



Wards Corner Civic League

Crossroads

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

November, 2008 Web site www.Wardscorner.com

CIVIC LEAGUE MEETING MONDAY

**November 17, 2008
6:45 PM**

NORFOLK FITNESS and WELLNESS CENTER

Agenda

Norman Mass, Library Director

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jim English ajim.english@gmail.com

Dear Neighbors,

It is election day as I write this message. The lines are the longest I have ever seen in all my years of voting. My first election was in 1968 having voted in the Nixon vs. Humphrey race. I haven't missed an election since.

So as you read this, we have undoubtedly chosen our 44th United States President to lead us over the next four years. Hopefully, the election has gone smoothly without incident and it will be decided by the voters, the electoral college and not by The Court. Whoever that elected person is, it has been unquestionable the most historic of all Presidential campaigns.

May the President-elect to be sworn in on January 20th, 2009 represent all of us well and restore America's respect among Americans and the world. We desperately need it.

And now for my version of the news.

Oh my! Not another article about how bad Wards Corner has become. Harry Minium, a reporter for the Virginian Pilot, wrote:

"Once a gem, Norfolk's Wards Corner retail hub needs rehab."

"Wards Corner thrived decades ago, housing one of the city's most upscale shopping centers that luxury retailers dubbed "the Times Square of the South."

But times have changed in this heavily traveled section of the city.

"It's a wasteland," City Councilwoman Theresa Whibley, who represents Wards Corner, said recently of the area's commercial district. "Any of us who saw what it once was are saddened to see what's happened to Wards Corner. That area needs a lot of help."

After long delays, the city began to address problems in the commercial corridor a few years ago. The City Council has spent millions in infrastructure upgrades and commissioned two studies of the area. Officials say they want to do more, but their hands have been tied by new state laws limiting their use of eminent domain.

Yet some residents and business leaders say Norfolk leaders have waited too long and done too little to reclaim the once-popular area."

I, for one, am glad Harry continues to write these stories. Maybe somebody in city hall will get the message and listen and start to do something about this neglected area and realize just how much of a revenue generator it could be for the city. I am also pleased with the statement from Councilwoman Whibley, who in my opinion has become a champion for Wards Corner in recent months. Many of us have been working for many years to revitalize this area with minimal success, particularly in the business district. The poor perception of this area as crime ridden continues despite increased police patrols who arrest the hardened criminals that plague our area like those who choose to hula hoop in the median on Granby Street. Shame on them! City Council needs to really put Wards Corner on the front burner of priorities for Norfolk and address the real problems and not continually put band-aids on the problems. We have had enough talk and rhetoric.

Speaking of problems, gang-related activities are becoming more prevalent. Blessed Sacrament Church has hosted a second gang-prevention brainstorming session on Wednesday, October 29th.

"The first meeting focused on youth involvement in gang activity. There were over 100 people at the meeting as well as the Mayor, Vice Mayor, Norfolk Police, prosecutor's office and city juvenile court representatives. There were also representatives from the local schools and community groups as well as parents with their teens and concerned local residents.

"The gang problem is real in our area and it affects everyone. In Hampton Roads, there still is time for us to get a handle on the gang problems, but it will take our commitment as a community to act now before the gang issue gets out of control and rules our lives." writes Tim Smith of the Talbot Hall Civic League.

According to the Virginia Pilot, City Council-woman Daun S. Hester has called for parents and community leaders to join in a grass-roots effort to fight violence in neighborhoods and schools.

"Like so many others in the community, we too are tired of the violence in our communities and the rate at which it has found itself in our schools," Hester said. "But we are also tired of a community response that accepts the deaths of children and second-rate living conditions on one side of our community but rises up in arms when something happens elsewhere."

Hester's comments come at a time when city leaders have focused on gang activity, after fear of violence prompted three high school football games to be moved and security measures were increased at Maury High School.

At the City Council's direction, Norfolk's city manager is currently coordinating the development of a comprehensive plan to combat and prevent gang activity.

Gangs are prevalent in Norfolk and are a threat to our security. They need to be eliminated but there are no easy solutions to doing that task. We all must be involved in addressing that problem even if it is just reporting suspected gang activity to the police when you see it.

Finally, in case you hadn't heard. "A public hearing on resizing Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center will not occur until early next year, as hospital officials continue to work on the proposal." again according to the Pilot.

Bon Secours Hampton Roads Health System has received an extension from the state health commissioner's office to turn in a revised proposal. That

will postpone the hearing, which officials originally thought might happen this month.

The health system is proposing changing the 238-bed DePaul hospital to a 124-bed facility. At one time, Bon Secours wanted to reduce the size to 64 beds but revised that proposal after an outcry from the city." according to Virginia Pilot writer Elizabeth Simpson.

