

West Calhoun Neighborhood Council

Wavelength

April 2007

Newsletter for the
West Calhoun
Neighborhood by the
West Calhoun
Neighborhood Council

- West Calhoun boundaries are West Calhoun Parkway on the East, West Lake Street on the North, West 36th Street on the South and France Avenue on the West
- The neighborhood includes Lake Calhoun's northern shoreline, Calhoun Commons and surrounding businesses, many residential buildings and 32 homes.

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Google Your Neighborhood
Join the West Calhoun Google Group.
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Earth Day Greenway Clean Up Saturday, April 21, 2007 - 9:30 a.m.



It's time for our annual spring clean up of the Midtown Greenway. Come spend a couple of hours helping clear away the garbage and debris left behind after the snow melt and help our section of the Greenway look its best during the coming months when it will be enjoyed by thousands of bikers, bladers, runners and walkers.

Meet your neighbors on Saturday, April 21, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., at the Greenway access point located at the fence behind Calhoun Village. Please dress appropriately for grubby work. Suggested attire is pants and long-sleeved shirts and comfortable shoes (not sandals). We'll provide the gloves and garbage bags. Questions? Call the WCNC Voicemail Hotline at 612-928-3511.

West Calhoun Neighborhood Council Launches Environment Committee

At the February WCNC meeting, the Board voted to establish an Environment Committee. The committee has been launched with the initial project of shoreline restoration along the west edge of Lake Calhoun. You may have noticed that there are many places where the shore has eroded and is beginning to encroach on the walking path. The committee will be looking

at an array of alternatives to address the erosion, including both "hard" solutions, such as large landscape boulders, and "soft" solutions, such as hardy vegetative cover. We plan to work closely with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on this effort. We have NRP funds available for use and hope to seek additional state and local grants. The goal is to begin now and

have the actual restoration work underway in early 2008.

If you're interested in getting involved with this project or other environmental efforts in the neighborhood, contact us at 612-928-3511 or e-mail WCNC@googlegroups.com.

We welcome your involvement!



West Calhoun Neighborhood News

New Neighborhood Coordinator

WCNC wants to thank outgoing Neighborhood Coordinator Ahndi Fridell for all of her hard work on behalf of the neighborhood. We also want to welcome our new coordinator, Rhea Sullivan, who was hired in February.

Rhea brings nine years of experience working with neighborhoods to this position. She served as Linden Hills Coordinator from 1995-2001 and has worked as Fulton Coordinator since July 2004. She has extensive experience implementing NRP projects and programs. She will be a great asset as we complete Phase I of NRP and move into Phase II.

Rhea will continue to work for Fulton neighborhood while taking on the duties of West Calhoun Coordinator. She is excited to put her skills to work for West Calhoun. To contact her, leave a message on the Voicemail Hotline at 612-928-3511 or e-mail her at WCNC@googlegroups.com.



Google Your Neighborhood

Are you the kind of person who likes to know what's going on in the City? In your neighborhood? Join the **West Calhoun Google Group**. The group provides a forum for city and neigh-

borhood information, including crime and safety issues, Midtown Greenway updates, and more. To subscribe, go to: <http://groups.google.com/group/WestCalhoun>.



Plant a Tree This Spring

Planting a tree is the easiest way to improve the value of your property, reduce your energy needs and improve our air and water quality. In 2007, the City of Minneapolis and Tree Trust are providing 1,500 trees to residents to plant on their property (not the boulevard) for a cost of \$15.

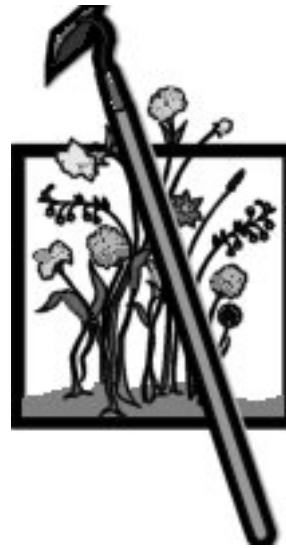
You may choose between an Austrian Pine, Cathedral Elm, Bur Oak, Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry, Cockspur Hawthorn or River Birch. To order your tree, go to: www.treetrust.org/orderhere. Orders must be placed before April 15, 2007.



Rain Barrels Available

The City of Minneapolis is making 2,000 rain barrels available to Minneapolis households this summer at a reduced cost. When connected to a downspout, the 55-gallon rain barrels store rainwater for later use. Rain barrels help protect the environment by reducing water consumption and cutting down on runoff that ends up in our lakes and streams. The

Bloom Where You're Planted



It's time to begin tending our West Calhoun Community Garden, located at the Midtown Greenway Access Point on 31st St. and Chowen Ave. S., behind Calhoun Commons. Volunteer gardeners are always needed to help care for this newly-planted neighborhood asset. To offer your green thumb, call the Voicemail Hotline at 612-928-3511 or e-mail us WCNC@googlegroups.com.

barrel connects to a standard garden hose, so it's easy for folks to irrigate their lawns and gardens.

