



Neighborhood News

From the Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Association

Spring 2011

Fostering community by preserving and enhancing the neighborhood character and providing a forum for neighborhood communication and action.

Announcement:

BCNA Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 30th, 10 a.m. – 12 noon

Central Lutheran Church, Fellowship Hall (16th & Chestnut)

2011 BCNA Annual Meeting

You are invited and encouraged to attend this year's **Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Association's Annual Meeting**. This has been a very busy and active year for the Association and we look forward to sharing our progress with our neighbors. We invite all neighborhood residents, both Association members and non-members, to attend the meeting to hear progress reports from each of the BCNA's working sub-committees and learn about our plans for the future.

Nominations and voting for BCNA Board Members will also take place. Volunteer opportunities on the various sub-committees will also be discussed. The agenda for the meeting is included to the right.

If you have additional agenda items or topics you are interested in discussing at the Annual Meeting, please contact BCNA President, Walt Ranta, at 452-6897 or teachemup@charter.net.

Annual Meeting Agenda:

1. General Welcome & Introductions
2. BCNA Overview, Mission and History
3. Sub-Committee Reports
 - Historic Preservation Committee
 - Traffic Committee
 - BCNA-Memorial Hospital Liaison Committee
 - Land Use Committee
 - Safety Committee
 - Communication Committee
4. Annual Membership Drive and Membership Renewals
5. Nomination of and Voting for BCNA Board Members
6. Other Topics of Interest from BCNA Members
7. Future Plans

2011 Membership Drive

The Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Association will also be conducting its **2011 Membership Drive** in April. All residences in our neighborhood will be receiving a membership renewal packet in the mail in early April. Annual Membership dues for 2011 can be paid at any time. To renew your Association Membership or to become a new member, please complete the form mailed to you or the one on the back page of this newsletter. Dues will also be accepted at the **Annual Meeting** on Saturday, April 18th (see page 1).

Members paying dues between January 2011

and April 2011 will remain active members through April 2012.

There are two types of memberships: **Active Memberships** are available to any homeowner or resident age eighteen (18) years or older within the neighborhood. **Associate Memberships** are open to any individual, association or estate having an interest in, and ethical support of, the mission and goals of the BCNA whether or not they live in the neighborhood.

All current Active Members will be able to vote during April's **Annual Meeting**.

Traffic Calming Plan – Plans Moving Forward

The latest word is that we stand an excellent chance of having the first phase of our neighborhood traffic calming plan installed Summer 2011. It could be happening as early as June.

At last report, Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital's architects are nearing completion on the design work for the traffic diverter at South 28th Avenue and Walnut. When this diverter is installed it will create a 'traffic loop' around the hospital property resulting in what has become known as the hospital's 'closed campus' plan. We anticipate a significant reduction in hospital-related cut through traffic by containing the traffic flow to YVMH's closed campus.

When notified, the BCNA Hospital Liaison Committee will meet with Memorial Hospital representatives and go over the final plan for the diverter's design and installation plans.

Barring any snags (and none are anticipated) construction on the diverter could start in June 2011.

Joe Rosenlund, the Streets and Traffic Manager for the City of Yakima, will coordinate the timing of the installation of the diverter and the closure of South 30th Avenue just south of Chestnut with installation of the Phase One traffic calming devices (speed bumps and humps) and additional stop signs within the neighborhood.

While Phase One is far from the comprehensive traffic calming solution that the Traffic Committee originally sought, it represents a significant step forward for our neighborhood. The City has committed to evaluating the traffic flow impacts of the Phase One traffic-calming measures in order to determine whether, and where, additional traffic-calming devices may need to be installed in a Phase Two in order to further adjust neighborhood traffic flow to: (1) slow traffic speeds; and (2) reduce cut-through traffic throughout the neighborhood.

Historic Neighborhood Design Review Guidelines

There has been some confusion and misinformation recently in the local media about the first phase of our process to have our neighborhood designated as a historic neighborhood district, and the conditions such a district places on homeowners. This is a complex and confusing issue that we will try to clarify in this article and at our Annual Meeting.

