

cory merrill neighborhood

Cory Merrill Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Fall 2012



Merrill Goes Green

Since the start of the school year, the excitement from students at Merrill Middle School continues to rise as students explore more opportunities to learn and grow every day. The announcement of Merrill going green and “Meeting Expectations” on the 2011-2012 Denver Public Schools School Performance Framework (SPF), added to this excitement for students, parents and faculty and staff.

The SPF is used to evaluate school performance in terms of student achievement and overall organizational strength using a variety of longitudinal measures.

Denver Public Schools Superintendent Tom Boasberg and Assistant Superintendent Antwan Wilson recently attended Merrill for an event celebrating the release of the district’s SPF results, which included Merrill’s impressive growth in student achievement. “We are extremely proud to announce Merrill has moved to GREEN and Meeting Expectations,” said Principal, Amy Bringedahl. “This is a true testament to the hard work of so many individuals who have dedicated themselves to helping our students succeed,” Bringedahl added.

Merrill was honored to host the event and to have an opportunity to showcase the

hard work and dedication of the Merrill staff, students and community. Merrill parent Lisa Filholm, also attended and expressed her gratitude for having a school like Merrill in her neighborhood. “We know our child is in good hands and we are proud to know

that the vision and professionalism and humanity of these hard-working teachers and administrators are being recognized,” Filholm said. “We will forever be thankful to the creative, welcoming staff and to the firebrand teachers who are preparing these students not

only for high school and college, but for their future as productive, critical-thinking world citizens.”



Left to Right: Merrill Teacher, Steve Eriksson, Superintendent Tom Boasberg, Merrill Principal, Amy Bringedahl, Parent Lauren Forman and student Alex Anadiotis

Interested in learning more about enrollment at Merrill?

Explore More at Merrill Middle School

Open House: November 7, 2012 6-8PM

Parent Tours: Every Friday, 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM
(Call 720-424-0600 to schedule)

Student Shadows: Tuesdays/Thursdays,
8:30 AM – 10:45 AM
(Call 720-424-40624 to schedule)



Lock 'jammers' steal cars in a click

Thieves have developed a sophisticated technique that allows them to drive off with some of the most expensive – and apparently most secure – vehicles available.

By Claire Duffin

If you think your car is safe once you've zapped it with your key fob, then think again.

Thieves have developed a sophisticated technique that allows them to drive off with some of the most expensive – and apparently most secure – vehicles available.

They are using a hi-tech device which can be bought easily online, to get into the car, without the need to even smash a window.

Once inside, they can then access its computer system and, using a second electronic device also available on the internet, reprogramme a blank key to start the vehicle, all in a matter of minutes.

Police have warned that high performance cars across the country are now being taken using this method, with more than 1,000 stolen in this way in the past year in London alone.

Officers became aware of the technique following a spate of seemingly unexplained car thefts, where owners were left baffled as to how their modern car – with keyless entry systems and push start buttons – could have been stolen without the keys being taken.

Car manufacturers say they are looking to close the security loophole. The companies are reluctant to say which models are affected to avoid alerting thieves.

So far, most cases have involved BMWs, made between 2007 and 2011, but experts say this may simply be because the make is the most attractive to criminals.

Keyless entry systems were originally restricted to mainly luxury brands but are now commonplace, meaning hundreds of thousands of vehicles are potentially at risk.

The thefts involve the use of a small, hand-held "jammer" to allow the thieves to get inside the car, without the need for breaking a window. The device, which is made in China and costs as

little as £50, blocks the electronic signal sent by the owner's key to lock the car.

So once the gangs have identified a car to steal, one of them simply needs to stand near it, while armed with a jammier, while the owner attempts to lock it by zapping it.

Once the owner has gone, the thieves can get into the unlocked car and plug in a key-programming computer. They are legally sold in the UK, for use by legitimate auto locksmiths but are now being bought by criminals.

Detective Chief Inspector Mark Hooper, from the Association of Chief Police Officers, said: "Ten years ago you would see a car thief with a jemmy or a slide hammer to pop the window. Now you are more likely to see them some sort of diagnostic equipment – they are getting very clever."

