



# Newsletter

August, 2015

**Old West Lawrence Association  
2015 OWL Street Party  
Saturday, September 19  
5:00 – 8:00 pm  
OWL Garage and Art Sales  
8:00 am – 12:00 noon**

#### From the President

Late summer brings a bittersweet mood – heat lingers, certain freedoms end, while tasks set in May are left undone. But fresh beginnings and new adventures await, with a hint of a cool breeze. What better way to welcome autumn than to participate in OWL Day on September 19th?

Rid yourself of unneeded possessions or market your art while adding to your coffers (and OWLA's) by participating in the Garage/Art Sale. And then use our gardens' late bounty to prepare a dish for the Street Party.

A sweet end to summer.

**-Kathy Nemeth Tuttle**

#### Neighborhood Crime

In late June 50 Old West Lawrence and Pinckney neighborhood residents attended a meeting to discuss criminal activity in the neighborhoods. Lawrence Police Officers Aaron Hachmeister and Drew Fennelly, both neighborhood resource officers, presented information and answered questions. Their key recommendations are:

1. Never leave valuables in a car or other vehicle and always lock vehicles when parked. Never leave garage door openers in a car parked outside.
2. Always lock doors to the house and windows. Close window curtains or blinds at night or if you are away.
3. Leave porch lights on at night. Install motion detector lights in the rear to light alleyways or property perimeters. *"Criminals hate light."*
4. Use home security alarms; consider inexpensive, non-monitored but loud alarmed systems, effective at ending an attempted break-in.
5. REPORT all criminal activity to police, including minor thefts (items left on a front porch, change drawer in a car, garden items), break-ins where nothing is taken, damage to property, or something or someone you find suspicious. Filing reports helps police track activity in a given area. The LPD non-emergency telephone number is **785-832-7509**. Call 911 for emergencies, or if you need to report a non-emergency and don't have access to the non-emergency number.

Remain vigilant and support your neighbors and the safety of the OWL neighborhood.

-Notes provided by **Mary Carson**, OWLA Secretary

#### Maine Street Traffic Calming

Old West Lawrence neighbors took action for a safer and calmer Maine Street. Back in 2007, based on resident requests, the City approved traffic calming for the 700 and 800 blocks of Maine, but no action was taken until funding was secured. When "micro-surfacing" was scheduled for the summer of 2015, David Woosley, City of Lawrence Transportation/Traffic Engineer contacted OWLA to let us know funding was available, but approval from adjacent property owners was required.

Maine Street neighbors Neal Barbour, Kelly Barth, Lisa Grossman, and Val Renault stepped up. Along with Kathy Tuttle, they met with Woosley to review options, and then took on the task of individually talking with property owners to secure the necessary 70 percent signature approvals. Street resurfacing started in July, with speed cushions to be added shortly. A traffic calming circle at 8th & Maine may be added next summer.

Traffic calming will make Maine Street safer for residents, pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. We extend thanks to the neighbors who supported the project and who worked hard to make it happen.

#### Remembering Barbara Waggoner



Barbara at the 2002 OWLA street party

Imagine Old West Lawrence, 2015:

A high-rise apartment building south of the pool casts its long shadow over houses on Tennessee St. every morning; a few blocks away, stores on the 700 and 800 blocks of Massachusetts look eastward onto the blank rear wall of a dying shopping mall anchored by JCPenney and, formerly, Sears; heavy city trucks regularly rumble past 7th and Indiana on their way to their maintenance garage by the water plant; Ninth Street from Tennessee to Illinois is home to a dense

hodgepodge of businesses such as fast food restaurants and car maintenance chain stores, each surrounded by its own skirt of asphalt, many accessed from the state-named streets. Old West Lawrence extends west only to Illinois St., but it doesn't matter anyway, because no one has repainted a house, repaired a porch, or installed landscaping in the historic center of town in years. Homeowners have almost all moved away, and rental units predominate.

Sound familiar? It doesn't? Then you can say "thank you" to Barbara Waggoner, who died in February at the age of 94, after living in OWL for more than 50 years. She arrived in 1962, shortly after OWLA was founded, and soon became a leader whose efforts helped block the scenarios above, each of which was once a true possibility. In those days, Barbara's causes were far from universally popular. Current civic pride in our vibrant, historic downtown, for example, contrasts with the strong opposition to preservation that was mounted by the chamber of commerce, city officials, and some downtown businesses for many years.

Every OWL resident today benefits from Barbara's efforts. She was there at the organizational meeting of the joint Pinckney/Old West opposition to the proposed city vehicle maintenance garage near 2nd and Indiana. She campaigned for preservation of stone hitching posts and curbs, and also for quality landscaping in the train park to screen its green space from surrounding vehicular traffic. She was on the scene to witness and object (albeit futilely) to the covering of brick streets with asphalt slurry and the imposition of the 200-foot "straight-line" commercial zoning along Ninth Street. She championed an initiative to "fight blight" that focused on halting encroachment of commercial zoning into residential areas and discouraging removal of houses. She was active in two different groups, both called Citizens for a Better Downtown (CBD) and separated by several years, fighting against proposed malls to save Downtown Lawrence from dying a slow death or being executed outright. She served as OWLA president in 1978, and in 1988 was given the Pearl Clark Award for outstanding service to the neighborhood.

