



VIEW FROM the hill

Neighbors in harmony improving, preserving & protecting - www.vhna.net

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The PURPOSE of VHNA is to improve the quality of life of residents & preserve property value. Our goals include encouraging improvement of properties, protecting the health and welfare of residents, promoting interaction among neighbors, encouraging participation in government and fostering pride in our homes and neighborhoods.

Our TERRITORY extends from the south side of Jefferson St to the north side of So. Grand Av, and from the east side of Walnut St up to but excluding Second St. Membership is not limited to residents or property owners in that area.

MEMBERSHIP is open to all who support our purpose and goals. Dues are \$10 per year. You may join via US mail, at a membership meeting or online at: www.vhna.net.

Our MEETINGS are held on the second Monday of each month from 7 to 9 pm in room 201, at Laurel United Methodist Church located at Walnut and South Grand.

VHNA Guest Speaker Polly Poskin to Discuss Waste Management Issue

Please plan to attend our VHNA Membership Meeting, to be held August 13, at 7:00 p.m. at Laurel United Methodist Church, located on the corner of Walnut and South Grand.

This month's speaker will be Polly Poskin who is President of the Harvard Park NA and a member of the Mayor's past task force on a new City wide waste management plan. She is currently working with Alderman Mark Mahoney who is heading a committee with the same focus. They met last month to take in public input at which time various neighborhood associations weighed in. This is our chance to get up



to speed and join the discussion that will have an impact on us individually and as a neighborhood. Two main topics seem to arise; the structure and how to pay for it.

First, how should we restructure the waste pick-up system in Springfield? Should we have the City take over garbage collection altogether, or divide the city into zones to give to existing haulers.

Secondly, should the City of Springfield impose a property tax or have CWLP collect mandatory hauling fees for all residences to insure full coverage of all residences to avoid fly dumping by freeloaders without garbage service.

At our meeting you will get a more complete analysis of this important issue and how it will affect you and our neighborhood.

See related article on Page 2.

After Thoughts on the Neighborhood Clean-up

By: Bob Croteau

Well, once again a dedicated group of volunteers assembled on a Saturday morning for pastries, juice, coffee and fellowship before assisting in our VHNA clean-up. The mission was to pick up items too big for the garbage cans that would otherwise be left in allies attracting rodents. A dirty neighborhood simply attracts more dirt and crime. It shows no one cares enough to keep it up, a virtual invitation for low-lives to move in and pursue illegal activities.

Even though I went up and down my alley moving junk to the street before the pickup, more appeared afterward. This brings to mind the importance of commu-

nication with neighbors regarding the clean-up. I wish I had explained it more to my neighbors.

Every year, it seems there is little organization when it comes to the actual day of the clean-up. If there is a plan, not everyone is aware of it and at best we go randomly through in a somewhat disorganized manner. I hope I didn't come off too controlling in an attempt to follow the plan we discussed, my apologies to those who may have felt so. Someone suggested, and I think we all agree, next year we should have a clear plan worked-out ahead of time and include the City's crew manager in the discussion.

Thanks to all those who volunteered to set up, pick up and those who lent support in providing refreshments to the thirsty volunteers. All-in-all a job well done.

Focus on Neighborhood Crime to Increase with Beat Circles

By: Ward 6 Alderman, Mark Mahoney

Efforts to deal with the crime problems in our neighborhood are ongoing and require a strong commitment from everybody. I have met with the Community Policing Institute and discussed the use of a task force to focus on the neighborhood with Lt. Doug Williamson and Chief Caldwell. They have committed to extra patrols and to focusing on some of the problems in the neighborhood and are committed to assisting our Neighborhood Police Officer in his efforts to tackle the issues.

However, even with these efforts I believe we still need to intensify the commitment to an ongoing focus on each problem property. That is why I am proposing the start of "Beat Circles" to meet each month in a small group of neighborhood leaders,



the police department, necessary city officials, the community policing institute, and myself. The goal is to guarantee an ongoing accountability from the city and each of the beat circle participants in dealing with the problem until it is solved. Too often many problems seem like the continue to persist despite the on going calls by neighbors and the ongoing crime at those locations.