In another case, also from June, Alan Watkins, 42, from Witham, Essex, was jailed for eight years for masterminding the theft of at least 170 luxury cars worth more than £3.5 million. His gang targeted car parks, mostly in Essex, laying in wait as unwitting drivers activated their remote locking.

Manufacturers are working with Thatcham – a research organisation funded by insurance companies – to find a solution, with BMW offering customers a software upgrade to prevent such thefts. Its most recent models are not affected.

Ian Wallace, from Thatcham, said: "We have been avoiding saying it's this car or that car to avoid alerting thieves. It could be any car."

Mercedes, Vauxhall and Nissan said they were unaware of specific issues. Jaguar Land Rover said that its systems could not be reprogrammed in this way.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/9623150/Lock-jammers-steal-cars-in-a-click.html>

Denver Urban Homesteading,

is an urban agricultural center near Downtown Denver in a large commercial-industrial building at 200 Santa Fe Drive, on the corner of 2nd Avenue and Santa Fe Drive.

Our goal is to promote agricultural activities in the Denver metropolitan area for a variety of reasons. First, for sustainability, i.e. renewing and preserving our energy and resources. Second, for growing and raising our own quality food and getting in touch with food sources. Third, for energy conservation. Fourth, for fun. Growing vegetables is fun. Raising food-producing animals is fun. Fifth, because a chicken living in your backyard and playing with a child is probably living a happier life than a chicken living on a factory farm.

We are not a big company, we are not a supermarket and we are not part of the industrial-agricultural complex. If you want local food, quality food, the ability to connect with farmers and neighbors and even get lower prices than supermarkets (yes, we are lower on many items), then c'mon in.

Denver Urban Homesteading is an earth market and part of the DIY (do it yourself) movement. An earth market contains local producers using environmentally sound

and sustainable growing/making methods, preserving the local food culture and helping improve biodiversity. The producers offer food directly to consumers at reasonable prices. The marketplace is a social meeting hub and a place where consumers can get education about food-producing practices.

Local Farmers' Market - Now open!

This market is open every Saturday from 9-3 and it sells high-quality, local* foodstuffs. Come and meet the farmers! We want to strengthen the bond between farmers and consumers. We want you to know where your food comes from and who grows or makes it. Many of these local foods are organic. We accept Mastercard, Visa and SNAP (food stamps).

DO COMPUTERS MAKE YOU CRAZY??

Yeah, me too sometimes, and I work on them for a living: Windows, Internet, Home Networking. 21 years experience. \$50/hr for evening and weekend housecalls. I'm a Cory Merrill neighbor.

Jim Esten:
303-355-3932
jcesten@gmail.com



GIVE DENVER Adopt A Family HOLIDAY DRIVE

Please help us make a difference in one the following ways:

- 1. Adopt-A-Family, Teen or Senior** – Team up with friends, family or co-workers to adopt a foster family, teen in crisis or senior in need. Everyone who registers to Adopt-A-Family will be entered to win a pair of tickets to a special reception at Downtown Aquarium with Wesley Woodyard, invited teammates and Mayor Michael B. Hancock! (No purchase required. To enter to win without adopting a family, select "Ticket Registration Only" under Type of Adoption in registration form below. Winner will be chosen by random drawing on Wednesday, December 5th and notified via e-mail and/or phone on December 5th. If the winner does not respond within 24 hours, a second winner will be randomly selected to receive the tickets instead.)
- 2. Drop-Off a Gift** – Donate new toys, games or other gifts to the GIVE Denver Center at 1200 Federal Blvd. by Monday, December 10, 2012. You can also drop off gifts at any Denver Recreation Center, The Buell Theatre, or The Webb Bldg.
- 3. GIVE a Donation** – Let us do the shopping for you! Monetary donations are 100% tax deductible. Checks can be made out to Denver Human Services with GIVE Denver in the memo line and mailed to: Denver Human Services, ATTN: GIVE Denver, 1200 Federal Blvd., Denver, CO 80204. Additionally, gift cards from Target, Wal-Mart, King Soopers and other stores can be used to help a family purchase food and other items they might not otherwise be able to purchase, and help parents select personal gifts for their children.

