



WARDS CORNER CIVIC LEAGUE

CROSSROADS

Serving: Colony Point, Hariton Gardens, Merridale,
Pinehurst, Restmere, Rose Gardens, Sussex of Norfolk,
Virginia Gardens and Wexford Terrace

June 2007

Web site www.Wardscorner.com

CIVIC LEAGUE MEETING MONDAY June 18, 2007

6:45 PM
NORFOLK FITNESS and WELLNESS
CENTER

Agenda

GANGS

Please note the meeting time change to 6:45 PM

President's message
By Jim English ajim.english@gmail.com

The June meeting will mark the last meeting of the first half of the civic league year until we resume our schedule again in September. Summer is just around the corner and schools will be out and hopefully we will all enjoy some vacation time. Hopefully this summer will be great and we will once again be spared any major hurricanes just like we were last year. However make sure you are prepared just in case.

I wish to thank Barbara Ross for her dedicated service as our newsletter editor. She has done an excellent job of preparing the newsletter each month. This takes a significant amount of time to complete and Barbara's newsletters are informative and always on time. Barbara we thank you for your service and look forward to your newsletters again in the fall. Enjoy your two months of newsletter free time. Speaking of keeping us informed, a hearty thanks goes to Martin Thomas Jr. for keeping our website www.wardscorner.com up to date and informative. It is yet another valuable service that we are providing to all of the residents of the Wards Corner Civic League. It is also the envy of many of the civic leagues in the Greater Wards Corner area as well as citywide. I also wish to thank Linda Spear for keeping the membership of the civic league up to date. Thanks are also in order for Lee Goldman who has been organizing and distributed our newsletter this past year with the assistance of Linda Spear. Also, special thanks to Joan Griffey for maintaining the records of our meetings and to Ray Duron for keeping our finances in order. Thanks also to Betty and Ray Duron for organizing and conducting our Adopt-a-Street cleanups over the last several years.

Finally, I extend a very grateful thanks to all of our paid members for your continuing support and attendance at our monthly meetings. Your presence and input at our meetings is much appreciated. Please tell your neighbors to join us in attendance and membership as more numbers mean a bigger voice at city hall.

Over the last week of May and early June a couple of articles and one editorial have appeared in the Virginia Pilot about Wards Corner and the infighting of our city council about the relocation of the police station to the East Little Creek Road area of the Texas streets. The below editorial that appeared on Saturday June 2nd is followed by my comments about the editorial. I am also submitting my response to the members of the Greater Wards Corner Partnership.

The Editorial

War of wards over police station

The Virginia-Pilot

June 2, 2007

"The job of the Norfolk's 2nd Patrol Division is to keep the peace in the neighborhoods north of I-64, a territory stretching from Willoughby Spit to the airport. It's so large that it covers the neighborhood wards and superwards of five members of City Council, among whom there has been little peace and good will in recent months

With so many cooks in the kitchen, no one should be surprised that the latest war of wards is over the best place for the new headquarters for the 2nd. It got so hot last week that Mayor Paul Fraim gaveled the council meeting to a close before tempers boiled over.

It's been settled for years that the smartest spot is in an office park on Sewell's Point Road. That puts the station in the wards of Anthony Burfoot and Daun Hester. With construction planning about to start, they had a right to be irritated to learn that an 11th-hour raid had been mounted to move it to Wards Corner.

The Wards Corner redevelopment task force, led by Councilman Barclay Winn, has hatched a plan to seize the precinct house for use as a weapon against an upsurge in crime in its backyard. The sales job by a Wards Corner leader, Louis Eisenberg, was superb:

"Do you need a police station in an office park that goes dark at night, or do you need a police station in a neighborhood that needs police protection?"

There's more appeal, however, than logic in the argument that the mere presence of so many cops in a building would make surrounding neighborhoods more secure.

If it was true, then what explains why the streets around the 3rd Police Division on Goff Street are among the city's most crime-ridden? The fact is that there's no crime problem inside the four walls of a police station; that's why Norfolk's officers show up there only at shift changes. Their office is the front seat of a police car that's flying the flag, constantly.

The best way to fight crime in Wards Corner is to keep the new police precinct where it belongs on Sewell's Point Road and to give Wards Corner neighborhoods the real security they deserve - not just the illusion of it - with a heavier presence of officers patrolling their streets."

My Comments

Ha! It appears to me that the author of this editorial is as ill informed about fighting crime in a blighted neighborhood as our elected leaders and city management staff. Good examples of the right way to do this can be seen throughout Norfolk including Ghent, Downtown, Ocean View and Broad Creek. Have they forgotten about these successful formulas when it comes to Wards Corner?

Moving the police station to that area or any area is not about relocating it there to fight crime. Placing more police officers in a crime ridden area just like more code enforcement is not the answer to uplifting an area and making the area better as these are only band-aid approaches.

The majority of the urban science research conducted by reputable academic researchers will tell you that this is the case. You must address the social blight that plagues an area like the 100 - 600+ blocks of the E. Little Creek road area that ultimately brings down all of the surrounding neighborhoods (which is what is happening now in the Greater Wards Corner area) if you really want to improve it.

Since our General Assembly in their infinite and well financed wisdom has gutted the eminent domain legislation, we are suggesting (and appropriately so) that by the city taking property in this area and using it for a public use like a Police Station is one way to begin the process of removing this social blight. Then interested developers would more likely want to move businesses and other commercial uses to that area and uplift it. Given the situation there now, what would you be more likely to invest in: the area as it is currently or an area with a police station.