This bears close surveillance by all of us to ensure that Bon Secours doesn't try to wiggle out of the agreement they made with the city. We also need to watch the city to ensure they remain steadfast in their support of Norfolk's citizens for the expanded version of Bon Secours' proposal and not anything less.

Thanks for being our neighbor in the best neighborhood in my opinion in Norfolk. Please join as a member and attend our civic league meetings. We need you.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Police Emergency	911
Police Non-Emergency	441-5610
Pace Officer	831-3484
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

WCCL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Jim English	423-7154
1 st VP/ Membership	Martin Thomas, Jr.	402-8583
2 nd VP/ Newsletter Distribution	Sue Classick	489-2315
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)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance			\$1667.17
+ funds received	\$145.00		
-funds disbursed		\$122.98	
Ending Balance			\$1689.19

Wards Corner Civic League Minutes October 20, 2008

Wards Corner Civic League met at 6:45PM Monday, October 20, 2008 in Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center. President Jim English welcomed new members and led The Pledge of Allegiance. Attendance-34.

Members held a moment of silent remembrance for Marion Blair, spouse of Past President Jack Blair.

Our featured speaker was Lisa Renee Jennings, Pres. of Friends of Norfolk Environment. Being an interior designer and a green living coach, she offered ideas for saving energy, protecting water, de-toxing rooms and maintaining a safe, healthy home. Ideas advanced were don't heat/cool empty rooms, cold laundry wash, low flow shower heads, replace light bulbs with CFL's, use ceiling fans, programmable thermostats, relinquish bottled water, use vinegar/baking soda for cleaning, avoid pesticides, etc. Informative Pamphlets are available at the Ernie Morgan Environmental Center.

Officer Curtis Jackson reported fewer crimes in Sept. (4 car larcenies, 4 burglaries, 1 robbery on Newport, 4 stolen cars). Questions asked were: hula hoop lady arrest, numerous patrol cars at Burleigh/Ruthven on 10/7 eve, increased truck parking behind Farm Fresh, car robbery on Kingsley Lane, Sheryl Drive murder, gang violence.

Pres. English stated that the VP position (newsletter delivery) was filled with nomination and second of Sue Classick.

Taskforce Update was given by Martin Thomas, Jr. The Alexis Apartments will be demolished. Offices are being constructed in Titustown near Albano's. A Memorandum of Understanding between the city and NRHA will permit residents of Denby Park to acquire loans for landscaping, upgrading, etc. Traffic calming on Newport Ave. will see rumble strips in the median at 3 intersections. It is illegal to pass on right. Brick crosswalks at Granby/Little Creek Road were installed after 6 years of requests. New medians on Thole Street are being re-landscaped. All citizens are invited to the WC Partnership meeting on Thursday, Oct.23 in the Workforce Development Center. Frank Duke will present changes to the Comprehensive Plan. Sherry Romulus asked why the green roofing of Nusbaum Apartments in the trailer park site are not in sync with our Compre-

hensive Plan "look". The traffic speed study on Birmingham Ave. did not lead to any relief for residents. Average speed was 31 mph.

Ray Duron asked for volunteers to clean Ruthven /W Little Creek Rd on Nov. 22 at 8:30AM. 11 bags were collected in last month's litter pickup.

The WC Business area is sponsoring a Spooktacular for children on Oct. 31 5-8PM.

The Sport Zone is relocating to 21st St in Dec. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15Pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Joan Griffey, Sec.

News and Notes

A workshop on "Making Your House Safety-Proof" for the Elderly and Disabled will be held on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 at the Huntersville Neighborhood Service Center. Call 823-4363 for information.

Thanks to our Adopt-a-Spot volunteers who helped in our continued efforts to "Keep Norfolk Beautiful" on October 11. They were Stephanie Gallagher, Valerie Van DeVenter, and Ray and Betty Duron.

And, don't forget, your help is needed to pick up litter at our Adopt-A-Spot area (Ruthven and W. Little Creek Roads) on Saturday, November 22, 8:00 AM. Questions-call Ray Duron at 423-4337.

WCCL Membership

We love to see you at the Civic League meetings. Help your Civic League by paying annual dues. Even if you're not able to attend meetings, please send a check for \$5.00 to Ray Duron (\$10/two household members). This helps support payments for expenses that arise throughout the year. Our dues' year runs from January 1 through December 31. If you are a continuing member, it's time to think of renewing for 2009. Ray's address is 530 Sterling Street, 23505. If you haven't joined yet, please consider doing so now.

Name:

Address:

Phone #: