



The Email Express



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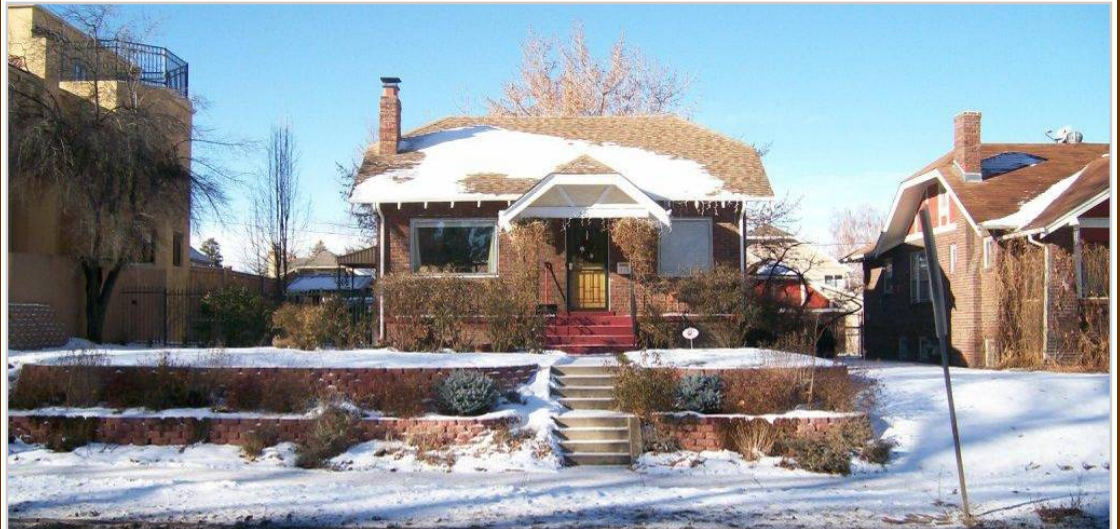
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Downzoning endangers family's dream



The 500 block of South Downing Street contains a variety of homes, from small older bungalows to newer, larger houses.

Dreams sometimes have deadlines, and Michele Roth Scharg and Jordan Scharg are facing one now.

The Curtis Park couple has been hoping to redevelop a property they own in the 500 block of South Downing Street. They want to build a duplex, sell one unit to finance the project and live in the other.

But the Dec. 15 vote by the Denver City Council to downzone from R-2 to R-1 some 208 acres of the West Washington Park neighborhood may mean the Schargs won't realize their dream – unless they can get financing and permits lined up before the ordinance goes into effect Feb. 1. That's an impossible challenge, given the time restraints and current financial conditions.

Michele, in a recent e-mail to District 6 Councilmember Charlie Brown, summed up the couple's dilemma eloquently:

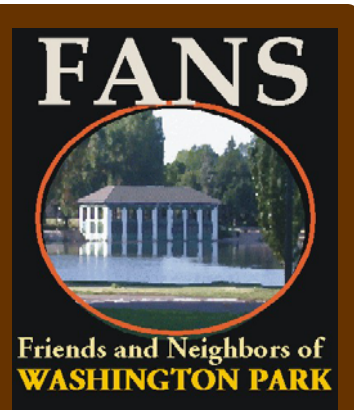
"Our dream to live ON the park has been shattered.

"When we purchased the home on S. Downing Street, our intention was never to live in it. Although it is a charming bungalow, my husband and I were never interested in living in an old, 1,200 square foot home that was way too small for us and our newly-started family.

"In our minds, it was a 6,350 square foot sized lot, in a fabulous location. Our intention from the beginning was to scrape

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"Property rights obviously aren't absolute, but they're important - they're in the Constitution, after all. And even if the moratorium and the downzoning have the support of a significant number of residents, which they apparently do, they should not be allowed to trample the rights of the minority who disagrees. The council should say no to both proposals." - Rocky Mountain News editorial, "In Denver, involuntary zonings are becoming a habit," 12/5/08.



January Meeting

When: January 14,
6:00pm to 7:00pm

Where: Washington park Dos Chappell Bathhouse (northwest corner of the park). Bring a friend!

What: Jay Wozny, an avid Washington Park photographer, will be presenting **Looking at Washington Park through Another Lens**. Jay will share his experience of taking photos in Washington Park and give some photo tips to help you get better pictures. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about Washington Park and see things you may have missed on your many visits.