Barbara disproved the saying "You can't fight City Hall." A visionary thinker, gifted writer, articulate speaker, and determined advocate, she seemed fearless in the face of the chamber of commerce, the city commission, the legislature, and the local media, all of which felt the force of her keen intelligence, accurate analysis, and pointed remarks at one time or another. She hosted many meetings in her living room and around her dining room table at 726 Louisiana, planning strategies and marshalling forces. She kept her ear to the ground and was the source of excellent ideas. She was skilled at clarifying issues and motivating people. Many were on the receiving end of Barbara's "Karen (or Steve, or Jeff), you've got to do this!" And most of her battles ended in victory.

We are lucky that Barbara Waggoner was on our side.

**-Karen Kressin**

### **The Horizon 2020 Update Process**

The Horizon 2020 Update Steering Committee has been meeting since February, 2014. It has gathered information through listening to stakeholders as well as polling the public. The Committee has prepared an Issue Action Report which identifies 19 issues. Most of the issues are non-controversial. For example, Issue 2 calls for the City to "Create Employment Opportunities." The Issue Action Report only identifies the issue of creating employment without making any findings on how this should be accomplished. The absence of meaningful guidance runs through much of the report. It is a listing of concerns without sufficient guidance to drive the creation of a plan.

A couple of issues are controversial. For example, there were many conflicting presentations on how the City could address the issues of affordable housing. The same holds true for the issues of the pace of growth of retail space. The

Committee found those issues controversial but made no effort to resolve any of them.

Of greatest importance to older neighborhoods is the steadfast avoidance of the concept of growth management. For many years, Lawrence has practiced an outdated form of planning. The City simply zones districts of the City and permits the developers to set the pace of development. The danger of this approach is that developers tend to overbuild. From 2000 through 2012, developers built over 800 more housing units than the growth of households would support. Overbuilding hurts older neighborhoods because it siphons off demand from older neighborhoods. It hurts the value of older homes and causes older neighborhoods to lose population. Similarly, the City has approved large increases in retail space during a time when the real growth in retail spending has been flat. Spending is the demand that supports retail space, and new shopping centers attract vendors away from older centers and downtown. When the demand is siphoned away from downtown and older centers, it hurts the returns on investment in those older centers.

There is a simple remedy to overbuilding; it is growth management. Many cities practice this approach to planning. It means that the City sets the pace of development, rather than the developers. The City keeps the growth of supply of homes balanced with the growth in households, and the City keeps the growth of retail space balanced with the real growth in retail spending. This approach keeps existing shopping centers and older neighborhoods much healthier and causes developers to compete with each other to offer the most meritorious proposals.

It appears unlikely that the City will adopt growth management. The real estate industry is interested in maintaining the status quo, and its influence on city government is very strong. It will take a concerted effort for neighborhood interests to prevail.

**-Kirk McClure**

### **OWL Day**

We are excited to announce that the **OWL Street Party** will take place on Saturday, September 19th, from 5 pm to 8pm on the 700 block of Mississippi Street (near 7th Street). The annual street party is an eagerly anticipated event that brings together all OWL neighbors for food, drink and, most importantly, community – the chance to see old friends and neighbors and meet new ones.

Of course, this event would not exist without the help of many OWL neighbors and we need your (very brief) help to make this event happen in 2015. We're looking for volunteer help in several areas and we've made it very easy to both view needed areas of help and also to sign up. Just visit this URL to do so: <http://bit.ly/1GRkoF7>

As always, tables will be set up for pot-luck dishes, and we encourage neighbors to bring their favorite dish to share (please remember to tag your plateware and utensils with your name/phone)!

Finally, you might guess that holding this important event does require significant funding, paid out of Old West Lawrence Association funds, which are not easily replenished. We'll "pass the hat" during the party and would welcome any and all donations. Please contact **Richard Andrade**, 617-970-8359 or [pivoss@yahoo.com](mailto:pivoss@yahoo.com), with any questions regarding the street party. Thanks so much for helping, and we are all looking forward to seeing you there!

To participate as a seller in the **OWL Garage-and-Art Sale**, submit a 2 to 4 line description of your sale to **Phil Minkin** at [pminkin@juno.com](mailto:pminkin@juno.com) by Monday, Sept. 14. We will then post it on our website, [OldWestLawrence.net](http://OldWestLawrence.net). Include your address, hours of your sale (a minimum of 8 to noon is suggested), location (alley, front yard, art studio, porch, etc.) and a brief description of your offerings. We will put an ad in the LJW, directing shoppers to the website. As in past years we ask each participant to give at least 15% of their sales to OWLA to help with our activities. Thanks.