

LOVELAND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
2ND ANNUAL MEETING
LOVELAND SCHOOL
JANUARY 31, 2009
SUMMARY NOTES

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Bob Runyon said that he got the idea for the Association on walks through the neighborhood when he concluded that it was important to try to improve things in his own back yard. The Board is considering an electronic newsletter and currently has a [website](#). Bob introduced Julie Cammarota from Cornish Heights Neighborhood Association located east of 78th St. and suggested that the two neighborhoods could do some things together. The Old Loveland Homeowners' Association is north of Pacific near Methodist Hospital. Their president, who was also invited but could not attend, is Gene Dunn. Traffic on 80th Avenue and Street are common concerns due to speeding and a police chase last summer (which ended up on Bob's lawn!). The Loveland Association supported a block party on Woolworth St. last summer and would like to see events such as garden walks and other social gatherings, including open houses at Christmas. A book club is another possibility as is a neighborhood flag. A committee led by Alyson Baffert formed at the meeting to pursue the flag project.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Marcia Anderson presented the report on behalf of Treasurer Nancy Haines. The Association received \$700 in voluntary contributions in 2008, mainly at the 1st Annual Meeting. Of this, \$400 was given to Robert Runyon for purchase of signage and other expenses in connection with the first meeting. An additional \$250, half of which was collected at the event, was donated to defray the cost of a pony ride at a neighborhood summer picnic event. After deducting other minor expenses, the Association had \$32 on hand. At the meeting, residents donated an additional \$274. Figures are approximate.

STREET REPAIR/SPRING CLEAN-UP

0 80th Ave. Street Repair

Gene Beam reported on his efforts over several months to get the city to repair a section of 80th Ave. that was caving in due to undermining by water. Finally, he called city maintenance and said that the Association stood behind his request.

Repairs were begun the next day. Gene believes that this outcome is an example of the power of our collective action.

0 Spring Clean-up

We cooperated with a nearby association to sponsor this event last May. Several Loveland residents volunteered time and the turnout of people wishing to get rid of larger items was very good. We plan to join with them again for a similar event this coming May.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH (NW)

At the first meeting in January 2008, residents said that starting a Loveland NW was a top priority. Peter Gadzinski took over organizing duties last June and is the current Watch Captain. He divided the some 435 houses in Loveland into north, south, and east districts and further set up 38 individual blocks with seven to 20 houses in each, depending on street layout. To date, we have 23 Block Captains, nine of whom have met the Omaha Police Department (OPD) minimum of signing up at least 60% of their neighbors as NW members. Our current goal is the “6060 Campaign” that aims at achieving at least 60% membership in 60% of the blocks by the National Night Out event on August 4, 2009. For more information on this event, go [here](#). Several residents volunteered to become Block Captains at the meeting. Peter reported that we held a kickoff meeting with the Southwest OPD representative in early December, encouraged residents to visit the [Loveland NW website](#), and noted that residents can request updated email crime reports from www.crimereports.com.

RADON PRESENTATION

The presentation was conducted by Curt Drew, a representative of National Radon Defense. Kurt represents a private radon reduction firm, but the Association has no connection with it and does not recommend its services. Radon gas is a naturally occurring radioactive gas due to the breakdown of uranium in the soil and is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Nebraska has high concentrations of uranium so radon gas is found here (2nd highest state in the U.S.) and tends to become concentrated in the lowest part of the house, especially basements. Therefore, it is a good idea to test for radon in your home. You can obtain a test kit from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services for around \$5 or buy one from Lowe’s or Home Depot for a bit more. If radon concentrations are above acceptable levels, there are a variety of treatments that typically cost \$800 to \$2500, depending on the nature of the remediation needed.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBER FRANKLIN THOMPSON

Councilman Thompson explained that he was not able to attend last year's meeting due to family obligations. He stressed the importance of organizing the neighborhood and the power of collective action, saying that he could cite numerous examples when collective action got things done and got them done quickly. Mr. Thompson said that he is willing to come together with the Association to strategize on how to accomplish tasks that are important to us. Once we mutually decide on a strategy to pursue, we can apply pressure. In the case of nearby Cambridge Oaks, it took 12 months of planning including means of leverage, communication, etc. in the ultimately successful effort to get the Papio Creek bank shored up. However, each case is different and may call for different tactics.

Thompson noted the existence of city grants of \$2,000 to \$5,000 for improvements and said that we should apply now for one of these. According to him, the city wants to do more in west Omaha so we would have a good chance of approval.

0 84th St. Traffic Calming

The current speed monitor no longer flashes a strobe light when drivers exceed 30 mph. The old sign kept breaking down due to the cold and the replacement does not have this attention-getting feature. A test showed that seven of 10 cars slowed down. There is some talk of taking down the stop signs at 84th and Ridgewood. Thompson said that he may need our help with petitions and other means to retain the stop signs if residents want them to remain. An early idea was to install a roundabout. However, this would require neighborhood involvement and approval and entail high cost. The city has received an offer of private funds for a roundabout at 88th and Cedar, but the neighborhood is divided (60% vs. 40%) so the money may be withdrawn. Speed bumps are "out of the question" due to opposition by OPD and the Omaha Fire Department.

0 Crime

This area has a low crime rate. In fact, 70% of the city's police resources are concentrated east of 72nd St. Consequently, response times are slower here than in the east and north parts of the city. In North Omaha, response times average 4.5 minutes. Here, they are 8.5 minutes.

0 80th Ave/80th St.

Residents expressed concern about speeding and traffic on this local shortcut between Center and Pacific. Thompson promised to work with the Omaha Police

Department to get more police monitoring the street beginning next month. The next phase would require involving City Public Works directly. He cannot speak for them. This calls for a special meeting between residents and Public Works officials. However, Thompson could help in bringing city officials to such a meeting. A roundabout at the intersection of 80th Ave., Dorcas, and Martha is one possibility but this will require an official study. Several residents volunteered to form a special committee for this purpose. They included Robert Harding, Kami Maloley, Peter Gadzinski, Jean Stillmock, and John Kenny, who will chair the committee.

DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONER PAM TUSA

Pam's district runs from Dodge to Harney and from 42nd St to I-80 Pam is involved with a number of activities including health and human services, green spaces, Meals on Wheels, jails, youth services, etc. She lives in the area and knows it well.

BROCHURE

Becky Jackson presented an attractive new Loveland Neighborhood Association brochure.

ELECTIONS

New members of the Board include Rosie Townley-Bakewell, Peter Gadzinski and co-members Joy Claussenius and Judy Johnson. Marcia Anderson has left the Board upon the expiration of her term. Thank you, Marcia!

ADJOURNMENT

50 enthusiastic residents attended the meeting which concluded at 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by
Peter Gadzinski & Bob Runyon
February 6, 2009