In 2006, when BCNA volunteers first began the process of researching homes to establish our first historic district under the Historic Preservation Ordinance (passed by the City Council in 2005), we were clearly entering new territory for the City of Yakima and the City's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

The City of Yakima Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 11.62) is complicated and covers a range of issues (historic properties, historic districts, special valuations, etc.). Portions of the ordinance appear to indicate that specific design review guidelines need to be adopted by the HPC regarding historic districts.

When we asked City staff what these "design review guidelines" were at the beginning of our project in 2006, we were told they had not been developed yet. After some time we received an initial set of draft "design review guidelines" from

the City. These were based on guidelines used elsewhere and we considered the ones we received to be far too restrictive.

When we shared our concerns with City staff, we were told that if we did not like them we should submit suggestions for improvements. The Historic Preservation Committee of the BCNA then developed some alternative guidelines that were far less restrictive than the ones the City had initially proposed.

Our alternative guidelines were the ones we posted on our BCNA website early last fall (2010). Some association members expressed concerns about the BCNA's proposed guidelines. Subsequently, a closer reading of the current ordinance indicated that additional design review guidelines were not necessary because the Historic Preservation Ordinance already references the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (which are used as guidelines nationwide). These standards were published on the editorial page of the Yakima Herald-Republic on March 24, 2011 and can be reviewed at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm>.

Because the Historic Preservation Ordinance already included the use of the Secretary of Interior's guidelines, the BCNA Board decided to withdraw

the draft design review guidelines we had submitted because they were not needed under the existing ordinance.

Gary Forrest, BCNA's Historic Preservation Committee chair, attended the City of Yakima's Historic Preservation Committee meeting on January 26, 2011 and let them know that we were formally withdrawing the draft guidelines. Gary also presented this same information to the Yakima City Council on February 1, 2011.

A month later at the City Council meeting on March 15, 2011, the same information presented by City staff members to the City Council apparently caused surprise and confusion among certain Council members.

It has been implied in recent media coverage that the establishment of a Neighborhood Historic District undermines an individual homeowner's "property rights." Our goal as a neighborhood association is to protect and preserve the unique character of our neighborhood in order to preserve it as a community resource, not to take away property rights.

One local media source described us as "The Nanny Neighborhood" and accused us of "slinking" the plan through City Hall. Another media outlet took a different view and lectured us on our communication skills.

Gary had been very clear in his presentations to both the HPC and City Council about our decision to accept the existing Secretary of Interior Standards (already contained in the 2005 Ordinance) so we are uncertain as to the source of some of the Council members' concerns. As for being secretive, Gary's comments are part of the public records from both of these meetings.

Within a historic neighborhood district, individual homeowners still have every right to make changes and additions to their homes. The Secretary of Interior standards are not meant to be applied rigidly, or to prevent remodeling and updates to neighborhood homes. As stated on the Secretary of Interior's website, the standards are meant to be applied "in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility."

A discussion of these issues will be held at the BCNA's Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 30th (see announcement on page 1). We look forward to continuing this conversation with our members. If you have any additional questions, please contact Gary Forrest, Historic Preservation Committee Chair at 248-1845 or gsforre@msn.com.

Historic Preservation Committee Update

The BCNA Neighborhood Historic District

The Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) continues to pursue our seven-phase project to have the entire neighborhood within our Association boundaries declared a Historic Neighborhood. We are pleased that the first signs have been posted by the City of Yakima to recognize that Phase One has been completed and that we are the first historic neighborhood district to be recognized within the City.

A master copy of the "Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Cultural Resource Survey, Phase 1" and the Committee's accompanying Survey Report were provided to the Yakima Valley Museum for the museum's archives in the Sundquist Research Library. According to the museum Spring 2011 newsletter,



"This book will be a valuable resource for anyone who needs information on older homes in the Barge-Chestnut area of Yakima. It contains information on 214 residences in the 11-block section chosen for Phase 1 of the ongoing project."

The Yakima Valley Regional Library has also requested a copy and the BCNA Board is providing a copy to the library system as well.