The cost of a 55-gallon rain barrel is \$45, which is about half the normal retail price. Barrels are available to Minneapolis residents for use on Minneapolis properties; limit one per household. You can order your rain barrel at: <http://www.thereusecenter.com> or by phone at 612-724-2608. Quantities are limited, so pre-order now. Barrels will be available for pick up in May.



Rain Garden Workshops

Minneapolis/Metro Blooms will offer workshops this spring on how to plant a rain garden. Rain gardens help absorb water runoff and keep land and waterways clean.

There is a \$15 fee for any of the 10 workshops available. In the past, these workshops have filled up fast.

Workshops will be held across the metro area. To find out what's available, go to: www.MetroBlooms.org.



Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan

The Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan was adopted with two amendments by the Minneapolis City Council at the February 23, 2007, meeting. According to Meg Forney, West Calhoun's representative to the Steering Committee, the overlay should not be much different than what is currently in place in our neighborhood. Minneapolis City Planner Beth Elliott reports that nothing has changed for

West Calhoun since the final recommendations were brought to the Board last summer.

The plan supports mixed uses at Calhoun Village and Calhoun Commons and calls for better use of the parking areas. It also recommends building out to the street on our busy arterial roadways.

The plan assumes some kind of transit along the

Greenway, which in the long term, could be a streetcar or LRT. The plan also advocates more intense housing along the Greenway over the next 20 years to support transit.

Beth Elliott said that the City of Minneapolis will use the plan as they make decisions on new developments, road improvements and other capital projects.

CS&CS

The final version of the plan is available online at:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning/midtown-greenway.asp>

For more information, contact:

Amanda Arnold, AICP,
Principal Planner

City of Minneapolis

612-673-3242

amanda.arnold@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Council Member's Corner

Teardowns and Infill Housing

by Ward 13 Council Member
Betsy Hodges ♦ 612-673-2213

I continue to work with staff to address resident and neighborhood concerns over the phenomenon of teardowns and infill housing, often referred to as "McMansions." After hearing from folks throughout the year in 2005 and 2006, our office sponsored a community meeting in July of last year to gather feedback from residents about their concerns. The group brought forward a number of issues, but the most commonly cited concern was the size of many new homes relative to the size of

the lot and to other houses in the area.

Following the meeting, I met with staff to discuss a number of potential ways to address size and bulk. We considered the possibility of regulating overall building volume, tying setback restrictions to the overall height of the building, and many other potential changes to the zoning code. In the end, we agreed that establishing a floor-area ratio (FAR) was the simplest and most effective method of mitigating the impact of new home construction while still allowing positive change to occur and avoiding adverse impacts on other parts of the city. Staff has drafted a proposal that would do three things:

1. Limit the overall square footage of a new home to half that of its lot (a FAR of 1/2). The limit would not include detached garages, open porches or basements, among a few other things.
2. Clarify the definition of natural grade in order to establish a more accurate measure of total height of a home.
3. Reduce the maximum lot-coverage and impervious surface percentages by 10%. Planning Department staff held an open house on March 19th at City Hall, and our office hosted a Community Meeting on March 22nd at Christ the King Church.

There will be a public hearing at the Planning Commission on April 9th and at the Zoning and Planning Committee on May 3rd.

As always, please call me if you have any questions at 612-673-2213.



CS&CS

Ward 13 Breakfast

3rd Wednesday
of each month
Pearson's Restaurant
50th St. & Ewing Ave. S.
8:00 a.m.



**West Calhoun
Neighborhood Council**

3208 West Lake St. Box 1
Minneapolis, MN 55416
Voicemail: 612-928-3511

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West Calhoun Neighborhood Council meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the cooking classroom of Whole Foods Market. All business and residential neighbors are welcome to attend. You can leave a message with comments, questions or concerns on the West Calhoun Neighborhood Council Voicemail Hotline at 612-928-3511 or on our e-mail group at: WCNC@googlegroups.com

Plug into your Neighborhood!



Spring is a great time to redirect your energies into new endeavors. Consider channeling your ideas and enthusiasm into your own backyard -- your neighborhood. **West Calhoun Neighborhood Council needs you!** WCNC is a group of bright, fun, civic-minded individuals working together to make sure that our neighborhood remains a great place to live, work and play.

All neighbors are invited to attend the **WCNC Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 8, 2007, at 7 p.m.**, in the **Whole Foods Market Cooking Classroom, 3060 Excelsior Blvd.** Come and see what we're all about and consider running for a seat on the Board. Board members impact important decisions about our neighborhood on issues ranging from light rail and development to environmental concerns. To get connected, leave us a message at 612-928-3511 or e-mail us at WCNC@googlegroups.com.