

A Brief History of the York Neighborhood Association (YNA) (Source documents: YNA newsletters and Archive files; compiled by Anne Mackie)

1970s:

Originally called the YNO (York Neighborhood Organization), the YNA was formed in the summer of 1976. Leaders were Edward and Barbara Simmers, who lived in the 1300 block of Humboldt St. From its inception, the YNA was actively engaged in neighborhood planning and park development. Efforts of its first year:

1. Prevention of a rezoning of property at Humboldt and Lakeway, which prevented development of fast food restaurants along this strip.
2. Requested that the State Highway Commissioners close the Lakeway I-5 freeway exits and reroute traffic from I-5 to the State and Samish exits. Didn't happen.
3. Lessened the impact of the to-be-built Holiday Inn (now called, Lakeway Inn/Best Western). Gained use of the hotel pool for neighborhood, if pre-arranged. (Not something that we have pursued.)
4. Worked to support the city's purchase of the old Franklin School property to be acquired for future use as a park.
5. 1977 - Successfully won a law suit that prevents apartment buildings from being built on single lots that are adjacent to vacant lots. (At that time, York was zoned R-M - residential multi.)
6. Acquired Federal Block Grant funds to purchase Rock Hill Park, preventing the construction of a 13-unit apartment complex on this property. A benefit dance, street sales, and petition drives were part of the grass roots organizing.
7. 1977 Conducted a block-by-block survey of the neighborhood to determine concerns and goals and to organize against commercial development at the corner of Humboldt and Lakeway.
8. 1977 - Mayor Hertz founded the Citizens' Advisory Committee to the Mayor (predecessor of MNAC) and a York rep was appointed. 1977 the City purchased the former Franklin School site as a possible park; \$126,000 set aside for parks in York and the "rock hill" in 1300 block of Iron St. is considered.
9. In 1978 the YNA initiated discussion to "dead-end" Humboldt & Grant streets south of Lakeway Dr. to reduce cut-through, speeding traffic. This was completed in 1990.

1980

Board of Directors: Kirsti Charlton, Michael Chiavario, Charlotte Giltner, Dave Hall, Homer McCluer, Bob Miller, Dagmar Moothart, Mary Ostlund, Linda Rietz, Barbara Simmers

1. This was a period of infrastructure rebuilding with Bylaws drafted in 1989, election of officers, New Projects: Rock Hill - efforts continued to create a park. An Environmental Awareness Committee was formed. A Social Committee was formed.

1989: President, Michael Chiavario

1990: President, Michael Chiavario; VP, Wally Dunn; Secty., Lynn Torno; Treas., Mary Mullen

1991: President, Tom Scott; Secty, Lynn Torno

1992-93: President, Anne Mackie; VP, Rod Taylor; Secty., Jan Callahan; Treas. Marilyn Miller

1994: President, Anne Mackie; VP, Doug Starcher; Treas. Marilyn Miller

1995-96: President, Doug Starcher

1997-98: President, Dan Hammill; VP, Kelly Bashaw; Treas. Alan Mullen

1999: President, Warren Sheay; VP, Laura Witt; Treas., Alan Mullen

During the 1990s:

1. Fundraising for a new playground at Franklin Park: yard sales, craft sales, soup dinner/silent auction. YNA received a \$8,000 grant to purchase new playground equipment and pay for other improvements in the park.
2. Won victory in barricading Grant and Humboldt streets at Edward St. to prevent cut-through traffic, speeding, and congestion through the neighborhood.
3. Organized a "Street Tree Planting" project that got trees planted in the parking strips.
4. Organized effort to confront landlords about problems with rental properties.
5. Annual Earth Day celebrations & Spring cleanup with US Air National Guard trucks and volunteers cleaning up the alleys. Dumpsters furnished to help people clean up the junk.
6. In 1994 a \$10,000 grant was acquired through the Neighborhood Initiatives Program to add lighting, improve trails, new signage, and picnic tables.
7. Interest in preserving the "Victorian and family character of the neighborhood."
8. Involvement in the city's Comprehensive Plan document.
9. Issues of traffic congestion, parking, and crime were frequently topics of YNA meetings. Stop signs were acquired for James St. and a four-way stop was installed at Nelson's Market.
10. Annual Dumpster Day continued.
11. Block Watch meetings were organized.
12. Held meetings related to the City Comprehensive Plan Amendments and attended meetings at City Hall.
13. 1991 grant for \$8000 for playground equipment at Franklin Park;
14. The Wine & Roses Garden Club was formed in the early 1990s.
15. YNA was part of the newly formed Bellingham Neighborhood Coalition (BNC), an umbrella group of city activists with a neighborhood focus.
16. Neighborhood garage sale held.
17. The new City Parks Dept. "Greenways Project" was introduced.

