

The Benton Park News

A Monthly Publication of the Benton Park Neighborhood Association

Volume 8, Number 3

March, 1991

Developers/BPNA to Host "Shell Tour"

(see related story, "*Lemp Properties*," page 2)

A number of area developers and the Benton Park Neighborhood Association have set Sunday, March 17, as the day for an "Open House" featuring fifteen residential properties available for development in the Benton Park area. The tour, open to the public without charge, will include properties in all stages of development, including newly-acquired buildings still in their untouched condition, gutted shells, framed-out, drywalled and completed rehabs.

Developers participating in the event include, Rothschild's, Trout Design/Build, Meier-Stiver, Inc. and Terry Skinner. Shells recently purchased by the Benton Park Neighborhood Housing Corporation will also be included.

Benton Park residents are encouraged to take the tour to see first-hand the kind of improvements that will be taking place in our neighborhood during 1991. The tour will also be an excellent time to invite co-workers, relatives and friends to take a good look at the direction this neighborhood is going, and to discover the housing values that are available in the area.

By viewing shells in their various states of
continued on page 4

House Tour Set for Mother's Day Weekend

The next meeting of the Benton Park House and Studio Tour Committee will be held on Sunday, March 10, 2PM, at the home of Kathleen Kelly, 2623A Indiana. This date is also "last call" for placing homes on the tour. Additional help is needed in several areas, and volunteers are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The tour promises to be an interesting one, with eight homes, two gardens and several galleries (including a stained glass studio) already committed. Trams will provide transportation throughout the neighborhood, and film crews will be on hand to document the event. Tentative plans are in the works for additional festivities along Cherokee Street's Antique Row.

Tour dates are Saturday and Sunday, May 11-12, Noon until 5:00 PM. For additional information or to place your home on the tour, contact committee chairman, Bob Friend at 771-0208.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 5, 7:30 PM

The agenda for the upcoming March 5 meeting of the Benton Park Neighborhood Association will be jam-packed with interesting information and discussion possibilities.

President Paul LaFlam will be presenting detailed information about major events planned for the Spring season, including two house tours: one to showcase properties under development; the other, the annual Benton Park House and Studio Tour, which will once again feature a unique blend of restorations and remodelled properties and some art studio "open houses."

Further information about the renewed "coalition" of the various organizations working in our neighborhood will be presented, including a review of both long- and short-term goals which will be attainable by the joint efforts of so many interested area residents, property owners, business people and elected civic leaders.

LaFlam envisions a very "grass-roots" approach to neighborhood improvement, safety and beautification, with an emphasis on block-by-block organization of the community, as well as full utilization of local resources and city services.

"The aim is to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood for everyone," comments LaFlam. "To succeed in this we need to tap all of the resources available to us -- from city programs to the expertise of individuals who reside in our neighborhood."

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Girls Club, 2216 Sidney. The public is invited to attend.

Lemp Properties to Be Redeveloped

Alderman Aboussie dubs Benton Park "Neighborhood of the Future"

Four vacant and boarded-up properties in the 2600 block of Lemp Avenue will be redeveloped during the coming spring and summer, according to Paul LaFlam, president of the **Benton Park Neighborhood Association**. Meier-Stiver, Inc. has been designated developer for the project.

The properties, located on the east side of the block, are numbered 2906-16 and presently consist of a flat-sided flounder house which once had a storefront, a **single-story** cottage and a four-unit building. Two vacant lots between 2906 and 2912 will become landscaped side yards for these two buildings.

"We envision exciting possibilities for this project," said Henrietta Meier, of the Meier-Stiver partnership. "With the availability of the vacant lots between two of the buildings, we plan to orient both the 'flounder' house and the cottage to the side. We will do a 'pop-up' with the cottage, adding a French-style second story with mansard and another addition on the side, making it into a two-bedroom, one-and-a-half bath residence with a Victorian side-entry porch. The former four-flat will become two fee-simple townhouses."

