

The HIGHLANDER

Official neighborhood newsletter of the Highlands area

HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (HCA)
PO Box 2041, Renton, WA 98056 <http://hca-renton.org>

HCA MEETING THUR, 8/17/06, 7 PM
ONE NEWMAN MINISTRY, 2830 SUNSET LANE NE

On the AGENDA:
Jerri Broeffle - home repair program
Council Pres Randy Corman - City Update

By Shirley Gaunt-Smith, HCA Newsletter Editor

The HCA received wonderful news the night Mayor Koelker announced her decision to shelve plans for a Declaration of Blight with its threat of eminent domain. With the Council's help, this was a major development and represents an enormous effort by community leaders over the course of several months. (Donations in any amount to the HCA to help cover attorney fees will be greatly appreciated. Donations are tax deductible.)

Property owners and tenants have been motivated to clean up/fix up their property, and all over the neighborhood, people are cleaning yards, re-roofing, painting, etc. Residents of the Highlands also look forward to efforts by the City to improve the sidewalks, streets, and alleys in the study area.

Last fall, HCA President, Terry Persson, and HCA Secretary, Inez Petersen, became suspicious of the repeated use of the word "blighted" with respect to the Highlands. This began what became a history making series of public hearings before the Renton City Council; it was also the impetus behind the HCA anti-eminent domain rally held on June 23rd near City Hall. Newspapers revealed the next day that Koelker (a councilmember then) had tried to condemn Corman's first home for developer economic gain, this is what the US Supreme Court Kelo decision is all about. More info about the Kelo decision can be found on the HCA website and at the Institute for Justice web site at <http://www.ij.org>. The IJ provided the signs for the HCA rally on June 23rd and has been a great support.

Last April, the HCA filed a SEPA Appeal to protest the City's position that no environmental concerns would arise out of plans to rezone from the existing 4-6 units per acre to 80 "bonus" units per acre in most of the Highlands study area. The first hearing is scheduled for mid September; and the Appeal cannot be dropped until Highlands residents are safe from the threat of their property becoming "non conforming" and impacts from high density development without adequate environmental analysis.

Take note that the HCA now has a website at <http://hca-renton.org>. This will be our "library" and contains correspondence regarding the HCA's efforts to stop misuse of eminent domain. The HCA Board also recommends the website of City Council President Randy Corman at <http://www.randycorman.com>. His BLOG is always "on topic" and citizens are free to comment on line as well. His leadership is greatly appreciated.

And speaking of the **City Council President Randy Corman**, Randy will be the main speaker at the **HCA August General Meeting** to be held at **One New Man Ministries, 2830 Sunset Lane NE**, behind the old A&H Drugs at **7 p.m.**, on **Aug 17th** Randy will address the HCA "14-Point Plan" in relationship to current City plans.

HCA member Jerri Broeffle, owner of Budget Builders Pro, will also speak on property maintenance programs for low income property owners.

HCA President Terry Persson will update the group on the true scoop about the Utilities Tax Rebate, and HCA Secretary Inez Petersen has a few words to share about emergency preparedness.

The HCA needs your email address to cut down on mailing expenses and to enable us to quickly mobilize our membership if the need should arise.

See you on August 17th, good news, good treats, good people. We will also be inviting dignitaries from local and state government. Come greet and meet and plan for the future. What you learn on Aug 17th may help you decide who gets your vote at the next election . . . or the election after that.

To see what can be done with a Highlands duplex, turn this page over. And kudos to all who are working so hard to make the Highlands neighborhood a better place to live, work, and play.