2000-10

2000: President, Warren Sheay; VP Laura Witt; Treas. Alan Mullen

2001: President, Warren Sheay; VP, Lisa McShane; Treas. Alan Mullen

2002: President Mary Fraser; VP Lisa McShane; Tres. Alan Mullen

1. Awarded \$2,200 for "Welcome to York Sign" grant from City's Small and Simple Grant Fund.
2. participated in National Night Out Against Crime
3. Worked on improving homeowner & student renter relationships.
4. Sponsored neighborhood yard sale.
5. "Yorkenstein" Halloween party and pumpkin carving contest.

6. involved in neighborhood planning and prevented a reduced parking zone from being extended east of Ellis St. into the neighborhood.

2003

President Mary Fraser; VP Carolyn Mulder, Secty/Treas. Anne Mackie, Board members: Laura Witt, Teresa Schmidt-Wiggs, David Schmidt-Wiggs, Tom Scott

1. Received \$2500 from City for a "Welcome to York" sign.
2. Annual neighborhood dumpster day clean up.
3. Began work on historic district
4. Wine & Roses Garden Club formed
5. Continued work on improving Rock Hill and Franklin parks
6. City Council began discussing a new ordinance to hold landlords responsible for their rentals.
7. A spot rezone at Lakeway and Humboldt in area 5B was stopped, which would have allowed bulldozing of single-family houses to build a 35 unit apartment complex.
8. Historic Preservation Committee officially formed to begin research on homes.
9. Spring clean-up organized
10. Sponsored community forum on growth and how it will impact York., June. and issued a survey.
11. York T-shirts produced for sale
12. Family Fun Follies
13. Discussed Whatcom Creek enhancements with Parks Dept.
14. Work parties and potluck suppers held at Rock Hill Park.
15. held meetings with Code Enforcement officers to discuss neighborhood problems (overcrowded parking, litter, trash, loud parties).

2004:

Board members: Jan Driscoll, Greg Keeler, Oso Keeler, Anne Mackie (Secty/Treas), Carolyn Mulder, Chris Neumann, Teresa Schmidt, Tom Scott, Habiba Sial, David Wiggs

1. The I-5 Freeway Safety & Sound Wall gets installed in the northern portion of the neighborhood after years of neighborhood lobbying to get this amenity to reduce noise. The YNA continues to work on extending the wall to the southern portion of the neighborhood.
2. The YNA led a fight against a "Spot Rezone" in the southern portion of the neighborhood (Area 5B) that would have allowed a 35-unit apartment complex in the 1200 blocks of Grant & Humboldt streets.
3. YNA lobbies City Council to draft an ordinance to hold landlords responsible for the conditions in their rentals.
4. Work begins on becoming a National Historic District.
5. YNA conducted a neighborhood survey which identified top concerns: clean-up of rundown buildings, crime, and protection of historic homes.
6. Dumpster Day continues.
7. Council working on new ordinance to deal with landlords.

2005:

President ?; VP ? Laura Witt; Secty/Treas. Anne Mackie

Board members Judy Bachman, Vale Bates, Oso Keeler, Greg Keeler, Amelia Lunde, Carolyn Mulder, Tom Scott, Joe VanLaeken, David Wainwright

1. Published the York Historic Map and Walking Tour, using \$2500 from City Small & Simple Grant award.
2. 2005 York initiated a pilot project with the City Attorney's office to provide neighborhood service work for alcohol-related offenses committed in the York neighborhood.
3. Seed money to move forward with planning proposals learned at the Planning Academy was awarded to YNA: \$2,500.
4. A \$2500 grant from the City's Small & Simple Grants was awarded to install a Butterfly Habitat at Rock Hill Park.
5. The Franklin Park Planning Task Force formed.
6. New I-5 Wall is christened Sept. 18, 2005
7. The first holiday caroling and horse wagon ride is held.

