



MESA MESSENGER



Newsletter of the Taylor Ranch Neighborhood Association, Inc.

March 2001

It's a Party!
(Not Really)

Annual General Meeting

Door Prizes

Refreshments

- Community Center Update
- Montano Landscaping
- Web Site Presentation
- Crime Update
- Scholarship Presentation
- Election of Board Members

Wednesday, March 28, 2001
7pm @ LBJ Middle School

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: MAKING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MORE EFFECTIVE

By Michael Cadigan, President - Coors Trail Neighborhood Assn.

Neighborhood Associations play a critical role in Albuquerque government. Albuquerque neighborhood associations are the primary means of communication between city residents and city government. In some cities, like Chicago, if your trash isn't getting picked up, or someone is building a landfill in your neighborhood you call your alderman or your political party's precinct captain to get action. In Albuquerque you call your neighborhood association.

Neighborhood Associations Defined

Many people confuse Neighborhood Associations with Homeowner Associations. Neighborhood Associations are recognized by city government as the official organized voice of the citizens in particular parts the city. Neighborhood Associations are entitled by law to notice of major development activities in the area, such as proposed zoning changes, certain new subdivisions, etc. Neighborhood associations have standing to appeal decisions of the Development Review Board and Environmental Planning Commission relating to land use decisions in their area. Membership in Neighborhood Associations is voluntary. However, if an association's members dwindle too far, it can lose its city recognized status.

Homeowner Associations, on the other hand, are organizations of people who own homes in certain subdivisions. They are not involved in city government or planning issues. Homeowner associations govern things like how high fences can be, whether you can have a boat in your yard or when you need to get your trash can off the street. They impose fines on people who don't follow the covenants. Membership is not optional. If you buy a home in a subdivision you ordinarily must be a member of the Homeowners Association and you must pay dues or a lien might be placed on your house.

When a developer shows up at the Environmental Planning Commission to present a new project, oftentimes, the only people who speak in opposition are neighborhood associations. Developers often see neighborhood associations as a speed bump in their road to economic prosperity. On some occasions, Neighborhood Associations work with developers on projects they can agree upon. Some see Neighborhood Associations as the only effective force against unrestrained, unplanned urban sprawl and commercialization.

The Environmental Planning Commission

The Environmental Planning Commission is the primary decision-maker for city planning and zoning issues. Members of the Environmental Planning Commission are unpaid volunteers. They are supposed to have nothing to lose or gain from the cases they hear (although some believe certain members have financial interest in real estate development generally). Environmental Planning Commission meetings are long and tedious, starting at 8:00 am and often running late into the evening. By the time a neighborhood association gets up to speak in opposition to a development, the EPC members are tired, cranky and often not receptive to Neighborhood Association concerns. Neighborhood Associations are given only a short time – sometimes only two or three minutes to discuss their concerns, while the developer is given unlimited time. This leads to frustration on the part of the Association, and, some argue, a denial of due process of law.

Additional inequity comes from the economic disparity between Neighborhood Associations and the developers. The developer is almost always represented at the EPC hearings by a professional planning firm or a lawyer who knows the system well and may even have a personal relationship with members of the Commission. The Neighborhood Association is ordinarily

(Cont. on page 4)

Room 2 Grow

Pre-school

*Affordable Education by
Early childhood Professional Moms*

Offering:

**Morning Pre-school class for children
2 years 9 months and older**

Afternoon Pre-K class for children ages 4-5

Located next to Chamiza Elementary.

899-3957

Montano Median Update

Both the City of Albuquerque Project Manager and a landscape architect from the firm that designed the median landscaping will present information and will be available for questions at the annual meeting. They will have a large board to illustrate the plants that will go in the median. This is the same firm that is designing the Coors median and they can answer questions about that median as well.

Do you have an interest in how vacant land is developed in Taylor Ranch? Jolene Wolfley of the TRNA Board is looking for people who are interested in reviewing zoning cases and other land use matters

Marie Hughes Elementary School is looking for a coordinator for the after school program for the 2001-2002 school year. We are looking for someone who can make a commitment to the children of our community.

Coordinator should possess the following: leadership skills, budgeting skills, and organizational skills. This paid position will coordinate the after school program and require attending approximately 2 meeting per month.

Applications can be picked up in the Marie Hughes School office. All application must be turned to the office no later than May 8.

that affect Taylor Ranch. Please contact her at 890-9414 if you have an interest.



Connie Gomez
Academy Director

4910 Kachina NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120
Tel 505.899.3361
Fax 505.899.5510
www.lapetite.com

We're Happy to be
Your Neighbor!



Brownell's

8201 Golf Course Rd, NW
Petroglyph Plaza

890-3909



Car Shopping?

CU Auto Sale is March 16 & 17

- 100s of cars, trucks and SUVs
- 1995-2001 models available
- CU Loan Officers on site
- Pre-approved loans at **342-8888 ext.14**

Check out for Less!

www.usnmfcu.org



U.S. New Mexico
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
FINANCIAL CENTER
Celebrating 66 Years of Exceptional Service

4411 Irving Blvd. NW • 3939 Osuna Rd. NE
2608 Tennessee St. NE • 616 Gold Ave. SW

(Cont. from page 1) represented by a member who may be a dentist, a computer programmer, an accountant – whoever happens to be the current president of the neighborhood association. The playing field is by no means level.

