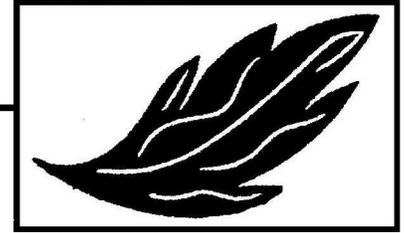


West Street Greenspace Preservation Coalition

P.O. Box 84, Naperville, Il 60566-0084 Phone: 630-637-9283 Fx:630-717-0785



Newsletter – February 14th, 2004

WSGSPC Meeting February 18th, 7:30 P.M.

The regularly scheduled February meeting of the Coalition will take place at the Naperville Township Building, 135 Water St., at 7:30 P.M. on Wednesday Feb. 18th. All Board Members have been notified in advance of this newsletter, and the meeting is open to all members of our group. If you have any suggestions or comments regarding how to best accomplish our mission, please bring them to the meeting or contact any member of the board. Spring is a great time for the Coalition to try new activities, and if there is member interest this is exactly what the Coalition will do.

WSGSPC Calendar

Here is a list of scheduled activities. Activities may be added. If times or dates of listed activities change members will be notified.

- April 14th- Regular meeting, 7:30 P.M. Wednesday, Naperville Township Bldg.
- April 24th- 5th Annual Earth Day Event, 9AM.-Noon Saturday, Garden Plots at "Plant-a-Row for the Hungry" collection booth.
- May 1st- Membership Renewals are due.
- June 9th- Regular meeting, 7:30 P.M. Wednesday, Naperville Township Bldg.

Working to Undo "Mission Creep"

Towards our mission, we generally work towards "... keep it green, and no more construction, lights, pavement or new high intensity uses. No reduction in trees, and additional uses should utilize the green or natural values of the properties.". Further to our previous report, Fred Turek has been working with the Park District to get them to undo various "creepages" in this area. Specifically, the expansion of the fence on the off season storage area (building and fenced area in

the southeast portion of Sportsman's Park, the expansion of activities and storage (dumpsters etc.) outside of the fenced area at that same place, a higher powered light on the south end of Sportsmans Park, and expansion of what was supposed to be just a chip pile in Garden Plots into a larger operation including earthmoving. These 4 items also conflict with previous agreements that the Park District made.

We are working with the Park District on this on a persistent but low-key longer-term basis.

Sportsmans Park Usage Rises Again in 2003

Sportsman's Park Trapshooting again rose substantially in 2003. Membership also set an all-time record in 2003. Membership is a different figure than usage because it is comprised of persons who have chosen to support, help or become more involved, even if they do not shoot at the facility. The majority of the users (i.e. by head count) are non-members, but the majority of the rounds shot are by members.

Park District News

The WSGSPC continues to partner with the Naperville Park District by encouraging current uses of the West St. properties. As such, the Coalition encourages its membership to participate in Park District activities ranging from the Annual Easter Egg Hunt (April 10th for ages 1-8), golf at Naperbrook and Springbrook, and hundreds of other exciting programs. Spring program guides will have been delivered door to door by the time this newsletter is published. If your household does not receive a guide, contact the Park District at 848-5000 or www.napervilleparks.org to arrange for a new delivery.

Garden Plots for Rent

For the fourth consecutive year the WSGSPC will rent two garden plots on West St. Current

gardeners have until noon on Wednesday Feb.25th to renew. At that time registration will be open to new gardeners. PRIME LOCATIONS MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR NEW GARDENERS!

If your family has an interest in horticulture the WSGSPC highly encourages you to participate in the Park District's Community Garden Plot Program. Not only is gardening far more of a social activity with a few hundred neighbors, but the continuation of the land on West St. as open space is vitally dependent on a sufficient number of gardeners. The cost of plot rental for District residents is a modest \$22, with the price dropping further to \$17 for seniors aged 60 or more. The season typically begins the 3rd week of April and lasts until mid-October. Registration is available to new users at the Administration Building, 320 West Jackson, or call 848-5000.

Controversy Again at Springbrook Prairie

Springbrook Prairie has become a frequent subject of this newsletter. Having increased to 1,787 acres with the addition of the Brach Property, Springbrook Prairie Forest Preserve is roughly 25 times larger than the West St. properties our Coalition strives to protect. Because of its sheer size and close proximity to West St., the animals that call Springbrook Prairie home are not uncommon visitors to the Garden Plots and Sportsman's Woods as well as Hobson West, Green Acres, and other neighborhoods of south-central Naperville. Over 90 species of birds, 18 mammals, and a dozen reptiles and amphibians have been identified at the prairie. According to DuPage County Forest Preserve Commissioner and horticulturist Carl Schultz, two recent habitat improvements at Springbrook have seen the return of the Lark Sparrow, a bird not seen in DuPage for more than 40 years! These improvements, along with a major realignment of the creek scheduled for the next two summers, are the now the cause of a very interesting controversy that is of interest to both environmentalists and users of the preserve.

