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Willard Neighborhood Association Newsletter September 25, 2007

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Items appearing in the WNA E-Newsletter are deemed to be of general interest to neighbors but do not necessarily reflect the views of Willard Neighborhood Association (WNA) or its Steering Committee

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Summary of Items in This E-Newsletter

Full articles appear further down in the body of this E-Newsletter.

1. Bus Rapid Transit or Rapid Bus +

Pro-Transit Alternative

The Willard Neighborhood Association Steering Committee's strong support of effective public transit and opposition to Bus Rapid Transit's removal of traffic lanes on Telegraph has formed a sub-committee headed by George Beier.

GeorgeBeier@hotmail.com

Saturday, November 17

The Berkeley Alliance of Neighborhood Associations is hosting a community meeting which will feature Greg Harper, the President of AC Transit's Board of Directors. This is an opportunity for all Berkeley residents to present their ideas and concerns about BRT to someone who can really make a difference in the way this project moves forward.

2. WNA Public Works – Fall Park Clean up

Saturday, October 27

The Willard Neighborhood Association's Public Works Committee is joining with the Berkeley Project, a student day of giving back to the community, to clean up, spruce up and generally make better Willard Park, the tennis courts and the tot lot. We need your help to make this day successful – come out and volunteer a few hours this Saturday morning.

3. Crime in our neighborhood

ASUC City Affairs – Safety Walk

Friday, October 26

Students are taking a pro-active approach to making our part

Of Berkeley safer. They are asking neighbors to join with students
In walking through the neighborhood and identifying unsafe
Conditions.

4. 2525 Telegraph -- Art House/Cafe or Night Club

The Willard Neighborhood Association Steering Committee's
position favoring no hard liquor and a compromise on the
proposed hours of operation was approved by the Zoning
Adjustment's Board as the basis on which a Use Permit
would be granted.

5. Wrights Garage

The Elmwood Neighborhood Association is currently in
settlement talks with John Gordon regarding mitigations
on the development of Wrights Garage. No leasing
lof the spaces is possible until the lawsuit is concluded.

You can read more specific's about why the suit was filed at
their website url: <http://www.theelmwood.org/issues.htm>

Other Events/Items of Interest (located at end of email)

A. Earthquakes and Insurance – A Reality Check for Homeowners

Thursday, November 15th, 7pm
Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda
Hosted by North East Berkeley Association
Everyone welcome.

B. People's Park Advisory Commission – redesign presentation

Monday 5th 7pm
Trinity Methodist Church, 2362 Bancroft

This meeting will be open for public comment on the MKThink
design ideas they have compiled from their public meeings.

*Contact information of City of Berkeley and Willard NA (located at very end of
email)*

President's Introductory Note:

There are three ways in the next month when you can have a direct impact on
the future of Berkeley. You can come out to help the WNA Clean up and

Restoration of Willard park this Saturday morning – this will help keep our neighborhood park a place that we all can feel comfortable visiting.

You can give your opinions on the design concepts developed for People's Park by going to the People's Park Advisory Board meeting November 5th -- outlined in Item B above.

You can let the President of AC Transit's Board of Directors know what you think the direction that public transit should be by going to the BANA Community meeting on Nov. 17th outlined in Item 1 above.

I'm making the second pitch for those of you who feel WNA is helping make our neighborhood a better place to live to donate dues. The voluntary contribution is \$10 per household and you can find the form at the very bottom of this email, and on our neighborhood link website.

<http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/pdf/nhextra/734472517/782299266/76726561.pdf>

If you can donate you will help us cover our costs for events like our spring and fall workdays in the neighborhood, the Xeroxing that let's us flyer for the events like the Block Party and the ability to support good works in the community with seed money. Whether you donate or not, you are still a member of Willard Neighborhood Association and entitled to all the rights and privileges that go along with that.

Thanks -- Vincent Casalaina <ProBerk@aol.com>

Willard Neighborhood Association Items in This E-Newsletter

1. Bus Rapid Transit or Rapid Bus + Pro-Transit Alternative

The Willard Neighborhood Association Steering Committee's strong support of effective public transit and opposition to Bus Rapid Transit's removal of traffic lanes on Telegraph has formed a sub-committee headed by George Beier.

