

Rooney Valley Election Update

The City of Lakewood and our own Ward 4 has been the focus of some intense political activity in recent months. During the holiday snow storms, Lakewood residents voted on a referendum to overturn the city's plan to reconfigure the boundaries of Iron Spring Park in Rooney Valley. The city's original plan was to extend the park boundaries into a strip between the existing homes and the new Solterra project currently being built in the northeast corner of the valley. This strip was to create a corridor that would provide public access between Green Mountain Park and Bear Creek Park. The 22 acres of private land that would have been acquired for this corridor was to have been compensated for by the transfer of an equal number of acres from the southwest corner of the existing city park. Lakewood voters overturned the land exchange by a vote of 57% to 43%. This vote causes the Rooney Valley development plan to revert back to the zoning that allows construction of up to 1400 homes (although the developer is promising to build only 1100 homes). The current zoning and development plans also provide for a 30 foot public access trail between the two developments.

Another citizen petition was intended to go before the city council that proposed to down-zone the Rooney Valley from its current zoning designation (which permits up to 5 units per acre) to the lowest zoning category that permits only one house per acre. However after the petition was turned in the City Clerk determined there were not enough legitimate signatures to qualify as a valid petition. The petition was rejected by the City Clerk's office and the city council did not have to decide whether to go along with the petitioners or put the matter to a vote of the people. If the council had rejected the petition then a special mail-in ballot election would have been scheduled 90 days later.

On another matter, the owner of the ravine at Alameda & Florida recently submitted plans to the city to construct nine (9) single family houses. He held a public input meeting on January 11 in which the local residents protested that the land was unsuitable to be built upon.

If you have any questions about these or other matters relating to Ward 4 or the City of Lakewood, please call *David Wiechman* at 303-986-4818.

Please Don't Feed Wild Animals

Many residents have reported an increase in Coyotes and Fox in the Mountain Side Park area. Well-intentioned people are feeding these predators which creates a safety hazard for children and small pets.

OHIO AVE PROPERTY HIBERNIA DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Hibernia Holdings has held in abeyance action regarding their latest residential development proposal. An important component of their plan included a proposed land swap with the city for adjacent Peterson Park land. In return for Peterson Park land the Hibernia plan was to have an equal amount of space on the west of their development set aside and improved as a park-like pathway and afford a larger buffer for the adjacent Alkire neighbors. Given the defeat of the Rooney Valley/Iron Springs Park land swap the conventional wisdom is that City Council will not consider another parkland swap proposal. That presents only a few options for Hibernia. They are not disclosing their plans at this time and have not given official notice except that they are not walking away. Too much time, effort and especially money has been invested in the property to leave. Like any business, they will do whatever gives them the best return. They may go back to a revised patio home plan that would include 60 units (or less) without the Peterson Park land. If there continues to be significant resistance from the neighbors then the path of least resistance would be to use the land as it is already zoned, for an office building. That could be done effectively and rather expeditiously without any neighborhood input. We will keep you informed as we learn of the next action.

Update on South Entrance Sign

Yes, GMCA is still planning a new entrance sign for the intersection of Alkire and Beech. This sign will use flagstone rock and lettering similar to the sign at Alkire and Cedar. Volunteers working on this project are currently getting details on the size and position together to obtain a sign permit from the City of Lakewood. Next steps will include getting estimates for the sign and landscaping work. So far, neighborhood donations to the special sign fund have raised about half of the \$5,000 goal. It's still not too late to donate to this special fund reserved for the entrance sign project. Many thanks to all neighborhood residents that already contributed!

Deer, Deer, and More Deer

Many more deer have been sighted in the neighborhood during the cold snowy weather. This is attributed to snow cover on the ground. In fact, herds of 10 to 20 deer have moved from the open Green Mountain park lands and are living full time in some yards. Residents should be especially careful driving near dusk when deer tend to move before nightfall.

Please do not feed the deer. Feeding the deer can actually harm their health and pose hazards for everyone in the neighborhood.



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Green Mountainside News

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Presidents Message

And the survey says!! Sorry, I couldn't help myself. At this writing we have had 71 responses to the 1100 surveys we sent out with the December newsletter. I thought I would pass along some of the results. Sixty respondents rated their opinion of GMCA as a favorable 4 or 5. There were no unfavorable opinions and 2 "No Opinion" responses.

Sixty-six replied that they are members and five are not members. Sixty-two said they get the newsletter, three said they don't and five said they don't know if they get the newsletter or not. Sixty-four gave the newsletter a favorable 4 or 5 rating there were no unfavorable or "No Opinion" ratings.

A few people said they would be a newsletter carrier or substitute carrier. In general, half to two-thirds of the respondents said they were aware of the GMCA activities and about the same number approve of the same. Participation in the activities by those who sent in their surveys varied a lot. The highest participation was in the EDS discount trash service. Oddly, forty-four of the respondents participated but only 37 are aware of the program. Go Figure. The clean up days were the next biggest event (32) followed by the picnic (12), park trail (11), The Annual Meeting, Easter Egg Hunt and the rest at only 5 or 6.

About eighty-five percent of those responding felt GMCA had done a good job with the Hibernia development negotiations and had kept the neighborhood informed. Almost three-fourths (72%) prefer the proposed Hibernia project to the exiting zoning of a Planed Development Office Building.

The survey also brought in a number of comments to the questions of "what can GMCA do better" and "what should GMCA do next year".

The "what can GMCA do better" had twenty-three comments and "what should GMCA do next year" had forty-six.

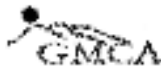
There were, of course, a number of "keep up the good work" and "great job" comments. These are always appreciated by the Board members who are all volunteers donating their time and hard work.

Some comments were about the Hibernia proposal, some for and some against. One said we should listen to the non-members as they are the majority. Well, first we try to listen to the entire populace of our neighborhood, and second we got five survey responses out of about 650 from non-members (or <1%). We got sixty-six out of about 450 from members (or 15%).

A few comments were regarding traffic control and speed bumps. But the largest number of the comments had to do with wanting the neighborhood to look better. To clean-up properties so values will stay high. Several people have asked us to reprint the article that was written by Rocky Reynebeau and with his permission we have done so in this issue of the GMCA newsletter. Please take a moment to read it over; he has some excellent things to say about keeping your property up and pride-of-ownership. As this was such a big comment concern we will be revisiting this subject throughout the year.

Many comments had to do with covenants, both for and against. This is a subject that has been brought up several times in the past (before my tenure) and continues to be a hot button issue full of confusion. I won't go into it any farther in this article but we are doing some research into the status of existing covenants and planning an article dealing with covenants for a near future newsletter.

Thank you for your participation in the survey, all of your comments mean a great deal to the board in shaping our direction for the coming year. The GMCA survey results are available to GMCA residents by request.



Community News

Garage Sale June 1 & 2, 2007

GMCA is sponsoring a community garage sale June 1 & 2, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You hold your own garage sale at your own home. Having garage sales on the same weekend makes our sales more attractive to buyers who appreciate the greater selection in one location that multi-family garage sales provide. Besides making sales more effective a shared sale weekend can reduce the number of garage sales on other weekends. Jeremy Vialpano with Coldwell Bankers is donating signs and flyers. She is asking that you please do not throw away the signs that are placed throughout the neighborhood.

They will be put up Thursday evening and picked up Saturday afternoon. Jeremy will need to know what days or day you will be participating and what items you have to sell. If you would like to participate in the garage sale or have any questions call Jeremy Vialpando at 303-914-4111.

Spring Clean Up Is June 9th

GMCA is sponsoring a neighborhood clean-up Saturday, **June 9 from 8 to 11 a.m. (or until full)** with three roll-offs at Foothills Elementary School to dispose of big items the weekly service won't take.

A to Z Rentals is donating a wood chipper to mulch branches and shrubs - *free mulch available*.

This service is limited to Green Mountainside residents. Proof of residency is required. GMCA volunteers will accept donations to offset some of the cost of this service.

DBL Marketing Service will take steel and aluminum scrap, lawn mowers, barbeques, water heaters, major appliances; even refrigerators and air conditioners.

We can't accept waste that is liquid, radioactive, toxic, ignitable, medical, corrosive or defined as hazardous.

Summer Picnic July 21

Our annual summer picnic will be later this year to allow families to get back from vacation.

Set for Saturday, **July 21st** from 5 – 8 p.m., GMCA will supply the food and drink while you provide the fun.

The picnic will be held in **Foothills Park**, just north of Foothills Elem. School.

The picnic is open to all residents and their immediate families. If you have a special dish you would like to share, you're welcome to bring it but it is not expected.



Easter Egg Hunt March 31st.

The Easter Bunny will be visiting Green Mountain with lots of candy and gifts. To promote good neighborliness, GMCA is hosting an **Easter Egg Hunt on Sat., March 31st., starting at 11 a.m.** Because of when Easter falls this year we do not have a rainy day backup. Bring your kids, grandkids and meet your neighbors as well as get some goodies.

The location will be **Foothills Park** (NE of Foothills School—on Youngfield Ct.).

There will be three hunts, divided by age: Pre-Schoolers!, Kindergarten through 2nd Grade! and 3rd Grade and older.

To help with the Hunt, call 303-987-7002 ext. 7004 and *leave a detailed message.*

BE PROMPT - hunts don't take long with these sharp-eyed kids.

Celebrate Earth Day April 21



Join us at 9:00 am for a morning, walking tour of our new paved pathway around the retention pond at the base of Green Mountain and a leisurely hike up the east side of Green Mountain. One of Lakewood's most beautiful parks, sitting right in our backyard!

Bring water, good walking shoes, a hat, weather appropriate gear, suntan lotion, snacks and water. Don't forget your cameras, binoculars, a good hiking stick, and a kite or two. It is Spring time! Time to fly kites in at the park in our backyard. GMCA will have extra water and suntan lotion available.

The hike will last about 3 hours, then we will return to the cul de sac and fly kites for an hour or so. . .

Meet at Mountainside Park (take Exposition West from Alkire to the cul de sac) Saturday, April 21, 2007, 9:00 am.

ADOPT A FAMILY CHRISTMAS 2006

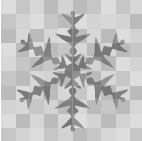
Not just one family this year but four! Four families that were looking at a bleak Christmas had it turn a lot brighter on Saturday Dec. 23rd. Thanks to the generous contributions of some of our Green Mountain neighbors plus the **Belmar Optimist International club #25192** and the **Front Range Bank "Gifting Tree."** Over \$800 in all! Santa's helpers, Diane and Ed Rhodus and Ken Bowen toted two big (heavy) bags of toys, clothing and food to each of four households. The excitement and joy registered in the faces of the mothers and kids was something I wish we could have recorded to share with all of you. It brightened our Christmas too. **THANK YOU neighbors, THANK YOU Optimist Club, and THANK YOU Front Range Bank.**

Alkire To Be Torn Up

Alkire Street is scheduled to be torn up in the upcoming months to put in a new water main in order to provide water to the new Rooney Valley development called *Solterra*. The water is being provided by *Consolidated Mutual Water Company* from their Applewood reservoir. Although the recent cold weather has caused delays, construction is anticipated to begin in March. However, at Alkire and Ohio they will begin to bore under the street by early March, weather permitting. As the dates get closer and more accurate information becomes available, GMCA will keep you informed. For further questions, call *David Wiechman* at 303-986-4818.

BLIZZARD OF 2006 SHUTS DOWN FOOTHILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND PREVENTS SANTA'S VISIT.