Historic Denver Reflects on 5 Years of the Demolition Review Process

By John Olson

Denver's preservation ordinance has been an effective tool for more than 45 years, helping to protect and promote historic places in our community and preserve the vital character that makes Denver unique and vibrant. Preservation in Denver is also an economic success story – driving revitalization efforts from LoDo to Uptown and into our core residential neighborhoods.

In 2006 amendments to the ordinance provided greater notice to the community when a potential historic landmark faces demolition. These amendments were crafted by a group of stakeholders that included neighbors, preservationists, developers, realtors, planners and elected officials. The amendments were designed to put a stop to “surprise” demolitions that caught neighbors, city council members and preservationists without warning. The amendments create a demolition review period and provide a way for community members and property owners to discuss the long-term impact of demolition before a resource is lost forever.

Historic Denver believes in the principles underlying the demolition review ordinance, because such notification provides an opportunity for the community to discuss the merits of the property, the impact of demolition and possible alternatives. Most importantly, the demolition review provision ensures that a truly significant and valuable historic resource is not lost without reasonable consideration. The provision encourages owners of undesignated historic buildings to examine a wide range of reuse options before pursuing demolition.

The review process requires that city staff review all demolition and certificates of non-historic (a process that gives the applicant a 5 year window to apply for a demolition permit with no further review) applications and publicly post for a period of 21 days any properties that potentially meet Denver's criteria for landmark designation. Denver's ordinance differs from other communities, and from the National Register of Historic Places, in its rigor by requiring that

a property meet designation criteria in two out of three categories (Architecture, History, Geography), rather than in only one category, which is the norm. This means that Denver's landmarks and historic districts are of exceptionally high quality.

Since the adoption of the demolition review provisions city staff has evaluated 2,010 demolition permits and 185 certificates of non-historic (CNH) applications. Of this total just under 1%, or 21 properties, have been found to potentially meet the criteria for landmark designation and resulted in a 21-day public posting. Of the 21 postings, 5 (or 0.25% of the total demolition and CNH applications) have resulted in designation applications. None of these properties have been designated, although in a couple of the cases negotiations between the concerned parties and the property owners resulted in an outcome that either saved the structure from demolition, generated a design charrette or at least allowed for property documentation prior to demolition.

As it has been said, in some cases this posting period has simply generated community awareness and in other cases it has resulted in a filing of a designation application for the resource in question. In part, this is because such a filing is the only way to extend the conversation beyond the 21-day posting period. This extension is not indefinite, as resolution must be found within 120 days from the initial application, otherwise the demolition permit or CNH is issued automatically. However, in the circumstances where the designation application does not have the owner's consent, a few select situations have generated significant controversy and frustration on both sides of the table.

Five years after the implementation of the ordinance amendments it is fair to revisit the demolition review process and related designation efforts and consider improvements. Historic Denver supports this dialogue and the proposed changes recently presented by Community Planning & Development (CPD) and recommended by the

Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) to the City Council's Land Use & Transportation Committee (LUTI) at their meeting on October 30. Our current position was prepared based on internal discussions we have had with our Board of Trustees and preservation committee, feedback we have heard from our supporters, as well as feedback from the general public during previous LPC meetings and at a community forum we hosted on October 10. After much consideration, we support the LPC recommendation and would like to underscore the following points:

- 1) We are comfortable with the idea that the application fee for designation applications to which the owner does not consent be higher than situations in which the owner does consent. We feel that a fee that is double the owner-consent level (currently \$250) is appropriate. A fee in excess of what it costs the city to process such applications is not warranted.
- 2) Requiring that designation applications without owner consent have at least three

applicants and that each applicant be either a resident or property owner in Denver will demonstrate a basic level of community interest and generate better processes.

- 3) Eliminating delay in the LPC process by allowing staff to set public hearings when the designation application is deemed complete, rather than waiting for such approval from the LPC, which only meets twice monthly, will allow applications to move forward for community, Landmark Preservation Commission, and City Council resolution more quickly.
- 4) Including consideration of context and integrity as part of the LPC's considerations encourages thorough applications and a more comprehensive conversation about a structure earlier in the process.
- 5) Eliminating historic review for single-story garages, sheds and other small accessory buildings on undesignated properties will reduce administrative burdens and red-tape.