2006:

President Tom Scott; VP Anne Mackie; Secty. Elisabeth Stark; Treas. Helen Jackson. Board members: Judy Bachman, Jessica Bandstra, Barbara Davenport, Greg Keeler, Oso Keeler, Amelia Lunde, Carolyn Mulder, Elliot Smith, David Wainwright

1. YNA begins planning to build a new playground at Franklin Park.
2. Volunteers continue to work on neighborhood plan updates, garden club activities, dumpster clean-up, and historic preservation research.
3. YNA successfully leads a rezone of Area 5 north and south of Lakeway Dr. to protect the single family character of the neighborhood. Area 5 was rezoned to Single Family from Multi-Family.
4. A petition drive was run to show support for protecting historic houses.
5. Members participate in the city's Planning Academy
6. Received a Neighborhood Initiative Program grant of \$150,000. The Franklin Park Committee sponsored the Franklin Market, which raised \$450. A \$2500 grant from the City was awarded to begin restoration of the Franklin Street Island Berm.

2007 -

President Tom Scott; VP Anne Mackie; Secty. Elisabeth Stark; Treas. Helen Jackson. Board members: Jessica Bandstra, Jeff Bates, Sarah Bates, Seth Cool, Barbara Davenport, Leslie Hill, Nick Hill, George Liepart, Amelia Lunde, Lisa McShane, Carolyn Mulder, Elliot Smith

1. Petition drive to get a crosswalk installed on Lakeway Dr. between Grant and Franklin street garnered over 400 signatures to be presented to the City Council.
2. YNA was awarded a \$1500 grant to host the Franklin School Reunion in Franklin Park.
3. \$1200 tree planting grant from the City to plant street trees.
4. Discussions continue with Parks about trails along Whatcom Creek through York.

5. Begin discussions about Neighborhood Plan Update project. Held group walk-throughs in the neighborhood and formed subcommittees to discuss housing, zoning, traffic, pedestrian safety, and open space/parks.
6. Sponsored a Franklin Park School Reunion Picnic, got \$1500 in City grant funds.
7. Dumpster Day held
8. Got a city grant of \$1200 for tree planting.
9. City was awarded a \$150,000 federal grant to research historic neighborhoods, which included York.
10. National Night Out Against Crime celebrated.
11. Neighbors fought back and won against an over-sized apartment development planned for the corner of Grant and Potter st. The owner wanted to build a 5-unit apartment complex, but received permission to only build a three-unit.
12. A Disaster Planning Committee was formed to begin a "mapping" project for the neighborhood to locate tools, skills, and things useful in an emergency.
13. A new committee formed: RATS - recycle and trash society - to organize trash pickup on the weekends.
14. First holiday horse wagon ride & caroling party held at Nelson's Market.

2008:

President: Elisabeth Stark; VP Jeremy Nunnikhoven; Secty. Jessica Bandstra; Treas. Helen Jackson

1. Franklin Park received a \$150,000 Neighborhood Initiative Project grant from the city
2. Committees exist for: Planning, Disaster Preparedness, Franklin Park, Quality of Life, RATS and Dumpster Day, Wine & Roses Garden Club, Rock Hill Park.
3. Held "York Pride Night" after a drive-by shooting incident on Potter St. and a fatal stabbing on James St.
4. Conducted a survey to determine what issues concern neighbors most.
5. Held a series of York Planning Committee Meetings to discuss the neighborhood plan amendments, which were submitted to the City by the end of 2008.
6. York participated in meetings about the Samish Way Urban Village plan.
7. Received a city Small & Simple \$1,200 grant to plant street trees.
8. York benefits from a national Preserve America grant of \$150,000 awarded to the City to do historic research, which ultimately resulted in the northern portion of York being designated a National Historic District in 2009.
9. Participated in National Night Out Against Crime.
10. York submitted petitions to the city to get two crosswalks installed in the neighborhood: 1) at Lakeway Dr. and Grant St.; 2) at Maple St. by McKay's Tap House. Funds came from a Community Development Block grant (\$100K) and Real Estate Excise Tax (\$50K).

2009

President: Tom Scott; VP Lena Bagwell; Secty. Jessica Bandstra; Treas. Vale Bates.

Board members:

1. Numerous meeting held to formulate amendments to the York Neighborhood Plan.
2. Participation in the Samish Way Urban Village planning process.

3. Summer of 2009: Construction began on Franklin Park's improvements. Many volunteer work parties were held. Celebration held Nov. 2009.
4. Rock Hill Park playgroup forms.
5. Garden Club organizes a tour of York gardens for fundraising for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life.
6. YNA becomes involved with the City Gate Apt. offender re-entry housing program.
7. Continued work on rental housing licensing and education about being a good landlord.
8. Holiday wagon ride and caroling party held.
9. Urged city to install crosswalks at Lakeway Dr. and Grant St. at Samish Way and E. Maple.

