



Metro Codes

E—News For Neighborhoods

Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

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Changes to Environmental Court

In October of 2007, Jim Todd was appointed as the new Environmental Court referee. Over the last several months, a number of important changes have been made in the way Environmental Court cases are processed and prosecuted.

On tradition that has continued is the practice of allowing citizens or neighbors to be present in the court and to offer testimony on behalf of Metro. Referee Todd has expressed his desire to facilitate testimony from neighbors and he feels that this is a vital component of his decision making process. While the rule of law will prevail, he understands and appreciates the input affected neighbors have on a pending case.

Metro Legal and Codes has also reviewed some of the documents and processes used in connection with Environmental Court cases. One in particular is the Mandatory Injunction form. Before, this document was done a day or two or more following the hearing on Wednesday and then the form had to be processed by Metro Legal and signed by the Referee before it could be mailed out to the violator. We are now able to produce the Mandatory Injunction in the court room, print it and get the Referee to sign the order in real time the day of the hearing. This

greatly reduces the time it takes to reset the case on the docket. This new procedure has also allowed us to present some of the orders to the violator while they are before the bench, eliminating the administrative processing required by Metro Legal. Codes, Health and Metro Historic Zoning are all using the new procedure for their legal orders.

One of the major barriers to effective enforcement has been the limitation on the amount we can issue as a fine. One method of dealing with this limitation has been to assess a single \$50 fine for each day the property is in violation. As a part of our new Mandatory Order process, we have included a provision to ask for a \$50 per day fine for each day the property remains in violation. Having a possible \$500 plus fine for failing to comply has been a real motivator. If we have to ask for the \$50 per day fine, we waive all but \$50 of the total fine if the violator comes into compliance by the next court date.

Codes, Metro Legal and the Court Clerks office continue work together to evaluate the court process and look for ways to improve our procedures.



Mayor Names Assistant Director of ECD Office

Mayor Karl Dean has named Nashville native Charlie Williams will serve as assistant director of the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development. Williams will serve under Paul Ney, director of the office, and alongside Marilyn Edwards, director of special events. He is currently a business banking relationship manager with First Tennessee Bank. Before joining First Tennessee in 2003, Williams ran his own business involved in international trade for six years.

"Charlie knows Nashville, he knows the business community and I'm certain he will serve my office and our city well as we work to grow our economy in balance with the needs of the community at large," Mayor Dean said. "He will be part of a dynamic team with Marilyn, who oversees dozens of special events in our city which attract visitors and bring Nashville residents together throughout the year, and Paul, who has already made much headway in his short tenure. I look forward to celebrating their accomplishments in the months and years ahead."

Williams received an M.B.A. from the University of Oklahoma where he was a Rath scholar, after graduating summa cum laude with a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee. He is also a 1991 graduate of Montgomery Bell Academy. Williams' community involvement includes sitting on the boards of Fannie Battle Day Home for Children, the Margaret Maddox YMCA, and the Neighborhoods Resource Center. He is also a past member of the Board of Zoning Appeals.



Tree Topping Hurts Trees

The practice of topping is so wide spread that many people believe it is the proper way to prune trees. However, topping can cause a variety of problems in trees, and ultimately cause problems for homeowners.

Topping and Pruning - What's the Difference?:

Topping is the excessive and arbitrary removal of all parts of the tree above and beyond a certain height with no regard for the structure or growth pattern of the tree.

Pruning is the selective removal the practice of topping is so wide spread that many people believe it is the proper way to prune trees. However, topping can cause a variety of problems in trees, and ultimately cause problems for homeowners

Tree Topping Myths:

- **The tree is too tall** - This indicates either poor species selection, improper tree placement, or fear that the tree might be dangerous in storms.
- **Topping reduces the risks of storm damage** - The reduction in height reduces risk temporarily, but as the tree re-grows, it is structurally weaker and the risk becomes greater.
- **It produces a denser shade** - The shade may be denser in a small area, but the overall shading potential is reduced.
- **It has to be topped because of power lines** - Tree and power line conflicts may be resolved by proper species selection, better placement or different pruning technique. Remember: power line clearance benefits the lines, not trees.

