



WARDS CORNER CIVIC LEAGUE

CROSSROADS

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

May 2007

Web site www.Wardscorner.com

CIVIC LEAGUE MEETING MONDAY May 21, 2007

6:45 PM
NORFOLK FITNESS AND WELLNESS
CENTER

Agenda
CITY COUNCIL AND STATE
REPRESENTATIVES INVITED

Please note the meeting time change to 6:45 PM

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

Dear Neighbors,

First of all please note the new email address. Please respond to me using this address in the future. I will also respond to your emails from my previous email address as well if you send me messages.

In my messages over the past several years I have always tried to be upbeat and positive in what I write. This message is a change from that normal writing. I am outraged and you should be outraged as well. We have had multiple murders (7 at my last count) in the Greater Wards Corner area in the past several weeks. Some of those have occurred within our civic league boundaries. This is ridiculous and we should not tolerate this insanity by the dysfunctional degenerates that are perpetrating these acts of violence. It appears, according to my sources with the police, that these individuals are believed to be living in or frequenting the Alexis Apartments on West Little Creek Road. We have feared that the dysfunction on East Little Creek Road would sooner or later make its way to our area. Now it has.

The following two messages in quotes were sent to our Wards Corner Partnership members recently and I am sharing them with you as they represent the anger that is growing in our area about the lack of leadership in the city to help the Wards Corner area except for putting "lipstick on a pig" and window dressing. The murders and the recent changes to the eminent domain laws instituted, thanks to the Virginia General Assembly this year, are hurting our revitalization efforts in Wards Corner.

"A Tale of Two Cities: Louis Eisenberg

Where Is Our Elected Officials' Outrage When There Is Not One But Two Murders In Wards Corner?

We all saw the City jump into action when there was a murder in the Granby Theatre in Downtown Norfolk. We heard comments on Black on Black Crime from a City Councilman. We saw our Mayor address the media. Why is the Official reaction so different when murder happens outside of Downtown? Is a life worth any less outside of Downtown? Do we have TWO Cities here, Downtown and Everywhere else?

Murder in Norfolk is creating an image that Norfolk is not safe no matter where it happens in our city."

"A Tale of Two Cities response: Tim Smith

Actually there are three cities here. Downtown, Ocean View and the rest of the city you have to drive through to get to those two places.

We talked about this before and I think it is time to bring it up again. The city has moved the poor around since as far back as I can remember (I'm 50). The scum of society follow the poor around cause they can disappear into the masses and they prey on the poor. I have seen the problems of Norfolk move from Ghent to Ocean View and now to Wards Corner.

Being that Wards Corner is overlapped by two Wards and two Super Wards you would think we would be at an advantage here. But it seems to me this division of wards has been a disadvantage to us. What better place to move Norfolk's problems to? Again I must ask, Why would you place Norfolk's main Welfare office in the middle of an area that was going to be rejuvenated? Wouldn't it make more sense to place your main Welfare office as close to the area were it would be of most benefit to those who need it. Also, am I the only one that thinks it is a strange coincidence that NRHA and Norfolk's favored developers are never far behind to step in and save us (at our tax dollar expense) from these blighted areas that were caused by our leaders in the first place (at our tax dollar expense)?

Is it just me or has the crime increased since our leaders split up the police precincts? The Wards Corner area's crime was in decline under one precinct. Not only did we have the shootings Louis talks about but we also have seen a number of armed robberies. The Shell Station and Bank@Lantec are the two recent ones that come to my mind. The bank was just robbed AGAIN a while back; now they have to pay for an off-duty police officer to stand there all day. Increased cost for security will be passed onto the consumers who shop in these

areas. This will give momentum to the downward spiral in Wards Corner we have been fighting for all these years.

Do you think there is a conflict with redeveloping our area seeing that we are so close to 21st Street? You all have seen the for sale sign by S. L. Nusbaum on the trailer park property by Southern Shopping Center and the article in the paper announcing the planned apartments at the Granby Street Bridge by S. L. Nusbaum. You think they will build apartments at both sites?

You also may have noticed that the apartments next to Talbot Park (the ones we opposed with 250 signatures to city council) have now changed to Senior Living only because the apartments were not leasing and some of those who live there now plan to move to the new apartments at the Granby Street Bridge when those are completed. Another example of how our voices are heard Downtown.

... it seems we are talking about the same problems we started talking about over 7 years ago. Is Wards Corner any better off; is our piece of mind any better; are our leaders listening to us any more than before; is it any safer for us or our fellow citizens to move about our area of Norfolk; is the drug and prostitution in our area under control or eliminated; is our housing stock around Wards Corner in any better condition?

If nothing has changed after all this time and energy has been expended then we all have a bigger problem than "\$1.08 in '08" and "Black vs. White". Nobody will be coming "Home To Norfolk" and we will be left holding the "Unfinished Development Cash Bag".

There was a letter to the editor in the Pilot just recently that comes to mind. It was from a Virginia Beach citizen and I think it applies to everyone. He talked about the lack of voter turnout and how the same people keep getting re-elected and the problems don't go away. Essentially, we are getting what we ask for.

