



## WESTMINSTER

### Staff Report

TO: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

DATE: May 31, 2006

SUBJECT: Study Session Agenda for June 5, 2006

PREPARED BY: J. Brent McFall, City Manager

*Please Note: Study Sessions and Post City Council meetings are open to the public, and individuals are welcome to attend and observe. However, these meetings are not intended to be interactive with the audience, as this time is set aside for City Council to receive information, make inquiries, and provide Staff with policy direction.*

Looking ahead to next Monday night's Study Session, the following schedule has been prepared:

*A light dinner will be served in the Council Family Room*

6:00 P.M.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

None at this time.

#### CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

1. Report from Mayor (5 minutes)
2. Reports from City Councillors (10 minutes)

#### PRESENTATIONS

6:30 P.M.

1. Property Related Code Enforcement Revisions
2. 2005 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and Management Letter

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Discuss contested use tax assessment with City Attorney and obtain Council direction thereon, pursuant to Section 1-11-3(C)(7) and 1-11-3(C)(8) of the Westminster Municipal Code

#### INFORMATION ONLY

1. Neighborhood Enhancement Grants
2. Semper Farm Master Plan

Additional items may come up between now and Monday night. City Council will be apprised of any changes to the Study Session meeting schedule.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Brent McFall  
City Manager



WESTMINSTER

2006-98

## Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting  
June 5, 2006



**SUBJECT:** Property Related Code Revisions

**PREPARED BY:** Janice Kraft, Neighborhood Services Administrator  
Eugene Mei, Assistant City Attorney

### Recommended City Council Action:

Staff will attend the Study Session meeting to make a presentation concerning changes to ordinances enforced by Code Enforcement Officers and to present a proposal for establishing a penalty assessment citation. Council is requested to provide comments and input to City Staff concerning the overall concept. If the Councillors approve of the proposals, City Council is requested to direct Staff to place this item on a future regular City Council agenda for formal ordinance amendment action.

### Summary Statement:

- Time has been set aside on Monday evening's study session agenda for Council to view a PowerPoint presentation by Staff concerning the review of existing Municipal Code sections and a modification of ordinances enforced by Police Department Code Enforcement Officers.
- Staff proposes clarifications of language to make the code more easily understood by property owners and modifications to the existing code to address conditions Code Enforcement Officers are asked to correct that are not adequately regulated.
- The most significant change deals with instituting a penalty assessment citation with appeals being heard by the Board of Adjustment and Appeals or an Administrative Hearing Officer.

**Expenditure Required:** \$0

**Source of Funds:** N/A

### Policy Issue:

Should City Council approve modifications to the Municipal Code and establish a penalty assessment citation process?

### Alternative:

City Council may choose to not accept the proposed modifications or may select only specific recommendations for approval.

**Background Information:**

Police Department Code Enforcement Officers enforce a variety of sections from the Municipal Code that regulate property conditions, use, and maintenance. The community-at-large most commonly associates code enforcement with regulations pertaining to weeds, junk vehicles, trash and debris, snow and ice removal and graffiti. Code Enforcement actually has many more components such as signs, zoning, sidewalk obstructions, excavations, garage sales, accessory structures, illegal dumping, littering, parking complaints, compost piles, fencing, solicitors, storage units, wood burning violations, and home occupation licenses. Furthermore, Code Enforcement Officers can assist the City Clerk's Office with potential business license violations and inspections for renewing special permits; Sales Tax for sales tax violations; and Environmental Services for illegal dumping into the storm sewer systems.

As the City of Westminster grows older, some neighborhoods mature while other neighborhoods deteriorate. It is readily apparent to anyone driving through the City that some areas are in more rapid decline. One or two properties on a block that are not maintained adversely affect the whole neighborhood or surrounding commercial areas, and the general well being of the community is jeopardized. Property values are directly impacted and it is not uncommon for the criminal element to move in as long-term property owners move out.