>> continued on page 8

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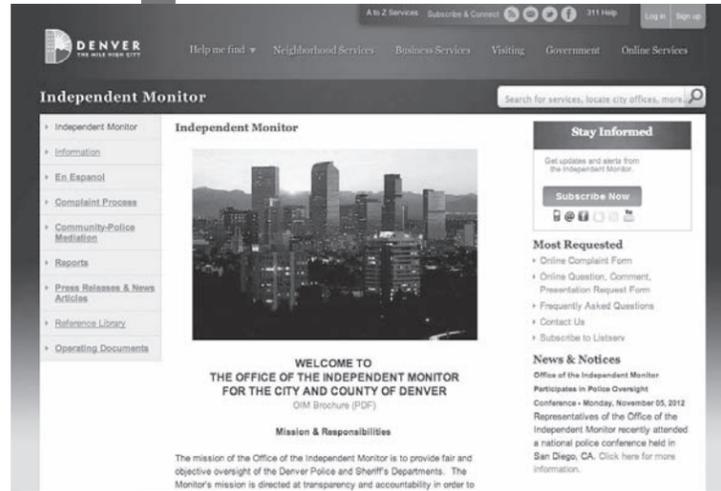


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I.N.C. Meets Denver's Independent Monitor



In a nutshell, The Office of Independent Monitor investigates cases of misconduct in the police and sheriff's departments and recommends discipline. The Safety Manager (Alex Martinez) then decides on discipline, which can range from a written reprimand to termination. Mitchell stressed the mission was to provide fair and objective oversight of the Denver Police and Sheriff's Departments. Formerly, Mitchell was a federal and state commercial litigator at Silver & DeBoskey law firm in Denver. He also has worked as an investigator for the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board for the city police department.

At the monthly INC September meeting, Nicholas Mitchell, Denver's newly appointed Independent Monitor, made a presentation concerning his office's purpose and what they are proposing to accomplish. His role is to mediate and carefully follow the course of all disputes whether they are critical incidents or those of a less serious level.

They will issue 4 quarterly reports and an annual report in March. His office is on the 12th floor of the Wellington Webb Building. If you Google the words Independent Monitor Denver you can view the reports that are filed. He also passed out a new form that gives citizens ability to present complaints as well as to make commendations

Crime Stats	Jan-Sep 2011	Jan-Sep 2012
Burglaries	16	19
Auto Theft	13	11
Theft from Motor Vehicle	53	35
Larceny (bicycle thefts, purse snatching, etc.)	26	36
Criminal Mischief/Damaged Property	21	13
Assault	12	1
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MARCH 2
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MARCH 21
Limón Dance Company

APRIL 4
Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain

APRIL 25
"Strings On Fire"
The Assad Brothers, guitars, Mak Grgić, guitar with Special Guest Joshua Roman, cello

MAY 3 & 4
"The Mikado"
New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players

>> **Historic Denver reflects continued**

- 6) Providing better definition regarding the differences between structures for designation and district designations will be helpful. We understand these changes will be adopted as part of a new LPC policy.
- 7) We further agree that historic resources should be considered early when a potentially historic property is involved in a General Development Plan (GDP). This could eliminate the need for later repetitive review processes for the owner and encourage better dialogue about the incorporation of historic resources as assets in redevelopment efforts.

With these changes in place the demolition review ordinance can function as it was intended within a framework that reduces red-tape, encourages quality applications and provides greater clarity for all concerned parties. Ultimately we rely on our elected officials to help weigh preservation considerations among a myriad of factors, but the proposed changes to the demolition review and designation ordinance provide a better

filter and a better process.

Preservation is an important value in Denver, one accepted for its contributions to our economy, our quality of life and our desires to live more sustainably. The demolition review ordinance does not guarantee that preservation will always win-out over other concerns; it simply makes preservation a viable consideration for structures with true historic merit. Historic Denver supports the proposals brought forth by CPD which are now on the table and welcomes the opportunity to discuss the merits of the ordinance.

