

the

serving residents of the Fisher Park Neighborhood

Fisher Parker

OCTOBER 2004

NEIGHBORHOOD CHILDREN'S WEDNESDAY PLAY GROUP

With summer's heat behind us, our neighborhood's playgroup revives! Starting in October, parents with young children are encouraged to meet at the east park playground, **Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m.** Contact Allison Manning to join her playgroup reminder list. (All contact information is on last page.)

AUTUMN IN FISHER PARK

The Park Committee met in August, generating upcoming goals. Reforestation of the park is on-going with the purchase and planting of canopy trees, dogwoods and redbuds in November. Thanks to a City matching grant, \$4,500 will be spent this fall on trees. Carl Myatt, a new Park Committee member, is investigating materials for pathway resurfacing. Once approved, we will begin fundraising for pathways.



Mark your calendar to participate in our **Park Work Day, October 16**. We will replant park entry planters, plant spring-blooming bulbs in natural areas, and clean up debris. Please attend to help make our park beautiful! ~ Angie Leath

GARDENING GROUP GERMINATING

On Sunday afternoon, **October 31 at 3:00 p.m.**, neighbors interested in initiating a casual neighborhood gardening group are invited to meet at the home of Michael Byrd, **813 Simpson Street**. Together we'll "germinate" ideas for neighborhood gardeners, just in time for winter and holiday decorating. Please be prompt! Contact: Wanda Myatt, 272-0999.

SIDEWALKS FOR WALKING

Neighborhood walkers express frustration when cars are parked on sidewalks or in driveway entrances, blocking sidewalks. Our neighborhood is unusually fortunate to have many sidewalks, so please aid walkers by parking your vehicles fully into your driveway or where permitted along neighborhood streets.

Speaking of street parking, Greensboro Department of Transportation (GDOT) staff supports on-street parking where permitted as one of the few tools available to slow or "calm" neighborhood traffic. Our older neighborhood includes many homes without driveways (like some on Wharton and Magnolia) and many shared driveways, sometimes blocked by a visitor, so on-street parking is often the only parking available to a number of Fisher Park homeowners.

DATES TO REMEMBER

PARK WORK DAY

Saturday, October 16

9:00 a.m.-Noon

Rain Date Sunday, October 17, 1:00

p.m.-3:00 p.m.

333-2299

CEMETERY TOUR

Sunday, October 17

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. weather permitting.

\$5 for Cemetery Fund. 370-0457

GARDENING GROUP

813 Simpson Street

Sunday, October 31

3:00 p.m. 272-0999

NEIGHBORHOOD ANNUAL MEETING

Holy Trinity Church

Sunday, November 21

4:00 p.m. 574-1879

WINTER LUMINARIA DISPLAY

Sunday, December 12, dusk

(Rain date Sunday, Dec. 19, dusk)

\$5/kit. Details TBA

AFTER-THE-FACT COA APPLICATIONS ON THE RISE

A Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) is required before beginning exterior work in any Historic District. This year, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has seen an increase in after-the-fact Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) applications from all three Historic Districts. If you live in a Historic District and proceed with exterior changes that require a CoA without obtaining one, then you must apply for a CoA after work has begun, risking civil fines of \$50-\$500/day and requirements to stop work and/or replace or repair unapproved exterior alterations. Why risk it?

TO COA OR NOT TO COA ...

First understand: CoAs are required only in the part of our neighborhood that is also within the Fisher Park Historic District. Unsure if you're in the Historic District? Call 373-2349 or visit our Web site to see the map. Additionally, this newsletter includes examples of: (1) projects that don't need a CoA, (2) projects that can simply and quickly get a CoA from city Historic District staff (Mike Cowhig or Stefan-Leih Kuns at 373-2349), and (3) projects that must go to the monthly Historic Preservation Commission meeting for approval. This short list of examples, and a copy of the full Historic District Manual and Design Guidelines, is always available at the city Historic District Web site, at our neighborhood Web site, and by calling 373-2349.

The short list does not cover every situation, so call when in doubt. Historic District staff and Commission members make concerted efforts to help property owners with their projects, while following the guidelines. Historic District staff observes:

- The guidelines exist to help protect the architectural integrity of our homes and businesses, particularly exterior details like windows, doors, porches, and architectural details.
- The value of our homes relates to our neighborhood's unique architectural integrity. If neighbors' homes lose interesting and unique features, it affects adjacent home's value.
- Historic Districts experience higher increases in property values than comparable non-historic districts.
- Historic Districts rely on neighbors to protect historic exterior features and property values by knowing the guidelines, sharing information with neighbors, and reporting violations.

New in the 'hood? Just contact volunteer Neighborhood Greeters who will deliver a copy of Historic District Guidelines along with other helpful neighborhood information.

FREE EXTERIOR DESIGN REVIEW SERVICES

Property owners who plan exterior changes within Greensboro's three Historic District neighborhoods are always invited to bring their design ideas to free monthly meetings of Greensboro's Historic District Design Review Committee. Volunteers with expertise in local Historic District guidelines will review your plans and share guidance. This free, expert advice for our property owners may save you a great deal of planning time, money, and mishaps. The Design Review Committee includes architects, landscape designers, and other volunteers. The Design Review Committee meets the 1st Thursday of each month, Plaza Level Conference Room, City Hall, 4:00 pm. Call the Historic District staff at 373-2349 to confirm your attendance and meeting times/dates. *Note: If you are in our neighborhood yet outside of our Historic District, we've recently learned you can still use these free exterior design review services!*



DELANCEY STREET ON ELM STREET

In newsletters this year we've highlighted group homes in our neighborhood, including Share-A-Home (for independent-living seniors, on Fisher Ave.) and Our House Too (for teen boys, on Eugene Street.) This issue highlights

Delancey Street, a group home at 811 North Elm Street from our interview of Ken Lee, Head of Intake for Greensboro's Delancey Street house.

The Delancey Street name derives from a street in New York City where early immigrants congregated to mingle, learn a trade, and integrate into American ways. In 1971, a program named Delancey Street began in San Francisco with four residents, a \$1,000 loan, and a dream to develop a new model to change the lives of substance abusers, former felons, and others who have hit bottom. The model empowers the people with the problems to become their own solution.

“Residents have met our society's most serious social problems and, by a process of each one helping another, with no professionals, no government funding, and at no charge to the clients, they work to solve problems from generations of poverty, illiteracy, lack of job skills, hardcore substance abuse, homelessness, repeat felons, teen pregnancies, and victims of every kind of abuse. Over several years, residents gain an academic education, three marketable skills, accountability, dignity, and integrity. Nationwide, Delancey Street has successfully graduated over 14,000 people from America's underclass into society as successful citizens leading productive lives.” [Source: Delancey Street Web site.]

Greensboro's Delancey Street home at 811 North Elm opened in the 1980s amid much neighborhood controversy. It remains the smallest of five Delancey facilities around the country, and residents can move among the five facilities. A maximum of 30 residents live here, with strict segregation of men and women. Only about one in ten who apply are accepted into this stringent program, in which the daily environment is highly structured. All needs for housing, clothing, and food are provided in abundance, so residents have no distractions, no excuses, and a positive environment for rehabilitation. Most residents have never before experienced such comfortable surroundings and such a neighborhood setting.



Delancey residents manage their self-supporting program. In Greensboro, they raise funds through annual Christmas tree and wreath sales, Delancey Street Moving & Transfer Company, and a small business creating and selling sand art containers to businesses. Within our neighborhood, Delancey residents are well known as the backbone of many neighborhood Park Work Days. They also provide our children's annual Easter Egg Hunt, and on occasion host an annual neighborhood picnic. Each December, Delancey Street house is among the most festive in our neighborhood, with lights defining every edge of its distinctive prairie-style architecture.

We asked, “What can neighbors do for Delancey Street?” The reply was simply an open invitation! Come visit, join us for lunch or supper, and learn about the success of Greensboro's Delancey Street program. With all other needs met, our Delancey Street neighbors' primary wish is to be included while becoming successful members of our community.

For additional information about the Delancey Street home in Fisher Park, contact Ken Lee at 379-8477.

FISHER PARK REVISED MISSION STATEMENT

Our neighborhood Board recently updated a mission statement. The new mission statement reads ...

To preserve and maintain the Fisher Park area of Greensboro, North Carolina, as a historic and scenic area for the benefit and education of the general public, and to preserve the residential character of the Fisher Park area.

Please contact any Board member with your comments.

NEXT GENERATION COMMITTEE

In 2003, the **Fisher Park Next Generation Committee** surveyed the entire neighborhood, received over 250 responses (of over 800 homes and businesses surveyed), then evaluated and categorized responses. That was a major accomplishment! Now we need volunteers to implement identified visions and goals for our neighborhood's future. If you're interested in serving on any committees to move forward with Fisher Park's identified goals for our neighborhood, contact Russ Clegg.

TOO POOPED TO SCOOP?

Since your dog has the energy to poop, surely you have the energy to scoop! Dog waste was a consistently high-ranked annoyance in our 2003 neighborhood-wide survey. Dog owners, please **scoop the poop** from sidewalks and our public park. Make your dogs proud of their owner!



LIVING IN OLD HOUSES

An August 11, 2004, National Public Radio program, "The Connection", discussed **two books** about the feelings that accompany life in an old house: the history, the privileges, the costs, and eventually selling it, giving it up to the next occupants. One of the book's authors offered an interesting perspective; living in an old house "reminds us of our own impermanence". "Old houses, with their layers of paint and other people's fingerprints, are a reminder of everything and everyone that came before. Like a door frame with pencil markings charting the growth of a child, an old house is a silent witness to change. It takes a particular blend of vision and respect to negotiate the fine line between preserving what makes the house special and needlessly living in the past. Two authors who have written about their families' old houses ... discuss the particular sense and sensibility of that place we call home." While available online, the entire radio program can be heard at http://www.theconnection.org/shows/2004/08/20040811_b_main.asp

The two books are: *Red House: Being a Mostly Accurate Account of New England's Oldest Continuously Lived-In House* by Sarah Messer and *The Big House: A Century in the Life of an American Summer Home* by George Colt.

Interested in creating a **history of your old house**? Visit www.fisherparknc.org/About_Us.html for a document Ann Stringfield created and shared during a Home History Workshop at our public library in 2002. The exploration is an adventure in itself.

JOIN FISHER PARK'S E-MAIL GROUP

Join <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fisherpark> to experience up-to-the minute news and neighbors' viewpoints. Once there, please review participation etiquette, peruse existing e-mails of interest, and then click on Edit My Membership. You can direct the service to send individual e-mails directly to you, or to receive them clustered into a daily digest. Either choice allows the e-mail to be "pushed" directly to you, the **ONLY** way you can receive time-sensitive information about issues that affect our neighborhood, such as immediate rezoning requests, lost and found animals, notice of break-ins, etc. The best part of this e-mail group is sharing; whether that be plants, viewpoints, or encouragement! When replying to neighborhood e-mails, please reply directly to the specific sender unless your reply clearly profits the entire group.

DOWNTOWN EVENT ORDINANCE AND NOISE ORDINANCE

In August, we alerted you to a new city Ordinance Amendment allowing special events until 1:00 a.m. on Fridays, Saturdays, and the eve of national holidays. Based on feedback from downtown neighborhoods, City Attorney Terry Wood has hosted two meetings with nearby neighborhood leaders and downtown event coordinators. An initial agreement was that, because downtown events now extend into the morning hours, then the core concerns, such as noise and traffic, need to be discussed and addressed.



A September meeting specifically addressed one primary concern: noise. Charlotte's new noise ordinance was reviewed as an example. Every Charlotte police officer carries a frequently calibrated noise meter. Disturbing noises are measured a specified distance from the noise. Officers first issue a warning. Second offences receive a \$100 fine; third offences a \$500 fine. Charlotte officers clarified that their ordinance, noise meters, and enforcement, only work because they are applied equally throughout the City. Citizens tend to respect that equality, rather than different areas having different conditions. In Greensboro, downtown event organizers prefer higher noise levels be allowed for downtown events. So there is much to be discussed. Please share with any Board member your thoughts on development of a potential new noise ordinance in Greensboro. This is a wonderful opportunity for improvement throughout the community!

REZONING REQUEST ON ELM STREET

Since the **Fisher Park Academy** pre-school closed its doors in 2003, developers have been standing in line to purchase this prime property in the central corridor of our neighborhood. Twice already, potential developers approached our Board with rezoning requests.

So far, each proposal suggests replacing the former pre-school building with three-story buildings, and each proposal has requested rezoning to multi-family residential. A current request seeks to rezone to RM-26 (Residential Multifamily) both the former Fisher Park Academy lot (currently General Office Medium Intensity) and a single-family residential lot on Magnolia Court. RM-26 allows multifamily use at a density of 26 units per acre or less.

