

Residents Back Historic District

By Susie Hanna

Nearly 100 people, mostly East Lawrence residents, gathered at the New York Grade School on a frosty night, Jan. 30, for a color slide show of historic buildings in East Lawrence. Following the show, a unanimous vote by members directed the East Lawrence Improvement Association (ELIA) to nominate East Lawrence as an historic district by asking the State to place most of the neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places.

The show, sponsored by the ELIA, was the result of months of work by Arthur Townsend, Ed Boles and Dale Nimz of Lawrence Preservation Trust. They were hired by the ELIA in August to survey the neighborhood to document the historic worth of the area's late 19th century and early 20th century buildings.

The area to be nominated includes nearly all of the neighborhood bounded by New Hampshire on the west, the river to the north, Delaware on the east, and 15th on the south.

Formal recognition as a historic district would place the area under the Historic Preservation Act and would help protect East Lawrence. For example, any governmental project using federal funds planned in or near a his-

toric district requires an additional review during the environmental impact statement process.

Thus, in the case of the now-tabled Haskell Loop, the environmental impact statement would have required a special review step.

Also, the Preservation Act discourages commercial intrusion and destruction of designated historical buildings by eliminating the standard tax provision which encourages new commercial construction through "accelerated depreciation."

Townsend predicted that designation would cause a flurry of rehabilitation of houses in the area as more and more people began to realize the worth of their property. Real estate values, according to Richard Pankratz, director of the Kansas Historic Site Survey, Topeka, will probably go up also.

Owners of historic buildings will be eligible for preservation grants. However, according to Townsend, funds are never sufficient to meet demand for grants, making them very difficult to receive. But he encouraged owners to apply any way and eventual-

ly, he hoped, some money would be granted.

Unless a property owner accepts a grant, there are virtually no restrictions about what can be done with property. The owner can, according to Townsend, do anything he wants, "including paint it purple."

Old West Lawrence is now the only historic district in the city. The Oread Neighborhood Association recently requested Community Development funds from the City for a similar historic survey. Some North Lawrence and Pinckney residents have also expressed interest in attempting historic surveys of their areas.



NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE!

PENN HOUSE

WISHES TO REMIND OUR FRIENDS AND CLIENTS THAT THIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN MANY OF US ARE RECEIVING GOVERNMENTAL FORMS TO BE COMPLETED. IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE GOVERNMENTAL LANGUAGE OR COMPLEX QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL US AT 842-0440 OR BRING THESE PAPERS WITH YOU TO OUR OFFICE AT 1035 PENNSYLVANIA STREET. OUR STAFF WILL HELP YOU EVERY WAY POSSIBLE.

ELIA Bids for Funds

Members of the East Lawrence Improvement Association announced their group's proposals for use of this year's Community Development Block Grant Funds at the first public hearing in January. Now beginning the fourth year of the program, Lawrence will receive nearly \$750,000 from the federal government.

Housing rehabilitation is the group's number one priority for use of the funds.

"The Community Development Act funds," Richard Kershenbaum, ELIA president said, "are the only funds that can be used for the purposes of aiding low- and moderate-income families with the upgrading of the all-important physical environment of the home."

The ELIA housing proposals included support for a special rehabilitation program in which the City would use CD money to purchase, rehabilitate and sell five houses in the CD target

areas which are in a state of serious disrepair. A revolving fund could develop, with any profit from the sale of these houses funneled back into the CD department and used to expand the special rehabilitation program.

Only areas declared "target areas" are eligible for CD funds. Currently East Lawrence, Far East Lawrence, North Lawrence, Pinckney and Oread are target areas. Old West Lawrence is eligible for only the federal loan program.

Another special project proposed by the ELIA was the purchase, restoration and resale of the Shaler Eldridge home, 945 Rhode Island, with CD funds. Now abandoned, this brick house was built in 1861 by one of the founders of Lawrence and is one of the oldest structures still standing in the city.

"This mansion, properly restored, would not only serve as a fine home, but would also serve as a cultural landmark," Kershenbaum

said. "Once completed, this landmark would be a focal point of the proposed East Lawrence historic district."

