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Redevelopment Questions Answered

On Wednesday, June 20th Councilwoman Lehmann convened a panel discussion to address constituent concerns regarding home redevelopment in University Hills. The panel consisted of David Berton, a local architect and builder, Kerry Buckey, a Denver City Attorney, Pat Cashion, Chair of the University Park Neighborhood Zoning Committee, and Tyler Gibbs, a Denver City Planner. Over 130 neighbors attended the meeting.

Tyler Gibbs began the discussion with a short history of residential zoning in Denver. Specifically, he briefed attendees on Quick Wins and Quick Wins II. Quick Wins and Quick Wins II are zoning amendments affecting single family homes in R-0, R-1 and R-2 zone districts. The changes were developed in response to numerous home redevelopments, commonly referred to as scrape-offs and pop-tops, occurring in Hilltop and Washington Park in the 1990s.

The original Quick Wins, developed in partnership with neighborhood representatives, developers and architects, lowered roof pitches and limited the size of second stories on houses in order to prevent larger homes from blocking sunlight for neighboring homes. However, these changes resulted in odd-looking, long houses that backed-up to alleys. Quick Wins II refined the codes to allow larger houses in more traditional forms and with more traditional placement on lots by increasing redefining and increasing open space requirements, creating a two-tier bulk plane allowing for larger homes on the front of lots and restricting heights in the rear.

David Berton followed Gibbs by summarizing the market for new home development. Berton explained that zoning is very complicated and architects serve as mediators between a client's wishes and the city's requirements. He told the crowd that today's home buyers are looking for more square footage and often pressure architects to "push the envelope" in order to build the largest home possible on their lot. He also made clear to the crowd that the phenomenon of scrape-offs and pop-tops is here to stay as long as property values remain low enough and nearby neighborhoods continue to improve, allowing developers to profit from redeveloped homes.



Representing neighborhood perspectives, Pat Cashon urged community members to familiarize themselves with city ordinances regarding constructing and redevelopment. He explained that new developers are not always aware of Denver's zoning and construction rules and may inadvertently violate them. He stressed that neighborhood organizations need to register with the city in order to stay aware of, and involved with, zoning changes occurring in their community.

Denver city attorney Kerry Bucky presented the rights of homeowners from a legal perspective. He explained that the right to property is firmly rooted in the U.S. Constitution. He clarified that the city is able to limit the use of property through zoning as long as the homeowner is permitted reasonable use of his or her property. He went on to say that Denver's Board of Adjustments allows for some variances to the zoning code, if property owners can prove that zoning requirements present a significant hardship.

Community members posed a host of questions for the panel concerning contractor's responsibilities to neighborhoods. Tyler Gibbs told the crowd that the planning department is developing formal provisions for citing irresponsible contractors in order to enable comprehensive reviews of contractors' work histories when licenses are up for renewal. He also said that neighbors can call the city Building Department to determine if a contractor is licensed to work in Denver.

Many older residents worry that expensive new homes in their community will raise their property values and resulting property tax increases will force them out of their homes. The panelists agreed that pop-tops and scrape-offs are a sign of a neighborhood's desirability and increasing property values. However, Kerry Buckey pointed out that an individual's home assessment is based on the sale of similarly sized homes in the community. In addition, large increases in home values usually correspond to a comparatively modest increase in property taxes.

Meeting attendees inquired about rules governing lot splitting, drainage regulations and limitations on building permits. Those attending the meeting were pleased with the panelists' straightforward answers to their questions. While many left the meeting with lingering concerns about changes in their neighborhood, most found the discussion extremely helpful and informative. For more information on this meeting or redevelopment in your neighborhood, please contact Councilwoman Lehmann's office at 303-504-5781.

Museum Offers Free Admission for Kids

Want to get an update on the progress of the space shuttle, study dinosaur bones and examine the largest crystallized gold nugget found in Colorado? All kids who come to the Denver Museum of Nature & Science with their families and present proof that they live or go to school in the city and county of Denver are eligible for free daily Museum tickets. This exciting initiative and community outreach project, supported by U.S. Bank, is called the Museum Summer Adventure Pass. It allows for FREE, unlimited visits, any day of the week until August 31. The public may call (303) 322-7009 for more information.

RTD Seeks Your Input on Service

RTD has released its proposed service plan for the southeast light rail transit corridor. Details of the proposed bus routes and services are available at www.RTD-Denver.com/Service. Click on “SE Corridor Service Map” or “Southeast Corridor Service Plan” under the service proposals tab on the left. The interactive map lets you look at each route and service in great detail. Most existing routes will be modified.

While RTD has developed this draft plan, public input is vital in finalizing the plan. RTD is interested in ensuring that the new light rail and bus service in the southeast area meets the needs of area residents, commuters and business people.