"Our **aim** as developers is to provide quality homes that meet the needs of today's **homebuyers**, while maintaining **affordability**," said Shari Stiver. "In addition, we want to maintain the historic charm of these buildings and, at the same time, give them **all** the modern amenities."

The Meier-Stiver partnership was formed in **1988** to develop properties needing moderate rehabilitation to total renovation. Both partners have had extensive experience in rehab and redevelopment. Henrietta Meier is a real estate broker and, in addition, has had experience as an advertising and public relations professional. **Shari Stiver** does **design/build** for the partnership and has extensive construction experience. She co-authored a **layman's** guide to the Lafayette Square Historic Code which is still being used in **Lafayette Square** and other historic neighborhoods.

The partners have developed three former two-flats into single family residences at **2340-42 Louisiana** in the Tower Grove East area and recently **completed** a single-family residence at 4121 Shenandoah.

The Lemp properties were acquired by the **Benton Park Housing Corporation**, and Community Development FSIP (For Sale Incentive Program) funds will be available to assist buyers with closing costs and interest-rate buydowns.

Martie Aboussie, Ninth Ward Alderman, has been an important moving force in helping to **acquire** and package properties such as these for rehab in the **Benton Park** area. "I'm high on **Benton Park**," he said. "I think it's the **neighbor-**

hood of the future, and I'm doing everything in my power through the Board of Aldermen and the CDA to get **funds** allocated and to bring **developers** into the area to keep things moving. I see this as a 'turnaround' year for development, with interest rates easing and buyers coming back into the housing market as recession fears diminish."

The developers are planning an open house for Sunday, March 17, in cooperation with the **Benton Park Neighborhood Association**, to attract interested buyers for these and other "shells" available in the **Benton Park** area.

The Benton Park News

The **Benton Park News** is published monthly for the **Benton Park Neighborhood Association** by Community Marketing Resources, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation providing marketing and communications resources for community organizations and neighborhood associations. P.O. Box 2096, St. Louis, MO 63158. Linda Dahlheimer, Editor. Copyright 1991: Community Marketing Resources, Inc. Annual Subscription rate \$5.00.

PUBLICATION DEADLINE

The 20th of each month is the cutoff date for material to reach the **Benton Park** newsletter editor. We welcome input from all of our readers regarding people and events that involve **Benton Park** and its residents.

Submit information by phone (664-8552), FAX (664-6310), or mail (3108 Illinois, 63118) to **Charlie** or **Linda Dahlheimer**.

BPNA OFFICERS:

Paul LaFlam, President
Nancy McRee, Vice President
Libby Reuter, Secretary
Kevin Kelleher, Treasurer

Home Loan Seminar

First Nationwide Bank is offering an eight-hour class covering various aspects of buying and owning a home. The two-Saturday course will be conducted on March 2 and 9, from 9AM to 1PM, at the Cabanne Library, 1106 Union Blvd.

The classes are part of a program to provide low-interest, closing-cost loans to St. Louis families with low to moderate incomes. Eligible properties include single-family, owner-occupied principal residences, including condominiums and planned unit developments.

According to Duwane Morgan, community investment officer for First Nationwide, lending guidelines will be more flexible than those applied to standard loans, including a higher ratio of housing debt to stable monthly income.

While maximum annual income for this particular program is \$42,870, all are invited to participate in the classes. First Nationwide also offers conventional financing programs.

The eight-hour course will include such topics as analyzing the cash and income requirements for home purchasers, getting and understanding credit reports, basics of household budgeting, how to shop for a quality home, negotiating the purchase agreement, budgeting and scheduling home maintenance, and tax planning.

For additional information or to reserve a place in the classes, contact Duwane Morgan, 889-7803.

Citicorp Renaissance Grant Update

The "Road Show" Committee of Benton Park received a substantial check from Citicorp recently from the Citicorp Renaissance Grant Program. This money will be used to help fund the production of a video presentation showcasing our Benton Park neighborhood.

Jean Ponzi and Patti Eischen, both Benton Park residents, are writing the script and developing a shooting schedule. Bradley Productions has been hired to produce the program. Shooting will begin in April and will also occur during the weekend of the Benton Park House and Studio Tour on May 11 and 12. This can be your opportunity to be "in the movies!"