A formal application for official designation as a national historic district has been prepared by Lawrence Preservation Trust, at the request of the ELIA.

Another priority the ELIA has had for the past five years is the improvement of the storm drainage system in East Lawrence. The group requested CD funding for an engineering study to determine how the storm drainage system may be improved to protect homes.

A special tree planting project was proposed. Although both the City and the neighborhood association have planted trees, many of the trees planted, according to Kershenbaum, were small and had a high mortality rate. The ELIA proposed planting 50 more mature trees with about 4-inch diameter trunks along thoroughfares in the neighborhood.

The group also requested funds to provide a series of entertaining and educational films for neighborhood children on Saturday mornings at the New York Grade School.

The ELIA requested that funding be continued for the sidewalk repair program and, to be consistent with interests in historic preservation of the neighborhood, that brick sidewalks be restored, instead of replaced with concrete, wherever possible.

Finally, the ELIA requested \$10,000 for operating expenses and small project funding. In the past three years, the ELIA spent most of its \$16,000 in CD money for small projects including neighborhood cleanups, tree planting, painting, purchase and distribution of garbage cans and racks, playground equipment for New York School, funding of an historical study of the area and administration of the association.

Following two more public hearings, a 15-member citizens committee comprised of two representatives from each eligible CD target area neighborhood and three at-large representatives will study all the requests and make recommendations to the City Commission. The Commission makes the final decision on funding.

East Lawrence

Leader

Dies

By Barbara Willits

Ed Down died in his sleep. These words reached into homes and lives following January 13, 1978. The reaction was the same in East Lawrence, at City Hall, all over town. "I can't believe it. I just saw him....."

Ed is gone. That fact must be faced by family and friends. The marks Ed left will never be gone.

Ed was a good husband: he leaves his wife, Betty. Ed was a good father: he leaves Kathy, Shirley, Becky, Danny and Tommy.

Ed was a good businessman: he leaves Audiohouse. Ed was a practicing Christian: he leaves the witness of his family, his pastor, and members of his church the walk he followed in life. He will be remembered as generous, hospitable, friendly and upright. His search for God stands out.

Ed was a man involved in his community: he was active in school affairs. He spent many hours involved in projects for New York School. He was many times a holder of offices in the PTA, an organization which draws few men. Ed and Betty often entertained PTA members and New York School staff. Their home was always open for meetings or work sessions.

Ed was a member of the ELIA, one of the first. He felt the organization was important for the neighborhood. He held several offices--treasurer, vice-president, and was treasurer again this

year. Ed enjoyed the annual picnic. He was at his best when organizing the food, the celebrities, and the bingo game. He could make it all come out right.

He could make an issue have two sides, then after thinking it out, a decision could be made.

We will all miss Ed on the East side.

Oread Proposes Eight Projects

The Oread Neighborhood Association presented eight proposals for use of next year's entitlement of Community Development money at the first public hearing in January. The following is the executive committee's recommendations in their order of preference:

1--Administration of ONA: \$3,500
Documentation of neighborhood houses to make a record of all houses in the neighborhood including historical information and photos: \$4,500.

2--Establishment of an Oread Neighborhood Preservation Trust which would set up a revolving fund with CD money to purchase, rehabilitate or replace and then sell properties: \$50,000.

3--Installation of pedestrian controlled crosswalk signals on Tennessee and Kentucky streets: \$1,000.

4--Providing an indepth planning and assistance for a one block

demonstration project in the Oread area that would include improving problems associated with blight, traffic, trash, public access and housing quality: \$10,000.

5--Implementation of neighborhood beautification projects including provisions for trash and animal control, trees, benches, lighting and safety: \$5,000 to \$10,000.

5--Creation of a bike path between the KU campus and downtown. This path would be the first in a multi-year effort to provide safe bike and pedestrian traffic routes: \$3,000.

7--Improvement and extension of alley access to those houses that need it: \$5,000.

8--Extension of the KU "blue light" telephone service to the Oread Neighborhood.