



Welcome!

In This Issue

Whittier Walking
Tour

Old House Fair

Change May Be
Coming To Your
Neighborhood

Inspection

Quick Links

[Membership](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[Help us! Become a
Sponsor.](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

March 2009 Newsletter

Denver's Old House Society is a new nonprofit dedicated to educating owners of old (50+ years) houses and helping them protect their neighborhoods.

Dear Old-House Lover,

We're here just for you! Now you have a source in Denver for all of your old-house needs.

Please join us and become a member today! [Membership](#) Our "cottage" membership is just \$25 per year. All of our memberships are reasonably priced with benefits to you included.

We do fun and educational events, such as guided walking tours, workshops on Saturday mornings, events in old houses, and all-day fairs with lots of presentations and exhibitors. [Events](#)

We do serious business, too, by bringing attention to houses scheduled for demolition, neighborhoods trying to protect themselves from intensive development, and information about Denver's new zoning code, Blueprint Denver. [Protect](#)

We offer lots of resources and referrals to craftspeople and professionals who specialize in old houses. [Resources](#) If you are in the market for an old house, go to our [old-houses for sale](#) section on our Web site.

Lots of volunteer opportunities are available. We recognize all volunteer efforts. [Volunteer](#)

You are always welcome. Please join us and become a member today! [Membership](#)

Coming Soon - Saturday, March 21!

Tour Whittier, one of Denver's Oldest Neighborhoods -- See the Victorian Splendor Once Enjoyed by Our Pioneers!

Spend part of a lovely Saturday afternoon, March 21, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on a guided walking tour, which focuses on picturesque Victorian homes in one of Denver's oldest neighborhoods, Whittier. After the tour, enjoy light refreshments at one of these Victorian homes. To register for the event, contact Denver's Old House Society, Inc. - 303-916-4359 or go register on line. [Whittier](#) . The cost is only \$10 person.

Along the way, you will learn about a Queen Anne home originally owned by Charles Miller, an undertaker. (Business was located elsewhere!) Another Queen Anne home we will see was originally owned by architect John Huddart. Neighborhood lore says that there was once a tunnel from the house under Humboldt Street to provide access to a dairy, and that the tunnel was used during prohibition to hide illegal liquor. And -- we have more fun tales along the way!

The Whittier neighborhood is bounded on the north and south by Martin Luther King Boulevard and 23rd Avenue and on the east and west by York and Downing Streets. The neighborhood's name stems from its Whittier Elementary School named in honor of a founding member of the Republican Party, John Greenleaf Whittier, known for his poems about the injustices of slavery. The Whittier neighborhood has been racially integrated since the 1890's and the Whittier name signifies the role this neighborhood has played in Denver's segregation and integration history.

The developers of Whittier were among Denver's earliest citizens and were leaders in agriculture, mining, railroading, education manufacturing, retailing, and government during the formation of the city. The neighborhood was home to many of Denver's finest craftsmen, who contributed to the architectural details of

some of the community's most significant structures. Their skills are evidenced in ornate details found on many of the homes.

Old wood windows can last more than 100 years - repair - don't replace! Spring is a good time to inspect windows.

What to look for --

- Is there any water damage on window sills and any horizontal brick, stone or masonry areas?
- How are the windows and doors? Any broken glass?
- Do they fit properly?
- Is any of the wood rotted?

Denver's Old House Fair, May 2, Offers Old-House Owners Oodles of Information -- (Sssssh! A Secret will be Revealed - Old Houses are Very "Green" - Really!)

The Old House Fair is scheduled for Saturday, May 2, at the historic Masonic Temple Event Center, 3550 Federal Boulevard, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cost is \$10 per person, payable at the door or online. [Fair](#).

The Fair offers 12 workshops on subjects pertinent to old-house owners, exhibits of numerous companies and organizations with products or services for homes built over 50 years ago, and tours of the event center, for many years open only to Masons. Once again, at the "Ask an Architect" booth, architects are available for a free 15-minute consultation on space.

A well-kept secret will be revealed at the Fair: Old houses are energy efficient. Old is the new green! A series of workshops, designated as the green track, will be offered. Topics include: Restoring and maintaining old wood windows, cooling an old house, sustainable materials for an old house, photovoltaic panels

for electricity, and an energy efficiency Xcel Energy presentation.

Other workshops include: saving and caring for old wood floors, wallpaper, updating kitchens with the look of yesteryear, porches, space in and out of the old house, and myth and method of historic designation.

Join architects Tim and Kris Hoehn, who recently completed a large historic restoration of the Temple, and center manager, John Layton, for a tour of the Historic Highland Masonic Temple Center, an 81 year-old treasured landmark, that was just recently opened to the public.

If you would like an exhibit booth or be one of our sponsors, click here - [Booth/Sponsorship](#)

Sponsors for the Denver's Old House Fair so far include: All About Saving Heat, Applewood Plumbing, Heating and Electric, Northwest Denver City Council District No. One, Crabtree Design, Phoenix Window Restoration, Inc., Style 1900, Xcel Energy, and Van Camp's Quality Floors.

Inspecting chimneys is a good idea. A pair of binoculars may be helpful. What to look for:

- Is the chimney leaning?
- How are the bricks? Have any fallen out?
- How's the mortar?

Change May be Coming to Your Neighborhood --

How Blueprint Denver and the Zoning Code Update Could Affect Your Home and "Hood"

By Jude Aiello, public policy chair

Denver's new zoning code is designed to prevent large multiplexes being built next to small homes in neighborhoods identified as "areas of stability."

Even though Denver's new zoning code, called Blueprint Denver, was approved by Denver City Council in 2002 with implementation designated for 2003, the code has not been executed. It is now anticipated that implementation may occur in 2010.

How will this affect your old house and neighborhood? Well, that will depend on where you live and what your neighborhood looks like now.

The majority of Denver's older neighborhoods are designated as "areas of stability," where some change will happen; but, it should be compatible with the type of buildings already there. Neighborhoods with mostly single family homes may have some new homes built in them, but not multiplexes. The size and heights of the new homes are set so that they do not dwarf the existing homes. If you want to find out what category your home falls into, the color coded map is included in the information on Blueprint Denver at [Blueprint](#)

The new code includes mapped out parts of Denver that are "areas of change," where increased density and variety (such as mixed-use buildings) will be allowed. These areas may have living units above businesses and less parking will be available to encourage walking and use of mass transit.

The Denver Zoning Code Update Task Force is expected to visit neighborhoods this May to explain changes to the current zoning code and to finally put the Blueprint Denver vision into practice. (Or, so we hope!)

You can read Jude's entire article on our Web site - [Public Policy](#)

I N S P E C T I O N !!!

A sunny spring day is the perfect time to give your home's exterior an inspection. Your view will not be obstructed by bushes and trees in full leaf.

Before you begin, gather several tools in a canvas bag: notebook, pen, binoculars, camera, a key, and a rock or small

hammer. Begin at the front or back of the house and work your way around.

First, examine the roof (here's where the binoculars come in handy.)

- Are there any missing, broken, or warped shingles or tiles?
- Does the asphalt shingle roof look lumpy or bumpy? (This could be from a shingles below the top layer.) Are there lots of mineral granules on the roof?
- Any pools of water?
- Is the roof sagging?
- How's the flashing around the chimney or steep-sloped areas? Is it sagging or wobbly?

Look in the gray bars of this newsletter for other inspection questions.

The "greenest" house is an old house!

Denver's Old House Society strives to leave a legacy of charming Denver neighborhoods of well-preserved old-houses, sensitively maintained, jewels of the "Queen City of the Plains."

Sincerely,

Denver's Old House Society