

# President's Message

Mike Fitzgerald

I am pleased to report that since our last newsletter was published we have become involved in more than business matters, unlike our first year. It may not be evident reading this column because I have highlighted our more serious activities. But updates on other projects we've branched into are reported in this newsletter. The range of activities makes a pretty colorful statement about WNA.

## Redevelopment of Former Husker Auto Properties East of 48<sup>th</sup> Along O Street

In April, Wynn Hjernstad from the Lincoln Urban Development Department explained what the city is doing to help redevelop the properties. As the first step in the process the city has conducted a "blighted and substandard study," with results to be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval. If approved, the department will present a redevelopment plan to the two bodies. Then the city would seek redevelopment proposals from developers and a redevelopment agreement could be approved by the City Council. The department has welcomed input from WNA developed by a subcommittee chaired by Russell Miller. The subcommittee listed items WNA wants to see in the redevelopment plan, items WNA can tolerate and items the neighborhood would oppose. WNA has requested Urban Development to provide feedback on the list and that WNA continues to be included in the redevelopment planning process. An update will be presented at the Aug. 5 meeting

## Expand the Health Dept. Facilities in Woods Park

The expansion requires lost park space be replaced elsewhere in the city on a dollar value basis (estimates range from \$270,000-550,000). In April, Mary Morin, WNA subcommittee chair, reported that the Woods Park Neighborhood Association has indicated interest in exploring the required land exchange to be done as part of the development of property at in the center of the

block between J and Randolph at 40<sup>th</sup> Street. In May, the Parks and Recreation Department Advisory Board voted to propose placing one third of the land exchange in the WNA area and the remaining two thirds on the northern edge of Lincoln.

However, the advisory board can be asked to reconsider the proposal. Doing so would be logical, if a proposal to keep the exchange within this area of the city could be developed by WNA, the Woods Park Neighborhood Association and the Parks and Recreation Department. At the July 1 WNA meeting, a small group was formed to work on the issue. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to contact Mary Morin. The group will provide an update at the Aug. 5 WNA meeting.

## Runza Recently Began Construction Of A Drive-Through Restaurant At 40<sup>th</sup> And Randolph

At the April WNA meeting, participants received a copy of a letter Runza had sent to a few property owners in the area of 40<sup>th</sup> and Randolph. It outlined Runza's plans for developing the property on the southwest corner of that intersection and the company's willingness to discuss how a sit-down restaurant with a parking lot might be designed to be acceptable to neighborhood residents and property owners. It was agreed at the April meeting that a group consisting of representatives from both WNA and 40<sup>th</sup> and A would meet with Runza officials to discuss neighborhood concerns the company could address in both drive-thru and sit-down designs and that it would report back to the larger group. Ed Hoffman and me and two 40<sup>th</sup> & A Neighborhood representatives met April 21 with a Runza official in an effort to relay neighborhood concerns and to seek more information about Runza's plans. The concerns were outlined in an April 22 letter, which the Runza Board considered on April 26 and issued a letter in response on April 27 that indicated the company intended to proceed with its plans to build a drive-thru facility.

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