

CONA OF MONROE COUNTY

NEIGHBORHOODS

Volume 1, Issue 2
September, 2005

Elections for the CONA executive Committee have been moved from September to October because of low attendance at the September meeting and because the meeting was not advertised properly. This news letter is part of that notification.

Catherine Stafford joined the committee in the summer as the treasurer one of the two titled positions on the board. The other titled position, secretary, will remain David Walter assuming no candidate out polls him. Two others are Richard Carr, and myself Craig Harvey. Mark Hooker has elected to drop out of the executive committee. The Bylaws state that there are 5 members on this committee so there is one

slot not filled.

Candidates for the 5 positions include the 4 mentioned above and Cynthia Bretheim. Votes are counted for all candidates and those 5 that have the highest number are seated as the next Executive Committee.

Craig Harvey's Statement
"As anyone who has paid any attention at all to the meetings has learned CONA is looking for ways to raise money. One of the chief activities I intend to engage in is to set up a series of fund raisers to meet this need. Watch for them in the coming year."

Dave Walters' statement
"What I would like to see is for CONA to secure funding

support from the community for the Executive Director's position so that the programs and services that are provided to the neighborhoods can be improved and expanded."

Catherine Stafford's statement "My goal is to continue to keep our books in the excellent shape that Carol Walter did for so many years. As a nonprofit organization, CONA has an obligation to its member neighborhoods and the public to be sure every "i" is dotted perfectly. I am always happy to answer questions from board members and neighborhoods about our budget and our financial statements. "

Richard Carr's Statement
"Recent development has

Inside this issue:

Getting to work.	2
Elections (continued)	2
Hydrogen Fuel?	2
RNNC continued	2
Lot Size (details)	3
Planning Alerts	4

Special points of interest:

- RNNC will be in September.
- The CONA Snow Shovel Scramble will be held at the end of August
- ZOC meetings will continue to elaborate on the Broad Categories
- Ordinance of the month will be on animal control.

CONA A NO SHOW FOR RNNC

RNNC came and went and besides Dave Walter; CONA was absent. I stayed away because of a cold, it wasn't so bad but seeing that so few others were attending helped decide me as well. The conference should be an opportunity for a

Neighborhood Organization to interact with others from the region as well as show the strength of our own. Clearly we failed to show



The Regional Neighborhood Networking Conference is in Muncie, Indiana this year

strength.

Dave did come back with news of how other communities deal with some of the same issues you also deal with. Specifically he men-

GETTING TO WORK

This is the first in a series of articles that will examine the different options available for getting to work in this world. Each article will examine the various challenges that modern commuters face when looking for a way to get to work. Of course the first choice of most commuters differs on location and developed infrastructure but since this newsletter is intended for residents of Monroe County then the articles will focus on the most likely options for residents.

The car is the current



best option and the one that provides the best amount of freedom. In fact given the schedules of busy parents this is the most likely scenario. The SUV is frequently not the first choice of most people but instead the clear pragmatic choice

over the Minivan when transporting a group of children to after school events.

Still while it may be the most practical solution for these kinds of needs there are alternatives what kind of a car to use and even alternatives to using a car when doing other tasks. For instance, if the office were to provide a virtual space for its workers most would not need to drive to work. A vehicle that uses methanol to power a fuel cell will deliver all the power of a 400 CI V8 but get better efficiency and use a fuel that doesn't need to be imported from unfriendly neighbors.

Each month this space will examine the options that you can use to complete your daily tasks and still offer you guiltless freedom that most Americans have come to expect.

changed the complexion of Bloomington. Multi-floor apartments have created a new skyline, and the student occupants, although neighbors for only nine months, are a significant segment of downtown life. It behooves CONA to welcome neighbors who cannot geographically constitute a neighborhood, but whose presence impacts us all.

tioned rental housing and a program that Muncie uses to help enforcement agencies contact a person who is responsible for a rental unit.

IS HYDROGEN FUEL IN YOUR FUTURE?

Hydrogen has made the news lately as an alternative to petroleum based gasoline as a vehicle fuel. The greatest advantages of Hydrogen are its abundance and the fact that burning hydrogen makes less harmful byproducts than burning gasoline. However, how hydrogen is used and even how it is stored are critically important issues that need to be addressed before you'll ever see it at your local fueling station.

Hydrogen can be burned like gasoline in an Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) like the one in your car. Simple modifications can be made to change the fuel source. However, ICEs have efficiency limitations that mean any fuel source used in one of them is going to assure that a majority of the fuel's potential energy will never be used.

Hydrogen is the smallest atom on the periodic table; because of this a storage

tank is a difficult thing to build. It could be "bound" to something; once bound, there has to be a way to get it off again so that it can be used. Metal hydrides are one way to bind hydrogen, alcohol is another. Methanol is an alcohol, that has the most amount of hydrogen of any of the alcohols and using a technology called Direct Methanol the hydrogen can easily be separated from Methanol. It just doesn't work that well with ICEs.

LOT SIZE DETAILS

A lot is the smallest size that a piece of land can be divided into in order to build a house. The lot size is restricted by the kind of zoning that the land is located in. There are a variety of zoning classifications; the most common are commercial and residential. Then there are subclasses as well, such as Residential Estate, Residential or Residential core. The zoning code establishes the *by-right* lot size for every zone.

So what does this have to do with you anyway, especially if you live in the city. The neighborhood you live in is already filled with homes and there isn't any way that more can be added even if someone wanted to. Well maybe but then again maybe not.