Problems Caused By Topping:

- **The balance between roots & crown is destroyed** - Removal of too many branches and leaves can starve trees. Without foliage trees cannot make enough food to maintain growth and vigor.
- **Sunscald can occur** - Bark tissues suddenly exposed to full sun may be burned and develop disease cankers.

- **Large stubs can't heal** - Stubs are separated from food and water flow. As tissues die, wounds don't seal, and decay may enter and spread to the trunk.
- **New growth is weak** - New sprouts are attached to the surface of stubs rather than being anchored from within former limbs.
- **Topping can create a hazard** - Storms do more damage because the new growth is weakly attached
- **Topping disfigures trees** - Topping alters trees' natural beauty and form.
- **Topping is only temporary** Trees will grow to their natural height. Rapid re-growth is nature's way of recovering from disasters, and frequent topping will be required to keep a tree under control.



Alternatives to Topping: Select the right tree, and plant it in the right place. A tremendous selection of trees is available. One can be found that will grow to just the right size. Avoid power lines and other hazards.

Remove the tree and replace it. If removed, then follow the right tree in the right place guidelines.

Prune the tree properly. Proper pruning removes limbs where they are attached to a larger branch or the trunk. Selective removal of limbs reduces the wind resistance of the tree. It also allows some light to penetrate the crown. Proper pruning improves the shape and balance of the crown.

Summary:

The practice of topping is not recommended. It can lead to decay, storm damage, and disfigured trees. Proper pruning that thins the crown, with cuts made at branch collars, is the best practice for the long term health of trees.

Proper Pruning:

The light gray limbs represent branches that have been removed. The crown has been thinned to reduce wind resistance and improve tree health without leaving stubs or changing the natural shape.

Codes & Building Safety Employees Recognized



Photo by Metro photographer, Gary Layda

Mayor Karl Dean recently honored the Department Codes and Building Safety for their efforts on behalf of the storm victims and Metro employees in Macon County. The ceremony, held at the Metro Fire Training Academy, recognized various metro departments who participated in the recovery and rescue efforts following the tornados which struck Macon County and the surrounding areas. The team representing the Code Department were:

Left to Right: Plans Examination Chief Wade Hill, Edward Simpkins, Sid Hinkle, Charles Fortner, Property Standards Chief Jeff Castleberry, Johnny Hargis, Steve Regen, Sandra Custode, Frank Jordan, Mayor Karl Dean, Plumbing Chief Inspector Dell Myers, Codes Director Terry Cobb, Jim Guscke, Scotty Chaffin, Tim Rowland, Special Assistant to the Director Billy Fields, Building Chief Byron Hall.

Metro Parks “Hidden” Garden

Hidden behind the Metro Parks’ Art Center in Centennial Park is a treasure that many Nashville residents have never visited.

Thirty one years ago the members of the Nashville Herb Society planted a garden with the goal of educating the community about the pleasures of growing herbs. Unlike the Cheekwood Herb Study Garden, also planted and maintained by the Herb Society, the Art Center garden is free to the public. While the garden is owned by Metro Parks, the Herb Society handles all labor and expense of the garden. If you visit the garden on a Wednesday morning you are likely to find an Herb Society member hard at work. In 2007 members worked a total of 362 hours in the garden and spent over \$1990 on plants and supplies for the garden. If you visit the garden look for facts sheets about a featured herb, these change throughout the season. This spring there are plans to fill pots at the entrance of the Art Center with culinary herbs and to supply visitors with recipes using these herbs.

There are plans to register the Art Center Garden’s collection of thymes with The Herb Society of America. Every thyme plant in the garden will be catalogued with the source of origin. The Herb Society of New Orleans has a sage collection like this. When it was lost to Katrina, they were able to go back to the original sources and rebuild the collection.

Every spring the Herb Society has its only fund raiser, with proceeds going towards both gardens. This year the sale is at 9 a.m., April 19, 2008 until sell out. The location is the Tennessee Fairgrounds, Sports Arena in Nashville. The sale features over 18,000 plants, representing over 200 herb varieties. Plants are arranged alphabetically for ease in shopping and shoppers receive a handy guide for growing and using herbs. The “answer ladies” will be on hand to answer questions regarding planting, growing and using herbs. The group will also offer personal shoppers.



