



Central Bench

Neighborhood Association

Annual Newsletter

Letter from the President

Happy New Year!

It is an honor to be elected President of our Neighborhood Association. 2016 is going to be an exciting year for the Central Bench Neighborhood Association. We will see the greening up of a new park on the corner of Franklin and Orchard. New business developments are in the works that have the potential to change the landscape of our neighborhood. Several projects are in the works to empower, define and shape our community. 2016 will bring many changes, some good and some perhaps not so good. With your help and guidance, we will see our community grow and prosper.

As we progress through this year, we need your involvement in more than a few projects. If you have not done so already, please follow us on Facebook and Twitter, and be sure to subscribe to our digital newsletter (centralbench.org).

We will be looking for neighbors to testify in front of City Council regarding the proposed zone changes to the Old Franklin School site (corner of Franklin and Orchard). The Maverik company is seeking to construct a 10 -12 pump gas station on the corner. We are asking the Boise City Council to consider the city's investment of the new park directly behind the proposed gas station project when voting on these zoning changes.

The new park slated to be built on the corner of Peg and Hilton Street is located directly behind the development on Franklin and Orchard. Boise Parks and Recreation will be holding public comment meetings (date to be announced at a later time) to consider amenities our neighborhood would like to see included in the park's master plan.

The Central Bench Neighborhood Association is also exploring the possibility of a partnership with the Wright Community Church to create the first community garden in our neighborhood. We will be looking for your input about how you would like this garden to operate and serve our community.

We hold our board meetings every quarter. The next one is at 6pm on Monday, January 25 at the Wright Community Church (4821 Franklin Rd) where we will be hosting our Annual Chili Feed. Come meet your neighbors, enjoy some chili and hear several presentations on the direction of our neighborhood. If you are interested in being involved further, we have a few board positions open and plenty of community committees on which you can become involved.

This year will be one with many changes for our community and I am excited to be a partner with all of you in this process. If you ever have a question or concern about our neighborhood, please feel free to contact me at 208-869-3902 or randyjohnson79@gmail.com. Together we can make the Central Bench the most livable neighborhood in Boise!

Randy H Johnson

President
Central Bench Neighborhood Association

About the CBNA

Maybe you've wondered, "What exactly is the CBNA all about?" To begin, the CBNA is not a closed Home Owners Association (HOA) that enforces rules and requires fees. The CBNA is formed from and run by volunteer neighborhood members. A member is anyone who lives, works, or owns property within the neighborhood boundaries.

The vision statement of the CBNA is "to promote safety and involvement in our community while celebrating diversity in the Central Bench". Board and neighborhood members accomplish this through various activities and practices. To help build community there are annual activities and events such as the Chili Feed (coming Jan. 25!) and the Spring Egg Hunt, among others. There are committees that address neighborhood concerns such as the Planning and Development committee, committees that help strengthen the community, like the Events or Communications committees, as well as committees that keep our community safe, like the Neighborhood Watch committee.

CBNA business is discussed at quarterly board meetings which are open to the public. All members are invited to participate in the decision making process by voicing opinions and ideas, and are encouraged to bring topics relevant to the neighborhood to these meetings.

The Central Bench is a dynamic neighborhood at the heart of Boise. Our convenient location; access to parks and the Greenbelt; and ethnic, generational and economic diversity are all reasons the Central Bench can be Boise's most livable neighborhood. Please join us in making the Central Bench the best it can be. To learn more about the CBNA, please attend a meeting, visit our website, get connected on social media or contact us.

The Central Bench is Looking for a Few Good Neighbors

All members of the Central Bench neighborhood are encouraged to become involved in building a better community. Attend a meeting. Volunteer to help coordinate an event. Join a committee, or join the board.

We currently have 3 board seats open. Board terms are 2 years and are elected by vote at a quarterly meeting. Any member can serve. Board members are asked to also sit on a committee.

Serving on the CBNA board is an opportunity to drive positive change in your neighborhood. For more info, attend the January 25th meeting or email centralbenchna@gmail.com.