A series of public hearings has been scheduled as follows:

Thursday, September 15, 1 p.m.
University of Denver – Driscoll North, Suite 1880
2055 E. Evans Ave.
Denver, CO 80208

Thursday, August 25, 4 p.m.
Hyatt Regency DTC
7800 E. Tufts Ave.
Denver, CO 80237

Wednesday, August 31, 7 p.m.
Calvary Baptist Church of Denver
6500 E. Girard Ave.
Denver, CO 80224

Tuesday, September 20, Noon
Regional Transportation District – Rooms T&D
1600 Blake St.
Denver, CO 80202

Thursday, September 8, 1 p.m.
Colorado Center
2000 S. Colorado Blvd.
Denver, CO 80222



Tips to Reduce Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping is a growing problem in the City and County of Denver. And, without knowing, you may be contributing to the problem. Much of the illegal dumping in Denver is done by private contractors – hired by property owners and tenants to do home improvements, maintenance, lawn care and hauling – who remove debris from a job site then illegally dump it some where else.

To address this chronic problem, Denver Solid Waste Management advises citizens to do the following:

1. Hire haulers that are registered with Denver Public Works. (A list of registered haulers is listed below.) City Ordinance #846-01, Section 48-62 requires any person, who transports rubbish within the City & County of Denver in or on any motor vehicle, other than a motor vehicle equipped with a mechanical compactor unit or a rubbish container unit to register the motor vehicle with the Department of Public Works.
2. Request to see recent receipts from landfills where the contractor has dumped debris.
3. Be aware of what is going on in your neighborhood. Alleys, vacant lots and residential dumpsters are not are not dumping areas for contractors!
4. Report suspected illegal dumping – call 720-865-6899. Provide as much information as possible about the vehicle and driver. You can remain anonymous.

Below is a list of registered hauling companies. These are private companies that provide hauling service within the City & County of Denver. Fees are determined by the individual company.

4 Seasons Hauling - 720-436-0827
ABC Hauling - 303-949-0894
Apogee Waste - 303-464-1899
Brown & Son - 720-335-1680
Master Services - 720-289-1947
Mayer Tree Services - 303-232-5292
Mick's Service Co - 303-668-4513
RC Hauling - 303-231-9688
Sierra Landscaping - 303-522-0754
Tubs, Inc - 303-623-8827



If you are a contractor and would like information on registering, please contact Mary Rose Abeyta at 720-865-6815. For more information, call Denver Solid Waste Management at 720-865-6900 or visit their website, www.denvergov.org/solidwastemangement. This information is provided by Denver Solid Waste Management.

Cultural Council Vacancies

Councilwoman Lehmann, Chair of the Public Amenities Committee is seeking applications from citizens interested in serving on the Denver County Cultural Council (DCCC), a board authorized by the State to distribute Scientific & Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) Tier III revenue to Denver County's small cultural organizations.

In making these appointments, City Council is looking for individuals with a citywide perspective, active community involvement at the neighborhood level, and professional, volunteer or advocational experience with an art, cultural, scientific or historical organization. Applicants should be willing to commit at least 20 to 25 hours each month April through June, the annual grant application review period. During the rest of the year, the workload requires about 10 hours per month.

The Denver County Cultural Council is comprised of eleven voting members. Three are ex-officio, representing citywide organizations, and eight are community representatives selected from interested applicants and appointed by the Denver City Council. The current positions are for terms of three and four years, renewable by mutual agreement for a total of six years.

Applicants must be:

- City and County of Denver residents;
- At least 21 years of age;
- Not currently a volunteer or paid staff of any organization applying for Tier III funding;
- Willing to disclose any conflict of interest.

Applications are available at www.DenverGov.org/CityCouncil, at the City Council Office,

DPR Announces Parks and People Program

During the month of August, Denver Parks and Recreation will be kicking off the Parks and People Partnership Program. This exciting initiative will allow community members to evaluate Denver's park, trail and mountain park system. The Parks Department will use the evaluations to plan for park improvements.

Parks and People Partnership Program volunteers must be willing to serve as an objective evaluator, attend an evaluation training session in mid-August, and evaluate their identified park at least two times per month for one year. Individuals interested in volunteering should contact Councilwoman Lehmann's office at 303-504-5781.

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Advice on Free Online Credit Reports

By federal law, every U.S. citizen is entitled to a **free** copy of each of his or her credit reports annually. Everyone should take advantage of this service. When ordering your free reports on-line, be sure to use the correct internet address. Several hundred websites now exist with addresses that closely imitate the official website for ordering free credit reports. Beware of "imposter domains" with close or nearly identical spellings of the official annual credit report website. In order to protect yourself be certain to use the official website for obtaining free annual copies of your credit report. That address is: **www.annualcreditreport.com**. Don't click on a website address that someone else has provided for you, or one you found by doing an on-line search. Type the address in exactly as it appears above. You can also order a credit report by calling toll-free, **1-877-322-8228**, or by sending a Credit Report Request Form by mail. Copies of the Request Form can be obtained by calling the CASE Assistance Line, 720-874-8547, or downloading the form at **www.annualcreditreport.com**.

Contact my office:

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Visit us on the web at:

www.denvergov.org/CouncilDistrict4