2010

President Anne Mackie; VP Kirsti Charlton; Secty. Jessica Bandstra; Treas. Lisa Anderson. Board members: Vale Bates, Chris Collison, Gary Gerard, Nick Hartrich, Don Hilty-Jones, Dave Hopkinson, Helen Jackson, Lesley Keenholts, Jake Lunden, Carolyn Mulder, Carrie Schwarz, Tom Scott, Chris Wolf

1. More public hearings and meetings on Neighborhood Plan Amendments.
2. Franklin Park and Rock Hill Park work parties continue.
3. Quality Committee meetings held.
4. Worked with Dept. of Transportation to discuss extending the I-5 sound wall south of Lakeway Dr. on Humboldt. Neighborhood urges constructions and demands a noise study be conducted, which it was but lack of state funds prevented wall from becoming a priority.
5. Continue work on rental housing licensing.
6. Neighbors get involved in a variety of garden projects.
7. National York Historic District is approved by the National Parks Dept.
8. Begin working for a rezone of Ellis St. Area 9 to preserve the historic houses on this street.
9. Graffiti became a bigger problem that the neighborhood responded to.
10. Work begins on getting street signs for the National Historic District.
11. City Council approves York's rezone request of Ellis St. that provides new zoning to help preserve historic housing.
12. Earth Day celebrated at Franklin Park.
13. Rock Hill butterfly habitat rejuvenated -
14. Educational meetings held on How to Create Your Own Backyard Habitat
15. Began a petition drive requesting that the City require landlords to obtain a rental license and inspection

2011

President & MNAC Rep: Kirsti Charlton; VP Don Hilty-Jones; Secty. Jessica Banstra; Treas. Lisa Anderson. Board members: Judy Hopkinson, Dave Hopkinson, Helen Jackson, Anne Mackie, Bippy McMaster, Carlyne Milling, Carolyn Mulder, Carrie Schwarz, Tom Scott - MNAC Alternate

1. Began working with residents of City Gate Apts. to involve them in the weekly trash pickups for RATS, later named STARS.
2. Two York house fires in January bring attention to the poor conditions of some rental homes and work to create rental inspections intensifies.
3. Education program on Indoor Air Quality sponsored by NW Air Quality Agency]
4. Rash of burglaries concerns residents and police.
5. Continue work with Western's Campus Community Coalition
6. Franklin Park: Earth Day work party in April; Make A Difference Day in Oct.
7. Neighbors start the free give-away kiosk in the 1400 block of Franklin St.
8. The Yorker published a list of York Heritage Trees.
9. Meeting on Disaster Preparedness held in June.
10. The Dept. of Transportation, urged on by YNA, conducts a noise study of the southern section of the neighborhood. The noise level qualifies us for a sound wall but no state funds are available.

2012

President & MNAC Rep: Kirsti Charlton; VP Don Hilty-Jones; Secty. Judy Hopkinson; Treas. Lisa Anderson. Board members: David Hopkinson, Mary Loquvam, Anne Mackie, Carolyne Milling, Mark Schofield, Carrie Schwarz, Tom Scott - MNAC Alt.

1. Historic costume party held in March to celebrate nomination of National Historic District.
2. Speaker from the State Historic office to talk about York's nomination.
3. \$1456 raised by neighbor donations for street signs to identify the York National Historic District.
4. More education about bringing butterflies to your gardens and enhancing the Rock Hill Butterfly Habitat.
5. Keeping Bees gets bigger in York.
6. Orchard and garden project begun; harvest festival held.
7. Volunteer efforts pick up at Franklin and Rock Hill parks
8. Annual Picnic has third annual Harvest Table and kids parade
9. Holiday Party traditions continue with garden club's progressive dinner and horse wagon and caroling parties.
10. York and Sehome neighborhoods co-host National Night Out Against Crime at the WECU building with a pizza party.

2013

President Don Hilty-Jones; VP Mark Schofield; Secty. Judy Hopkinson; Treas. Lisa Anderson. **Board members:**

1. Work focuses on urging City Council to pass a rental registration and inspections ordinance; neighborhood meeting with Councilman Jack Weiss
2. Education about birding in York.
3. YNA's Orchard & Farm Committee plants fruit trees.
4. "Take Teddy To Tea" party for kids celebrated York's historic past, April.
5. Meetings held to discuss the riot at WWU
6. Volunteer work at both parks.

