompatible with the Westside Neighborhood Plan.

**August 15:** Authorized appeal if the lot partition at 933 W. 13th Ave. is approved, contingent on contributions to cover costs or subsequent vote of Executive Board to authorize funds. Recommended City Council approve amending the Jefferson/Far West Refinement Plan and Metro Plan to designate the recently redesignated area of Jefferson neighborhood back to "Low Density Residential." And, in the interim, Planning Director issue an interpretation of "Low-Medium Density Residential" as a stop-gap measure to mitigate the negative impacts of potential R-2 upzonings in this area. Renewed membership in Eugene Neighbors, Inc., and authorized accounts for tax-deductible contributions to JWN activities.

**JWN Web site and e-NEWS Launch**

JWN recently launched its independent Web site at [jwneugene.org](http://jwneugene.org). The site is regularly updated with news and announcements and has a growing number of helpful resources. Wonder who to call about an abandoned car? Interested in composting? Find over forty "Frequently Called Numbers" for City agencies. Want to find a local bakery or auto repair shop? Consult the JWN Business Directory. Need to track what's really going on with zoning and other land use actions in your neighborhood – get the unfiltered story on the JWN Web site.

At the same time we also began the JWN e-NEWS, a regular e-mail service that provides timely summaries of neighborhood news, meeting announcements, and special "alerts" when something critical is in the works. You can enjoy the benefits of the JWN e-NEWS and still receive printed newsletters and announcements. As we upgrade our list management, we'll offer JWN members the option to select which JWN publications you want to receive and whether you want electronic, printed, or both forms. More choices and more timely delivery are our goals. To begin receiving the JWN e-NEWS, simply send an e-mail request to: [co-chairs@jwneugene.org](mailto:co-chairs@jwneugene.org). You can also call either co-chair for more information.

**Eugene Neighborhood Services Policy Statement:** This is the official newsletter of the Jefferson Westside Neighbors. Newsletters are published courtesy of the City of Eugene. Newsletters are produced by neighborhood volunteers and are free to the residents and businesses of the neighborhood. Space is available for letters to the editor with editorial comment from the neighbors. Signed letters will be printed as space permits. Editorials express the authors view and not that of the neighborhood association, the City's elected officials or city staff.

**VIEWPOINT**

**Update on Opportunity Siting and Infill Standards**

*By Paul Conte*

City Council has funded two projects that may have a significant impact on neighborhoods, especially Jefferson and Westside.

One is to develop infill compatibility standards. At their December 14, 2005 work session, City Council directed staff to make this a high priority. The basic goal is something many residents of the JWN have been seeking for decades – appropriate and effective zoning standards that will make sure infill development is harmonious in intensity and design with the surrounding neighborhood. Simple enough and something that should have been done decades ago before cranking up the allowable density in the R-2 and R-3 sections of our neighborhoods.

As of the August 21 Planning Commission meeting, the only tangible work product so far is a sketchy "draft work plan" that a number of neighborhood leaders, including both the JWN co-chairs, have testified doesn't provide for adequate neighborhood involvement in planning how the project will be conducted.

At their August 22 meeting, the Neighborhood Leaders Council voted to recommend that "Implement Infill Compatibility Standards" be the Planning Division's #1 priority in their FY 07 work plan. This recommendation will go to the Planning Commission and City Council, and hopefully at their joint work session on September 27, this critical project will be adopted as one of the Planning Division's top priorities and some real progress will be made.

"Opportunity Siting" (OS) is the City's "secret weapon" for achieving dense residential development without destroying neighborhoods -- which would be a welcome change from the current approach. OS is so secret, the City hasn't yet published any description of it that you can consult. Don't worry though because you can find a "Citizen's Guide to Opportunity Siting" on the JWN Web site (or contact a JWN co-chair to receive a printed copy).

In brief, opportunity siting provides incentives to a property owner or developer to create well-designed medium- or high-density residential development on specific sites where a properly designed development will not negatively impact nearby neighborhoods. The key here, of course, is substantial resident participation in deciding which sites are appropriate and which designs are acceptable. Otherwise, OS becomes just another loophole in the already lax residential development standards.

OS was included in the same draft work plan mentioned above, and it's not easy from what was presented to figure out the role that neighborhood residents and organizations, such as the JWN, have in the process. The JWN Board will be keeping a close watch on both the OS and infill compatibility standards processes, and we'll provide more information on the JWN Web site and in the newsletter.

City Council is also supposed to discuss infill compatibility standards and OS at their September 27 work session.

*Opinions expressed are those of the author.*

**Jefferson Westside Neighbors  
Future Meetings:**  
JWN Executive Board Monday, September 19  
JWN General Membership Meeting, October 10

**Jefferson Westside Neighbors Executive Board**

**Co-chairs:**  
Paul Conte 344-2552 [pconte@picante-soft.com](mailto:pconte@picante-soft.com)  
Rene Kane 343-4309 [rkane@highstream.net](mailto:rkane@highstream.net)

**Treasurer:** Eric Gran      **Secretary:** Dale Deason

**At-large Board Members:**  
Kyle Burns, Erika Seiferling, Glenn Smeed,  
Angela Rooney, Garrick Mishaga Jr.

**Newsletter Editor:** Rene Kane  
**Newsletter Distribution:** David Tobin