The Historic Preservation Committee expects that Phase Two of building the Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Historic will be completed later this year. Limited numbers of volunteers have slowed progress, but the committee has gained three new members in recent

weeks. Chris Linschooten returned to the committee in addition to Association members Bonnie Sotelo and Mary MacKintosh. Initial work has started on

Phase Three. This phase of the project is expected to be completed next year.

Additional volunteers are still needed for this important long-term project. If you are interested, please contact Gary Forrester, Historic Preservation Committee Chair at 248-1845 or gsforre@msn.com.

Yakima Urban Area Plan and Neighborhood Preservation

As many of you are aware, the BCNA's Historic Preservation Committee and Board put a considerable amount of effort and energy into crafting specific, local design review guidelines for our newly formed Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Historic District (see story above). These design standards have since been determined to be unnecessary and the City's Historic Preservation Commission will use the Secretary of Interior's "Standards and Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties" for review purposed under the City's established Historic Preservation ordinance.

Some City Council members may not be aware of elements contained in the Historic Preservation Ordinance passed in 2005 before they were elected, but that does not mean the BCNA's efforts to protect and preserve our neighborhood are at fault.

During future interactions with City Council members we may also need to remind them about some of the goals and policies they pledged to promote when they passed the Yakima Urban Area Comprehensive Plan 2025 in December of 2006. The Plan includes the following elements in the plan's Action Plan:

1. Identify historic neighborhoods within the Yakima Urban Area.
2. Develop and implement design standards for residential infill housing development that promote compatibility with existing neighborhoods.
3. Create residential development/historical preservation guidelines to foster good architectural design compatibility, and aesthetically pleasing streetscapes.
4. Work with neighborhood associations to better define neighborhood boundaries and neighborhood need.

Furthermore, the Land Use Chapter (Chapter 3) of the Urban Area Plan contains the following goals and policies:

Goal 3.3: Preserve Existing Neighborhoods:

3.3.1 - Preserve the character of neighborhoods such as historical character, architecture, natural features and layout.

3.3.2 - Ensure that new development is compatible in scale, style, density and aesthetic quality to an established neighborhood.

3.3.3 - Integrate historic preservation by ensuring new construction and development integrate the existing historical buildings and landscaping to help create a distinctive identity for the neighborhood.

Goal 3.4: Restore Old Neighborhoods and Revitalize Declining Neighborhoods.

3.4.1 - Encourage preventive maintenance and appropriate reinvestment.

3.4.4 - Maintain and preserve the existing single-family residential neighborhoods of the Northeast, Southeast and Barge/Chestnut areas of the City.

3.4.6 - Preserve and restore historic houses within the neighborhoods by using private and public partnership when possible.

With these types of goals and policies listed with the Yakima Urban Area Plan, it is hard to understand the lack of support for historic neighborhood preservation that has been demonstrated by certain City Council members and some in the local media.

The Importance of Historic Preservation

The BCNA understands that historic preservation has many diverse purposes and rewards, including the strengthening of local economies, stabilization of property values, the fostering of civic beauty and community pride, and the appreciation of local and national history.

As your Historic Preservation Committee moves forward on the various Phases, we encourage you to be involved in the public debate about historic preservation in the City of Yakima. You can demonstrate your support by writing letters to the editor, making contacts with City Council Members in person or in writing explaining your support for historic preservation, and vote for City Council Members who publicly support such preservation efforts to prevent the City of Yakima from becoming a "tear down town."

Graffiti Busting

Reporting Graffiti

Unfortunately, graffiti seems to have been on the rise in the neighborhood in the past several months – occurring mostly during a few individual sprees. The most recent recommendation from the Yakima Police Department (YPD) is to call 911 to report the graffiti. This will do two things: (1) Initiate a call number/report of the vandalism, and (2) initiate a response by an officer/ supervisor who will come out to photograph the graffiti.

When calling to report the graffiti, please be prepared to provide specific location information (e.g., street address, “on the Stop sign on the NW corner of the intersection,” etc.), and the approximate date graffiti was done. You can still report the graffiti if you don’t know for sure when it was done.