7. Cosponsored National Night Out Against Crime with Sehome neighborhood on Samish Way.
8. Meeting held about parties and October riot.
9. 10th Anniversary holiday progressive garden club dinner party.

2014

President Don Hilty-Jones; VP Mark Schofield; Secty. Anne Mackie; Treas. Lisa Anderson. Board members: Cory Anderson, Byron Bagwell, Kirsti Charlton, Katie Dunne, Judy Hopkinson, Brian Kennedy, Tom Scott

1. York and Sehome neighborhoods address crime problems on Samish Way and work to get problem motels closed down.
2. Educational programs held about hunger and homeless; spring gardening; rental housing safety and licensing; recycling. New City Council member Roxanne Murphy spoke at the March meeting.
3. City Gate Apt. residents continue to help with bi-monthly trash pickups.
4. Franklin Park work parties held throughout year and on Earth Day in April.
5. Efforts continue to urge City Council to pass a rental housing inspection and registration ordinance; vote passed in Dec.
6. York and Sehome co-sponsor National Night Out Against events.
7. Dumpster Day celebrates its 35th year.
8. Holiday horse wagon & caroling party celebrates its 10th year.
9. New park plan implemented for Rock Hill Park.
10. First annual Kids' Talent Show held at the annual picnic.

2015

President Lisa Anderson; Vice Pres. Tom Scott; Secty. Anne Mackie; Treas. Don Hilty-Jones; Board members Cory Anderson, Paige Anderson, Robb Correll, Kirsti Charlton, Kim Owen, Mark Schofield, Edward Tabor

1. Educational topics for General meetings included: home air quality with Dave Blake, NW Clean Air Agency; Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, BPD Officer Osterkamp; stormwater pollution and prevention; earthquake preparedness and emergency planning; and the January annual meeting had Mayor Kelli Linville, Council Ward 3 rep Dan Hammill, and Planning Director Rick Sepler.
2. York continued working with Sehome neighborhood to get the Aloha Motel closed and rid the Samish Way area of crime problems.
3. YNA Board members participated in the City's kick-off for the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Dumpster Day was held for the 36th time!!!
5. Volunteers continued to improve Rock Hill Park and Franklin Park.
6. In March, the City Council passed the rental registration and inspection ordinance which YNA had supported for many years.
7. In June the Board organized a petition to prevent construction of two mega-plex rooming houses to be built in the 1600 block of Iron St. This is an area of historic

homes and is single family zoned. The two houses were advertised as rentals with seven bedrooms.

8. YNA requested the City to begin work on design guidelines for new construction in historic districts.
9. Held the 11th Annual Holiday Horse Wagon and Caroling party at Nelson's Market.

2016

President Don Hilty-Jones; Vice Pres. Tom Scott; Secty/Treas Anne Mackie; Board members Cory Anderson, Ben Larson, Kim Niederhauser, Kim Owen, Audrey Roberts; Mark Schofield, Edward Tabor

1. Educational programs included: Public Safety in York with Police Chief Cook and Officer Osterkamp; information about "Town & Gown" programs to bring students and neighborhoods into better relations with speakers from WWU and WCC; issues about waste, water protection, and prevention of rodents; and the issue of homelessness.
2. YNA sponsored a large community forum in September about housing concerns with approximately 140 attendees from 15 different neighborhoods.
3. Board members continued to participate in many public hearings and work sessions of the Planning Commission and City Council to address updates to the City Comprehensive Plan.
4. Along with the Sehome neighborhood, York supported the renaming of Franklin Park to become the Harriett Spanel Park in honor and memory of the former State Senator who had been instrumental in the early days of getting the park established.
5. We welcomed new housing projects to York: Eleanor Apts. in the site of the old Wilsons' Motors lot broke ground; and Lydia Place purchased the Bell Tower church building to support its program of housing for homeless women and children.
6. Student members of the Board participated in Lobby Day with elected leaders.
7. Rental registration of rental properties throughout the city was completed; and York's rental inspections began in November.
8. Great work parties were organized at Franklin and Rock Hill Parks.
9. Student board members participated in the "Don't Trash Bellingham" anti-garbage and furniture dumping education program initiated by WWU and the City as part of a Tenant Waste Task Force.
10. York got two "little libraries" set up by neighbor volunteers.
11. A house fire in January that displaced six women students helped bring more attention to the need for rental inspections and safety standards.
12. Annual Dumpster Day to clean up the trash was held in June.
13. Annual picnic held in September.
14. 12th Annual Holiday Caroling Party & Horse Wagon Rides held in December.