



# WESTRIDGE NEWS & VIEWS

A Monthly Publication of the Westridge Homeowners Association

Vol. 13 No. 10

October 2007

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## Why You Should Be Concerned About The Rock Church's Proposed Expansion, and What You Can Do to Help!

By now, you probably have heard about The Rock Church's plans to add a youth center and to also expand their offices and worship space. The Westridge HOA is opposing this expansion plan, primarily because the size and use of the proposed buildings would generate traffic volumes that would be very detrimental to the character of the neighborhood and to the property values of those living near the church. Additionally, there are concerns about noise, upkeep of the property, and creation of a mega-church campus that would be inappropriate for our established residential neighborhood. It is very important to note

that the HOA is in no way opposed to the church's work or beliefs. The HOA is not opposed to the message, just the method.

### The Process:

In order to begin work on their proposed expansion, the church needs Jefferson County to agree to rezone the property. This is accomplished by submitting a rough design plan to the county called an "Official Design Plan" or "ODP." The county's various departments then prepare comments regarding the ODP, and the county Planning Division then compiles these comments and recommends either approval or rejection of the ODP to the County Commissioners. The County Commissioners make the final decision as to whether the ODP should be approved or not. There are several steps in this process, including public hearings before both the Planning Division and the County Commissioners. Additionally, the applicant is required to have a community meeting where the public can voice their approval or concerns over the proposed project.

### The Rock Church's ODP History:

The church has submitted two proposed ODPs to the Jefferson County Planning Division, and both times the Planning Division replied that it would recommend rejection if the church submitted the ODP to the County Commissioners for approval. The church has also had two community meetings regarding the ODPs. At each meeting, over 100 of the church's neighbors attended, and the vast majority of these attendees were very vocal

in their opposition to the proposed expansion. The Rock did not submit either of these prior ODPs to the County Commissioners.

On September 13, 2007, the church submitted another revised ODP to the Jefferson County Planning Division. As the church has already conducted the one required community meeting, there will likely not be an opportunity for the neighborhood to voice its opinion again until public hearings are held by the Planning Division and the County Commissioners. At this time, Westridge HOA is preparing its written objection to the latest

ODP. After reviewing this objection, and the various county division comments, the Planning Division will respond to The Rock recommending either approval or objection of the ODP if it is submitted to the County Commissioners. As the size of the expansion has not been significantly changed from the prior ODP, Westridge HOA

anticipates that the Planning Division will once again recommend rejection to the County Commissioners. It is then up to the church to determine if it wants to proceed or make further revisions to their ODP. If the church chooses to proceed, a public hearing will be heard before the Planning Division, and then a final public hearing will be held before the County Commissioners. Westridge HOA will be attending both of these hearings to oppose approval of the ODP. It is very important that

*continued on page 3*



### Westridge Financial Report

<b>Last Reported Balance 6/6/07</b>	<b>.....\$1,933.57</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Members Fees	.....\$425.00
Insurance Refund	.....\$662.26
<b>Expenses</b>	
Attorney Fees & Court Costs	.....\$227.98
Colorado Lasertype (newsletter & flyers)	.....\$52.55
Stamps & Office Supplies	.....\$347.83
Insurance (semi-annual)	.....\$421.00
<b>Ending Balance 10/1/07</b>	<b>.....\$1,971.47</b>

## Got Coats??

It's that time again! Judy Susman is ready to start her 12th annual COATS FOR COLORADO drive. Judy will do the legwork and make it easier for you to contribute by picking up your donations and delivering them to the

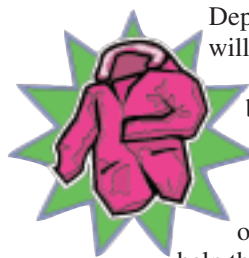
Dependable Cleaners collection site. She will also bring you a donation receipt.

Judy wants to make this drive an even bigger success than in the past. Well-over 1,000 coats have been collected from Judy's coat drives.

If you have coats that you don't need or want, and you wish to participate and help those less fortunate than you, **please call**

**Judy Susman at 303-932-3322 by Wednesday, November 7th with your name, address and phone number to schedule a pickup on Saturday, November 10th between 8 and 10 a.m.**

Participants will be entered into a drawing for a **free holiday turkey** – one entry for each coat donated. The turkey drawing will take place on Sunday, November 11th.



## Two More Students Complete Judy Susman's 30 Book Reading Challenge!

JUDY SUSMAN, Re/Max Professionals, says congratulations to **Andy** and **Kenny Lieu**. Andy and Kenny each read the required 30 books, and they each received a free Blockbuster gift card for their effort. Judy believes that reading is vital, so she encourages kids to get involved in this program. To date, 56 kids have completed the challenge. If you didn't get your card, they are available from the school library, the school office or directly from Judy Susman by calling 303-932-3322.



