

EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by VECA, Volintine-Evergreen Community Association

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The Vollintine-Evergreen Historic District – In the Making

by Mary Wilder

The Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association has begun to organize the steps necessary for the neighborhood to become a National Historic District. As neighbors, we have long recognized the beauty of our older homes, the diversity of architectural styles, and enjoyed sharing in Memphis' history by

living in one of the older neighborhoods. We live in an era where we talk about recycling to conserve our limited resources. VECA has reused its housing and community services since the early 1900s and is better and stronger for it. It costs money to replace housing in an urban area these days. Many urban areas see a shrinking tax base as the housing in their older areas deteriorates. Tax revenues, land and housing materials

all are limited resources. The prime condition of the homes in VECA is a testament to the hard work and pride of its residents. Keeping our neighborhood alive is part of urban recycling, conservation, and preservation. Historic designation is a tool that our community can use to continue maintaining our viability.

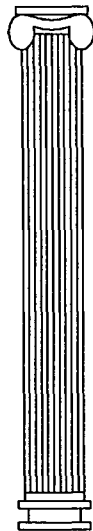
A Historic District is a community recognized for its unique architectural history, famous people, or its history as it relates to

Memphis, the state, or the nation. The U.S. Department of the Interior's Division of National Parks reviews all requests for Historic District status. If the community is determined to meet one of the above criteria, after an application is received, the community is listed with the National Parks Service's Registry of Historic Places. After such a listing, the community is officially a Historic District. VECA is being considered for Historic District status because of its architectural heritage which is so well preserved in its 4,000 homes.

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The Vollintine-Evergreen Community is a prime example of 1900 to 1940s middle to upper income housing in Memphis. VECA was one of Memphis' first "suburban" developments in

the early 1920s. VECA's development was planned in sections by single developers with bigger lots and individual homes for the average citizen. VECA was an extension of the eastward movement of the Greenlaw and Klondyke areas as families moved east toward the city limits. The majority of the area considered VECA was not annexed into the city until 1929. This eastward movement has continued to be a housing pattern in Memphis.



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continued on page 2

Do not place in mailboxes

continued from front page

There are tangible and intangible benefits to becoming a Historic District. On the tangible side are protections from federal highway and hazardous waste developments in the Historic District. The Historic District status would require hearings on proposed projects using federal dollars and would give the VECA area protection on such developments in our area.

The intangible benefit of historic designation would be what has been described as the "designer" label effect. Historic designation will bring recognition to an already quality product and lend more credibility to the reputation of the neighborhood. Historic designation has been shown to stabilize property values in already established and viable communities. VECA has maintained itself as a residential neighborhood with good affordable and architecturally unique housing. Historic designation is bringing awareness to the Memphis community of the great quantity of wonderful 1900 to 1940 homes we have in our neighborhood. This designer

label effect will encourage people who live here to invest in their homes insuring that they will realize a return on their investment. Property values will maintain themselves and money invested in the home will be well spent. People will feel comfortable buying into the area also recognizing the stable value that goes with the Historic District label. VECA has an established reputation with Shelby County and Memphis city governments, but the Historic District label will be another strength VECA can call on when working to bring service to the community. Anyone who lives in VECA knows we have a good neighborhood; Historic designation will just help us tell the rest of Memphis what we already know.

When VECA completes the work for the application and is granted Historic District status the neighborhood can then go to the Memphis city government's Landmarks Commission for local Historic District designation. Local Historic designation is what is commonly thought of as a Historic District. However, a neighborhood cannot apply for local Historic District status until a National Register designation has been granted. A community can choose to remain a National Historic District only. The Landmarks Commission works with neighborhoods and groups to set up local Historic Districts. With the community, standards are established for the designated area and used to help the area maintain its unique Historical nature. The Local Historic District status has many tangible benefits in maintaining the quality of the homes in the area. The neighborhood enters into an agreement with the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development through the Landmark Commission. This agreement allows the community to set stan-

EVERGREEN NEWS

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VECA Hotline: 276-1066

continued on page 5

TRIED 'N TRUE RECIPIES FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS



Killer Cheese Toast

The best thing about this recipe is the fact that you can substitute almost any cheese or bread. You can make smaller amounts using the same proportions.