Code Enforcement Staff completed an extensive review of the codes they most commonly are called upon to enforce and highlights of recommended code changes would include:

- Limiting garage sales to one every 90 days and not longer than three days in duration
- Requiring a property owner to remove graffiti within 14 days
- Decreasing the amount of time that a vehicle can remain parked in the same location on the public street from 30 days to 15 days
- Changing the current abatement process to allow the City Manager to authorize abatement of specific code violations in a similar manner as the current weed and snow/ice abatements

Finally, Staff is proposing the implementation of a new penalty assessment citation program, similar to a parking ticket, which could be used by Code Enforcement Officers in addition to the existing municipal summons to court. This citation will assign escalating fines for a first offense, second offense, and third or subsequent offense. A person receiving a penalty assessment citation can pay the fine and bring their property into compliance, or they can appeal the citation to either the Board of Adjustment and Appeals or an Administrative Hearing Officer appointed by the Board of Adjustment and Appeals. The fines assessed by the penalty assessment citation would be lienable against the offending property. Staff discussed the appeal of such citations with the Board of Adjustment and Appeals, and that Board was supportive of the proposed citation program and handling the citation appeals directly, i.e., without the appointment of an Administrative Hearing Officer.

More specific details on code changes and the penalty assessment citation will be provided by Staff during the presentation

Respectfully submitted,

  
J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

2006-99



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting  
June 5, 2006



SUBJECT: 2005 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and Management Letter

PREPARED BY: Tammy Hitchens, Finance Director

**Recommended City Council Action:**

Review and discuss the 2005 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and Management letter.

**Summary Statement:**

Finance Staff along with Wendy Swanhorst, Partner and Kyle Logan, Senior Manager, of Swanhorst & Company, LLC (Swanhorst), the City's independent audit firm, will present the 2005 CAFR and Management Letter to City Council for review. The CAFR is scheduled for formal acceptance at the Council meeting on June 12, 2006.

The City has received an unqualified opinion from Swanhorst & Company, LLC. This means the CAFR represents fairly the financial position of the City.

The Management letter has four comments the auditors would like to bring to the City's attention.

**Capital Assets** - Swanhorst has questioned if the value of the assets, used as collateral for the leases with the Westminster Building Authority, need to be adjusted on the books. Staff will evaluate whether or not the value needs to be changed.

**Grants** - Swanhorst has indicated that the way grants are recorded is not technically correct. Grants will continue to be recorded as done historically, but staff will make year end adjustments to be in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

**Interfund loan with the golf course** - Swanhorst has concerns about the outstanding interfund loan in the golf course fund. Management is evaluating strategies to pay off this loan and will present those to Council at a later date.

**Westminster Commons/Westminster Housing Authority** - Swanhorst is recommending that the City closely monitor the accounting records for the Westminster Commons. Staff will work closely with the management company, especially at year end, to address the auditors concerns.

**Expenditure Required:** \$-0-

**Source of Funds:** N/A

**Policy Issue:**

Section 9.10 of the City Charter requires that an independent audit be made at least annually in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as they pertain to governments for all funds reported in the comprehensive annual financial report. The audit is required to be conducted by Certified Public Accountants, experienced in municipal accounting. This audit was performed by Swanhorst & Company, LLC, Certified Public Accountants.

**Alternative:**

Require staff to make changes to the report. Minor changes could be made to the report without affecting the audit opinion. Major changes may cause the report to not be in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles as they pertain to governments and could result in a change of the auditor's opinion.

**Background Information:**

Every year Finance staff prepares a CAFR and contracts with an independent auditor to perform an audit of the financial statements. The 2005 CAFR received an unqualified opinion from Swanhorst & Company, LLC, the City's independent auditors. An unqualified opinion indicates the financial data of the City is fairly presented according to generally accepted accounting principals. Highlights of the 2005 CAFR are detailed below:

- Government-wide: Combined net assets of governmental and business-type activities increased \$23.9 million, including a \$9.8 million increase in governmental activities net assets and a \$14.1 million increase in business-type activities net assets.
- General Fund: The fund balance of the General Fund decreased \$0.7 million in 2005. Of the \$17.8 million ending fund balance, \$10.2 million was unreserved and available for future spending.
- Sales & Use Tax Fund: Sales and Use Tax revenues increased \$2.1 million. Net assets increased by \$0.7 million due to overall sales and use tax collections exceeding transfers to other funds.
- General Capital Improvement Fund: Operating revenues increased by \$3.4 million and expenditures were comparable to 2004. Fund Balance increased \$5.8 million primarily as a result of the issuance of \$17.1 million in Certificates of Participation for the 144<sup>th</sup> Ave interchange.
- Westminster Economic Development Authority: Fund balance increased \$50.6 million from \$3.3 million to \$53.9 million due mostly to the issuance of \$68.3 million of Tax Increment Financing Bonds for the Orchard project.
- Utility Fund: Net Assets increased \$15.1 million from \$347.8 to \$362.9 million due primarily to tap fees of \$14.7 million.
- Golf Course Fund: Net Assets increased \$2.6 million from \$7.4 to \$10.0 million due primarily to the write off of outstanding interfund loans.
- One additional debt issue occurred during 2005 in the amount of \$15.4 million in the form of a note. The proceeds were used for the upgrade and expansion of Big Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Capital spending was funded with pay-as-you-go resources and bond proceeds. Capital spending for all projects included the following:

\$ 21,365,355	General Capital Improvements Fund
11,751,337	Utility Fund
<u>28,537,258</u>	Westminster Economic Development Authority
<u>\$ 61,653,950</u>	Total Current Year Capital Expenditures

The specifics of the management letter and staffs' responses are outlined below.

- 1) **Capital Assets** Over the years, the City has entered into a sale and lease back of capital assets with the Westminster Building Authority. The Westminster Building Authority has issued Certificates of Participation to purchase the assets from the City. The City has subsequently leased those assets back. The City has used the proceeds of the sales to do such projects as the Public Safety Building, Ice Centre and Westminster Boulevard. The leases are collateralized by a "pool" of City assets. As the collateral pool has increased in value, the City has not adjusted the value of the assets when it leases them back. Staff will evaluate the need to increase the asset value on the asset records.
- 2) **Golf Course Interfund Loan** Swanhorst is concerned about the outstanding interfund loan. This loan is a result of having negative cash at year end. This is partially caused by the seasonality of golf but is also caused by an accumulation of losses over the years. As Council is aware, in 2005 the City wrote off several loans to assist the golf courses. The courses have a net operating surplus but continue to struggle with the debt service. Management has developed and put into place a strategy to assist with the debt service. Management will continue to monitor the financial results of the golf courses. Management is also evaluating strategies to further assist the golf courses with paying down the interfund loan.
- 3) **Grants**– Historically the City has recorded grants receivable on the books in order to track the grants. According to GAAP this is not a proper recording of the grants. The City will continue to record grants as historically recorded but will make an entry at year end to report the grants according to GAAP.
- 4) **Westminster Commons/Westminster Housing Authority** – Howard Bishop and Company (Bishop) has managed the Westminster Commons for several years. For the most part, Howard Bishop and Company uses a cash basis of accounting. Historically the auditors have provided year end adjustments for the Westminster Commons to record them on an accrual basis. Swanhorst is uncomfortable in both providing the year end adjustments and then auditing them. Bishop and Company lost a key accountant staff member that has created some issues for GAAP reporting. Staff will be working closely with Bishop to ensure proper accounting.

Staff and representatives from Swanhorst will attend the June 5th Study Session to answer City Council's questions.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

Attachments

April 28, 2006

City Council  
City of Westminster  
Westminster, Colorado

We have audited the financial statements of the City of Westminster (the "City") for the year ended December 31, 2005, and have issued our report thereon dated April 28, 2006. Professional standards require that we provide you with the following information related to our audit.

#### **Our Responsibility under Generally Accepted Auditing Standards**

As stated in our engagement letter, our responsibility, as described by professional standards, is to plan and perform our audit to obtain reasonable, but not absolute, assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Because an audit is designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance and because we did not perform a detailed examination of all transactions, there is a risk that material misstatements or noncompliance may exist and not be detected by us. In addition, an audit is not designed to detect immaterial misstatements or violations of laws or regulations that do not have a direct and material effect on the financial statements.

As part of our audit, we considered the internal control of the City. Such considerations were solely for the purpose of determining our audit procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal control.