The Beat Circle will begin in August with monthly reports at the VHNA meetings each month. It is my intention to try this approach for several months to see what kind of improvements we can achieve. It is also important to get feed back from the neighbors to let us know if you believe things are improving and problems are being addressed. You can always contact me by calling 544-7944 or by e-mail at mmahoney67@hotmail.com.

Council to Vote on Garbage Proposals in September

By: Ward 6 Alderman, Mark Mahoney

After two hearings by the Public Affairs Subcommittee on Garbage it is time for the Springfield City Council to take action to clean up our city. After hours of testimony from waste haulers, landlords, neighborhood association, and individual citizens the problems with garbage collection in Springfield was once again highlighted and a number of potential solutions discussed.

As the chairman of the subcommittee I am proposing ordinances for introduction and discussion on the Councils September agenda. These ordinances will address issues with residential pick up and create improved mechanisms for tracking and enforcing garbage collection as well as licensing of waste haulers. Further there will be a proposal to eliminate the sticker on yard waste bags and go to an "if you put it out, it will get picked up" on a weekly basis approach. Additionally, we will be discussing



a proposal that will expand the large item pick to a year round program that is more users friendly and not contingent upon residents having to schedule a pick up.

I believe that these proposals will be a much needed positive step in dealing with our waste management issues in some of our neighborhoods.

After discussing the issue and listening to the ideas of many of the Alderman and the hearing participants I believe there is a strong commitment to moving these proposals forward for the good of our community.

However, even with that commitment it is important that the Vinegar Hill Neighborhood continue to be vocal in their support of efforts to deal with the garbage issue once and for all. Please take the time to voice your support by attending the September meetings and or calling the mayors office at 789-2200.

Contact alderman Mahoney by calling 544-7944 or by e-mail at mmahoney67@hotmail.com.

**Great minds discuss ideas;
Average minds discuss events;
Small minds discuss people.
- Eleanor Roosevelt**



VHNA Wins Award

In 2007 the city's started an annual street-side beautification program known as Springfield in Bloom. The goal is to encourage home and business owners and neighborhood groups to make landscape improvements where none existed before, but they also wanted to recognize individuals, businesses and neighborhoods with existing garden projects providing inspiration to others. Springfield in Bloom is all about encouraging clean, green and bloomin' beautiful street-side beautification across central Illinois.

On Wednesday, August 1st an awards ceremony was held at Illinois National Bank. The Vinegar Hill area was well represented in the Springfield in Bloom competi-

tion this year as three award winning gardening efforts were selected in our area for recognition. First place in the business garden category was awarded to the Inn at 835; second place in the business garden category was awarded to the Pasfield House Inn, owned by VHNA board member Tony Leone; and third place in the Non-profit & Neighborhood category was awarded to none other than Vinegar Hill Neighborhood Association for our gardens on Lawrence and Cook at Pasfield. To see pictures of all winning gardens, visit the Springfield in Bloom site www.springfieldinbloom.org.

Congratulations to all of the Springfield in Bloom winners and thank you to all of the VHNA volunteers who worked on installing the gardens and continue to work on watering, weeding and feeding our plants. They look great. Please visit our web site to see pictures of both of our award willing gardens.

Anyone wanting to help, please volunteer at our meeting, Monday, August 11, or call Betty Green at 522-2690.