## Fifth Annual Holiday Craft Fair

The Rock of Southwest Baptist Church (adjacent to Westridge Elementary School) is hosting its fifth annual holiday craft fair on Friday, October 12th from 1-8 p.m. and Saturday, October 13th from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. Door prizes will be given hourly. Coffee bar open. If you are an interested crafter, please call **Luann** at 720-934-2825.

## Valuable and Helpful Community Websites

Westridge Homeowners Association: <http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/jeffco/wridge>

COHOPE Council of Homeowners Organization for Planned Environment: [cohopejeffco.com](http://cohopejeffco.com)

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**\*\*\*Anyone who wishes to be part of the Board, please contact any one of the board members with your interest.**

### Committees

**OPEN COHOPE**

*If you would like to form a committee, please contact a board member for more information. Thank you for your help!!*

The *Westridge News & Views* is published monthly by the Westridge Homeowners Association, a non-profit homeowners association. The HOA mailing address is PO Box 621172, Littleton, CO 80162-1172.

The deadline for articles and advertisements is the 15th of the month for the next month's issue except for the Jan. issue which is Dec. 6th. **All articles must be approved by the board for publication, or as space permits.** Appearance of an advertisement in this publication does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by the publisher or the association of the goods or services offered therein. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and not of the Board of Directors of your association or the publisher. Neither the Board, publisher nor the authors intend to provide any professional service or opinion through this publication.

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## Important Numbers to Have on Hand

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\*This number is for parking and driving violations that need to be brought to the attention of the sheriff's department. The streets are county property and part of their jurisdiction.

Jeffco Graffiti Hot Line . . . . . 303-271-8247

Jeffco Commissioners . . . . . 303-271-8525

Animal Control . . . . . 303-271-5070

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Jefferson County Website [www.co.jefferson.co.us](http://www.co.jefferson.co.us).

## It's Not Too Late to Join Us!!

Your dues of just \$25 for the year helps support community activities, the newsletter and efforts to keep Westridge a first-class neighborhood! \$25 is a small price to pay to keep this community great!! Please send your dues in today. **Thank you!**

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**The Rock**, continued from front page

any concerned Westridge residents also attend these hearings and voice their concerns to the Planning Division and County Commissioners. This will likely be your only opportunity to be heard on the issue. The church's most recent ODP, and the county Planning Division's prior responses may be seen on the Westridge HOA's website at <http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/jeffco/wridge/>. These and several other documents related to the church's proposed expansion can be found under the "Community Pages" section.

**Why You Should Be Concerned:**

There are numerous reasons why the Westridge HOA is opposed to The Rock's expansion, and why all Westridge, Reflections and Sunrise Creek residents should be concerned.

**1) The proposed expansion will be used for much more than just a 'youth center.'**

If you examine any of the church's ODPs, you will notice that there are no restrictions on how or when the 'youth center' may be used. In fact, during the church's second community meeting, one of the church elders, Wendell Bash, admitted that the 'youth center' will be open to use for weddings, receptions, and any other gatherings that the church deems appropriate. This means that the 'youth center' is actually an event center – and a very large one at that. The proposed 'youth center' is 17,000 square feet in size. Compare this to the Jefferson County Fairgrounds Event Center which is 10,440 square feet in size. The Jeffco Event Center can, and does, accommodate up to 700 people for banquets, and 900 people if set up classroom style. How many people will the church be able to fit into a building that will be 60% larger than the Jeffco Event Center?? Even more alarming is that the church is also planning to expand their meeting rooms and offices by another 20,000+ square feet. This is even more space that could be utilized to host events.

Mr. Bash further admitted that this 'youth center' would be open to use 7 days a week, with no time restrictions. If you examine the most recent ODP, you will see that while there are time restrictions for outdoor use of the property, there are no such restrictions for the 'youth center' or any of the church's other proposed buildings. Under this ODP, the church could host any size event during any day or time of the week. You can expect large weddings going until early in the morning. Retirement parties could be held during any evening of the week. Business meetings or other functions could occur during weekdays – causing even more problems with the traffic at Westridge Elementary. Keep in mind that the church is proposing 330 parking spaces for their new lot. You should view this as a very clear and ominous sign of how the church intends to use their 'youth center.'

**2) The proposed expansion will result in a "mega-church" operating in our quiet residential neighborhood.**

The church's latest ODP provides for a total building space of 63,000 square feet! This is far and above what is appropriate for a residential neighborhood. In the two ODPs that the Jefferson County Planning Division rejected, they noted that the largest church operating in an established residential neighborhood like Westridge was only 19,651 square feet in size. In fact, the County Planning Division has twice noted their opinion that The Rock Church is already at or beyond the scale of what would be appropriate for the community. When considering the large size of this building, keep in mind that the church has only around 30 homes in the Westridge neighborhood that are members – all other atten-

*continued on page 4*

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## **The Rock**, continued from page 3

dees drive here from other neighborhoods!