If someone wishes to build a new structure in an existing neighborhood the *by-right* method is the easiest to pursue. In this case, the petitioner simply needs to acquire a property or properties that have enough area to accommodate the final change and announce that the new structure is to be built.

By-right is a frequently used term in planning and it basically means that a

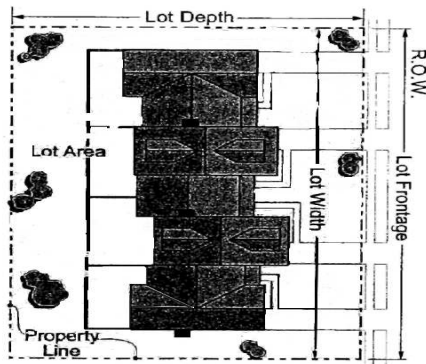
Smaller lot size could mean reduced maintenance.

builder (petitioner) is allowed to build a certain number of structures on an acre of land. This is also called the housing (or unit) density. This density is a quick test to determine if the petitioner has met the minimum legal requirements to build a structure. When someone wants to build a structure they need to show that there is enough land for it and this is where the *by-right* determination becomes important. Alternately,

they could appeal to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) to reduce the lot size but that is another discussion.

Current minimum lot size for RS is 7200 sq ft or about 60 ft wide and 120 feet

deep. One of the proposed changes in the zoning ordinance is to make a new zoning designation



A zoning description showing pertinent parts of the lot description

have a 5500 sq ft minimum lot size. The RC zone has been proposed to replace the current zoning in almost every existing neighborhood in Bloomington.

By examining lot sizes in a typical Core Neighborhood (specifically at Southdowns and Hawthorne) we can see that at between 13000 sq ft and 9000

sq ft these lots can not be resized into two separate lots because you would need a total of 14400 sq ft under the current regulation.

However, under the proposed change you would only need 11000 sq ft. If someone bought two properties in order to have sufficient land to resize them into 3 lots then you would have to have 21600 sq ft. So some of the lots could now be combined to make a third lot under the current regulation. Under the proposed change you would need 16500 sq ft for three lots and 22000 sq ft for 4 lots. By combining 2 of the smallest

lots in this neighborhood a petitioner would have 9000 x 2 or 18000 sq ft; clearly enough for 3 lots where there were once 2. Also with the proposed change a petitioner would be able to make 4 lots where there are currently only 2.

So, is this a boon or a curse? Clearly, opportunity exists for the home owner to profit from the proposed regulation; also clearly increased congestion could negatively impact property values and ambiance of nearby neighbors. As the example above shows many of those

Smaller lots sizes may negatively influence a neighborhoods ambiance.

called RC that will

who would benefit are individuals who own or can buy side by side properties. Which implies that the greatest advantage of this proposed change would be for Real Estate Speculators.

Many communities work well with the reduced lot size. Many of the larger metro areas in the world have houses right next to each other. In addition, a smaller lot size would reduce the amount of lawn care you would have to manage.



The final decision on how this would affect a neighborhood is best determined through consensus. Talk to your neighbors and see if you can come to a consensus. Either way you decide Bloomington will continue to grow, new homes will be built, families will arrive and depart. However, now is the time to make that determination on what you would like to do to shape the future of your neighborhood. Then see to it that you make your choice clear.

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*BUILDING COMMUNITY
NEIGHBORHOOD BY NEIGHBORHOOD*

We're on the Web!
Conaonline.org



CONA is an organization made up of neighborhood associations in the City of Bloomington / Monroe County, Indiana. The neighborhood is the chosen geographic environment for most of us. As such, we want to preserve the quality and safety that our residents desire. Each neighborhood has unique features that the residents want to ensure for themselves and others. This is the work of CONA, the Council of Neighborhood Associations.

PLANNING BRIEFS

The Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee has completed its meetings and will be preparing a report soon. Will CONA have anything to add to this?

A Downtown Plan has been presented for public comment. Look for it soon at the City Council.

2030 Transportation Plan will begin to be discussed.

McDoel Gardens NA is complaining about large trucks. Something about an ordinance is mentioned but nothing clear.

Some complaints about illegal turns at stop signs have been brought forward. There appears to be some people who are squeezing to the right of vehicles in front of them in order to make a turn. The specific example was 11th and Rogers. Is this McDoel again?

Renwick II. The development at the corner of Moore Pike and Hillside, where that fab new roundabout is, is back in the PC.

The developer has determined that not enough clear ground is available for his manor and so seeks to clear more of the trees on the southern boundary.

The same developer who is trying to get out of agreements made for the above project has also agreed to put in a turn lane on Moores Pike at Sare Rd. Sometime in the future.

The Tom Cherry Muffler shop has joined the many closed business on north college / walnut. Perhaps it will be the next Graffiti canvas. Take a look at the old Stephens Honda or Burger King to get an idea of what this will add to the ambiance.

Walker Street Medical. (Prospect Hill) The owner has asked that that this be rezoned to General Office Use. The building (a stone structure) has seldom been leased. The owner hopes this will make it more easy to lease. The neighborhood opposes this, they apparently feel that the new zoning will nega-

tively impact their neighborhood than the current zoning.

Smallwood Annex. This was to be a landscaped area next to the 8 story apartment building across from City Hall. Now it will be more commercial space.

Hand (Housing and Neighborhood Development) is going to develop a property. They plan to build 12 homes for family's of 4 with an annual income of up to \$47,000 a year. HAND says that since commercial development hasn't appeared its time to build homes. The site will be a showcase of the most modern "Green" building capabilities.