



C.D. Funds Disputed

By Susie Hanna

Disregarding many of the recommendations of a special, citizens review committee, City Commissioners adopted most of the City Manager's recommendations in allocating next year's Community Development funds. CD money is federal funds channeled back to cities to help revitalize older neighborhoods.

The decision came at a public meeting following weeks of discussions among the 15 representatives of the six older neighborhoods who Commissioners appointed to determine how to spend the funds. This citizens' review committee was formed at the urging of CD Director, Lynn Goodell, as part of the new Lawrence's citizen participation plan.

With the citizens' review committee formed, more people were involved in the funding process, and in some ways, the City's use of CD funds was different than it had been in past years. For example, in the past the majority of CD funds was slated for demolition of houses in East Lawrence in preparation for the Haskell Loop roadway. This year, more money than ever (\$300,000) was allocated for housing rehabilitation.

But even though the citizens' com-

mittee spent over 40 hours deliberating over numerous requests from neighborhood associations and other groups, the Commission had the final say in a "public hearing" that was politics as usual. Despite the two hour discussion of items, the Commission's decisions differed little from the staff's (i.e. City Manager's) list of recommendations.

Many of the committee's members were disheartened by the Commission's alterations of their recommendations.

Richard Eisner, vice chairman of the committee and Oread Neighborhood representative, commented, "I feel they adopted the staff recommendations without much consideration of the committee's..."

The Commission's decision on the funding of neighborhood associations was the most surprising. The Commission voted to drastically cut the groups' funds and to adopt a new method for funding that would assure more control over how CD money is spent.

All the associations were cut to \$2,500 each with the exception of

Old West Lawrence which was cut to \$1,200 over Commissioner Don Binns (now Mayor Binns) objections. "I'd be in favor of not giving them anything," he said.

A discretionary fund of \$66,500 was established from which all the associations may request money. Before, associations each were given funds for special projects. The CD director reviewed projects and approved expenditures. Now the CD director will review requests for less than \$500 and the City Manager must approve expenditures between \$500 and \$2,000. Any request over \$2,000 must go before the City Commission.

"I just think we've got to have more control over the City's money," Commissioner Ed Carter said. "First, you people come here requesting \$4,000, then the next year it's \$5,000 then \$10,000. I'm afraid we're just creating little agencies..."

Dismayed committee members and other neighborhood residents attempted to argue with Commissioners, pointing out that controls already exist and that the result of the new system will be competition among the groups for money, causing divisions among the older neighborhoods.

when they should be cooperating to revitalize their areas.

The biggest difference between the committee's recommendations and the Commission's decision was the approval of \$100,000 to continue the senior center project at the municipal building, 8th and Vt. The committee had not favored funds for it this year, stating that the City should first use CD money to revitalize the older neighborhoods.

The Commission also eliminated funding for renovation of the historic Eldridge house at 945 R.I., a project favored by the committee.

The final allocations were: Neighborhood plans \$12,000; neighborhood associations, \$13,700; discretionary funds, \$66,500; CD Dept. administration, \$115,000; rehab grants (including \$25,000 for a pilot loan program,) \$250,000; demonstration rehabs, \$50,000; CD Dept. winterization program, \$15,300; special winterization program for renters through Penn House and Consumer Affairs, \$2,500; drainage improvements, \$43,000; senior center, \$100,000; North Lawrence sewers, \$64,000; contingencies, \$28,000.

Oread Plans Neighborhood Survey

BY BOB MARVIN



The Oread Neighborhood Association met April 3, 7:30 pm at the South Park Recreation Center.

ONA heard a proposal for expansion of parking facilities at Shenanigan's discotheque. The expansion would involve purchase and destruction of a home South of Shenanigan's. The space would be used for 19 more parking places. ONA members voted 20 to 1 opposing Shenanigan's plan as it entails commercial encroachment and destruction of their residential area.

The association plans a neighborhood survey to gather background information from Oread residents. The survey is intended to provide some insight as to various aspects of living in the Oread Neighborhood. A dozen people volunteered to distribute the survey questionnaires.

ONA plans to coordinate their Spring Cleanup Week with other neighborhood groups. Mrs. Lynch has volunteered to be liaison between Oread and other neighborhood

groups.

ONA board of directors will investigate incorporation of the association as a not-for-profit corporation.

The next meeting of the Oread Neighborhood Association will be May 1, 7:30 pm in the South Park Recreation Center. Dick Dunhaupt Mercantile Credit Union Manager, will discuss possible credit union expansion to include neighborhood association members.

HISTORIC HOME STILL THREATENED

Weathered yellow-painted bricks of the two-story house are crumbling and dull in the afternoon light. Missing glass panes give the windows a checkered, forlorned look.

It is one of a handful of standing homes to have survived Quantrell's 1863 raid on Lawrence and is one of Lawrence's oldest structures.

Located at 945 Rhode Island, it was the home of Col. S.W. Eldridge, a Kansas pioneer and past-owner of the famous Eldridge Hotel.

Many Lawrence residents are familiar with the house through its use by the Jaycees as a Halloween "Haunted House," an activity which has not improved its condition.

Now the historic home is threatened with a fate which is the bane of preservation advocates--being turned into a parking lot.

But recent discussions involving East Lawrence residents, City Commissioners and the Salvation Army, the present owner of the home, have yielded new hope that the house may be saved from destruction and perhaps restored to its original ante-bellum elegance.

The once-proud home has reached its present grim state through a series of misfortunes. Purchased by the Tophan family in the 1880s, it finally fell to Laura Tophan, a worldly aesthete who spoke six languages.

In her later years she became an eccentric recluse who moved from room to room in the house as each

became filled with refuse. When she was placed in a nursing home in 1972, she had worn the same hat for so long that her hair had grown through it and had to be cut in order to remove it.

The brick mansion she had inhabited had fallen into a state of serious disrepair. Having no living heirs, she left her home to the Salvation Army upon her death in 1975.

Unable to locate a buyer willing to restore the house, the Salvation Army Board of Directors contemplated demolishing it to provide additional parking for their facility that is located on the lot just west of the Eldridge home.

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SCOOP

ATTENTION EAST LAWRENCE PROPERTY OWNERS!!!!!!

Sometime in May, you will be receiving a letter from the Kansas State Historical Society. This letter will ask for your comments about the proposed East Lawrence Historic District application. (See Public Notice, Feb. '78, P. 9 for more information about Historic District.)

If you would like the Historic District project to go through, it's very important to send your comments to the State Historical Office. They want to know what the residents think about the plan. If you have any questions, be sure to come to the May 8 general meeting, 7:30pm at New York School.