Making the System More Fair

How can the system be changed to make neighborhood association more effective without making it impossible for a responsible developer to get a project approved sometime within the decade? A few suggestions:

1. Eliminate the Environmental Planning Commission and replace it with a panel of citizen hearing officers whose job it is to hear planning matters. Informal contact with the hearing officers should be prohibited, much like state court judges. Each case should be assigned to a panel of three randomly selected hearing officers. Neighborhood associations and developers should be able to excuse one hearing officer each. Hearing officers should receive training in basic planning, planning law and the contents of the comprehensive and sector plans.
2. Matters to be heard by the panel should be scheduled for a particular time. Currently, the EPC goes through its agenda as quickly as they can but it usually takes 12 to 16 hours. There is no way a neighborhood association can know when their matter will be heard. Rather, neighborhood volunteers are forced to take an entire day off work and away from their families to sit through all the agenda items just to be sure they are present when their issue is called. This is unfair and discourages public involvement.
3. Developers and neighborhood associations should have equal time to make presentations to the panel. If there are a large number of people to speak, the Neighborhood Association can appoint one person as spokesperson to speak on behalf of some or all who want to speak.
4. The Office of Neighborhood Coordination should provide technical assistance and training to neighborhood associations to help them make more effective presentations. The Office should help neighborhood associations understand the process, make available free comprehensive sector plans, and zoning materials. The city should offer Neighborhood Associations technical support on issues such as traffic planning, air quality issues, etc.
5. There is nothing more frustrating for neighborhood associations than showing up for a hearing, waiting all day for your matter to be called and having the developer request a deferral until the next meeting because the plans are not ready, or some other reason. Deferrals and continuances should be granted rarely and only with consent of the neighborhood association.
6. City zoning officials must understand that the comprehensive plans, sector development plans and other planning ordinances of the city are mandatory – that projects that violate these planning documents cannot be approved. Too many times, developers and even city planning staff take the legally inaccurate position that these planning documents are mere "guidance" or "guidelines." They are, in fact, legally binding planning rules that must be followed.
7. The city should establish more detailed and specific zoning and building rules that give notice to developers of what kind of projects will be approved in particular areas. If we want developers to build appropriate projects in appropriate places, we must, out of fairness, give them advance notice of what we as a community expect from them. In return, when developers seek approval for projects that meet these detailed rules, the projects should be approved quickly, efficiently and with minimum red tape.

These are just a few ideas for improving the development process. Developers play an important role in bringing jobs, retail establishments, entertainment venues and houses to our community. They deserve fair treatment from our planning authorities. But neighborhood associations deserve an effective seat at the decision-makers' table. Without consensus building and community involvement, we will never be build the bright future for Albuquerque we all hope for.

Join the 30 Million Americans who e-file!

Get your refund in half the usual time – even faster with Direct Deposit – using IRS *e-file*. We'll prepare your return and file it with the IRS electronically. It's fast, accurate, and secure with proof of acceptance within 48 hours.

Do you owe taxes? Get the benefits of IRS *e-file* and delay your direct debit or credit card payment until April 16th.

Come in or call us today.

Diana Manning CPA, LLC

Certified Public Accountant

7007 Wyoming NE, Suite D-5 American Institute of CPA's
Albuquerque, NM 87109 New Mexico Society of CPA's
Phone: (505) 821-2427 Fax: (505) 797-5327
email: dmanning_cpa@yahoo.com



AFRAID TO WALK IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

(Taken from an article in the Neighborhood News.)

A National Crime Prevention Council survey shows, despite seven years of declining crime rates many Americans continue to feel afraid in their neighborhoods.

Jr. V. Calhoun, NCPC's president and CEO announced that Americans are forgetting the simple things in preventing crime such as paying attention to locks, lights and alarms. Not enough Americans are taking basic inexpensive precautions to reduce their immediate risk of crime.

* Nearly half the nation's homes have deadbolt locks only on the main entry door rather than all entry doors.

* Less than half the nation's homes have keyed, compared to thumb turn, window locks.

* Only one in four homes has a timer to automatically turn on and off lights when residents are away.

The GOOD NEWS is most of us have a neighbor who will keep an eye on our homes while we are away. Most of us agree that we need to work together with people in our neighborhoods to solve common problems.

Getting involved with the community IS SUGGESTED AS ONE THING WE CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT CRIME. On the downside there is a decrease in volunteering for programs that help prevent crime. Not knowing where and how to sign up is part of the problem. That means that there are many adults who could be recruited to prevent crime just by letting them know how to get involved.

Vibrant communities offer one of the best protections against crime. There is one thing we are certain of, increased community involvement reduces both crime and fear.

West Side Family YMCA News

For more info call the West Side Family YMCA at 899-8417

Teen Dance Nights

It is a fun and safe way to hang out with friends! We are also in need of High School Juniors/Seniors as volunteers to chaperone the dances. (Volunteers get in free.)

