



A Note from City Manager *Ron Whitehead*

The Methodist Spine Hospital is coming to Town

Last Tuesday evening the City Council followed the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Manager's recommendation to approve zoning that would allow the construction of a new 32 bed spine hospital on Dallas Parkway in the north part of town. Negotiations between the applicant and Trinity Christian Academy, one of the adjacent property owners, went into the eleventh hour and there were compromises made that advanced the project. The final ordinance is still being refined and is subject to the final approval of the City Attorney and the City Manager. The applicant did agree to some height limitations on this and future phases, but the densities that could be achieved assured the applicant that they could build a financially viable project. The first phase of the project will be valued in the area of \$60,000,000. I think everyone is committed to making this a great asset for the entire community and a good neighbor for the school and the surrounding properties.

DISD School at Loos Field

Councilmembers Tom Braun, Greg Hirsch, Kimberly Lay and Planning and Zoning Commissioner Alan Wood joined Assistant City Manager Chris Terry and myself on an architectural tour of three DISD Schools. Two of them were elementary schools that were designed by WRA Architects. They are going to be the architects on the Addison School. We toured Celestino Soto Elementary, Arturo Salazar Elementary and Hector P Garcia Middle School. Garcia was designed by another firm, but we wanted to visit it, because of its interesting design and use of building materials.

The DISD employees could not have been nicer and we were so pleased to see the enthusiasm of the students and teachers and how they were thriving in these wonderful new facilities. Somehow these success stories escape the media, but we have been seeing them with our own eyes for the past couple of years. Each principal told us that the key to a successful school is good teachers, good students and parental involvement. We can do that here in Addison and I think we can even make it better by having great community involvement. Oh, I also think it is important to have a great Principal and I think we can impact that also.

We are making good progress and will be meeting with the team that will design and help build our school. The school will be a K - 5th grade school and will open in September of 2011.

Jazz Festival

If you have some time on Saturday during the day, drop by the Crowne Plaza Hotel and stick your head in any of the performance rooms and you will hear some incredible music. Students from all over the country will be performing throughout the day and it is free to listen. You will be utterly amazed at what you hear from these young and very talented young people. It is really fun. I hope you will check it out.

The Dog Park

Well, we are making progress. Greg Layman our Assistant Police Chief and I met with one of the new owners of Office in the Park yesterday and he reacted very favorably to our request to allow people to park in their parking to access the dog park. This would allow us to try to eliminate the on street parking in front of people's houses on Le Grande and hopefully any of the side streets. I expect we will ink an agreement in the next 10 days. I am going to try and make it by to visit with many of the neighbors that are affected in the next week or so. We have a couple of ideas on the parking we would like to discuss with you.

Secondly, we would like to close the dog park in the easement for a couple of weeks so we can do some work on the turf areas. The park by Loos Field will still be open, but we need to see what we can do, so we can have turf throughout the summer. We plan on closing the park on Friday, April 24th and it should take a couple of weeks to rework things and then we should be ready for the warmer weather.

Paul Hayes brought to our attention that dog parks were not mentioned as a specific item on our survey about outdoor recreation needs. If you feel dog parks are one of our outdoor recreation deficiencies, please write that down and let us know.

Earth Day and Cool Cities

We knew we were cool already, but the Mayor and Council committed us to be even cooler. The Cool Cities program promotes environmentally friendly practices and greenhouse gas reductions. The Mayor will read a proclamation that announces our membership in the Cool Cities Program next Wednesday, April 22 at 7:00 pm at the Addison Earth Day Celebration. The ceremony will take place in the earth-kind rose garden across from the Addison Athletic Club. The first 100 attendees will receive an earth kind rose plant to take home with them.

The Town was an early advocate of sustainability and implemented many programs and developments that embrace these efforts. The Mayor will highlight these developments and talk about our sustainability programs and environmental accomplishments. The Environmental Committee of the Citizens Advisory process, the Arbor Foundation and the Sierra Club are being invited to celebrate Earth Day in Addison.

Les Lacs Drive

Well the officers have been out there a lot and they have not written many tickets, so that is a good thing. I think we are having the desired effect in that we are causing people to slow down. We installed the new traffic speed signs two days ago in both directions and they are activated any time someone drives over 30 miles an hour. We also installed the High Enforcement signs. Those have worked pretty well on the Arapaho Bridge when we have combined them with our enforcement efforts. We will obviously still have speeders from time to time, but let me know if you think we are having the desired effect and if not we will make adjustments.

Speaking of Signs

Did I mention that we had some political signs go up last week? We have been trying to apply a common sense approach to political signs and the candidates were very cooperative in not putting them up in people's yards until 30 days before the election. The candidates have also respected the public medians and other public properties. Frankly, after the election we need to revise our ordinance to get it more in line with State law, which may cause the ordinance to be more liberal. Hopefully we can come up with a balance that everyone can live with. Right now we are kind of caught between the state law and an outdated ordinance. We will bring those forward to the council after the election.

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