#### **Significant Accounting Policies**

Management has the responsibility for selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter, we will advise management about the appropriateness of accounting policies and their application. The significant accounting policies used by the City are described in Note 1 to the financial statements. We noted no transactions entered into by the City during the year that were both significant and unusual, and of which, under professional standards, we are required to inform you, or transactions for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus.

#### **Significant Audit Adjustments**

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a significant audit adjustment as a proposed correction of the financial statements that, in our judgment, may not have been detected except through our auditing procedures. We provided management with a schedule of audit adjustments. An audit adjustment may or may not indicate matters that could have a significant effect on the City's financial reporting process (that is, cause future financial statements to be materially misstated). Management has determined that the effects of the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole. In our judgment, none of the adjustments we proposed, whether recorded or unrecorded by the City, either individually or in the aggregate, indicate matters that could have a significant effect on the City's financial reporting process.

## **Accounting Estimates**

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's current judgments. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from management's current judgments. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the estimates in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

## **Disagreements with Management**

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, concerning a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditors' report. We believe any disagreements were resolved during the course of our audit.

## **Consultations with Other Independent Accountants**

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves the application of an accounting principle to the City's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditors' opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

## **Issues Discussed Prior to Retention of Independent Auditors**

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management prior to retention as the City's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

## **Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit**

We encountered no significant difficulties in performing our audit.

## **Other Information**

### Capital Assets

The Certificates of Participation (COPs) issued by the Westminster Building Authority are collateralized by certain capital assets, including several buildings and structures, in a property pool. These capital assets have been sold and leased back by the City. However, the City did not reflect the changes in value of these capital assets when the sales transactions occurred. As a result, the capital assets may not be reported at the proper amounts on the accounting records. We recommend that the City evaluate this situation and determine if the capital assets should be adjusted on the accounting records.

### Grants

The City has historically recorded certain grant receivables in the accounting records at the time the grant is awarded. We understand that this was used as a tracking mechanism for the grants. However, for audit reporting, these receivables are not appropriate, since qualifying expenditures have not yet occurred. We proposed adjusting entries to the accounting records to properly state the receivables under generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP"). We recommend that the City review its grant reporting procedures to allow for proper GAAP reporting in addition to adequate grant tracking. This may simply require an annual year-end adjustment.



### Interfund Loans

The City has approximately \$8.2 million of interfund loans to the Golf Course Fund and WEDA. Last year, the City forgave approximately \$2.7 million of these loans to the Golf Course Fund. We understand that the WEDA loans may be repaid with future tax increment revenues. However, it seems unlikely that the Golf Course Fund will ever have the resources to repay these interfund loans. We recommend that the City review these loans annually. If the loans are not collectible, they should be removed from the accounting records. This would require the lending funds to ultimately forgive the loans.

### Westminster Commons/Westminster Housing Authority

As you know, the Westminster Housing Authority owns the Westminster Commons apartment complex. Westminster Commons is operated and managed by an outside management company. During our audit, we proposed a significant number of adjusting entries to the management company books to report them in accordance with GAAP. In addition, the management company did not maintain all documentation necessary for proper reporting. We believe the City has additional risk because the management company lost an employee that performed the accounting function for many years. We recommend the City closely monitor the management company accounting and reporting in the future. In addition, the City may be required to maintain certain accounting information that the management company does not currently maintain.

### **Conclusion**

We would like to thank Tammy Hitchens, Cherie Sanchez, and the Department of Finance staff for their considerable time and effort during the audit. We appreciate the City's cooperation and assistance.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Council and management of the City of Westminster and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Very truly yours,



Swanhorst & Company LLC



# WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

Information Only Staff Report  
June 5, 2006



SUBJECT: Neighborhood Enhancement Grants

PREPARED BY: Kathy Piper, Landscape Architect II

### Summary Statement:

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council. Under the recently adopted Community Enhancement Master Plan, the Parks, Recreation and Libraries Advisory Board receives \$50,000 per year from the Community Enhancement Fund to provide a funding source for neighborhoods willing to enhance their streetscapes. Earlier this year, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board merged with the Library Advisory Board to form the new Parks, Recreation and Library Advisory Board. The following are the results from this year's grant process:

- On May 10, 2006, the Parks, Recreation and Library Advisory Board met to review and award this year's grants.
- There is \$50,000 available for Neighborhood Enhancement Grants and the Tree Give-Away Program. Past funding totaled \$30,000 for both programs.
- The Board received eight applications requesting \$125,000 in grants.
- The Board selected five grant applications to receive some type of funding. They are as follows:
 

○ Pebble Brook North HOA	\$3,400
○ Sunstream Filing #8 HOA	\$2,755
○ West Cliff HOA	\$4,000
○ Silo HOA	\$3,500
○ St. Martha's Episcopal Church R.O.W	\$1,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,855</b>
- Those applicants who did not receive funding either had a project that did not meet the criteria, such as being on private property, did not provide matching funds, or did not provide any volunteer efforts.
- Each applicant will receive acknowledgement for applying and will be informed of the recipients of a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant.
- Those applicants receiving grants will be required to meet all City of Westminster standards and regulations. All projects must be completed before December 31, 2006.
- The remaining funds (\$35,145) will be used for other community enhancements such as the Street Tree Give-Away Program. A second grant cycle may be considered for the fall if any unused funds remain.

### **Background Information**

The Neighborhood Enhancement Program is a component of the Community Enhancement Program and is designed to provide a funding source for neighborhood communities who wish to enhance the appearance of their neighborhood and community. Staff has specifically targeting Homeowners Associations and the Community Oriented Governance (COG) in the past. Several communities that have received grants in the past are reapplying and/or are requesting grants for several projects within their community. The yearly funding for this program in the past has been \$30,000. Applications are received once a year in the spring, with work to be completed by December 31 of the same year. This year the funds were increased to a total of \$50,000. As the new Parks, Recreation and Library Advisory Board moves forward, it has been encouraged to consider other community projects with some of the funding.

The Street Tree Give-Away Program has Westminster citizens fill out a short entry form that includes instructions for receiving a tree. A raffle will be held in September to draw 80-100 “winners” that will receive a 2” caliper, balled and burlapped tree. The tree must be planted within 10 feet from back of sidewalk, along a public street. A contractor will be hired to plant all the trees in late September/early October. Care of the tree will be the residents’ responsibility.

To promote this new plan, entry forms will be placed in several publications, including the fall activities guide, City Edition, City libraries and Westminster Faire.

This program meets the following Strategic Plan Principles:

- Principle B: A Choice of Desirable Neighborhoods - Means 3- Having neighbors taking pride, contributing to make the neighborhood better
- Principle C: Beautiful by Design - Means 1- Having a visually pleasing community with minimal visual clutter - Means 5- Having aesthetically pleasing landscaping through use of water conservation design - Means 6- Having attractive, well maintained streetscapes, businesses and public spaces
- Principle H: Residents are engaged - Means 4- Involving residences through volunteer activities

Respectfully submitted,



J. Brent McFall  
City Manager



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

Information Only Staff Report  
June 5, 2006



SUBJECT: Semper Farm Master Plan

PREPARED BY: Vicky Bunsen, Community Development Programs Coordinator

**Summary Statement:**

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council. Staff has completed the Master Plan for Semper Farm and a copy is attached for City Council's information. Pursuant to this master plan, the Street Division has finished the new access drive and parking area, the Utilities Division installed the water tap and meter for the community garden, and the community garden has been built by the Streets Division, Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) and many volunteers, including Open Space volunteers, DUG volunteers, and the gardeners themselves.

The State Historical Fund has provided a \$9,900 grant to fund the historic structures assessment and SlaterPaull Architects are working on that project. The Westminster Legacy Foundation has provided a \$3,000 grant to help with apple orchard restoration and fundraising for additional private donations for that purpose is underway. It is anticipated that crusher-fines path construction and interpretative signage for the historical and botanical points of interest will be completed with volunteer labor and grant funding over the next one to two years.