Two to three feet of drifting snow, extreme cold and blowing winds shut down Lakewood, Jefferson County, R-3 school District, Greater Denver Area, DIA, and most of Colorado from December 20th to the 23rd. Foothills Elementary closed two days early for Winter Break due to the Blizzard. Santa (Warren Howard) and Elf (Rebecca Bonham) were all ready to visit all the wonderful children and teachers at Foothills for treats, pictures and a great big **HoHoHo, Merry Christmas to All !?! Several hundred packages of treats for all the preschoolers to second graders were prepared and bags of candy canes were ready for the 3rd through 6th graders. Santa and the helper elf were very disappointed but plan to visit in December 2007.**



Holiday Lights Contest Winners

1st Place

14022 W. Exposition Place

2nd Place

14234 W. Exposition Drive

3rd Place

13452 W. Dakota Ave.

Honorable Mention

13775 W. Exposition Drive

Thanks to Dave Davenport, Warren Howard and City Councilor Ray Elliot for their contribution as judges. They enjoyed the job and wonderful displays of all the homeowners. Thanks to all who decorated for the holidays.

Final Notice

Last chance to get your resident owned business listed for FREE in the GMCA brochure sent out yearly to all residents and new homeowners. Deadline is May 1st. Paid members can email information to lakewoodgmca@msn.com.

Be sure to include Business name, Services, Phone, Email, Web address for the brochure and your name and address within GMCA (for payment verification).

2007 brochures will be included in the next issue of the newsletter.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 31: GMCA Easter Egg Hunt (Foothill Park)

April 5: GMCA Meeting 7 p.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

April 14: Ward 4 Meeting 9 a.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

April 22: Earth Day Walk (Mountainside Park)

May 3: GMCA Meeting 7 p.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

May 12: Ward 4 Meeting 9 a.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

June 1st and 2nd: Community Garage Sale

June 7: GMCA Meeting 7 p.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

June 9: Spring Clean Up (Foothills Elementary School)

June 9: Ward 4 Meeting 9 a.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

July 5: GMCA Meeting 7 p.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

July 14: Ward 4 Meeting 9 a.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

July 21: Summer Picnic (Foothill Park)

Aug 2: GMCA Meeting 7 p.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

Aug 11: Ward 4 Meeting 9 a.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

Sept 6: GMCA Meeting 7 p.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

Sept 8: Ward 4 Meeting 9 a.m. (GM Presbyterian Church)

Sept 31: Fall Clean Up (Foothills Elementary School)

Help Keep Our Community Strong — JOIN GMCA TODAY

Did you know that Green Mountainside Civic Association (GMCA) membership dues allow us to conduct these useful neighborhood activities?

- Spring & Fall Clean Up
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Community Garage Sale
- Entrance Signage
- Holiday Lights Contest
- Adopt-a-Family Program
- Lower Trash Rates
- New Resident Welcome Committee
- Park Development
- Landscape Contest

Membership Coupon



Dues are only \$25 and allow us to improve the neighborhood, and give you a voice in the community. Please take a moment to join today.

YES! I want to keep Green Mountain Estates a wonderful place to live! Enclose your \$25 check to GMCA and mail to: GMCA, P.O. Box 280482 Lakewood, Co. 80228

Name: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____

The Importance of Neighborhood Pride-of-Ownership

Buyers buy sizzle, not steak .Pride is the sizzle!

By Rocky Reynebeau

Real property has a life cycle! Accordingly, neighborhoods also have a life cycle. It goes like this. A neighborhood is new, then near new, then older, then old AND then either the decline continues or the neighborhood is RECLAIMED. It is that period between older and old that neighborhoods become known as a "transitional neighborhood" .

Now, all neighborhoods are in a continual state of transition but not all neighborhoods are reclaimed. Witness, Washington Park, Northwest Denver, Parkhill and Golden. These are all older places where pride of ownership is an important part of the housing equation. These are areas being "reclaimed." But, there are also excellent examples of formerly great neighborhoods where the lack of pride-of-ownership is the critical mass.

