

President's Message

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2006 from Lincoln Central Association. Winter is past us again, and the LCA Board is very excited about the opportunities for LCA in 2006.

2005 was a significant year for LCA. At our first board meeting of this year, the LCA Board spent time summarizing what LCA accomplished in 2005, and I think many of us were surprised by the long list. **Highlights of new activities include:**

- ✓ Created and published this newsletter
- ✓ Established a broadcast e-mail system for community alerts
- ✓ Increased income from membership 22% and total income 75%
- ✓ Organized the first annual Dickens' Holiday Festival, raising more than \$2,000
- ✓ Initiated and financed repair of the parkway bordering Bauler Playlot
- ✓ Financed maintenance of green space at North Ave. and Larrabee St.
- ✓ Held three community meetings on zoning and other significant issues

At that same meeting, the LCA Board established priorities for 2006, another long list.

In 2006 we plan to:

- Grow residential membership 20%
- Grow business membership 200%
- Increase scope of Dickens' Holiday Festival
- Manage budget to create a positive net income for the first time in more than six years
- Hold at least two community meetings to discuss relevant issues
- Work with Alderman to ensure and protect back yard space throughout the city
- Establish liaison program with Lincoln Park High School



I am not a big believer in neighbors joining an organization like LCA just because it's there.

Neighborhood organizations must prove their value to the community – and the way they do that is to give back to the community. For many years, LCA has been the eyes and ears of the neighborhood on zoning issues, but not always much more. As I have watched our membership grow in 2005, I feel it is a direct result of LCA showing what value it can bring to this neighborhood. It has shown it can organize efforts to repair public spaces, such as the work done on the parkway by Bauler Playlot and at North and Larrabee. It has shown it can host a wonderful community event like the Dickens' Holiday Festival, which proved to be both a great social event and a fundraiser.

This year, we will show that LCA can do much more. The list of priorities for 2006 is long but achievable. Our efforts last year resulted in a **public zoning process**, a useful **web site** (www.lincolncentral.org), an efficient **broadcast e-mail system** and a **consistent newsletter**. 2006 will be the time for LCA to do things out in the community, so that more and more neighbors see the value of a strong neighborhood association and will want to do their part to help.

Be watching for great things in 2006 from Lincoln Central.

Richard Rausch
President



Plans for Ogden Park Play Area

By Anne Moore

New benches, a soft surface and playground equipment is planned for the northeast corner of Ogden Park, where a sandlot and climbing structure now stand. Ald. Vi Daley approved plans for the play area last year, after several community meetings.



Existing Ogden Park



"car-bumper" sculptures by John Kearney

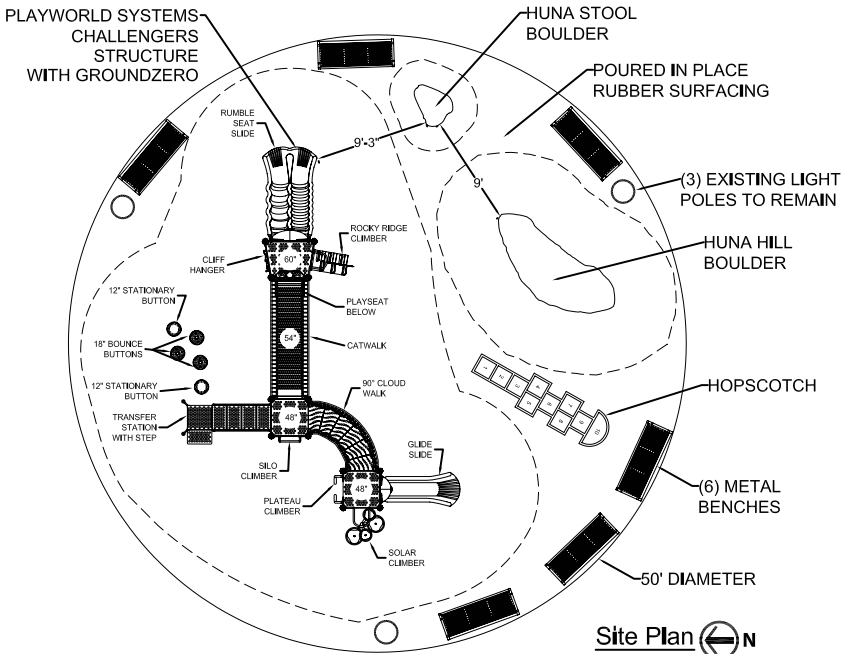
Ogden Park is a unique urban space: a well-used public walkway with wider areas for seating and play. It runs between Sedgwick Ave. and Hudson Ave., north of Menomonee St., opposite the Midwest Buddhist Temple and holds two "car-bumper" sculptures, of horses, by noted artist John Kearney. The park borders Lincoln Central and the Old Town Triangle and is owned by the Department of Transportation.