Neighborhood Police Officer

Dave Barringer — Cell: 652-2255 — **Emergency: 911**

Police Drug Unit — 788-8498 — 3 to 11 pm

Aldermen

Ward 5: Sam Cahnman - 528-0311

Ward 6: Mark Mahoney - 544-7944

VHNA VOLUNTEERS

Greeting / Condolence Cards
Betty Green 522-2690

Newsletter Editor:

Bill Castor 416-1212
wm.castor@yahoo.com

Block Stewards:

500 block Allen Street
Louise Hodge 528-9768

400 block Allen Street
Mona Colburn 522-1702

Canedy & Chenery Sts.
Ted Keylon 528-8466

College Street
George Tinkham 753-2737

Cook & Edwards Sts.
Bob Croteau 753-3449

Fayette Avenue
Bill Vickers 789-1732

First Street
Cathy Twyman 528-1918

Henrietta Street
Dee Nelson 528-7702

Jackson Parkway
Tom Cullen 744-2511

Pasfield Street
Ron Kuethe 744-0118

Spring Street
John / Sherry McBride 971-3313

Vine Street
George Bastin 971-5760

Walnut Street
Dennis / Emilia Rogers 522-4279

Williams Street
Charles Hudson 747-0338

THANK YOU ALL !

City Council Report

By: Ward 5 Alderman, Sam Cahnman

Tougher Vehicle Noise Ordinance – At our July 17th meeting the City Council unanimously passed an amendment to the City's noise ordinance requiring any vehicle violating it for the 3rd time in a year to be towed. The current ordinance outlaws playing a car stereo or other sound emitting device so loud that it can be heard 75 feet away.



Under the new law, the registered vehicle owner will be sent a notice each time their vehicle violates the ordinance with a warning that if it happens a 3rd time in a year, their vehicle will be towed. The owner can retrieve their vehicle by posting \$750 bond and paying the towing and storage costs. The owner can also get their vehicle back by requesting a preliminary hearing within 24 hours of receiving notice of the tow and showing at the hearing that there is no probable cause to believe the vehicle was operated with the owner's permission in violation of the ordinance.

Alternatively, they can have full hearing after they pay the bond or without paying the bond, and if the City fails to prove the violation by a preponderance of the evidence, they get their bond back, or if they didn't pay the bond, they get their vehicle back. If the violation is proven and the owner fails to retrieve the vehicle by posting the bond within 30 days the city may dispose of the vehicle as an unclaimed vehicle.

I favored a stronger ordinance requiring the tow for a second offense, but deferred to the sponsor. If the new ordinance doesn't yield the results we want, Alderman Theilen agreed to support a strengthening of the law. I did offer an amendment to clarify the hearing rights provision of the ordinance, which was adopted by the Council.

Committee Meetings on Cable TV – In another important measure, the Council voted 9-1 to telecast Council Committee meeting on the City's cable channel 18, just like our Council meetings. Much of



the deliberation occurs at Committee meetings because the Council's practice is to put non-controversial items on the Consent Agenda at Council meetings and vote on numerous consent measures at once with no discussion. This takes putting the Committee meetings on TV all the more important.

Despite that, one Alderman called the possible expenditure of an additional \$13,000 to do this "a waste of money." The only reason for the possible increased expense is because we will have to pay two video employees overtime because their union contract does not allow for flex time. I told the Mayor that when the contract comes up for renewal, we should add a provision for the video employees to work flex time--start a little later on days of Committee meetings and then they won't have to be paid overtime. By the way, in addition to being on cable TV, the audio of past Council and Committee meetings are archived on the City Clerk's web site: www-springfieldcityclerk.com. I'm working to get the Council & Committee meetings broadcast live on the web site for folks who don't have cable TV.



Quiet Zones for Rail Roads –

A new federal law now allows cities to ban train horns in certain areas by installing flashing lights, extra barriers and other safety measures at train crossings. These are called quiet zones. I've received a number of complaints about those extremely loud train horns that blast through our ward at all hours of the night and day. As a result, I'm considering introducing a measure to create a quiet zone in our ward (and other wards if their aldermen want it.) Our ward seems particularly well suited for

this because the large number of one-way streets reduces the likelihood of an accident at a train crossing. The downside of a quiet zone is the question of whether it would lead to an increase in accidents, but Richmond, Virginia, which created 4 quiet zones, has had no collisions or safety problems. Please let me know if you think we should create a quiet zone in our ward. — See ya at the Fair!