THANKS!

For having paid voluntary dues to our Cory Merrill Neighborhood Association:

- { KAREN HILL • LISA SMART }
- { POLLY KRUSE • DIANE PUGH }

City seeks volunteers to be Snow Buddies

What is the Snow Buddies Program?

Snow Buddies is a partnership between the City and County of Denver and Volunteers of America. The Snow Buddies program connects healthy volunteers with anyone 60+ in the metro area who cannot shovel their own walk. Volunteers are paired with seniors within a 2 mile radius of one another.

Why volunteer?

The Snow Buddy program was initiated to keep seniors safe from falls on snow or ice during the winter. The program also keeps seniors from accruing city fines for not being able to shovel their snow from the sidewalks. When you sign up to be a Denver Snow Buddy, you are strengthening our community, improving someone else's life and transforming your own life through service.

How do I volunteer to become a Snow Buddy? Volunteers fill out an application and undergo a background check before being matched with a senior. Once the match is made, the expectation is that the volunteer will show up at their buddy's home after two or more inches of snow has fallen and clear their walkways.

Go to <http://www.voacolorado.org/Volunteer/Snow-Buddies> to request information to volunteer. Please note there is a one-time fee of \$20 for the background check.

I'm 60+ and need help shoveling my walk, how can I request a Snow Buddy? Seniors in the Denver metro area can call 720-264-3379 to be paired with a Snow Buddy.



SAVE OVER 15% DURING WINTER BREAK!

SCHOOL DAYS OFF

Register for any 5 days of Winter Break School Days Off for just \$225! Winter Break dates include:

- December 21, 26, 27, 28
- January 2, 3, 4, 7, 8

Winter Break registration forms are available online at recreation.du.edu/sdo. Please note: This special offer is not available through online registration. Daily registration is available online at <https://signup.recreation.du.edu>.



JOIN THE COORS FITNESS CENTER!



Redeemable at the Coors Fitness Center front desk. Expires 3/31/13. Limit one per person.

For more information on our community membership options, please call 303.871.4523 or visit recreation.du.edu/join.

Dear Washington Park Users,

Denver Parks and Recreation will start a construction project at the Southeast entry of Washington Park starting the last week in September through the end of December. Specific areas impacted during this construction include the primary access location at Louisiana Avenue and Franklin Street and the secondary access location at Louisiana Avenue and Gilpin Street.

The improvements will create a wider and clearer entry on the south end of the park and a safer and less congested route through the entry for the popular park running trail. For greater public safety during construction there will be a detour route for walks and the running trail along S. Gilpin St. and E. Louisiana Ave that will be impacted by construction. Pedestrians and runners will be diverted to the central park road that will bypass the southeast corner of the park for the duration of construction. Our goal is to make the trails in Washington Park more accessible and safer for patrons. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

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Change Denver's Historic Preservation Law!

By Councilman Charlie Brown

Mark Twain said "no man's property is safe when Congress is in session," a concept that surely extends to a city landmark law that allows anyone — even those who do not live in Denver — to seek landmark status on private commercial and residential property. In Denver, the source of Twain's fear would come in part from the way the city allows buildings to be declared historic landmarks. The process, with disturbing ease, can stop demolition of old, decrepit buildings that ought to be torn down. While this doesn't happen often, it happens enough to produce an ugly, angry, hostile trampling of private property rights set in motion by anybody with 250 bucks and a narrow personal agenda.

Two examples of the flawed process have emerged this summer

3005-3019 Huron Street — This large warehouse structure that common sense says is one building, was divided into thirds for purposes of designation, based on the three addresses assigned to the building. At the end of the preservation process one-third had been declared non-historic and demolished (3005 Huron); one-third was deemed not to have enough historic significance to require landmark status (3011 Huron); and one-third was forwarded to city council by the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) for consideration of landmark designation (3019 Huron). Before the city council could vote, the process ended in mediation. Some say "extortion." The property owner was put into the position of having to negotiate with unrealistic applicants for the right to utilize his own property. In my judgment, an unfair position for a property owner who has done nothing more than seek to further economic development in the city.