Chairperson Paulette Deutman has announced plans for a slogan contest. The winning slogan, a five- to eight-word phrase that describes Benton Park, will be used in conjunction with the video. Prizes will be awarded. Additional information about the project and details of the contest will be provided at the March BPNA meeting.

For more information or to submit your entry, call Paulette at 776-7074 by April 2.

The video will include architectural and historic landmarks, cultural highlights and on-the-street interviews with residents. This worthwhile project will provide a valuable tool to promote the Benton Park Neighborhood.

Membership Application

Activities of The Benton Park Neighborhood Association are funded primarily by the dues and donations from neighborhood residents, and property and business owners within Benton Park.

Annual dues of \$5.00 include a year's subscription to The Benton Park News and a 10% discount on all purchases from area merchants. The growing list of participating merchants includes: Allen's Garden Shop, 3201 Cherokee; Morands Hardware & Supply, 1801 Pestalozzi; TEASE Hair Salon, 1615 South Ninth, Edele & Mertz Hardware Co., 1822 S. Broadway, and the Benton Park Gallery, 3016 Wisconsin.

Count me in as a member for 1991:

Name _____

Address _____

Check enclosed: \$ _____ (Payable to Benton Park Neighborhood Ass'n.)

Mail to: BPNA, P.O. Box 2066, St. Louis, MO 63158

Shell Tour continued

completion, it becomes evident that purchasers of these properties are literally buying "new homes" which have been constructed within the walls of hundred-year old buildings -- solid masonry walls which can be found today only in the most expensive custom-built homes.

The tour will begin at the corner of Lemp and **Pestalozzi**, with shells located at 2906 through 2916 Lemp. (see "Lemp Properties," page 2).

Shells at 2864 Lemp and 3000 Wisconsin will be shown by **Rothschild's**. Plans for the former include **2+** bedrooms, a second-floor laundry and **1.5** baths. Many options are available to custom tailor the home for the buyer. Finished price will be \$89,900, with purchaser incentives.

3000 Wisconsin, one of the oldest buildings in the neighborhood, is planned as a 2-4 bedroom, 2.5 to 3.5 bath single-family gut rehab with second floor laundry. Located on a large lot, it **will** be priced at \$129,000, with purchaser incentives.

At **2845-47 McNair** two custom rehabs near completion will be shown by Terry Skinner. These two-bedroom models will exemplify the way new homes can be fashioned out of old.

Additional shells on **McNair** include 2855 and 2862, both owned by the **Benton Park Community Housing Corporation**.

2124-26 and 2130-34 Victor are Trout Design/Build's contribution to the tour. Each is an 1800 square-foot minimum custom rehab, featuring three bedrooms, two and a half baths and two decks, with laundry located on **first** floor. Purchaser incentives include tax abatement and a

Brass House Plaques Again Available

The **Benton Park** Neighborhood Association has recently taken delivery of its second order of **Benton Park** house plaques. Since the plaque's **introduction** in 1989, **sixty-five** homes in the **Benton Park** area are now displaying these handsome brass plaques featuring the distinctive **Benton Park** logo. Ten from the new shipment have already been spoken for and the remaining **forty will** be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

The plaques are being sold at cost, which is \$50.00 per copy.

If you have ordered a plaque or would like to purchase one, please plan to attend the next BPNA meeting, or **call** Kevin Kelleher, at 664-0776 to arrange for pick-up or delivery.

Spring Membership Walk

The BPNA Membership Committee is planning a Spring Membership Walk on Saturday, April 13. They will be canvassing the neighborhood to seek out prospective members for the Association. Members interested in participating should **call** Barbara **Marshall** at 776-7829 before the next Membership Committee meeting on March 25.

bonus of \$6,000. This grouping on Victor will provide an opportunity for tour-goers to view the entire rehab process that buildings undergo as they are transformed from vacant shells to beautiful townhomes.

The Benton Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 2066

St. Louis, MO 63158