GeorgeBeier@hotmail.com

Saturday, November 17

BANA Community Meeting – Bus Rapid Transit

Berkeley Alliance of Neighborhood Associations (BANA) will host a Community Meeting on Saturday, Nov. 17th to discuss Berkeley's vision of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). BANA will have a special guest speaker, Mr. Gregory Harper, President of AC Transit's Board of Directors. Mr. Harper joins us, so that he can hear our

thoughts first hand, on the various plans put forth for BRT, and alternatives to BRT that have been proposed in Berkeley. Please see his biography below.

The meeting will take place Sat Nov 17, 9:15am at 2407 Dana St., First Presbyterian Church--Church Lounge. Street and garage parking are available. Light refreshments will be served.

The Bus Rapid Transit project as currently proposed would create dedicated bus lanes and BRT stations on arterial streets in the cities of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro. The intent of the project is to achieve the speed and reliability of rail using lower cost buses. The project would also include specially designed passenger boarding platforms, shelters, NextBus signs and bus priority at traffic signals.

Many of the features proposed only for BRT could be used in alternative proposals such as Rapid Bus +. This meeting is the place to let AC Transit know how we see the future of public transit in Berkeley.

The new service would operate primarily on Telegraph Avenue, International Boulevard and East 14th Street roughly parallel to the existing BART service but with more stops available. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (DEIS/R) is currently available for this project.

http://www.actransit.org/planning_focus/details.wu?item_id=30

AC Transit has currently implemented Rapid Bus featuring NextBus signs at selected stops and bus priority at traffic signals along the BRT corridor. This service will be discontinued if BRT is fully implemented. Construction of the full BRT project is scheduled for completion in 2011.

The full cost of building BRT is currently estimated at \$400 million. To date, only limited funds are available for implementation of the project. Voters approved Regional Measure 2 in Voters approved Regional Measure 2 in the March 2004 election. This measure raised bridge tolls by \$1, and funded a number of projects including \$65 million for construction of the Bus Rapid Transit system. This measure also includes \$3 million annually to operate the system. In addition, Alameda County Measure B, the 1/2 percent sales tax, will raise \$20 million for construction of the project. There is also about \$4 million available from Federal and State sources. This leaves a funding gap of nearly \$300 million.

Biography:

Greg Harper, an East Bay attorney and a former Emeryville mayor, was elected in November 2000 and re-elected in 2004 to represent Ward 2, including portions of Berkeley, Oakland and Emeryville. Director Harper presently serves as President of the Board of Directors. A principal in a local law firm, Director Harper is active in regional civic affairs and serves on the Regional Planning Committee

of the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Alameda County Housing Authority. He also has served on public bodies including the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency, and the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Water Transit in the Bay Area. Director Harper earned his B.A. and B.S. at the University of Illinois and a J.D. at Hastings College of the Law.

Ward 2:

Cities of Emeryville and Piedmont and that portion of Berkeley not in Ward I. That part of Oakland that is north of a line that when drawn from the Oakland-Alameda estuary runs generally east from the water on 42nd Avenue, then north on Foothill Boulevard, then east on 35th Avenue, then north on MacArthur Boulevard-Georgia Street, then east on Laguna, then northeast on Lincoln and other streets until it runs into Park Boulevard, east on Park to Mountain, south on Mountain, then to Ascot Drive, then Castle Drive, then Melville Drive to Skyline, and then to Waterloo, and Waterloo to the Oakland City line.

2. WNA Public Works – Fall Park Clean up Saturday, October 27 -- Greg Murphy

Please join the Willard Neighborhood Association's Public Works Committee at 9:00 am on Saturday, Oct. 27 as we hold our fall work day at Willard Park. Over 40 student volunteers from the Berkeley Project will be joining us to do graffiti abatement, clubhouse renovations, landscape renovations, painting and clean up projects, and other projects to spruce up the park.