Parents' Role A Focus of Town Hall Meeting

Student disciplinary issues dominated a public meeting at Antioch High School—and Mayor Karl Dean, who Orchestrated the meeting, said the discipline kids receive from their parent can be considered a civic matter.

“A lot of the issues raised tonight are



family issues,” Dean said after the meeting. “They’re things we have to deal with....We should be talking about it more.

The Mayor’s Town Hall meeting on public education, drew a large crowd of parents, teachers, students, Metro Council member and other Nashvillians. Some teachers said parents need to provide more thorough discipline at home - and some said more teachers need to engage with students’ families. One student said the amount of time spent on enforcing standard student attire rules takes hours of time away from instruction.

All agreed distractions at school stemming from kids who don’t want to follow the rules must be addressed.

“Parents have to be accountable. Students have to be accountable. And I have to be accountable said Antioch High School English teacher Evelyn Davidson at the meeting. “But I don’t what to be accountable by myself. I need help”

Board of Education member Karen Johnson, whose district includes the Antioch cluster, said student disciplinary issues are a community-wide problem, and not limited to Antioch.

“It’s district - wide,” Johnson said. “Solving this is going to take us really getting together and coming up with some newer solutions.

Participants at the meeting ad few solutions to suggest. Dean noted the recent talk of Shelby County Mayor A.C. Wharton, who has said publicly he would favor making neglect of children’s education a crime that could be charged against parents. Dean said Wharton’s proposal isn’t the only Tennessee city with student discipline currently near the center of its public education discussions.

“We’re an urban school district with a wide variety of needs, Dean said

Parents at the meeting also raised questions about the relative scarcity of elementary education and pre-school

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resources in the Antioch area. All elementary schools in the Antioch cluster are currently at 110% capacity or above, Johnson said. She encouraged parents to continue reminding Metro Council members - several of whom were present at the meeting as well as Dean about the severity of the problem.

“Dean said that he’s “getting that message,” and is “convinced” that Antioch is Metro’s fastest - growing area. After the meeting, Dean said he considered the problem of educational resources for young children in the cluster to be significant.



Concerned parents and students share their thoughts and ask questions at the meeting.



“This should be priority,” Dean said. “This area of the city has not had the resources it’s needed. We need to do better.”

Johnson said that construction of a new elementary school in the Antioch clusters included in the district’s long-term capital improvements plan, but not for the upcoming 2008-2009 school year. Johnson said construction of the new school should be moved ahead.

“We need it now,” Johnson said after the meeting. The Town Hall Meeting drew one of the largest crowds the mayor’s public education meetings have garnered. Dean has said he plans to host a town meeting in each Metro Nashville Public Schools cluster.

The next meeting is slated for Hillwood on April 10, followed by Glenciff on April 28. For further dates into May, you may check the webpage at www.nashville.gov/mocytownhall/schedule.

Alignment Nashville Moving To Mayor's Office

Mayor Karl Dean has taken a step to further the coordination of community efforts to improve Nashville public schools, announcing Alignment Nashville is moving to the Mayor's Office.

Alignment Nashville strategically aligns the efforts of over 109 community organizations to meet the needs of Nashville public schools based on the district's strategic plan.

"The need for better schools and higher graduation rates is not just a schools issue, it's a community issue and it's going to take the entire community coming together to solve it," Dean said. "The leadership and staff of Alignment Nashville work every day to make sure our community resources are applied thoughtfully and efficiently. I can't think of a better way to further that effort than to offer the full support of my office."

Sydney Rogers, the executive director of Alignment Nashville, three other full-time staff and one part-time employee will report directly to the mayor.

"This move makes a lot of sense. Alignment Nashville is

well positioned to assist the mayor with his agenda to connect the community and public education," Rogers said.

Tom Cigarran, chairman and CEO of Healthways Inc. and operating board chair of Alignment Nashville, said: "Since its inception Alignment Nashville has more than exceeded all of our expectations. With the support of Mayor Dean's office, I know we can do even more. All of us are eager to begin this partnership and to begin improving the lives of more children in Nashville."

Alignment Nashville currently shares office space with the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and Metro Nashville Public Schools. The staff will relocate to the Mayor's Office in the next few weeks.