To put perspective on the size of a 63,000 square foot building, compare this to the large white church West of our neighborhood on Bowles. This building is around 90,000 square feet. The Rock Church wants to build a campus that will only be 30% smaller than this huge mega-church on Bowles. And unlike the Bowles church, The Rock's campus will be located entirely within an established residential neighborhood.

### **3) The church does not have the neighborhood's interests at heart.**

Sadly, The Rock Church has shown time and time again that it does not care about the neighborhood. When the church first proposed buying the vacant YMCA building, Pastor Bruce assured the Westridge HOA that the church's intent was to remain a small community church. Instead, the church has grown aggressively – adding a third service earlier this year. This growth has caused numerous traffic-related problems for those who live near or on Alamo Place. When confronted with this issue, Pastor Bruce responded that the traffic was the county's problem, not The Rock's.

The church's disregard for the neighborhood can also be seen in the manner in which they purchased the lot they intend to build on. Despite the church's assurances that they did not intend to grow, they negotiated and completed the purchase of this land without ever notifying the HOA or neighboring property owners. This was obviously due to the fact that the church knew that there would be opposition to any growth plans, especially after their pastor's assurances that they intended to remain a small community church.

The church's disrespect for its neighbors is further displayed by recent comments made by its leadership. Despite the fact that two community meetings held by the church were attended by about two hundred people who were adamantly opposed to the planned expansion, Pastor Bruce recently told his congregation that only 10 to 15 households in the community were trying to prevent the expansion. This disregard for the neighborhood's concerns was further displayed by a church elder who confronted a Westridge HOA member at a recent gathering near the church, where the HOA was handing out information packets to the congregation. When it was explained to this elder that there were at very least 200 to 300 neighbors of the church who had contacted the HOA in opposition to the expansion, he replied that he didn't care as "his mission to save souls was more important."

Through its statements and actions, The Rock Church has shown time and time again that it will grow to whatever size it wishes, without any consideration to how this growth will affect the neighborhood. The church will act in any way that the church feels is beneficial to the church – even if its neighbors are harmed. Keep this in mind when you examine the ODP. Except for any specific use restrictions that are in the ODP, the church is in no way prevented from continuing to grow, add services, host functions, etc. Any promises or assurances from the church to the contrary should be viewed in light of the church's prior empty promises and assurances.

### **What Can You Do to Prevent the Construction of a Mega-Church in Westridge?**

The Westridge HOA is leading the opposition against the  
*continued on page 5*



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### *The Rock, continued from page 4*

church's proposed expansion. You do not need to be a member of the HOA to join us in opposing this project – we want to hear from everyone in the neighborhood! Many of you who have attended the community meetings and HOA meetings have asked how you could help oppose the church's re-zoning request. Up to this point, the HOA has asked you to remain informed and wait until you are contacted. Now we need your help! There are three very important things that you can do:

**1) Please sign our petition!** Volunteers from the HOA will soon be canvassing the neighborhood with a petition. If you agree that the church should not be allowed to build a mega-church in our neighborhood, and thereby further increase traffic congestion, please sign the petition. If you are not opposed to the church's expansion, just inform the volunteer of your position, and we will note your address and not bother you with future communications

regarding this issue.

**2) Please attend the Jefferson County Planning Division's meeting regarding this issue.** This meeting has not been scheduled yet. However, it will occur during a weekday evening. This will likely be your only chance to be heard on this issue. The

*continued on page 6*

### **Teen Services**

This list is provided as a free service to residents of Westridge. If you would like your teen's name added to this list, please call Colorado Lasertype at 979-7499. No recommendation or endorsement of any of the names on this list is implied or stated by Colorado Lasertype or the association board. Categories: (B) Babysitting; \*Red Cross Certified; (P) Pet & House sitting; (L) Lawn care/Snow removal

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**The Rock**, continued from page 5

HOA will notify you when this meeting is scheduled. It is extremely important that we have as many residents as possible at the meeting to express their opposition to the expansion project. Your comments, and the number of opposed parties, will be noted by the Planning Division and forwarded to the County Commissioners. The church will likely be represented by its Westridge membership. We need to make sure that the Planning Division realizes that this 4% of the community does NOT represent Westridge's majority position regarding the church expansion.

You also invited to attend the County Commissioner hearing. Unfortunately, this hearing is usually held during business hours during the week. Again the HOA will notify you when this meeting is scheduled. Although both meetings are important, the HOA feels that a strong showing at the Planning Division meeting is critical.

3) Please write to the County Commissioners. Let them

know how you feel about having a potential mega-church as a neighbor! Remember that the County Commissioners are elected by you. They are supposed to represent YOUR interests, not the church's. Please let them know that their decision on this matter will affect how you vote in the future. Their names are **Jim Congrove, Kevin McCasky** and **Kathy Hartman**. All three can be written to at 100 Jefferson County Parkway, Golden CO 80419.

**The value of your property will be affected by the outcome of this zoning decision!!**

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