So far, Sue Fischer, Howard Rosenberg, and Vincent Casalaina have agreed to participate from the neighborhood, but I'd love to get some additional volunteers to help with the following projects:

On Saturday, Oct. 27

I would also like to get commitments to organize/supervise –

1. Coffee, doughnuts, and lunch service (for about 50 - 60 people)
2. Painting of the tennis practice wall, wastebaskets, and other minor painting projects
3. Landscaping projects including weeding, planting, and pruning
4. Clubhouse work including removing the plexi roof and possibly other work (depending on the Parks & Rec. Dept.)
5. Center storage clean up and organization (between the tennis courts)

6. Tot-lot repairs including water fountain, sand, front gate, and bulletin board

The schedule will be :

9:00 - 10:30 meet at the Clubhouse for Coffee, Doughnuts
and work assignments

10:30 - 10:45 break

10:45 - 12:30 finish work assignments & clean up

12:30 - 1:30 Lunch

Gregory S. Murphy
Direct: 415-449-3853
gregm@ifcs.org

3. Crime in our neighborhood

ASUC City Affairs – Safety Walk Friday, October 26 -- David Garfinkel

The City Affairs Department of the ASUC External Affairs Office would like to invite members of the Willard Neighborhood Association to a student-led city walk-thru of the areas surround the Berkeley campus. The goals of this walkthrough are to identify non-functioning streetlights and dark areas, cracked and broken sections of sidewalks, bushes and vegetation that creep into walking paths, and any other dangers and improvements that can be identified to make Berkeley a better place for students and neighbors.

Once we have compiled the results of this event, we will produce a report that will be available to the community. We will also hold a meeting with the Berkeley City Council and City Manager.

The walkthrough shall commence on Friday, October 19 at 6:30 p.m. We will meet by Sproul Fountain (that's Ludwig's Fountain for those of you old enough to remember) on the Berkeley Campus where we will break up into teams that will target small areas for intensive surveying. We expect to be have completed the survey by 9pm.

Food and drinks will be provided, and that atmosphere will be lively, fun, and full of opportunity to meet fellow students, neighbors, and city officials.

Thank you for your hard work to make Berkeley a safer place!

Please contact me at dgarfinkel@berkeley.edu by next Wednesday, October 24, to sign up for this event.

Other Events/Items of Interest

A. Earthquakes and Insurance – A Reality Check for Homeowners

Thursday, November 15th, 7pm
Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda
Hosted by North East Berkeley Association
Everyone welcome.

We all know a Big One is likely to happen. You have retrofitted your home and engaged in disaster preparedness. What about insurance?

Come listen to and question our panel of experts about the ins and outs of homeowner insurance policies, CEA-backed earthquake insurance policies, and other earthquake insurance policies

PANELISTS

- Amy Bach, Esq., Executive Director, United Policyholders
- Phil Kamlarz, Berkeley City Manager
- Bruce Patton, Esq., Sr. Staff Counsel, California Department of Insurance and Insurance Commissioner Designee to California Earthquake Authority Governing Board
- David Shaffer, Independent Insurance Agent

B. People's Park Advisory Commission – redesign Public Comment

Monday 5th 7pm
Trinity Methodist Church, 2362 Bancroft

The draft report: People's Park Assessment & Planning Study by MKThink consultants is online at the Community Relations website:

http://communityrelations.berkeley.edu/whatsnew/peoples_park_draft_study.htm

A copy of the report is also available for viewing at the People's Park office. Community members who would like to comment on the draft report should e-mail their comments to pplspark@berkeley.edu or send them by US mail to:

People's Park Community Advisory Board

336 Sproul Hall #4208
Berkeley, CA 94720-4208

The study reflects the opinions and perspectives of a broad range of community stakeholders who are concerned about the future of People's Park. The study's findings suggest future directions that the university may consider with the goals of making the site safer and generating greater use by the campus and community.

Members of the public are invited to comment on the study in writing or to address the People's Park Community Advisory Board at its November 5, 2007 meeting (7:00 pm, Trinity Methodist Church, 2362 Bancroft).

