

**Greensboro Neighborhood Congress (GNC)**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**Thursday, August 9, 2012**



**GNC Co-Chairperson Susan Taaffe** convened the August GNC meeting at the Greensboro Central Public Library beginning with our traditional introduction of all participants and presentations by guest speakers.

**Guest speaker:**

**Donna Gray, City of Greensboro Community Relations Manager**, described neighborhood walks which are organized to allow City management and City department leaders to see your neighborhood on-site, hear about your neighborhood's points of pride and learn your neighborhood concerns. During spring and autumn months five neighborhood walks are organized, 5:30-7:00 p.m., one in each City Council District. Each walk includes a 20-minute period for rest/snack/rehydration. This autumn's walks will be in the O'Henry Oaks, Arlington Park, College Hill, Sunset Hills, and Random Woods neighborhoods. Anyone may participate in these neighborhood walks, but please contact **Donna Gray at 336-373-2723** so she may anticipate the number of participants. Also contact her to schedule your neighborhood for a walk in 2013. After each walk, City management and staff better recognize that neighborhood's unique character and any concerns the City can address.

Gray also reminds all neighbors with questions about our City to call **373-CITY (that is 373-2489)** during any work day so City call center staff may answer your questions about our City government and direct you to the correct City office to deal with your concerns – everything from repairing potholes, reporting neighbors' grass that needs cutting, to water bills that need explanation, etc. Please inform your neighbors about calling **373-CITY**.

**Steve Sumerford, Assistant Director of the Greensboro Public Libraries**, informed us about **Building Common Ground: Community, Civility and Compassion**. This grant-funded project will engage public contemplation and discussion about older adults in our community and aiming to connect us through service projects to older adults, especially those living in assisted living and nursing facilities. Research shows that older adult's physical and mental health improves through meaningful community engagement. A mid-September kick-off begins with a community-wide "Day of Listening" when everyone is invited to truly listen to all elders you contact, including those in assisted living and nursing care facilities. Other activities will include engaging older adults in storytelling and expressive writing, creating and celebrating art exhibits by older adults, inter-generational gardening projects, speakers from the Creative Aging Network NC who share evidenced-base research demonstrating that older adults remain healthier and happier when regularly engaged in creative activities, discussion of Karen Armstrong's book *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*, and an inter-generational Play Day coordinated by the City Parks & Recreation Department. Volunteers are needed for all these activities. You are encouraged to organize your own events reflecting the Building Common Ground themes of compassion, civility and community. For more information or to volunteer contact **Steve Sumerford, 336-373-3636** or [steve.sumerford@greensboro-nc.gov](mailto:steve.sumerford@greensboro-nc.gov).

**Committee Reports:**

**Mike Pendergraft** summarized a thoughtfully crafted proposal recommending how our City might better enforce minimum housing codes for the over 35,000 rental units in Greensboro. The proposal focuses on rental property owners rather than rental agents, requires no inspection fees, no registration, nor periodic inspections. The proposal gives examples of reasonable basis for rental dwelling unit inspections, pre-inspection notification, and recommendations for access. The proposal has been presented to the City Planning and Community Development department for consideration. For further details contact Mike Pendergraft at [mrp\\_mlp@bellsouth.net](mailto:mrp_mlp@bellsouth.net).

The **Issues & Bylaws Committee** continues to work toward proposed noise ordinance revisions. A web page about our City Noise ordinance is at <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/index.aspx?page=1927>. The entire City Noise Ordinance is located at <http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=10736&stateId=33&stateName=North%20Carolina>

**Announcements:**

**GNC Liaison Donna Newton** reports City Police officers are concerned about security around “night clubs” and may consider requiring more extensive training for club’s security staff and city ordinance improvements to hold club’s owners accountable for improved emergency response procedures and for their patron’s safety.

Newton also reported that **Building Stronger Neighborhood’s (BSN)** grant requests have increased in number and quality, with increasing applications from local immigrant communities. GNC members are encouraged to invite immigrant neighbors to participate in neighborhood activities while respecting the culture each immigrant brings to our community.

Next meeting is **Saturday, September 8, 9-11 a.m. in the Nussbaum Room of the Central Public Library.**

Respectfully submitted by Ann Stringfield of the Fisher Park Neighborhood, August 10, 2012.