2016 Important Dates

CBNA Meeting and Chili Feed:
Jan 25, 6pm
Wright Community Church

Spring Egg Hunt: Mar 26, 10am
Wright Community Church

CBNA Meeting: April 25, 6pm
Wright Community Church

National Night Out: Aug 2, 6pm
Location TBD

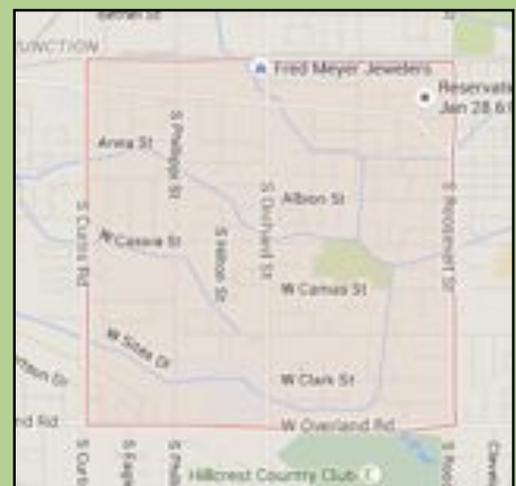
CBNA Meeting: July 25, 6pm
Wright Community Church

CBNA Meeting: Oct 24, 6pm
Wright Community Church



Central Bench Neighborhood Boundaries

North: Alpine Street
South: Overland Road
East: Roosevelt Street
West: Curtis Road



Public Art Projects in the Central Bench

The CBNA is funded through grants awarded from the City of Boise. This money supports essential operations, allows us to host neighborhood activities and events, and pays for things like the postcard you received. Funds for community projects come from a specific program called Neighborhood Reinvestment Grants.

Over the years, the CBNA has applied for and been awarded multiple Neighborhood Reinvestment Grants. These grants funded the construction of the arch at Cassia Park, and purchased the bike racks at Cassia park. Funds from this program also allowed the installation of public art in the form of traffic box wraps at Franklin/Orchard, Franklin/Phillippi, Kootenai/Orchard and Cassia/Curtis. This spring, two more traffic box wraps will be installed at the pedestrian lights at Curtis/Edson and Orchard/Cassia.

Newly installed neighborhood markers are also a project funded by a Neighborhood Reinvestment Grant. These eye-catching, colorful markers have been installed at 8 locations around the perimeter of the neighborhood

boundaries. Look for them at these intersections:

- Alpine/Roosevelt
- Rose Hill/Roosevelt
- Camas/Roosevelt
- Overland/Roosevelt
- Orchard/Overland
- Curtis/Overland
- Cassia/Curtis
- Franklin/Curtis

The final marker will be installed at Franklin/Orchard at a later date due to the pending construction on that parcel. All signs were installed in ACHD Right-of-Way, aside from the markers located at Roosevelt/Rose Hill, Roosevelt/Camas, and Overland/Orchard. We'd like to thank those property owners (Davis Family, Walgreens and anonymous) for allowing installation on private land.

The design was selected through a process involving CBNA members and the City of Boise Arts and History Department. A call for submissions was put out to the community, bringing in a handful of design options. A vote was held at a CBNA quarterly meeting and the top 3 designs from that vote were presented to the A&H Visual Arts Committee, which approves all public art in Boise. This design, submitted by John Yarnell of Trademark



Signs, was chosen for the way the imagery represents the neighborhood (parks, canals and foothills views), historical significance (the bell from Franklin School and orchards), as well as the composition and clarity of the design.

Installing these markers helps to identify the Central Bench neighborhood and double as public art. We hope that these markers will continue to build a sense of community, identity, and pride for the Central Bench.

If you have an idea for a project that would benefit the Central Bench, or if you'd like to be on the Grants Committee, please contact us.



Stay Connected!

Facebook: Central Bench Neighborhood Association

Twitter: @CBNA_Boise

Website: centralbench.org

Email: centralbenchna@gmail.com

What's Happening at Franklin & Orchard?

It's no wonder that community members are curious and concerned about the potential developments at the old Franklin School site. The school was once a cultural and social landmark for the Central Bench. Since the building was demolished, the open lot has been salt in a wound, inspired dreams, or been an eye sore, depending on who you talk to. Regardless of how you view the parcel, here is where things currently stand:

Maverik has purchased 4 of the 7 acres from the Boise School District, which make up the lots that line Franklin and Orchard. They plan to build a gas station and convenience store on the corner lot and are currently searching for buyers for the remaining lots. The remaining 3 acres, located along Peg and Hilton Streets, were purchased by the City of Boise and plans are underway to make it a park.

Maverik and the City are in the process of finalizing a small land swap. This is a square-foot-for-square-foot trade which will make each lot more square. Once this process is finalized, Maverik will submit an application to the City to rezone their lots, as well as submit their design plans for the store and pumps.

Maverik plans to ask the City to change the current zoning (A1: open space) to a C1 zone (commercial that allows gas stations, the same zoning as Hyde Park). The CBNA has submitted a formal letter to the City Planning Dept. requesting the Maverik parcels be zoned PC (Pedestrian Commercial, the same zoning as Bown Crossing). This letter outlines the reasons for this recommendation and is available on our website (centralbench.org/newsletters). A PC zone still allows a gas station, however it must be approved by issuing a Conditional Use Permit.