At its December 3, 2007 meeting, the board will discuss recommendations to make to the university with respect to the study. Please pass this information along to your neighbors.

We would like to thank you for participating in the community input process and invite you to comment on the draft report.

Irene Hegarty -- hegarty@berkeley.edu

*** * * * * City of Berkeley: Useful Contact Information * * * * ***

Police

Police Emergency Number: 911 (from landline);
981-5911 (from cell; preprogram with this
number)

Police Non-emergency Number: 981-5900

Link to beat maps and a list of beat officers:

<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/police/departments/beatinfo/beatlineup.html>

In Willard neighborhood, North of Derby is Beat 7, South of Derby is Beat 9.

Area Coordinator -- Steve Burccham 981-5778

Other City Departments:

Neighborhood Services Liaison Jim Hynes <jhynes@ci.berkeley.ca.us> 981-2493

Public Works Customer Service: 644-6620 (streets, sidewalks, graffiti, sewers, litter, storm drains, street lights)

Tree Trimming/Planting (Forestry): 644-6566

Written Communication with City Council:

To comment to City Council, cut and paste the following email addresses:

City Clerk <clerk@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Mayor Tom Bates <Mayor@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Linda Maio <LMaio@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Darryl Moore <DMoore@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Max Anderson <MAnderson@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Dona Spring <DSpring@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Laurie Capitelli <LCapitelli@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Betty Olds <BOlds@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Kriss Worthington <KWorthington@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Gordon Wozniak <GWozniak@ci.berkeley.ca.us>

Representatives for Our Neighborhood:

Councilmember Kriss Worthington (District 7) 981-7170
All except Eastern edge of neighborhood

Councilmember Gordon Wozniak (District 8) 981-7180
Eastern edge of neighborhood

Mayor Tom Bates 981-7100

Zoning Adjustments Board:

To comment to the Zoning Adjustments Board regarding projects on their calendar, email: Zoning Adjustments Board <zab@ci.berkeley.ca.us>

Best to submit your comments 10 days prior to meeting for inclusion in the advance packet to board members, but late submissions will be

distributed the evening of the meeting

Dues Contribution Form

Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____@_____

Phone: (_____) _____-- _____

Interests: _____

Suggested Dues: \$10/household Amount Donated: \$_____

We appreciate your contribution and will use your money to support activities that benefit the Willard neighborhood. Whether you donate or not, you are still a member of Willard Neighborhood Association and entitled to all the rights and privileges that go along with that.

Send to: Willard Neighborhood Association
2619 Benvenue Ave. Apt. A
Berkeley, CA 94704

Willard Neighborhood Association Newsletter: The WNA Newsletter covers items of general interest to neighbors in the Ashby/Telegraph/Dwight/College area of south Berkeley, including announcements about community-building events, greening projects and work parties around the neighborhood.

If you're receiving this email, you probably either signed up at a neighborhood event or a neighbor forwarded it to you. Please note that to prevent spam, WNA always uses bcc and does not share your email address with third parties. Feel free to pass the WNA Newsletter on to other neighbors you think might be interested.

To submit items for the newsletter: Email content or links you'd like to see included in the Newsletter to Vincent Casalaina <ProBerk@aol.com>. Please note that due to the volunteer nature of the endeavor, the Newsletter does not typically include "letters to the editor" or "commentary" type articles. The Berkeley Daily Planet has a large section devoted to opinion.

WNA Yahoo Group: If you would like to receive messages (and participate in discussions) on the WNA Yahoo Group, please sign up on the website indicating your interest, and you will receive a confirmation of your membership.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/willardna/>

WNA Neighborhood Links site: If you would like to see the agendas and background information that the Steering Committee gets each month, you can find it here at this site. Also here are archived copies of the Newsletter and some additional contact information.

<http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/berkeley/willard/>

Willard Park Blog: If you would like to view and contribute to Mark Celsor's neighborhood blog go to his site.

<http://www.willardpark.com/>

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please reply to this email with the subject line of "un-subscribe" and I'll remove your email address.