"Denver Councilman Charlie Brown is right: The city's historic preservation ordinance is being abused in a case involving an old, abandoned warehouse west of Coors Field whose owners have plans to replace it with five-story apartments."

Denver Post Editorial, 7/7/12, "Abusing Denver's Historic Preservation Ordinance"

Former Gates Rubber Factory — The property owner worked with Denver City Councilman Chris Nevitt, the city, Historic Denver, and five neighborhoods to come to agreement to support demolition of the buildings that will pave the way for necessary environmental cleanup of the site. At the last minute, a 21-year-old CU Boulder student, Eugene Elliot, filed a request for historic designation at the property. The application passed the first test at the LPC, and a public hearing is scheduled for Sept. 4.

After he filed his application Elliot met with neighbors, many of whom had been working on this site more than ten years. It was not a warm reception. "How dare you," one neighbor told Elliot, "I feel like I'm kicking a puppy. I don't want to kill your spirit of getting involved, but when this comes to city council, I will kick you until you're bruised." (*Westword, "Trouble in the Rubble," August 16-22*) It is clear that this is an unwanted, indeed frivolous application that is adding unnecessary delays and expense to the long-awaited revitalization of the Broadway corridor.

"Amid the ranks of legitimate historic preservationists, are some truly loopy anti-progress individuals for whom common sense is a mystery. They ignore economic reality and property rights. It ought to be more difficult to stop a project like this (Gates) than just paying \$250."

Neil Westergaard, "For \$250, you, too, can block progress" Denver Business Journal, Editorial, 8/10/12

These two examples demonstrate that the integrity of the landmark process is clearly being abused. I will be working to amend this law with two council colleagues, Nevitt and Jeanne Robb, Community Planning and Development and Historic Denver.

Here are some proposed changes:

Amending our preservation law

- **LIMIT ALL APPLICANTS TO DENVER RESIDENTS** — they must be 21 years old and have a primary residence in the city.
- **INCREASE APPLICATION FEE** — from \$250 to \$2,500 on non-owner consent applications.
- **BROADEN THE LPC'S PURVIEW** — when reviewing landmark designation, the commission should be able to consider physical integrity and historic context.
- **CHANGE THE CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION APPLICATIONS** — instead of two criteria for non-owner applications, increase it to five from two different categories.
- **STREAMLINE THE PROCESS** — so applications are complete and better prepared. This would eliminate confusion, redundancy and get the issue before the City Council faster.
- **LIMIT LANDMARK STATUS** — to the primary structure and not worry about garages and outbuildings.

I support reasonable and rational historic preservation. Indeed I've probably renovated and lived in more older homes than any other council member. My proudest achievement was the renovation of a 1887 Victorian near Curtis Park.

Yet, I'm also a believer in private property rights and have come to realize that just because something is old doesn't make it historic or worthy of renovation. City council needs to change the ordinance now, before we end up with other embarrassing examples such as Huron or Gates. These two and others before them, make a mockery of the historic application process.

"This use of the tool of historic designation as an offensive weapon to stop development is all too common in Denver which is one of the few cities in Colorado that allows historic designation of a property without the owner's consent, and over the owner's objections."

*Carolynne White, Attorney
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP*

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Cory-Merrill Neighborhood Association

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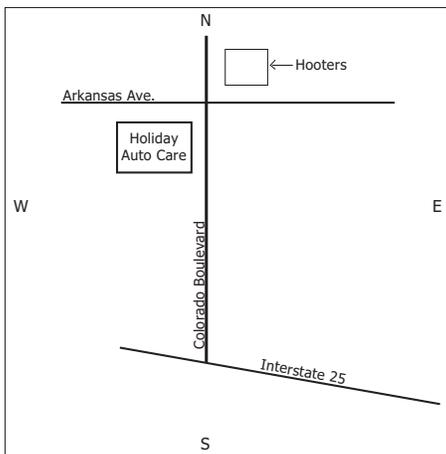
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