

WESTWOOD PARK ASSOCIATION



Newsletter ↪ *Summer* ↪ 2006

Letter from the President

Congratulations to the Ocean Avenue Revitalization Committee for winning a \$10,000 grant from the city to help clean up Ocean Avenue. The OARC's community activists and local volunteers have been working hard to organize merchants, neighbors, and city resources to improve the commercial strip of Ocean Avenue. Please read the OARC article in this newsletter to find out more about the group's work and how you might want to get involved.

Speaking of grants, the Westwood Park Association is also pursuing grants from the city to help our efforts to refurbish aging irrigation systems, replace missing and dying trees, and also improve the landscaping of our common areas. Neighborhood involvement is an important factor in getting these grants. Many residents have already signed on to help with such things as landscape design, planting trees and shrubs, laying sod, and so forth. Anyone interested in joining this effort should contact our Gardening Committee Chairperson, Dan Joraanstad, at djoraanstad@yahoo.com or 415-586-6910.

I also want to let you know that the Association is closely monitoring the Balboa Park/Ocean Avenue Development Plan. This project has been stalled due to lack of funds. The next step is expected to happen in July, when public comments can be made about the plan's Environmental Impact Review. At that time, we can express our concerns about building height limits, parking, and traffic. The Association will keep you informed as this process continues.

Have a great summer!

Greg Clinton

board@westwoodpark.com

Westwood Park Association Board Members

President
Greg Clinton

Vice President
Anita Theoharis

Secretary
Nanette Asimov

Co-Treasurers
Julie Hagelshaw & Grant Edelstone

Member at Large
Anne Chen

Member at Large
Bob Hermann

Members of the Westwood Park Association Board of Directors are volunteers elected to serve three-year terms.

Board meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of each month at the home of a board member, and begin at 7 p.m.

For information and the location of upcoming meetings, visit www.westwoodpark.com.

Contact us via e-mail at:
board@westwoodpark.com,
or by voicemail at:
415-333-1125
or by mail at:
P.O. Box 27901 #770
SF, CA 94127

Perks of the Park

Westwood Park Limerick Contest!

Westwood Parkers please open your eyes,
For this newsletter's giving a prize!
Write a limerick with spark,
'Bout our own Westwood Park;
And the winner will win a surprise!

Please send your entries by August 1, with Limerick Contest in the subject line, to newsletter@westwoodpark.com, or mail your entry to: P.O. Box 27901 #770, San Francisco, California 94127.

The Story on Adding Stories

by Anita Theoharis

You love Westwood Park, but your house is feeling cramped. So you decide to expand. Can you build up? The answer is: *probably not*.

As you know, Westwood Park enjoys the distinction of being the first Residential Character District in San Francisco. That has allowed us to establish residential design guidelines specific to our neighborhood.

In the recent past, the Westwood Park Association has approved several remodeling projects that included expanding within the existing building envelope. These projects conformed to the guidelines and had strong neighborhood support.

A proposed vertical addition was recently disapproved because it did not conform to the guidelines. A design review of the project was conducted by Kurt Meinhardt, co-chairman of our Planning and Zoning Committee, and the architect who wrote our guidelines. Mr. Meinhardt determined that building up on that site would create a negative impact not only on the surrounding neighbors' light, privacy and views, but on the character of the neighborhood as a whole — a key characteristic of Westwood Park's residential design guidelines.

The overwhelming majority of Westwood Park neighbors who contacted the Association requested disapproval because of these impacts, and said they were also concerned about setting a precedent: if this house grew in height, wouldn't all of the houses eventually do the same?

During this discussion, several neighbors suggested that the Association explore ways to further protect Westwood Park properties and the architectural character of the neighborhood as a whole. One idea was to modify our CC&Rs to disallow vertical additions.

In general, vertical additions in Westwood Park would violate the design guidelines because they block neighbors' light, privacy and views and negatively impact the subdivision as a whole. Westwood Park was developed along the foothills of Mount Davidson, where the continuous slope was used to create a terraced rhythm for buildings.

For the small lots on the slopes, the "stepped down" effect provides each successive residence maximum access to light, air, open space and full or partial views. In addition, 91.6% of the homes in Westwood Park are one level or one level over a basement. The few vertical additions we have were built prior to Westwood Park becoming a Residential Character District and the implementation of the city's Proposition M in 1989. Therefore, it is no longer likely that a vertical addition would be approved.

We remind all residents that the Westwood Park Association must first approve remodeling projects. The process for neighborhood notification, submission of plans for design review, and consideration by the Association are contained in the residential design guidelines.

Also, Section VIII of the Westwood Park CC&Rs requires that the Association's Board of Directors approve any proposed projects. These documents can be downloaded on our website at www.westwoodpark.com, or by writing or calling the Association. Past newsletters are also posted on the website and contain articles of interest with regard to remodeling and planning and zoning issues in the Park.



Community Dog Walk

Please join us at 9 am, Saturday, August 26 on the upper Faxon Green for a walk around Westwood Park with (or without) our dogs! The idea is to raise awareness of animals affected by disasters. The route will be marked by chalk, and there will be brochures, coffee, and hot chocolate at the end of our walk. Contact Elynn at jhagelshaw@sbcglobal.net for more information.

To comment on this issue of the newsletter, send an e-mail to newsletter@westwoodpark.com. Please indicate whether your comments may be published in future editions of the newsletter.

