

Salt Lake City Council

District Seven Community Update

September 2008

GOOD NEIGHBORS: BEING A PART OF THE SOLUTION

BY SØREN SIMONSEN

Living in Salt Lake City, or any city for that matter, can be a good thing. More people are living in cities than ever before. When we choose to reside in a community we are signing on to a social contract. A recent email from a resident in District Seven reminded me that being a good neighbor means understanding the role we each play in both guiding and abiding by the rules of that contract.

We all enjoy the benefits of living in our City—from employment opportunities, and access to great cultural and recreational opportunities, to expectations of safety and security, and the peace of mind that comes when we watch over each other and our neighborhoods. Sometimes, it's good to be reminded that being a part of a community carries with it an obligation to be a good neighbor and abide by the rules that allow us all to live in relative peace, comfort, safety and prosperity.

A recent survey suggests that while Salt Lake City residents are generally pleased with the nature of our neighborhoods, we have also identified that parking, noise, and community character are especially noted areas of concern and conflict. The City Council is working hard to ensure that the rules and regulations that guide our conduct as residents are simple, practical and logical.

This newsletter includes what I hope is helpful information about recent actions of the City Council to address parking issues, as well as reminders of noise and nuisance regulations, and tips for caring for our yards and gardens. These are useful tools to help us to be better neighbors, and to remind us of how to address concerns when they arise.

More information is available on the District Seven webpage (www.slcgov.com/council/D7), including the *Good Neighbors Partnership Resource Guide*. A resource list is also available to provide answers to common questions about being a good neighbor, and who to contact if you have a concern that needs to be addressed.

Thanks for all you do to be a good neighbor and for making Salt Lake City a great place to live. And as always, please feel free to contact me by phone (801-535-7600) or email (soren.simonsen@slcgov.com) if you have any ideas, questions or concerns.



Photo by Laurie Bray. Photography by Laurie

Council Member Søren Simonsen

PUTTING THE GARDEN TO REST: GARDEN CARE FOR AUTUMN

Salt Lake City Water Conservation Coordinator Stephanie Duer has prepared a simple and easy-to-follow summary for preparing gardens and lawns for winter. She notes the change in temperature and the opportunity for new plants to grow in the warm soil. The article is printed in full on the District Seven web page, but the lawn care section is highlighted below.

Late summer and fall are great times of year to garden. The air starts to feel cool and the warmth of the sun is welcomed and not shunned. Plants feel less stress, and even though daytime temperatures decline, the soil is warm and encourages new root growth, so new plants have a leg-up on spring. It is also a great time to prepare your garden for winter, by following these simple steps, you can ensure your garden recovers from the stress of the hot dry summer, slumbers well this winter, and is ready to grow again next spring.

Lawn Care

Raise the mower height to 2 1/2 to 3 inches. The longer grass blades will shade weed seeds, keeping them from sprouting. Also, the longer blade will provide extra protection for the turf during the winter. Stop mowing as soon as a hard frost hits.

If snow molds or other fungal diseases have been a problem in the past, bag grass clippings, and rake up any leaves that are on the lawn before the snow falls.

Reduce watering to once every 10 to 14 days in October if there is no rain or snow; frequent watering will encourage fungus and molds and keep roots shallow.

Aerate compacted soils, leaving the soil plugs on the lawn to provide rich organic material (this can actually replace a fertilizer application).

De-thatch if your lawn feels spongy or if you can't feel the soil when you dig your fingers into the lawn.

Over-seed in thin areas to improve your lawn for spring; consider over-seeding with a lower water species such as a dwarf tall fescue. Warm season grasses, such as buffalo grass and side oats grama are best left to early summer seeding.

Fertilize with a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer or home-made compost; organic fertilizers tend to be "slower" than chemical fertilizers so new blade growth will be minimal but the roots will get what they need.