Thank you, (I feel better now)." Tim Smith, Talbot Park

We should all be asking ourselves: Is it time for a change of leadership on city council? I recently heard (but not confirmed) that our council representative for Ward 1 missed the real estate tax hearing last week at Granby High School because he was on a cruise. Really!??? As I listened to the many angry citizens at that meeting last Wednesday night on the City TV station it became apparent to me that they believe that our City Council and City Manager are not listening to them/us. What do you believe? Are you outraged? Now is the time that we all need to stand together in solidarity and tell our elected leaders WHAT WE WANT and not accept what they want to give us. It is now time to hold our elected officials accountable for the needed improvement efforts for the revitalization of Wards Corner! Agree?

Let me hear from you and what you think. Come to our meetings, express your opinions, and help us work for change in Wards Corner. 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>\$1395.67</u>
+ funds received	\$35.00		
-funds disbursed		\$68.25	
Ending Balance			\$1,362.42

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 _____

The Wards Corner Civic League Website.

www.wardscorner.com

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR SECRETARY'S MINUTES

April 16, 2007

Wards Corner Civic League meeting was held on April 16, 2007 in Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center at a new time, 6:45 PM. (we must vacate the building by 8:30 PM).

President Jim English led the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a moment of silent prayer in memory of the students and families of VA Tech.

PACE Officer Jackson informed us of the recent Shell station robbery/homicide, ticketing/ speeding on area streets, ticketing/violations at No Turn on Red at W Little Creek Road, 2 homicides (Grantham Ave. and Harvard St.), 6 robberies of people in apartment parking lots, 3 stolen autos, 18 car break ins, 3 larcenies from vehicles, Rebel Road burglar arrest, and then answered questions of the 7/11 store parking problems, and a suspect streetwalker.

President English introduced David Freeman, Director of Neighborhood Preservation/ Codes Enforcement and Len Newcomb, Zoning Administrator. Mr. Freeman gave an informative slide presentation. He named Eugene Bradley, assistant to WC Taskforce and Philip Williams, team leader and codes specialist (664-6696). This department commits to the development of healthy, livable, sustainable neighborhoods. The goal is to eliminate substandard housing, blighted conditions and environmental stresses. For code compliance, the Public Works Dept., Public Health Dept., City Planning, City Attorney, Solid Waste, Norfolk Fire Dept. and Paramedics all interact. Codes enforcement has 30 positions: 5 Teamleaders, 5 Senior Inspectors and 20 Inspectors. The usage of cell phones, blackberries, digital cameras all assist in the reporting and tracking of problem sites.

Len Newcomb, with the Planning Department since 1978, stated that parking on grass and lawns, driveways which are L shaped, unimproved surfaced, and larger than 20 ft wide are not legal. He surveyed properties in our civic league area and has sent violation notices to those with non-conforming sites. The driveways are to be 20 ft wide and perpendicular to the street. Permits are necessary for driveways. The goal of the recent survey is for compliance. He also answered questions concerning the Martone property boarded windows, the trailer park near Southern Shopping Center, and AJ Gator litter.

Joan Griffey reported that Beautification Committee efforts produced results in replacement of cracked asphalt at Maycox Ave/Granby St. (aLantic Bank) , 5-7 new trees replaced in median at Granby St. near Norfolk Collegiate School, the requested playground equipment for North Shore Neighborhood Park to be installed in September and the dumpster at Sai Gai will be fenced with some city permitted encroachment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Joan Griffey, Secretary

NEWS AND NOTES

The police are patrolling Newport Avenue and Granby Street by the bridge. Watch your speed!

As a follow-up to truancy issues in the neighborhood, a Truancy Assessment Center has been established at the Workforce Development Center. Truants are held for assessment before being released to their parents or the school.

Do you have a flag that's a bit tired and worn out? Boy Scout Troop 180 will dispose of it properly. Bring it to the Civic League Meeting.

Address Verification and Property Imaging Project

You may see a white van in your neighborhood...The City of Norfolk has contracted for a Pilot Project with Mobile Video Services, Inc., to validate the address and digitally photograph the exterior of residential and business properties in the pilot neighborhoods. The van is clearly marked on the doors and has a flashing light on the roof. Goals/Benefits are:

- validate property addresses to identify homes and business for fire, police and medical emergency response*
- improve the overall quality of property tax appraisals*
- complete a property inventory of all improved parcels in the City*
- save taxpayers money by making the property tax administration process more efficient*
- assist homeowners and business with "before" photos in case of losses*
- Enhance emergency management recovery reports necessary for state and federal assistance*

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)

UPCOMING EVENTS AND REMINDERS

It's hard to believe that several months have gone by, and it's time to clean up "our spot". Our Adopt-a-Spot group will meet at the corner of Ruthven Avenue and W. Little Creek Road at 8:00 AM on Saturday, June 23 to pick up litter in that area. With extra help, the hour goes quickly. Questions? Call Ray Duron-423-4337