At our September 27 Fisher Park Board meeting, a potential developer presented his request for RM-26 rezoning. Neighbors from Magnolia Street and Magnolia Court expressed concerns about the proposed project's housing density, building height, parking, dumpsters, landscaping, etc. Board members voted to support RM-26 rezoning of both properties, with several conditions. At the subsequent September 29 Historic Preservation Commission meeting, additional neighbors expressed concern about rezoning. The Commission voted to support RM-26 rezoning for the Fisher Park Academy lot, but to retain single-family RM-5 zoning for the Magnolia Court lot. The next step is a Zoning Commission meeting Monday October 11, 2:00 p.m. in City Council chambers. Call 373-2144 (Zoning Dept.) for details. The final step is City Council.

With any rezoning request, it is in your best interest to become informed of proposed developments and share viewpoints, whatever they are, with neighborhood Board members, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Zoning Commission, and City Council. Please engage in your community and share your opinions!

NEIGHBORHOOD ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar for our neighborhood-wide annual meeting, **Sunday, November 21, 4:00 p.m.** in the Education building of Holy Trinity Church, 607 North Greene Street. We review the year's accomplishments, elect officers, air concerns, share goals, and enjoy afternoon refreshments provided by neighborhood Board members.

As our neighborhood experiences change from within and pressures along our boundaries, it is increasingly important that we communicate with one another and our Board. Please join us for what is always a beneficial meeting. And remember, Fisher Park neighbors are welcome and encouraged to attend all monthly Board meetings.

**FISHER PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
P. O. BOX 2043, GREENSBORO, NC 27401-1612
CONTACTS – 2004**

Board of Directors			
Position	Name	Phone	E-mail
President	Russ Clegg	574-1879	russang@aol.com
President-Elect	Allison Manning	275-8833	abdmanning@yahoo.com
Secretary	Carol LaJeunesse	272-5564	opexcel@aol.com
Treasurer	vacant		
Past President	Genie Schwartz	456-7594	eschwartz@triad.rr.com
Board	Blair Barton-Percival	273-3365	bfb4@cornell.edu
Board	Michael Byrd	274-8361	michaellbyrd1@aol.com
Board	Lawrence Cox	274-6322	lcox@haganproperties.com
Board	Nina Dabbs	230-0422	nsdabbs@aol.com
Board	Anne Daniel	275-4050	annerdaniel@aol.com
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Board	Roger Seel	275-3470	rseel@triad.rr.com
Board	David Shub	274-0363	shubb99@yahoo.com
Board	George Weldon	379-0902	george_weldon@vfc.com
Other Contacts			
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	Liz Urquhart	373-1250	liz.urquhart@ugcorp.com
Webmaster	Ann Stringfield	370-0457	infocrofters@triad.rr.com
Park Committee	Todd McCain	333-2299	stmccain@aol.com
	Geoffrey Wall	274-2915	ghwall@infionline.net
West Side Greeter	Rachel Canon-Percival	273-3365	bfb4@cornell.edu
East Side Greeter	Melissa Ouellette	273-2036	mouellette@triad.rr.com
Neighborhood Watch	Natalie Koeplinger	378-0108	n/a
Young Fisher Park Playgroup	Allison Manning	275-8833	abdmanning@yahoo.com
Social Committee	Michael Byrd	274-8361	michaellbyrd1@aol.com
Design Review Committee	Allison Manning	275-8833	abdmanning@yahoo.com
City Council Rep.	Claudette Burroughs-White	379-0050	burroughswhite@prodigy.net
County Commissioner Rep.	Jeff Thigpen	316-1983	jthigpe@co.guilford.nc.us
Schedule	Monthly neighborhood association meetings are held 6:00 p.m. the Monday before the final Wednesday of each month. Meetings are open to all residents. Upcoming meetings are Monday, October 25 and Monday, November 22, 2004. Our annual neighborhood meeting is Sunday November 21. Call Russ Clegg, President, to confirm dates and times.		

City of Greensboro and Other Contacts		
Department/Company	Purpose	Phone
City Historic District Staff	Historic district guidelines, application for certificate of appropriateness, free advice	373-2349
Zoning Enforcement	Parking in front yards, historic district guidelines enforcement	373-2630
Ordinance Enforcement	Housing inspections, abandoned vehicles, lot cleanup	373-2111
Duke Power	Streetlight outage	378-9451
Police	Help for emergencies and non-emergencies/enforcement	Emergency: 911 Non-Emergency: 373-2222
Fisher Park ListServe	Subscribe: mailto:fisherpark-subscribe@yahoo.com	Submit e-mail: fisherpark@yahoogroups.com