Old Town Triangle Assoc. (OTTA) is raising funds for the **rehabilitation of the entire park**; the children's play area would be the first area to be improved, at a cost of \$65,000.

Most of the money for the play area has been raised, thanks to generous donations during last year's Old Town Art Fair and a follow-up fundraising letter to neighbors earlier this year. The Department of Transportation is providing no funds.

A committee, under OTTA, has been working on an improvement plan for the park since 2004. At that time, neighbors were surveyed, seeking information on current use as well as "best use" ideas for the park. Most respondents noted that the park is a vital pedestrian link, as well as a friendly gathering place for neighbors and pet owners. Children from the neighborhood and area preschools use both ends of the park for lunch and play outings.

Contributions for the park's improvement can be sent to OTTA, 1763 N. North Park Ave. Chicago, 60614.



St. Vincent De Paul Center

By David Varnerin

St. Vincent DePaul Center

Located in the heart of Lincoln Park at the corner of Halsted and Webster, St. Vincent De Paul Center is **one of Chicago's premier social services agencies**. Now over 90 years old, the Center can trace its roots back to 1915, when fathers serving in the military and mothers working to support their families needed assistance in caring for and watching over their children. In order to fill this need, particularly for families of the working poor, a day nursery was started by the Daughters of Charity and **Reverend Francis X. McCabe**, pastor of St. Vincent's Church and President of DePaul University. A two flat building located at 2145 N. Halsted (the Center's present location) was donated and on **December 8, 1915**, the DePaul Nursery and Social Center opened. As the activities of the Center grew, **a new building was built on the same site in 1923**. In **1958**, the **Recreation and Activity Building** was opened around the corner on Webster to handle programs for older children (between six and 12). **A Resale Shop** opened that same year as a way to generate additional revenue for the Center's programs.

By the **late 1990s**, the Center's main building was severely overcrowded and was in need of major renovation and repair. Extensive bracing and reinforcement enabled the Center to continue to operate. However, it was evident that new facilities were needed. **Since 1985**, Sister Catherine Mary Norris, D.C., known as **Sister Katie**, had been the head of the Center and had worked tirelessly to help people in their quest for a better life. Sister Katie had extensive contacts in the community and throughout the Chicago area. When the idea of a new Center was formulated, a number of those contacts became instrumental in the new building project. One of those contacts – **Daniel Walsh** – had grown up with Sister Katie and was determined to make the new Center a reality. A development program was begun in the late 1990s to raise funds for the project. Construction began in



2000 and in 2002, the new **\$30 million St. Vincent DePaul Center** was dedicated.

The new building was literally built around the old building, which continued to operate during the construction period. Once the new building opened, the old building was demolished, making way for the outdoor children's play and recreation area. The new building has three times the space of its predecessor, with **additional program and office space**, a new **recreation facility** featuring a **basketball court** and **underground parking**.

The Center serves over 450 children on a daily basis and is approaching its capacity of 478. The Center provides **day care, early childhood education** and **recreation** on weekdays from 7 AM to 6 PM. Infants (four months and older) and toddlers are accepted into the day-care program. A **preschool** program and **full-day kindergarten** are also offered. For children between six and 12, there is a before- and after-school program, which includes homework assistance and educational play programs that help the children develop social, emotional and cognitive skills. **A summer camp** program is also available.

The children in the Center's programs come from all over the city but primarily from parents who work or live in the Lincoln Park – DePaul area. Approximately 90% of the children are from families who qualify for day care or education assistance from the state of Illinois. Ten percent of the children are from families who pay the full cost of the programs.

The Center also provides **social services** to help children and their families cope with situations aggravated by poverty, discrimination and linguistic barriers. The Center's Social

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Services Department provides extensive counseling and assistance with domestic violence, serious mental illness, developmental delays, child abuse, neglect and medical issues. Childcare and social services work in tandem and result in a more complete service than what would be provided in other day care facilities.

The Center derives its support from many sources. Government grants (principally from the state) account for 34% of last year's revenues (2005). These grants are directly related to the number of underprivileged children the Center serves. Program and service fees, including income from the resale shop, made up 27% of revenue. Public support (direct and restricted contributions, bequests and special events) made up the remaining 39%. As program and governmental revenues have remained relatively flat, contributions have become the primary source of revenue growth.

Contributions grew 50% in 2005. One of the Center's principal fund raising activities is the Fleur de Lis Ball held each year in February. This year's event honored Sister Katie and raised over \$300,000. In addition to financial support, the Center also benefits from work by more than 3,300 dedicated volunteers who performed over 50,000 hours of service in 2005.