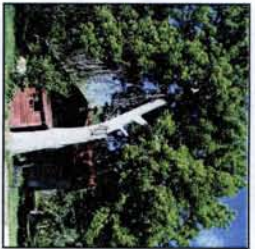
Respectfully submitted,

  
J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

Attachment

## Charles and Julia Semper Farm Introduction

The four-acre Charles and Julia Semper Farm is a historic landmark located northwest of West 92nd Avenue and Pierce Street in Westminster. The farmhouse was originally built in 1880 by Charles and Julia Semper, who homesteaded 160 acres.



Existing farmhouse

The 1880 portion of the house represents an example of the environment of land-grant homesteaders. The design, construction method, and history of this pioneer home are significant to the educational value of the site.

The low barn was built in the early 20th century and used for livestock. Other outbuildings on the Farm were removed in the late 20th century, leaving the farmhouse and barn as the primary remaining structures from the pioneer and farming eras of the Farm.

The Sempers occupied the Farm from 1880 until Mr. Semper's death in 1917. The Farm was then acquired by Greek immigrant John Allison and the Allison family owned the property until it was purchased by the City of Westminster in 1989.

Having few residents and little disturbance over the past 125 years, the site is of interest to archaeology students who have used the site to identify the locations of former buildings and learn more about life on this pioneer farm. The site includes ruins



Student excavating



Old foundation

of what is possibly a very old privy, a newer privy, a brick-lined historic well, a more modern well, and remnants of an irrigation ditch lateral.

This site plan provides a physical framework for concepts that could be implemented at this site, including restoration of buildings associated with a type of farm historically found in the north Jefferson County area, restoration of the cultivated landscape to demonstrate historic orchard and garden uses, community gardens, educational and interpretive resources for the benefit of school children as well as other visitors, and creation of a gathering place that will invite picnics, field trips and entertainment.



Community gardening

The plan provides for narrow, crusher fine paths throughout the Farm that will provide access to historical and botanical points of interest for visitors. Interpretive signs and materials will be developed for the benefit of visitors.

In addition to the specific points of interest detailed in this plan, further materials will be provided to describe other important historical facts in this area, including the Cherokee Trail/Overland Wagon Road that reputedly used the current Pierce Street alignment, the role of irrigation and the railroads in the development of the area, the role of Charles Semper in establishing a school, and other historical information about the village of Semper that grew up as a result of the Sempers' settlement of the area.





**Guide to specific interpretive points**

- A Grove of Riparian Silver Poplar Trees
- B Tree Stump
- C Champion Apple Tree
- D Apple Orchard
- E Volunteer Apple Trees
- F Stump of Walnut Tree
- G Grove of Cherries
- H Grove of Chokecherries
- I Green Ash Tree
- J Apple Orchard
- K Black Locust Tree
- L Mulberry Trees
- M Cultivated Roses
- N Wild Roses
- O Currants

**Semper Farm Botanical Interpretive Plan**

April 2006

**Charles and Julia Semper Farm Botanical Interpretive Points**

**A** Grove of Riparian Silver Poplar Trees (*Populus alba*). These trees grow along what was once a lateral irrigation ditch that extended from one of the large canals to crops north of the site.

**B** Tree Stump. An example of the size achieved by the well-irrigated historic poplars on the Farm.

**C** Champion Apple Tree (*Malus* sp.). As of the date of this site plan, the largest common apple tree in the state of Colorado; it is 110 inches in circumference and 41' high.



Old apple tree

**D** Apple Orchard. The orchard area includes mature apple trees as well as cherry trees and stumps of black walnut trees. The area will be pruned and new trees will be planted to replace the dead wood.

**E** Volunteer Apple Trees. These trees spread from the original orchard area, perhaps from seeds dropped by people or animals. The old irrigation ditch provided a good environment for these trees to take hold.

**F** Stump of Walnut Tree (*Juglans nigra*). The stump at the east side of the apple orchard appears to have been 100 years old prior to its demise due to the 2002-03 drought. Another large black walnut tree on the banks of the irrigation canals also died during this drought.

**G** Grove of Cherries. Many *Prunus* varieties grow on the Farm, including sour cherries and chokecherries. *Prunus* varieties hybridize (cross-pollinate) easily, resulting in many cherry types of bushes on the Farm. Food for birds and animals.

**H** Grove of Chokecherries. Native to Colorado mountains, provide food for birds and animals.

**I** Green Ash Tree (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*). Provides luminescent yellow fall leaf color, as well as shade against the hot summer sun.