Jam Over Library Parking

By Nanette Asimov

As Westwood Park residents await with anticipation the 2008 opening of the public library at 1298 Ocean Avenue at Plymouth (on the site of the old Sunset Garage), several neighbors of the new branch say they are angered by plans for parking spots and a delivery driveway they had not realized would be created on the block.

Construction for the new Ingleside Library will begin in spring, 2007. Its front door will be on Ocean Avenue, where the plan is to add four metered parking spots and one green zone drop-off spot. Around the corner, on the east side of Plymouth, plans include three parking spots (two metered and one disabled), and a service entrance for deliveries. Parking would be eliminated across the street on the west side of Plymouth.

Currently, parking is prohibited on the eastern side of Plymouth where the library will be located. Parking is also limited during certain hours, or by permit only, across the street and up the block.

But anyone who's ever driven through the 1200 block of Plymouth knows that even with those parking restrictions, the area is one of the most congested in the Park. Cars park halfway up the sidewalk to avoid blocking the street altogether. And when two cars are coming from opposite directions, it's always a dance—the west coast swing or sometimes the tango—just to pass safely by one another.

Library officials say the parking spots and service driveway have been in the plans, shown several times in public, since the beginning of the project in October, 2003. But neighbors say they had no idea, and are concerned about congestion growing even worse.

"We feel outraged," said Danae Manus, who lives on the same side of the street as the future library. "It's a violation of what was agreed upon, and it's a violation of common sense. "Plymouth Avenue is extremely narrow," she said. "It's the only throughfare between Ocean and Monterey, which is why the fire department needs to have enough clearance to safely get through."

Neighbors say they are considering a petition drive to require the library to have all deliveries and parking spots on Ocean Avenue or along the easement on the east side of the property.

Mindy Linetzky, a program administrator with the branch library improvement program, said the service entrance will be much less of a problem than neighbors fear. "The library delivery truck comes only once a day and is a small panel truck, about 24.5 feet long," said Linetzky. "For deliveries, it will pull into the driveway and not block traffic." As for parking, Linetzky said, "The Library is working with the Planning Department and DPT (Dept. of Parking & Traffic) on the parking and street design and will consider the neighbors' concerns."

New Library Needs Help from its Friends\$

State and local funds go a long way toward paying for the new 1-story, 6,000-square-foot Ingleside Library on Ocean at Plymouth avenues—but library boosters say they won't go far enough. The millions in state and local funds will not buy all the furniture, fixtures, and equipment the library will need, said Christine Leishman of the fundraising group Friends of the San Francisco Public Library.

So a capital campaign is in progress for that purpose. The new library will be financed by a piece of the \$106 million bond measure approved by San Francisco voters in 2000. And the Ingleside branch also won \$3.7 million from a competitive state grant last year, part of Proposition 14 funds for libraries.

Leishman said the new branch will have children's and teen areas, a program room, more books, videos, DVDs and audiobooks than there are now, as well as more public computers and seating. Artist Eric Powell will also design a gate for the new library.

The Ingleside branch is also included in the Branch Library Improvement Program Arts Master Plan. An art enrichment program will be offered, managed by the San Francisco Art Commission, Leishman said.

To contribute to the capital campaign for our new library, e-mail christine.leishman@friendssfpl.org, or call 626-7512 ext. 101.

City Grant Awarded (for a *Cleaner Ocean Avenue!*)

By Emmet McDonagh
Ocean Avenue Americorps Program Coordinator

Good news: the Ocean Ave. Revitalization Committee (OARC) has won a \$10,000 grant from the Department of Public Works to clean up Ocean Ave between Manor Drive and the I-280 overpass.

Now we need your help.... This grant was awarded May 25th on the condition that volunteers help with each of the monthly clean-ups on Ocean Avenue, or by participating in the planning and organization of the Task Force.

Unless that happens, we will be out of the running for future grants. The City will evaluate all grant recipients in six months, so the better we do in the meantime, the better chances are that we will continue to win future grants.

In May, the OARC was among 23 winners of this year's Community Challenge Grant from the Dept. of Public Works, which awarded \$500,000 for various beautification projects throughout the city. The OARC received its grant to implement the Ocean Avenue Task Force, a program meant to help keep the commercial district clean and graffiti-free. The fiscal sponsor is OMI Neighbors in Action.

Winners were recognized at a reception with Mayor Gavin Newsom at City Hall on Tuesday, May 30th. Representing Ocean Avenue were myself and Ingleside resident Dan Weaver, who has been instrumental in getting this program started.

We look forward to working with you to help make Ocean Avenue a great place to shop, dine, and stroll.

The clean-ups are usually scheduled for the last Saturday of each month, from 10 a.m. to noon, with lunch provided after. But it's best to check in with me first, just to make sure, and to find out where everyone will be meeting. Please contact me by e-mail at emmet.mcdonagh@gmail.com.

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P.O. Box 27901, #770
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Save the Date! Westwood Park's *annual picnic & board meeting* on the upper Faxon Green will be at 11 a.m. on **Saturday, October 7**. Bring your kids, your appetite—and perhaps a dish to share with your neighbors. The Westwood Park Association will supply the burgers—vegetarian, too— chicken, and hot dogs. As always, election results for the Westwood Park Association Board will be announced. See you there!