Many of the chores above can be combined with those listed in the Garden and Vegetable Care sections. A little extra effort in the fall and winter can pay large rewards in the garden next spring and summer. And at least you don't have to worry about sun stroke. To view the complete article, please visit www.slcgov.com/council/D7.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL PARKING

The Sugar House, Avenues and Downtown are popular areas, which means finding a parking space can sometimes be challenging. On July 22, 2008, after extensive research and discussion, the City Council passed an ordinance modifying the parking requirements for businesses in the City. The changes to the ordinance were completed with the desire to encourage walkable neighborhood business districts. Small business owners and residents collaborated with City staff to raise awareness of their concerns with parking situations.

The ordinance decreases the number of off-street parking stalls currently required for businesses; creates incentives for businesses to add pedestrian amenities such as bike racks, benches, and stroller parking; and also allows for shared and off-site parking options. The purpose of these changes is to encourage pedestrian-friendly activity near neighborhood businesses and to provide access to them beyond the use of automobiles.

The City Council also adopted legislative intent statements requesting the Administration to develop a comprehensive program to mitigate parking spillover into residential neighborhoods. Efforts could potentially include developing an outreach campaign to help facilitate positive neighbor relations, implementing urban design elements to distinguish between neighborhood commercial business districts and residential neighborhoods, and investigating creative solutions for neighborhoods most directly impacted by neighborhood businesses.

This ordinance amendment and the legislative intent statements are intended to develop cooperative and supportive neighborhood commercial and residential areas. It is essential for residents to speak openly with neighboring business owners about parking concerns. Business owners are encouraged to provide customers the necessary service while limiting parking time on residential streets, thus promoting customers to walk, ride bicycles, or use alternative transportation.

These efforts represent a significant collaborative undertaking between residents and business owners in seeking to be good neighbors and to continue building Salt Lake City as great city. If you would like to view the complete ordinance, please visit the District Seven webpage at <http://www.slcgov.com/council/D7>.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOISE

In our neighborhoods many of us cultivate friendships, enjoy a sense of community with gatherings and parties, and sometimes share the experience of neighborhood noise. Noise can create a nuisance between neighbors. The car stereo with booming bass, a party with loud music, home construction, and barking dogs can all cause distress to individuals living near the noise. Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) enforces on issues relating to sound and Salt Lake City coordinates efforts with SLVHD to minimize noise in residential areas.

Loud noises such as construction, garbage pickup, truck deliveries, the operation of heavy equipment, loud music, etc. are to be discontinued from all residences and on residential streets from 9:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m. Car stereos are to have the sound level kept to a minimum.

If you would like to have a party, be a good neighbor and consider those who live around you. Ask them if they have concerns regarding loud music and — if held outside — where in your yard it might be more agreeable to situate the party, so as to be cooperative and have an enjoyable evening.

Barking dogs can also contribute to neighborhood noise. For some, it is a nuisance to listen to noisy animals when trying to enjoy the comfort of their home environment.

As a reminder, all dogs are to be licensed annually and have required vaccinations. Animal Services recommends cleaning up dog feces once a week; and according to City Code, the permitted number of dogs per household is two.

If there are concerns in your neighborhood related to noise, approach your neighbors in an effort to work together in developing a plan of resolution. However, if loud parties persist, call the Police Dispatch line at 799-3000. If loud noises continue to impact your home environment, call SLVHD at 303-6641; and if there is a problem with dogs in your neighborhood, contact Animal Services at 559-1100 or 743-7045 (after business hours).

View the *Good Neighbors Partnership Resource Guide* on the District Seven webpage. There is also a shortened version for quick access to information and phone numbers. Many items are included, such as Outdoor Burning. Outdoor Burning is not permitted within the City. Large gatherings like luaus should be cleared by the Fire Department Prevention Division at 799-4150. Report violations immediately to the Fire Department at 911.

DISTRICT SEVEN WEEKLY EMAIL UPDATES

Stay informed with the District Seven Weekly Email Update!

Updates include information relating to District Seven concerns, development and planning issues, and events to remember. Visit the District Seven webpage and sign up for the weekly email at

<http://www.slcgov.com/council/D7>