Green ash tree

**J** Black Locust Tree (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)  
**K** Mulberry Trees. Not native to Colorado, good wildlife food.



L Cultivated Roses

M Wild Roses

**N** Currant bushes, either native or cultivated, grow in many locations on the Farm and the thickets along the irrigation canals.





**Guide to specific interpretive points**

- ⓐ Community Garden
- ⓑ Trail along Irrigation Canals
- ⓒ Brick-lined Well
- ⓓ Newer Well and Pumphouse
- ⓔ 1880 Homesteaders' House
- ⓕ Horse Barn
- ⓖ Privy Collapse
- ⓗ Newer Privy Structure
- ⓓ Historic Access
- ⓓ Parking Area
- ⓓ Irrigation Ditch Lateral
- ⓓ Landscape Buffer
- ⓓ Existing Block Garage

**WESTMINSTER**  
**Semper Farm**  
**Historic Interpretive Plan**

April 2006

**Charles and Julia Semper Farm Historical Interpretive Points**

**O** Community Garden. A 24-plot community garden is planned, to be built by volunteers with water installed by the City to serve the garden.

**P** Farmers' High Line Canal Trail. This trail is a major pedestrian and bicycle corridor, extending across the north metropolitan area and connecting with numerous other trails. A trail easement exists on the Official Development Plan of the Tri-City Baptist Church to the west and the Trail is expected to be relocated in the future to follow parallel to West 92nd Lane on Church property, then cross West 92nd Lane and continue on City open space and along the railroad tracks to Wadsworth Boulevard. This riparian area is characterized by very large old trees, a diverse understory of native shrubs, and grasses. The old trees make this a particularly valuable area by providing habitat for cavity-dependent species.

**Q** Brick-lined Well. This may be the original well on the Farm.

**R** New Well and Pumphouse. Installed in mid-20th century.



Brick-lined historic well

**S** 1880 Homesteaders' House. The two-story western portion of the house was built by Charles and Julia Semper under the Homestead Act in the 1880s. The eastern portion was built by the Allison family in 1961. Possible exterior and interior restoration of the house will be assessed and, if feasible, the house will be restored for public or non-profit use. Possible uses include museum, offices, meeting place and artist/writer retreat. Access and parking will be adjusted to suit future uses as needed.

**T** Horse Barn. Built in the early 20th century, this barn was used for livestock. An architectural assessment will be conducted at the same time the house is assessed and restoration is planned.



Horse barn

**U** Privy Collapse. This site may be assessed by archaeologists.

**V** Newer Privy Structure. This structure will contribute to the historic landscape of the Farm and will be retained. It is not known at this time whether it stands in its original location.

**W** Historic Entrance to Farm. The Sempers and the Allison accessed the Farm via a bridge across the two irrigation canals from what is now West 92nd Avenue.

**X** Parking. This gravel 14-space parking area will serve gardeners, visitors to the historic Farm and users of the Farmers' High Line Canal Trail. A new access point will be built from Pierce Street to the parking area. Trail access is provided to the Farmers' High Line Canal Trail at the east and west of the Semper Farm site.