- 1/2 cup shredded cheese (American and Cheddar work best.)
- 1/2 cup finely diced onion
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder (true garlic lovers will finely mince garlic to taste.)

Stir all ingredients and spread liberally on French bread. (Slightly stale sandwich bread or buns will substitute.) Broil until brown and bubbly. Serve immediately.

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"All Are Welcome"

NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS

Historic Designation Committee Begins Work

VECA received a grant from the Community Foundation of Memphis' Neighborhoods Small Grants Program. The grant of \$1,817 will be used to help with the training of volunteers, computer work, and the printing of the survey material needed for the historic designation work. Rhodes College has agreed to be the fiscal agent and manage the grant. Rhodes is again showing itself to be a good neighbor-thank you.

A student, Russ Simms, has been hired and is working on setting up the housing information on computer. Mike Kirby is coordinating the computer work at Rhodes and putting in many hours himself on the project. Russ Simms will then design, with the help of VECA resident Bette Akerman, a survey form. This form will be used to catalog all homes in the VECA area. A map of the VECA area, with subdivisions, has been put together by Charlotte Swails. The survey work will be organized one subdivision at a time. Bette and Russ Simms have met with Cathy Marcino of the Landmarks Commission and Kim Isabel of Memphis Heritage Foundation to develop a training manual for the volunteers who will conduct the survey. James Cochran is working with Bette to insure that all the architectural styles represented in VECA are accounted for in the survey.

Lois Scott of Kensington Street is chairing the volunteer committee and will soon call area residents. Lois will recruit people to survey their area for the Historic District. VECA needs community historians, people who like to visit, old pictures of the area, photographers and in general, volunteers, to complete this project. Please call the VECA Hot Line if you want to work on the Historic Designation or write VECA at the P.O. Box.

Follow-up: St. Therese Little Flower Day Care Center will open August 31, 1992. The center for 88 children from six weeks to five years of age will be on the grounds of St. Therese Little Flower Catholic Church at 1666 Jackson Avenue. Call Benita Myles at 722-4744. Registration will take place at the center during the week of August 24th.

Fall Family Festival

With all the work being done on the Historic Designation, some of the usual volunteers are stretched a little thin for this year's Fall Festival. There will be an organizational meeting to discuss plans for the festival to be held in October. Please come to the meeting if you are interested in planning this event. Every offer of help is welcomed!

August 11th, 7:00 p.m.
Nazareth Hall, 840 Dickinson

Special Thanks to Michael Hooks

The Shelby County Property Assessors' Office came to the aid of the Historic Designation Committee by helping provide some information to start the Historic District survey. The cooperation of public agencies with neighborhood groups is what helps build good working relations between the public and government.

continued from page 2

dards for home improvement in the area and can monitor and also enforce codes to help prevent the deterioration of homes. This second step in the process is about two years away and will require a great deal of community involvement.

The first thing VECA has to do is complete all the steps in becoming a National Historic

District (see article on Historic Designation Committee). As the process of historic designation continues, the Evergreen News will keep you updated. Please, if there are any questions about this designation process, come to the meetings, write the newsletter, and let us hear from you in any way.

Historic Designation Committee members are Bette Akerman, Charlotte Swails, Claudia Rutkauskas, Lois Scott, Mike Kirby, James Cochran, Helen Evans, Mary Frances Pitts, Julie Baker, Jim Meng, John Lipsey, Linda Nichols, Chiquita Isom, Frank Gongleski, Mary Wilder, and Mrs. Garland Boyd. Anyone may join the committee. Call the VECA Hotline, 276-1066.

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VECA is a neighborhood organization made up of volunteers and paying members. The Evergreen News is the way in which VECA communicates with its residents. The Evergreen News contains information about VECA, neighborhood residents, business and government policies. VECA is bounded by Watkins on the West, Cypress Creek on the North, Trezevant on the East and North Parkway on the South. Contact VECA by writing to P.O. Box 12011, Memphis, TN, 38182-0011.