**Vinegar Hill Neighborhood Assn Membership Meeting Minutes
July 9, 2007**

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Mario Ingoglia.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Vickers were introduced as returning members.

Guest speaker, Megan E. Morgan, Assistant Corporation Counsel, Supervising Attorney for Code Enforcement Division, Office of Corporation Counsel, City of Springfield, Illinois made a comprehensive presentation of the Springfield Code & Ordinance Enforcement:

- 1) Department Information
 - Department of Building & Zoning
 - Housing Division of B & Z
 - Zoning Division of B & Z
 - SFD/Fire Safety Division
 - SPD/NPO: Beat 200
- 2) Frequent Neighborhood Association Complaints
- 3) Process Following a Complaint
- 4) City Administrative Court
- 5) Circuit Court
- 6) Demolition Cases



7) Chronic Nuisance

Ron Kuethe asked to have 437 West Edwards identified as a nuisance property.

An open discussion followed the presentation.

Bill Castor encouraged members to vote for Our Springfield for the Simpsons contest by 1:59 a.m. Tuesday.

The neighborhood cleanup will begin at 424 W. Vine at 8:15 a.m. Saturday, July 14. Donuts and juice will be available at 7:30 a.m. for all volunteers.

Mario acknowledged Alderman Mark Mahoney's and Officer Dave Barringer's cooperative efforts in addressing neighborhood crime.

There was no Treasurer's report.

A motion was made by Cathy Twyman and seconded by Bill Castor to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50.



Officers

- Mario Ingoglia, President — 744 - 6969
 Bob Croteau, Vice-president — 753 - 3449
 Judy Ingham, Treasurer — 544 - 5642
 Bill Castor, Secretary — 416 - 1212

Please join today! You need not be a resident or property owner in our association area to join, as long as you support our mission. You can join online at: www.vhna.net, but must mail a check or attend a meeting to pay dues. You can also fill out the form at right to join and mail it with your \$10 dues payment check to:

**VHNA
 P.O. Box 1026
 Springfield, IL 62705**

Membership Form

Name *

Street address *

City * State * Zip *

email address (if you wish to receive more timely information)

Phone *

Cell phone (* denotes required item)

May we list your contact information in the VHNA directory to be distributed only to members? (circle one) YES / NO

Please suggest issues VHNA should address or activities you think will help better our association: (attach sheet if needed)

VINEGAR HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN.
POST OFFICE BOX 1026
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62705

www.vhna.net



August 2007 VHNA Point O' Pride



Holy Land Diner — In the Vinegar Hill Mall

This month's Point 'O' Pride is **Holy Land Diner**, owned and operated by Afaf Rashmawy. The restaurant relocated from

Downtown to the **Vinegar Hill Mall**, where Afaf serves up wonderful Greek and Lebanese cuisine. Perhaps you've heard of Holy Land Diner. It has been voted "Best Vegetarian Restaurant" in Springfield by Illinois Times readers several times. We went there the other day, just on a lark, to see if it might be open yet, and it was! What a treat this food is, especially right here in our neighborhood. Tantalizing aromas were encountered from an eggplant and garbanzo bean dish, green beans and ground lamb in a lovely sauce and, of course, all the makings for gyros. Tasting the refreshing cucumber sauce will literally make you say, "Ahhhhh" shamelessly, right out loud. And the kalamata olives and her homemade Baklava are to die for. Her new location has given us all good reason to get out for a walk on Friday or Saturday evening for a fabulous dinner at a very reasonable price. "But evening meals will not start until September," Afaf told us. It has taken more time than expected to get the place up and running, but you won't be disappointed. It was well worth the wait. Hours are M – F, 9 am for coffee; 11 – 2 lunch buffet; and 5 – 9 dinner buffet on Saturday and Sunday only (beginning in September). For more information and an online menu, visit:

www.springfield-vr.com/0001menu.html

Please let us know if you have a business or property you'd like to nominate as a VHNA Point O' Pride. Send nominations to wm.castor@yahoo.com.