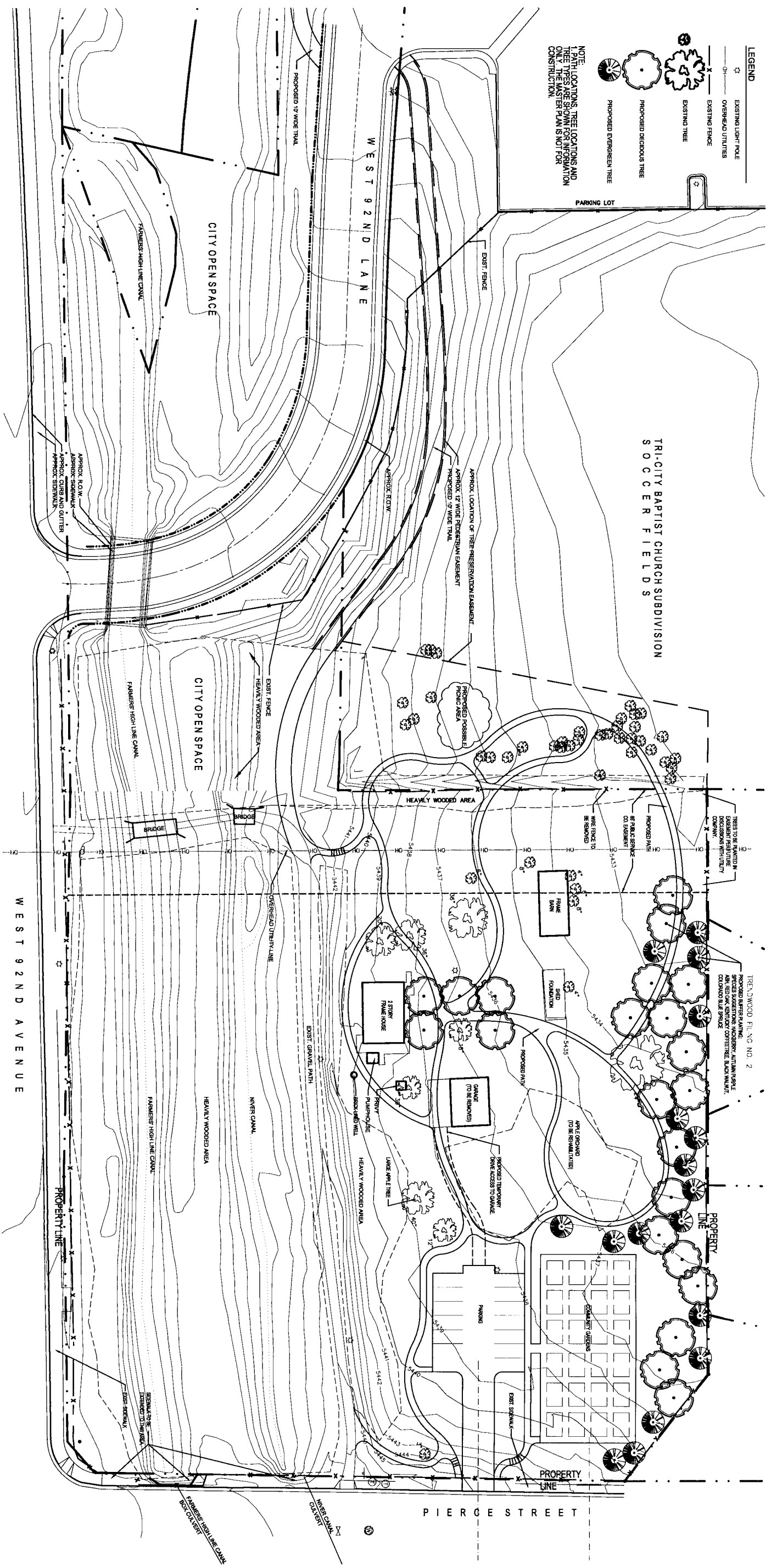
Irrigation ditch lateral

**Y** Lateral Irrigation Ditch Remains. Lateral irrigation ditch that extended from one of the large canals to crops north of the site.

**Z** A significant landscaped buffer is planned along the entire north boundary abutting the existing single family homes to screen the backyard fences from Farm visitors and also to provide privacy to adjacent residents.

**AA** The existing block garage, built in 1961, does not contribute to the historical interpretation of the site and is intended for removal, possibly at the same time that the house is renovated. When the use of the house is better defined, the use of the garage site will also be defined.

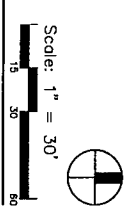
- LEGEND**
- EXISTING LIGHT POLE
  - OVERHEAD UTILITIES
  - EXISTING FENCE
  - EXISTING TREE
  - PROPOSED DECIDUOUS TREE
  - PROPOSED EVERGREEN TREE
- NOTE:**  
 THE LOCATIONS, TREE TYPES AND TREE TYPES ARE SHOWN FOR INFORMATION ONLY. THE MASTER PLAN IS NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION.



# Semper Farm

## Master Plan

April 2006



Lime Green Design, Inc.