Controversy is not new to Springbrook Prairie. Many will be surprised to know that the Preserve itself is relatively young, with the first acreage converted from farming in only 1975. Longtime Napervilleans who knew farmers at that time may recall the negative sentiments felt by farmers who saw the end of an era just around the corner. In large part, of course, the town was proud to protect land which otherwise would have been developed.

As the size of the preserve grew, controversy of another sort was generated immediately with plans to create 200-acre Dragon Lake, complete with a swim beach and campground. By 1994 this project had been abandoned in wake of environmental outcry (flooding 200 acres isn't good for the animals on site). With this project abandoned, many area residents felt the area was vastly underused. As reported in the Oct. 2003 newsletter, DuPage County responded to those complaints by adding a new 8.5 acres of limestone gravel trails looping on the perimeter of the preserve. The project was completed last fall amidst widespread fanfare. So what is the source of the new controversy?

With the completion of the new perimeter trail, the DuPage County Forest Preserve Commission now has plans to eliminate the preserve's only interior trail. Running between Naperville-Plainfield and Book Roads, the interior trail is actually the remnants of an old farming road, which nature has yet to truly overtake. Longtime residents will recall having explored the area by using this entryway. Total seclusion and isolation from the sounds of urban life were possible, and according to resident Margaret Eismann they still are. "On the perimeter trail we're reminded of the stresses, sights and sounds of traffic and model airplanes," said Eismann. "I believe users of the path should be notified of the changes." District Executive Director Brent Manning has agreed to a discussion of the issue, but he points out that that recent habitat improvements have re-introduced neotropical migrant bird species and foraging raptors which prefer as wild a habitat as possible. "The less intrusive you are in those areas, the more success you have in wildlife recruitment" continued Manning.

Anyone who would like to help Margaret Eismann in her effort to save Springbrook Prairie's interior trail may contact her by visiting www.savethepath.com. With a position on either side of this controversy contact the Forest Preserve District of DuPage, P.O. Box 5000, Wheaton, IL 60189. Address any letters to Commissioner Carl Schultz who represents the Naperville area. Information is also available at www.dupageforest.com.

---Written by George Bennett with credit to Katie Foutz, "Naperville Sun", Feb.6, '04.

New South Naperville Forest Preserve

Despite the pending development of the last unprotected open space in Naperville's Sector G,

the south side of town will soon have a new 248 preserve. Whalon Lake is located on the sight of a former limestone quarry on Royce Road near the Bolingbrook border. It is named after the Whalon family of farmers who lived in the area during the 19th century. The lake will be located on the east side of the property in the massive hole left by the Elmhurst Chicago Stone Co. In a sense the parcel will follow in the footsteps of other more famous centrally located Naperville quarries including the current sight of Centennial Beach. The preserve, which is part of the Forest Preserve District of Will County, will eventually offer boating, swimming, and scuba diving, as well as a 5.5 acre dog park and picnic facilities. Future plans will connect Whalon Lake Preserve with Naperville Park District's not yet completed DuPage River Trail.

Credit- Marni Pyke, "Daily Herald".

Renew Your Membership!

Our membership year runs from May 1st though April 30th. Now is a good time to renew. Dues are \$10 or a different amount of your choosing (lower or higher). Please send it (along with any changes in your contact information such as address, email) to WSGSPC, P.O.. 84, Naperville, IL 60566-0084, or give it to any board member.

Greenspace Coalition Information

Mission Statement The West Street Green Space Preservation Coalition resolves to defend the existing green space west of and adjoining West Street against incompatible development and encourage and promote programs and amenities that foster conservation, honor historical tradition, and preserve the area for passive use.

More on Our Mission Our focus is to not lose any greenspace the 4 properties on west side of West Street. (Garden Plots, Sportsman's Park, Von-Oven Scout Camp, Soccer Fields/Forest on Oswego.) Support current uses that keep it green, and advocate no more construction, lights, pavement or new high intensity uses. No reduction in trees, and additional uses should utilize the green or natural values of the properties.

Contact Information

See information in letterhead

Our web site is: www.greenspace.koolhost.com

Board of Directors

Dan Bennett	George Bennett 357-0289
Jim Cavanaugh	Elaine Fisher
Nan Kroll	Chris Wilkinson
Wendy Mouche	Warren Gill
Fred Turek	

President: George Bennett

Vice President: Fred Turek

Treasurer: Wendy Mouche

Secretary: Dan Bennett

Newsletter Content: George Bennett, Fred Turek, Wendy Mouche & Others

Newsletter Editor: Fred Turek

Public Relations: Dan Bennett

Special Consultant: Teresa Ryan

Webmaster: Elaine Fisher

Membership

Membership is open to all individuals, families and organizations who would like to support our mission (see mission statement). Dues are \$10 or your choice of a different amount (lower or higher) A membership application is available to facilitate joining. *The WSGSC is always careful to note that its viewpoints on individual topics do not necessarily reflect those of individual members and member organizations.*