Photo by Jay Wozny, 2006

(Continued from page 1)

the house, build a duplex and live in half of it. The proceeds from the sale of the other half would help us live affordably in a brand new home that we could design ourselves. We would have never purchased the home if it wasn't zoned R-2.

"Back in March, when we purchased it, we had no inkling that the city would be going through a down zoning process or we wouldn't have made such a substantial investment. Even after purchasing it, we never once received communications from the city that our property rights were at jeopardy. How unfair and disappointing! What are we to do now?"

The Schargs are the latest victims whose property rights have been compromised by a series of three hostile down zonings that were approved in 2008. Michele testified at the Dec. 15 public hearing.

The West Washington Park proposal was made by Councilmember Chris Nevitt of District 7, who filed the rezoning application in October. The plan was backed by the West Washington Park Neighborhood Association.

Council approved the down zoning 11-1 (Brown voting no) after a four-hour public hearing and council discussion. A related measure to impose an 18-month development moratorium in the neighborhood immediately west of the down zoned area passed 9-3.

The ordinance changes the zoning from R-2 to R-1 for some 2,800 households in the area bounded by Cedar Avenue on the north, Downing Street on the east, Mississippi Avenue on the south and the alley between Clarkson and Washington on the west.

There was lengthy testimony from residents both for and against the down zoning. While supporters claimed the change reflected community wishes, opponents noted that the yellow "survey" card distributed in the neighborhood only contained spaces to register support of the plan, not opposition or questions.

"I would call it a push poll. It's saying to the people we only care about you if you're on our side. ... This is not a fair and objective communications tool," Brown said at the hearing.

In November the council voted to down zone 21.5 acres in south Park Hill from R-2 to R-1. The move was prompted by a builder's plan to erect a nine-unit development at East 16th Avenue and Cherry Street, and residents' fears that another 22-unit project would be built nearby. The irony is that the rezoning approved by council exempted the nine-unit project.

"Traffic problems? They've got that in Detroit, where residents are fleeing the city one way— out of town. We are fortunate people still want to move to Denver. We should welcome them, not chastise them for wanting to live in new homes and duplexes."

- Councilman Charlie Brown

And, last April the council voted 11-2 (Brown and Faatz opposed) to approve two ordinances that down zoned parts of the West Highland and Sloan's Lake neighborhoods from R-2 to R-1, limiting development to single-family homes in an area of more than 100 acres.

The risks of the hostile down zonings are the same for all three neighborhoods – restriction of property rights and

creation of incentives to build only large single-family homes with the potential to drive up home prices and make the areas less affordable for some buyers.

Opponents of the three down zonings have argued that design and construction guidelines are better tools for managing neighborhood development and preserving community character.

On Dec. 15, Brown talked about the broader economic implications of down zoning. "We should be grateful that people want to move into our town," he said, adding that other U.S. cities would welcome the kind of development and new housing Denver has seen in recent years.

As for any need for council to impose such restrictions, Brown quipped that "We already have a moratorium, and it is called a recession."



The Best Game Ever



(Editors note: Joe Glenn, former head football coach at UNC-Greeley and Montana, was fired last month as Wyoming's head coach. The following is a tribute to the former head coach by Councilman Brown, a UW grad and avid fan.)

Joe Glenn stood in the lobby of the Golden Nugget wearing a grin as wide as the open range of Wyoming, greeting Cowboy football fans as they checked into the downtown Las Vegas hotel.

It was a moment almost as rare as the huge golden nugget displayed in a bullet-proof glass case, well-guarded in the corner of the lobby a few feet away.

Two-year head football Coach Glenn had taken a dismal program with just five victories over the three previous seasons to get here with a 7-5 record.

Playing in the 2004 Las Vegas Bowl -- in one of the driest states in the union -- was appropriate. Wyoming had a 38-year drought of post-season bowl victories.

Picked last in the Mountain West Conference, Wyoming wasn't expected to do much that season, much less make a bowl appearance.

Up against a cocky UCLA team the Cowboys, 12-point un-



Joe Glenn, former UW coach.

derdogs, weren't expected to make much of a showing. In fact, according to the UCLA student newspaper, the Bruins were embarrassed to have to play the unheralded Cowboys. "Where is Wyoming?" the headlines screamed, mocking the rural cowboy state, the university and the team. The Wyoming players knew they were getting no respect when at the pre-game luncheon some UCLA players refused to shake hands.