Graffiti Clean-Up

Because graffiti tends to encourage more graffiti, it is important to clean it off or paint over it as soon as possible (preferably not before it is photographed by YPD). The following website (a link is also available on our BCNA website) provides information on clean-up of graffiti: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/crime-prevention/docs/graffitiremoveletechniques.pdf>

If the graffiti is on a City-owned sign (e.g., traffic sign), please call the City Public Works Department, Streets and Traffic Division (575-

6005), give them the same specific location information, and they will clean or replace the sign.

A special thank you goes out to BCNA Board Member Derry Jeffris who makes regular rounds through the neighborhood with paint and cleaning supplies to remove and cover up the graffiti he spots. We appreciate this valuable community service!

Gang Prevention & Intervention

The City of Yakima and Yakima County have both initiated gang intervention programs and initiatives. Reducing gang activity takes time and involves a community-wide effort. Hopefully, as these efforts progress, we will begin to see the benefit in the form of reduced graffiti throughout the City and County.

The Yakima County Gang Commission recently launched an informational website which can be found at:

<http://yakimacounty.saynotogangs.com>

Central Lutheran Church will also be hosting a presentation by Father Gregory Boyle on Sunday, May 8th at 7:00 pm on “The Power of Compassion.” Father Greg Boyle has worked for years with members of Los Angeles’ street gangs and in 1986 founded Homeboy Industries, the largest and most successful gang intervention program in the country.

A full description about Father Boyle’s work and his upcoming Yakima presentation can be found at: <http://www.clcyakima.org/frboyle.html>

Communications Committee Expanding Options

The BCNA’s Communications Committee has been exploring new ways to keep in touch with its Association members.

Thanks to Association member Lisa Delorme, a local photographer and website developer, we have an improved presence on the internet. Our website features photos of our neighborhood and information on Association membership and committees. If you know of neighbors who are not members of the BCNA yet, you can help us to build support for the Association’s mission and goals by directing potential new members to our site.

The site can be found at: <http://bcna-yakima-wa.org/>.

Board Member Chris Piercy helped us to set up a Facebook page to help us connect with members through this networking site. You can help

us by becoming a “fan” of the BCNA and posting comments and content on our Facebook page. Just search for the Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Association and when you get to our page, click on “Like.”

If you are still receiving this newsletter by mail, you can send your email address to Paul Nagle-McNaughton at naglemcn@yvn.com and you will receive future newsletters in a PDF format by email, along with regular email updates on various neighborhood topics such as upcoming Association meetings, safety and crime tips, community events, and other topics of interest to Association members.



BCNA Membership Application 2011

BCNA Mission Statement:

To foster community by preserving and enhancing the neighborhood character and providing a forum for neighborhood communication and action.

If you have not yet joined the **Barge-Chestnut Neighborhood Association** or renewed your membership for 2011, please take a minute to do so. Your membership and participation are essential to the success of our Neighborhood Association. Please complete the application below and return to:

Ralph Call, BCNA Treasurer, 2608 W. Chestnut Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Optional: *To help us save on costs of mailings and to receive BCNA updates and information by e-mail, please provide us with an e-mail address. Your address will not be sold or shared with other organizations.* **E-mail Address:** _____

Type of Membership:

- 1. **Active Member:** Homeowner or resident, 18 years old or older, within BCNA boundaries. Voting Privileges. \$10.00/person. \$20.00/couple.
- 2. **Associate Member:** Anyone interested in the Association individual, association or estate having an intent in, and ethical support of, the mission and goals of the BCNA. No voting rights. \$10.00/person. \$20.00/couple.

Membership: \$ _____ + Additional Donation (optional): \$ _____ = **Total Enclosed:** \$ _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Barge-Chestnut
Neighborhood Association
c/o 211 S. 24th Ave.
Yakima, WA 98902

(Note: If you received this newsletter by mail, help us save resources by sending your e-mail address to naglemcn@yvn.com and you will be sent future issues electronically.)