Operating costs for the new building are considerably more than for the prior facility. This has contributed to the Center's small operating deficit over the past few years. Programs and management costs have remained steady over the past two years. Management and fund raising accounts for 13% of expenses, with the remainder going directly for program services.

The Center's programs are needed today more than ever. Children of nearby residents are welcome to enroll. The Adopt-A-Family Fund allows donors to support families of working poor who are not covered by state funding. The annual Ball is a wonderful and fun way to provide support. Of course, direct contributions are always welcome and deeply appreciated. Individuals interested in supporting the Center or in finding out more about its programs are encouraged to call (312) 943-6776. Or visit their Web site at www.svdpc.org.

Zoning & Planning

Lincoln Central Assoc. hosted a community meeting in October, regarding **upzoning** (from RM4.5 to RM5) a portion of Lincoln Central (roughly, Dickens St. to the north, Lincoln Ave. to the east, North Ave. to the south and Larrabee St. to the west). The city sought the upzoning in the hopes of settling a lengthy lawsuit brought by a property owner, Al Hanna.

Eighty residents voiced their concerns, chiefly that backyards are already shrinking under RM4.5. With upzoning, neighbors fear a further loss of sunlight, air, trees, greenery and neighborliness because of the increased density of buildings and backyard structures. Also, filled lots means there's nowhere for rain water to soak into the ground, which contributes to flooding and pollution.

City attorneys cited fiscal reasons for the upzoning. They felt Mr. Hanna would drop the lawsuit because it would put his property back to its former zoning designation. **Lincoln Central's board voted (8-0) to support the city's request**, contingent upon two things: 1) a citywide ordinance requiring green yards, at grade, on residential lots. Breezeways and other structures that consume rear yards would not be allowed, and 2) should the lawsuit continue, zoning would be returned to RM4.5.

More recently, LCA hosted a community meeting regarding a proposed height increase (from 47 feet to 50 feet) at **1932 N. Burling St.**, a multi-lot residence. Previously, LCA's zoning and planning committee unanimously rejected the request, but the LCA board wanted to hear from neighbors. Some board members felt the increase should be allowed because there would be abundant green space around the home.

Neighbors strongly objected to the height increase. Ald. Daley interrupted, informing the crowd that the city's zoning administrator had already granted the request, because immediate neighbors had not objected. One neighbor whose property adjoins the site had not been notified, however. Ald. Daley suggested he file a complaint.

Craig Saenger,
Chair, Zoning & Planning

Regarding the **Armitage Ave. "el" station, Ald. Vi Daley** in April negotiated an agreement with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) to ensure use of proper materials for its renewal. Representatives from Lincoln Central Assoc., Ranch Triangle Assoc., the Armitage-Halsted Landmark District, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and city historic preservation agencies and groups helped in the negotiations. CTA was planning to use materials not in keeping with the historic district. The agreement calls for **restoration or duplication of historic canopies and railings**, use of **black gooseneck light fixtures**, reuse of portions of the **939 W. Armitage Ave.** structure, use of **red brick**, salvaging and protecting **wrought iron fencing**, and **landscaping**.

Property owners within the Armitage-Halsted Landmark District were particularly troubled by CTA's plans to use non-compatible materials; they felt that CTA should be held to the same historic standards.

Ald. Daley and representatives of the neighborhood and preservation groups met with CTA many times in the past year to achieve this agreement.

Lincoln Central Assoc. and other community organizations will form an oversight committee to ensure that the agreement, including the salvage of historic panels from Armitage Ave., is successfully completed.

Spotlight Quiz
[Answer]

[ANSWER TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ]

Where in LCA's world can you find this architectural detail?

(Answer: 1722 North Mohawk)



Join us!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Type

- Family (2 Members) \$25.00
- Individual (1 Member) \$20.00
- Organization (1 Member) \$25.00
- Senior (1 Member) \$10.00

Contribution

(includes membership)

- Patron \$50.00
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Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip+4 _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

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Please indicate your interests.

- Membership
- Newsletter/Public Relations
- Planning/Zoning
- Beautification/City Services
- Parking
- Fund Raising
- Safety/Security
- Community Relations
- Finance
- Parks
- Social Programs
- Schools

Send this completed Application, with your check, made payable to

Lincoln Central Association to:

Membership Chair
Lincoln Central Assn.
P.O. Box 14306
Chicago, IL
60614-0306

Voice Mail
(312) 409-2783

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Spotlight

SPOTLIGHT QUIZ

Where in LCA's world can you find this architectural detail?