On a bitter cold night the Cowboys "Cowboyed Up" and rallied from 11 points down in the fourth quarter to stun the UCLA city-slickers. Quarterback Corey Bramlet threw a hard pass over the middle that stuck like a tick in the hands of tight end John Woodkowski for a 12-yard touchdown with 57 seconds left for a 24-21 victory before a bowl-record, in-house crowd of 27,784 at Sam Boyd stadium. It was the Cowboys first bowl victory since a 28-20 win over Florida State in the 1966 Sun Bowl.

Back at the Golden Nugget, Cowboy fans celebrated the end of the bowl draught amid impromptu shouts of the familiar mantra from the school's fight song, "Powder River" answered by "Let'er Buck" ricocheting throughout the bar and casino until the wee hours of the morning. It is not often you go to Las Vegas and come away winners!

It was the greatest collegiate game and festivities I have ever experienced.

Tree-Cycle program

The **Denver Recycles** team is ready for Christmas tree recycling beginning January 5th.

1.) Set your tree out for collection (with all decorations removed) on **January 5th** or **January 12th**.

2.) Be sure your tree is set out by **7 AM** and at least four feet away from any containers, bags, dumpsters or other obstacles. Please do not place trees in dumpsters.

For questions please call 3-1-1 or visit **DenverGov.org/**
DenverRecycles.



Thanksgiving 2008

Councilman Brown with his son, Nick (right) and Sam Ritter (left), son of the Governor, prepare to serve homeless families at the Samaritan House in downtown Denver.



Councilman Brown's 2008 Roundup



"I saw someone who was extended an invitation to sing the National Anthem, which I think is an honor and a privilege, and she abused that privilege. I was shocked and offended like everyone else. I can assure you the citizens of Denver did not appreciate what happened." - The O'Reilly Factor 7/3/08

Rocky Mountain News *"Denver City Councilman Charlie Brown is right: The Denver 2008 Host Committee for the Democratic National Convention has been shamed by national ridicule into being reasonable."*

- Vincent Carroll, Editorial Editor, "Crow on menu" 7/15/08

"As a gardener, I love to watch bees. I work side-by-side with them." - "Denver City Council clears flight path for urban bee enthusiasts" 11/17/08

"We're seeing some drastic economic changes here. Is this a realistic budget for the new economy that we suddenly face?" - "Spending plan stirs uneasy feelings: City councilman fears projections too rosy in light of market drubbing" 9/17/08



"What an insult. Regardless of political labels, for any radio announcer (including Rush Limbaugh) to wish a riot on a city so his party could win, that's disgraceful and its absurd."

- Countdown with Keith Olberman 4/25/08



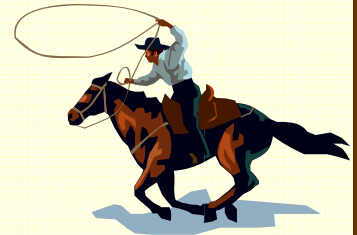
"If people want to believe in (aliens), they're welcome to believe it. But I think you cross the line when you want taxpayers to support people's belief in little green men coming from Mars." - 5/8/08



"You just can't have closed-door meetings and bring in labor leaders to negotiate a contract with a low bidder. It's against our Charter. It's obvious that some of my colleagues are intent on representing union interests. But they are supposed to represent their district and the city of Denver, and I've yet to see that separation occur." - Mike Rosen Show 3/27/08



"The recent business/union deal, sealed at the last minute and requiring a cash commitment, was just the logical extension of past initiative gamesmanship. It's an unfortunate precedent that exposes the flaws and abuses of our initiative process. It's not good for Colorado or any other state." - "Was the Price too High for Colorado Initiative Deal?" Letter to the Editor 10/13/08



"The DNC guests up in the sky boxes will be able to drink whiskey and beer but thousands of folks in the heat at Invesco Field will not. What a great example of two Americas." - The Morning show with Kelly and Mudflap 8/24/08



"I've been a gardener for 40 years, and all I've got is a bare spot. I think the Denver Daisy is a great idea, it just didn't bloom." - "Plans for Denver's Daisies Drown in Disappointment" 7/19/08



"Banning fried food from the DNC catered events (as they wanted to do here) is like having the French Socialist Party ban croissants." - Interview on French Television 8/24/08



"The DNC protesters have their rights. They also have duties and responsibilities to obey our law and respect private property." - "Police to be friendly but firm with crowds" 8/22/08

"We need to be careful and separate City Hall from the union hall. I think it's so blatantly political." - "Proclamation splits council: Three Denver City Council members leave the room for the vote on a union leader" 3/4/08



"The only thing I'm running for is the border." - Caplis and Silverman Show 12/26/08