April 20, May 18, and June 15 from 7-10pm

Jimmy Carter Middle School in the cafeteria (drop teens off at the school bus cul-de-sac)
YMCA Members \$5, non-members \$7

Summer Day Camp

For children entering grades 1 - 5 who want to have a fun and exciting summer. The fun begins May 29 and runs until August 10 from 7am to 6pm. There will be weekly themes, field trips, swimming, presentations, arts and crafts and much more!

Will be held at Chamiza Elementary School.
Registration begins April 2, 2001.

Full Member

Basic Member

Cost: Full Week \$74/week \$84/week
Short Week (holidays) \$68/week \$54/week

Financial aid is available for those who qualify.

Child Care Program

For all 3 (and potty trained) to 5 year olds!
This is an intimate program where fun, safety and individual attention are stressed.

Full day care M-F from 7am to 6pm

Extended day care (min. 3 days) from 7am - 3pm
On going registration until we reach program capacity.

Babysitting Workshop with the American Red Cross

Calling all 12+ year olds interested in learning all of the absolute fundamentals of responsible babysitting!

In this 12 hour course you will learn about First Aid, CPR, and other ways to make sure the children in your care are safe. Two Saturdays - June 2 & 9 from 8:30am to 3pm. (All participants must bring a sack lunch)
Registration begins March 19.

Preschool Age, School Age and Beg. Level Gymnastics

Classes held at Painted Sky Elementary
Sessions begin week of April 2 thru April 30 (no classes during Spring Break)



Taylor Ranch Neighborhood Association, Inc. Membership Application



This is a: new membership renewal membership

Type of membership: Resident/Landowner Business
Phone number: _____ Date _____

03/01

Name: _____
Address: _____

We can always use your help! Please check off any areas of interest in which I can help the Association:

- Crime Prevention
- Parks & Recreation
- Voter Education
- Multigenerational Comm. Center
- Board of Directors
- Education
- Library
- Zoning
- Traffic
- Support Only
- Membership
- Beautification
- Voting
- Calling
- Other: _____
- Newsletter
- Environment
- Social Activities
- Children's Parties

I am enclosing a check made out to TRNA in the amount of:

Resident: \$12, 1-year \$22, 2-years \$30, 3-years

Non resident memberships only: You may pro-rate your dues for the first year you join TRNA as follows:

\$12 if join Jan-Feb-Mar \$9 if join Apr-May-Jun \$6 if join Jul-Aug-Sep \$12 if join Oct-Nov-Dec

Business: \$50 1-year \$90 2-year \$125 3-year

New business memberships only: You may pro-rate your dues for the first year you join TRNA as follows:

\$50 if join Jan-Feb-Mar \$40 if join Apr-May-Jun \$25 if join Jul-Aug-Sep \$50 if join Oct-Nov-Dec

Please mail this application with a check to: TRNA Membership, P. O. Box 67108, Albuquerque, NM 87193-7108

**USEFUL
PHONE
NUMBERS**



Animal Control (West side)	.....768-1935
Burn/No-Burn Advisory	.....768-2876
City/County Information	.....768-2000
Community & Neighborhood Coord.	...924-3914
Community Planning	.....924-3860
Garbage Collection Problems	.....761-8100
Gas Leaks (24 hrs, 7 days a week)	.....246-7474
Graffiti Removal Services	.....857-8055
Keep Albuquerque Beautiful	.....761-8188
Los Volcanes Senior Center	.....836-8745
Office of Senior Affairs	.....764-6400
Pothole Repair	.....857-8025
Ridepool	.....243-7433
Recycling Information	.....761-8176
State Information	.....1-800-825-6639
Wasted Water Hotline	.....768-3640
Weed & Litter Complaints	.....857-8060

**POLICE &
EMERGENCY
PHONE NUMBERS**



Emergency	.....
APD Crime Analysis Section	.....768-3262
APD Records	.....768-2020
APD Telephone Reporting Unit	.....768-2030
Crime Stoppers	.....843-7867
Fire (non-emergency)	.....833-7300
Fire Marshal's Office	.....764-6300
National Fraud Info. Center	.....800-876-7060
Neighborhood Crime Prevention	.....924-3600
Poison & Drug Information	.....272-2222
Police (non-emergency)	.....242-COPS
Police Substation (West side)	.....831-4705
Police Substation (Valley)	.....761-8800
Sheriff's Department (non-emergency)	...768-4160
State Information	.....1-800-825-6639
State Police	.....841-9256
Traffic Sign & Speed Info	.....857-8680

Please pass this on to your neighbor and suggest they join TRNA to receive their own copy of this newsletter. TRNA needs all our neighbor's support to keep improving our neighborhood, planning social events, watching zoning changes, assisting with community policing, and informing you of what's going on in and around your home in Taylor Ranch.



Taylor Ranch Neighborhood Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 66288
Albuquerque, NM 87193-6288

Return Service Requested



The expiration year of your membership is shown on the bottom line of your mailing label.
Please renew early for the next year to avoid missing an issue of the Mesa Messenger.

87120+2430