All zone change requests go to the Planning and Zoning Commission. These hearings are public and anyone can speak for up to 3 minutes in favor of or against the zone change. The CBNA has up to 20 minutes to testify and will do so against the C1 request and in support of PC. The date of the hearing will depend on when Maverik submits the application. Please stay connected with us through Facebook, or by signing up for our digital newsletter to stay updated on these dates.

At the hearing, the Planning and Zoning Commission will make a recommendation in favor of or against Maverik's C1 zone request

which will then move on to City Council. City Council will have the final say to approve or deny the requested zone change. City Council meetings are also public and anyone can speak in favor of or against the request.

Maverik will have to go through a similar process to have the design of the store and gas station approved. Their design will go through the Design Review Commission, which is also open to public testimony.

The park, which is currently unnamed, is still in the planning stages. The City held a public meeting to collect comment and suggestions and is currently working on the master plan. There will be more opportunity for public comment as the plans are finalized.

The Central Bench is your neighborhood and your community. We encourage everyone to become actively involved in the processes around the potential developments of the Franklin School parcel. Community voices can and do affect change. If you want to become involved or want more information, please attend the Jan. 25th CBNA meeting or email centralbenchna@gmail.com.

Have an opinion about the Franklin Parcel? Here's What You Can Do:

- Submit a letter to the City. All letters regarding the zone change or design application will be delivered to commission members. We encourage you to use the CBNA letter as a reference and to pull important points from regarding the zone change. Email letters to Andrea Tuning: atuning@cityofboise.org.
- Testify at the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing. Everyone who wishes to speak will be given up to 3 minutes. This is an effective avenue to speak directly to decision makers. Stay connected to the CBNA for updates on hearing dates and times.
- Testify at the City Council Meeting. City Council are the final decision makers regarding zone changes. Everyone who wishes to speak will be given time to do so. This is another opportunity to speak directly to decision makers.
- Stay connected to the CBNA to be kept up to date on coming meeting dates/times.

Central Bench Oral History Project

The history of the Central Bench is packed with fascinating insights on how and why the neighborhood evolved to be what it is today. In order to capture all those tidbits, the CBNA submitted a Neighborhood Reinvestment Grant to collect an Oral History of the Central Bench.

Once the grant was awarded, local historian Jim Duran began interviewing people who grew up in the Central Bench and have stories to share on how the community has changed. Each of the hour-length interviews were recorded, transcribed, and deposited at the Arts and History department. Historian Angie Davis assisted with research and tracked down many of the photos that will be used in the coming booklet, created in partnership with the Dept. of Arts and History. Due to be completed spring 2016, the booklet will be available on the CBNA website, and will be published and available for purchase or for check out at the Boise Public Library.

Below is an excerpt from the booklet:

By the 1940s, the bench mostly served as a residential suburb for Boise with only limited retail commerce outside downtown core. This changed as property owners developed shopping centers at some of the major intersections in the Central Bench. Fred Koll was one such investor. In 1947 he built a small hardware store at the back of a lot on the corner of Franklin Road and Orchard Street near the railroad tracks. Koll envisioned a cluster of buildings serving as a commerce hub for the neighborhood. Two years later the Albertson's grocery chain built a small store



Franklin Shopping Center. Photo credit Scoop Leeburn Photo, Idaho State Historical Society

on the same lot, the current location of the Mandarin Palace restaurant. In 1953 Koll built another structure that housed a Whitehead drug store for many years. That same year, Albertson's expanded close to where Fred Meyer sits today.

By the late 1950s the Franklin Shopping Center bustled with business, including Albertson's Market, The Merc, M.H. King Co., Sew More Sewing Center, and Whitehead Drugs. Pediatrician Dr. Carl M. Johnston along with a few other doctors and other professionals also established their businesses in the Franklin center.

Thank you to Jim Duran for the excerpt and photos.

Shop at the **FRANKLIN SHOPPING CENTER**

*In the Heart of
the Bench Area*



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE BENCH MIRROR FOR COMING TO
THE BENCH WHERE THE BUSINESS FUTURE IS UNLIMITED
—Fred Koll

An advertisement from *The Bench Mirror*, a local paper published August 15, 1957.

Central Bench Stats

- The Central Bench covers 1 square mile.
- The total population is 5,475 residents whom live in 2,921 households.
- 35% of households are owner occupied, 55% are renter occupied and 10% are vacant.
- The median age is 35.
- The average household income is \$39,709 while the median income is \$33,367.