Everyone, including editorial writers, needs to think about long term solutions and not short term knee jerk reactions and use credible information when they make decisions or publish articles like this editorial. It makes me wonder whose side the Virginia Pilot is on (but then again, I think I already know that).

One thing is for sure. The dedication and commitment of the membership of the Greater Wards Corner Partnership, Task

Force, Business Association and area Civic Leagues (including and especially ours) will continue the push with our city elected officials and senior city management staff to help us correct and develop the area and rid it of the dysfunctional and criminal element that has unfortunately been drawn to the area. We will not be taking the summer off but will continue our fight. Please join us in that fight as numbers speak to elected officials. The Norfolk Tea Party 2 proved that citizens in mass can and do move elected officials to act responsibly for their constituency.

Have a great summer and hope to see you in September.

Thanks, Jim

Important Phone Numbers

Police Emergency	911
Police Non-Emergency	441-5610
Pace Officer	664-6921
Police Red Sector	664-6914
Code Enforcement	664-6532
Environmental Health	683-2712
Sewer Backup	823-1000
Waste Management (Call here for large pickups)	441-5813
Norfolk Cares Call Center (Don't know what office to call on the problem?)	664-6510

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance			<u>\$1362.42</u>
+ funds received	\$235.00		
-funds disbursed		\$72.35	
Ending Balance			\$1,525.07

WCCL Board of Directors

President	Jim English	423-7154
1 st VP/ Membership	Linda Spear	402-8583
2 nd VP/ Newsletter Distribution	Lee Goldman	287-1619
Secretary	Joan Griffey	440-9508
Treasurer	Ray Duron	423-4337
Web Master	Martin Thomas, Jr.	618-6468

Newsletter ideas/comments-Barbara Ross
(Bookworms@WHRO.Net or 489-1024)

The Wards Corner Civic League Website.

www.wardscorner.com

CHECK IT OUT!!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR SECRETARY'S MINUTES

May 21, 2007

Wards Corner Civic League met on Monday, May 21, 2007 in the Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center, with 31 attending. Leader Jim English welcomed us and led The Pledge of Allegiance. He, as immediate past chair of the Norfolk Environmental Commission, recognized both Ray and Betty Duron for their volunteer services in our Adopt-A-Spot (W. Little Creek and Ruthven Roads) to keep the neighborhood clear of litter.

- PACE Officer Curtis Jackson reported our crime statistics for January through April, recent shooting at AJ Gator, robberies from sheds, complaints of the plasma bank, prostitutes, construction vehicle parking in neighborhoods, vendors at parking lots and newspaper solicitation at traffic intersections. He addressed random evening gunfire shots, soliciting at Southern Shopping Center, traffic shortcuts through Sussex (Bradford Ave.).

-Councilman Barclay Winn (Super Ward 6) addressed the Eminent Domain Position Paper. Elected in 2000, he wants to reenergize the Taskforce. A Blight Study was commissioned by the Council to address the Southern Shopping Center/Wards Corner corridor. (Code violations, quality of life issues and renters behavior problems) Our redevelopment area plans changed with new State Eminent Domain laws. The old law permitted Ghent, East Beach and Downtown development. Five council members represent the greater Wards Corner Partnership. Positive progress is possible with innovation and creativity. There is no abuse of property rights.

-State Delegate Kenneth Alexander, (89th District) also a WC business owner, told us that the original intent allowed localities to take private properties for development. Property rights attorneys and lobbyists wanted to deny the collective community rights on a property by property basis. This changed the definition of Eminent Domain. (Kilo vs. New Haven, CT). 37 other states have agreed. Pre 1/1/07, NHRA could take property in a redevelopment area for elimination of blight. In January, a possible change to ED may be added in the General Assembly.

-Delegate Paula Miller stated that new legislation redefined blight. Criminal activity is not currently addressed. She stated that the city talked much but did nothing more. Police and code enforcement is a band-aid. We need conservation plans and tools available. The city funds the Housing Authority, a legislative office. A disconnect between the General Assembly and the City of Norfolk prevented her vote in support for the new eminent domain issue. Property can be taken for police and schools.

-Council will meet Tuesday to discuss the blight/Wards Corner issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Joan Griffey, Secretary

Have a Safe and Relaxing Summer!

NEWS AND NOTES

Don't Forget! Your help is needed to pick up litter at our Adopt-a-Spot area (Ruthven and W. Little Creek) on Saturday, June 23 -8:00 AM.

Questions? Call Ray Duron-423-4337

Isn't it great to look out at the yards in your neighborhood on the 4th of July and see the flags that have been placed there? Volunteers are needed to help distribute them. Ray Duron is your contact for that, too.

Fogging for mosquitoes is being started in Norfolk neighborhoods. Residents are urged to stay inside when their area is being fogged, between the hours of 6:45 PM-11:00 PM. Call the Mosquito Hotline number, 683-2914 after 3 PM daily for fogging locations.

You are encouraged to attend the meeting of the Wards Corner Task Force on Thursday, June 14, 8:30 AM, at the Fitness and Wellness Center. We're asking residents to show our elected officials that our community is important to us, and that we support their efforts to promote safety and encourage development.

**We have 150 members in our Civic League.
Please consider joining. It's a bargain!**

WCCL MEMBERSHIP

Annual dues are \$5.00. Our dues' year runs from January 1 through December 31. If you are a continuing member and you have not renewed your membership for 2007, please submit your payment at a meeting or mail to the Treasurer, Ray Duron, at 530 Sterling Street, 23505. If you haven't joined yet, please consider doing so now.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail _____