

Woodland Park Newsletter

The Best of Ferndale Since 1924 • Issue 12/94

Letter From the President

The Woodland Park Improvement Association, whose members are your friends and neighbors, wishes you happy holidays and a joyous New Year's. Much has happened this past year in our neighborhood, and 1995 promises even more.

After 48 years we have reached a friendly agreement with Wetmore Tire over the use of Lot 489, the small, irregular lot behind and to the west of Wetmore's. The dispute began in 1924, when the State of Michigan widened Woodward Avenue to create its southbound lanes. Much of Ferndale's downtown, which was located there, was condemned. The remaining businesses were relocated on the west side of Woodward, on the edge of the Woodland Park subdivision, some of which was also condemned for the move. The Association fought all subsequent attempts to condemn additional residential lots, or to rezone them for commercial uses, fearing destruction of the neighborhood's residential character. The Association forced important concessions from the State, and in later years obtained injunctions from the Oakland County Circuit

Court forbidding use of the lots for commercial purposes. One injunction, issued in 1946, prohibited Wetmore's from using Lot 489 for commercial parking. Unfortunately, it did not clearly address its effect on future owners of Wetmore's. After nearly fifty years of dispute, several more court appearances, and a request from Wetmore's for rezoning to commercial status which has been pending since 1989, a settlement has been reached. The written settlement will permit Wetmore's a non-conforming use of Lot 489 for parking, contingent on City approval with restrictions as to use, hours, and appearance. The Association will participate in the drafting of the landscape plans. The agreement will be binding on all future owners of Wetmore's, regardless of the use to which the property might ultimately be put. Wetmore's, an old and friendly neighbor with an important job and tax base, will remain. The residential integrity of the neighborhood will be preserved against future commercial rezoning attempts.

Forces of change continue to pressure our neighborhood, however. National business interests are actively seeking properties for redevelopment along Woodward between 9 Mile Road

and 696. Our proximity to booming Royal Oak and our greater value-for-price real estate, mean that we must remain active and vigilant in neighborhood use and control issues if we are to maintain the family quality of Woodland Park. If Governor Engler supports construction of a new Tiger Stadium on the State Fair grounds, real estate values will soar and the temptation to rezone land along Woodward Avenue will escalate. Now, more than ever, your active support of the Woodland Park Association will permit us to anticipate these changes, deal with them realistically, and allow us to continue to preserve and build on the gracious residential character of our neighborhood into the 21st century. Please pay your dues when asked, and lend a hand with our all-volunteer organization. It's your neighborhood.

Lyle Russell

Treasurer's Report

Our 1995 beginning balance is about \$1,800.00. Most of our annual budget is used for snow removal, with a portion also used for luminaries and the summer party. Due to an increase in our snow removal charges, we must regrettably increase our dues this year to

\$12.00, up from the \$11.00 fee for the past 9 years. We continue to conduct a periodic survey of snow removal services, including the neighborhood kids, and know that our service is far less costly than any of the 14 others surveyed. We make every effort to provide prompt, efficient snow removal on public sidewalks. If you have a problem with this service, please call any officer or director, listed below.

We were able to settle the Wetmore dispute at no charge to the Association through donated legal services for the past 5 years. Timely payment of your dues will permit us to maintain a small, but prudent, cushion against similar problems in the future. There is one more potential lot dispute heating up now. Average dues payment last year exceeded 90% of our residents, a testament to your confidence in Woodland Park.

Eric Shapiro

Summer Party

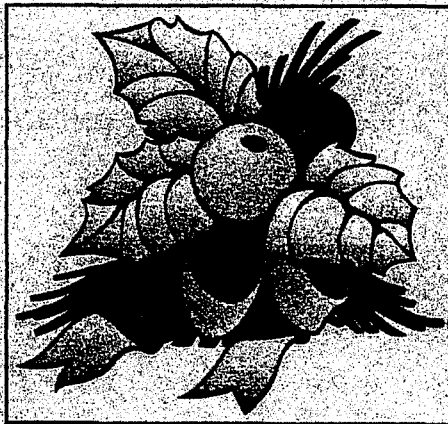
Bill and Carol Frederick have done an excellent, selfless job of resurrecting and organizing the annual summer party, which had been absent from our social calendar for about 10 years until they stepped forward. After 5 consecutive years of very hard work, (1995 will be their 6th consecutive effort), they need a rest, commencing after the 1995 party. Unless dedicated replacements come forward, the 1996 summer party may be in jeopardy. The 1995 summer party will be held the 3rd Wednesday in June, or the evening of the last day of session for Roosevelt School, whichever is later.

Our sincere thanks to the following individuals, whose efforts made possible our 5th

of Judge Robert Turner; Debbie Mast; Dave Murfin; and Eric Shapiro. Our thanks also to the following local merchants, whose generous donations allowed our budget to meet the financial needs of the party without a dues increase: Alpha Services; the Western Market; Foodland; Perry Drugs; Battel's; Jeffery's Restaurant; Wetmore Tire; and Arbor Drugs.

Christmas Lights

On Christmas Eve, block directors and other volunteers will distribute luminaries, which for seven decades have lined the curbs of Woodland Park, spreading holiday cheer. Any help you can provide your block director would be greatly appreciated. Block directors and officers are listed by name, telephone number, and street immediately following.



The Woodland Park Association

President: Lyle Russell 547-6852
Vice Pres: Dick Duggins 545-8066
Treas: Eric Shapiro 398-7886
Secy: Ellen Hill 545-6574

Block Directors

Upper Oakridge, 414-671
Gerald Pielack (455) 545-1806

Lower Oakridge, 299-391
Frank Fernandez (277) 541-2487

Upper Drayton, 416-671
Bob Wurdock (555) 544-2911

Lower Drayton, 215-413
D'Arcie McLaughlin (241) 542-4682

Upper Woodland, 415-671
Bill & Carol Frederick (640) 547-9389

Lower Woodland, 151-393
Phil & Carol Kaufman (225) 545-3354

Upper Maplehurst, 156-391
Ken Kamerschen (578) 544-7481

Lower Maplehurst, 156-391
Linda Beck (184) 542-6478

Lower Lewiston, 156-490 (even nos. only)

Help! We have no block director for Lewiston; a volunteer is needed immediately.