Alignment Nashville operates on an annual budget comprised of both public and private funding. The organization is governed by a board of directors, which oversees its budget, and an operating board, which manages its project implementation. The structure of Alignment's funding and governance will remain the same.

Arbor Day Celebrations



Left to Right: Stephan Kivett - Urban Forester; Jimmy Granberry of HG Hill Realty; George Cate - Former Vice Mayor

The annual Arbor Day celebration was held on March 14, 2008 by the Sunken garden at Centennial Park. Nashville received it's 13th Tree City USA designation this year.

The celebration was highlighted by oral presentations of award winning essays from Metro Public Schools area 5th grade students. There where also several memorial tree dedications and the George H. Cate, Jr. award.

This years Cate award for beautification was given to HG Hill realty for their exemplary work on the Hill Center in Green Hills. Jimmy Granberry of HG Hill Realty accepted the award.

Employee Highlights

Marjorie Pelland is an Office Support Representative III for the Property Standards Division. Margie is one of four secretaries assigned to the Property Standards Division. Her primary responsibility is to provide clerical and administrative support to one of our three inspection Teams. As the “Red Team” secretary, Margie generates the inspectors abate notices, processes legal notices for substandard properties, enters inspection results into our KIVA (Requests For Service) tracking system, and she provides additional administrative support to the Assistant Director.



Ms. Pelland also takes telephone requests for inspections from the public, assists in the processing of permit applications and enters zoning inspection requests from Contractors to complete the process for their Use and Occupancy letter.

Margie joined the Codes Department in 1999. She began as the only clerical support to the Housing and Zoning division, the precursor to the Property Standards division. Margie is focused on providing quality public service and she is always looking for new ways to assist our customers. Prior to joining Codes, she spent 13 years as a manager with Circle K and was a Quality Control Supervisor with H & R Block.

Margie is originally from Rhode Island and has lived in Nashville since 1977. She and Angel, her calico cat, now call Madison home. She enjoys her family of three brothers, four nieces, three nephews, four great nieces and two great nephews.

Department of Codes & Building Safety

Metro Office Building
800 2nd Ave., South
Nashville, TN 37210
615-862-6590 / Fax 862-6593

Mayor—Karl F. Dean

Director—Terrence Cobb
Assistant Director—Bill Penn

Office Hours: Mon-Fri / 7:30-4:00



Taking Notice of Our Neighbors Eastwood Neighbors

Eastwood Neighbors, located in East Nashville, describes itself as a “charming, urban residential area characterized by early to mid-20th century single-family residences and multi-family units representing a range of architectural styles characterized by local variations on the architectural styles popular throughout the country between 1890 and 1940.

Established in 1992, Eastwood Neighbors, Inc. is a non-profit, 501C organization established in 1992.

Their stated objectives include:

- To unite the residents of the neighborhood by bringing neighbors together in more frequent contact with each other and encouraging them to plan and work together;
- To preserve and enhance the neighborhood's residential character by seeking policies of zoning and codes enforcement;
- To cooperate and affiliate in appropriate ways with other local, state, and national organizations having compatible goals; and
- To promote the general welfare of the neighborhood.

Eastwood Neighbors represents an area from Gallatin Pike and Eastland Avenue to Douglas Avenue in the East then Eastland Avenue from Gallatin Pike to Porter Road in the South. The neighborhood boundaries continue to Porter Road from Eastland Avenue to the railway tracks in the West then Douglas Avenue from Porter Road to Gallatin Pike to the North.

For more information, you can contact Eastwood neighbors at admin@eastwoodneighbors.org or you write to Eastwood Neighbors, Inc. P.O. Box 68397, Nashville, TN 37206-8397



PASS IT ON!

Pass the word about our newsletter! We would be honored if you would share our newsletter with your colleagues and co-workers. If anyone would like to sign up to receive it themselves, they just need to send us their email, and we will be happy to “Pass It On” to them.



For information regarding accessibility, please contact Manley Biggers at (615) 862-6521 or fax (615) 862-6499. He can also be reached at manley.biggers@nashville.gov

Terry Cobb and **Bill Penn** welcome your feedback on our e-newsletter. Please send your comments to

Bill Penn,

Assistant Director, Property Standards Div , 862-6590