The only difference between each of these neighborhoods is pride-of-ownership or lack thereof. I have a friend who lives in Heritage West (Celebrity product at Kipling and Jewell) and I questioned him one time about how they keep their lawns so perfect in there. He told me, quite bluntly, they demand pride of ownership from the people who live there. And it shows.

Neighborhoods start to decline in very small ways. First, it becomes acceptable to allow a yard to become overgrown, then not watering or fertilizing a lawn becomes a good way to save money. Then come the junky cars, broken fences, dead trees, boats, "3rd, 4th and 5th cars and gravel pathways to the RV parked on the side of the house. Then come the pink paint jobs and an excessive number of rentals. The tremendous eyesore of lack of pride-of-ownership leads to the very worst part - potential buyers go other places where there is more pride-of-ownership. Buyers who want pride-of-ownership are replaced with buyers who don't give a hoot about it. All this because some people feel that "nobody is going to tell me what I can't do with my property." That individual might be right but it is a case of winning the battle and losing the war - property values then begin to fall or fail to keep up with inflation.

I remember studying the concept of "critical mass" a long time ago. It is a concept similar to momentum and inertia I suppose. (Noun - Critical Mass - the minimum amount (of something) required to start or maintain a venture). As related to "neighborhoods" it simply means that people and neighbors decide what level of pride-of-ownership is acceptable in the places they live. To put it in my terms - if you drive down a street and you can say "boy, I could live here" then there is positive critical mass relative to pride of ownership. Conversely, if you would not want to live there then there is negative critical mass.

In the final analysis it is this "pride-of-ownership" thing that is principally related to residential housing values. Every home I have ever sold had bedrooms, kitchens and most even have bathrooms - but not all homes or neighborhoods have pride-of-ownership. Buyers don't buy steak they buy the sizzle! Whether a neighborhood is old or new really has nothing to do with it and price range does not seem to have any effect either. It just does not make sense to live in a \$500,000 neighborhood and then save \$500 a year by not watering or fertilizing a lawn. Yet, it happens all the time. That \$500 "savings" will cost an owner and their neighbors \$50,000 in lost value.

Now, I know that this conversation is beyond my providence. And I also know that some of the readers are going to be very angry at me for my frankness. But I do this because I love this part of town - there is not a better place to live, in my view, the west side of town. Frankly, I think we could be close to "Camelot" status - I really mean it. Think about it. After a hard day at work we head home to a quiet part of town. We have Bear Creek State Park, open areas and two golf courses to our immediate south. The north side of this hill provides us access to everything in a matter of minutes. To the west we have where most Americans want to go on vacation. AND, the top of this hill is Open Space with tons of trails and wildlife. You know all the attributes so I don't have to mention them.

But, the older parts of this hill are also at the risk of becoming transitional neighborhoods. A great street can be significantly hurt by one or two crap neighbors. Yes, critical mass is still in our favor - the preponderance of homes on this hill show a great deal of pride-of-ownership. We need to be ever vigilant of critical mass and we need to do it street by street and neighborhood by neighborhood.

Assuming that we want to maintain critical mass we should all look at our streets and ask ourselves am I helping this street or hurting it. If you are helping - great. But, if you are hurting the street then maybe you need to think about how you are impacting your neighbors.

Neighborhood associations, if you are lucky enough to have one, need to continue to stay on top of their neighborhoods. If there are eyesores in the neighborhood we should nicely inform that household that it is not acceptable - period. This stuff matters - big time. Witness a 900 sq. ft. home in Washington Park will sell for upwards of \$350,000 - That same product in (I can't mention the area) will sell for \$125,000. The first neighborhood had very, very positive pride-of-ownership, critical mass, and the other does not.

If we want our homes to maintain value and grow to the maximum - we should demand pride of ownership of ourselves and our neighbors. Very Simple.

