

GREENWOOD VILLAGE IS BORN

By the year 1950 there had evolved in that part of rural Arapahoe County to the south of Belleview Road a happy little community known to a few as "the poor man's Cherry Hills." It was made up of a compatible melding of farmers and suburbanties with a few creative types thrown in. Here the birds sang, the frogs and the people who lived in the area loved it just as it was.

It was understandable then that these people tended to view with some antagonism the inexorable advance of urban development which they viewed as threat to the peace of their rural community. First they had to defeat a scheme to construct a drive-in movie on the site of the old Brookridge Dairy on South Clarkson, and then there was a fight with the Colorado Power Company over its proposal to put a big power line across private land in the area of Long's Road and University. But the last straw was the unveiling of a plan by the City of Englewood to condemn land owned by Mrs. Thomas F. Savage at 900 East Belleview in order to construct a holding reservoir for Englewood.

Distressed area residents led by Mrs. Savage took their unhappiness to their long-time neighbor, Charles Roland (Rollie) Enos, attorney and former Republican State Chairman. Enos called a community meeting at Curtis School on South University to discuss the problem.

Some people had suggested that Cherry Hills Village annex the area but that municipality's mayor who attended the meeting, said that it was not in Cherry Hill's interest to antagonize Englewood by becoming involved in this local spat over where to put the new reservoir.

Rollie Enos then proposed the incorporation of a new municipality an area three miles long and one mile wide bounded by Belleview Road, Holly Street, Orchard Road and South Clarkson Street, where the residents would then be able to set up zoning restrictions to keep undesirable and disruptive development out of the area. He suggested calling the new town Greenwood Village after the old Greenwood Ranch founded in the area by Cyrus Richardson before the turn of the century.

This plan met with considerable enthusiasm, and soon an incorporation petition hearing 80 signatures was submitted to Arapahoe County Judge Henry Teller ordered a vote on the question to be held on September 8, 1950 at Curtis School. He named the following area residents to conduct the election. George Hayden, John W. Calkins, C Charles Buchler, Fred De Yoadum, and George D. Tubbs Jr.

There did appear to be considerable opposition to the plan as well. Area resident Gene Cerv in his newspaper (then in its first year of publication) called it "a proposal cooked up hurriedly for the benefit of a few and against the welfare of the thousands who live in Englewood." The most bitterly spoken opponent of the plan was Clarence Johnson of 5506 South University, a retired farmer who had lived in the area for 31 years. He objected to others putting development restrictions on his land.

On September 8, 1950 one hundred thirty eight area residents (almost the entire voting population) went to the polls at Curtis School and of these 74 voted for the new town while 64 voted against it, a comparatively close vote.

Farmer Johnson was so incensed with the outcome of the voting that he filed suit the new village charging that the incorporation was illegal due to insufficient signatures on the petition. He was supported by other unhappy losers in his suit which went up to the Colorado Supreme Court for a ruling. On November 13, 1951 the court ruled that Greenwood Village was to fact a legally incorporated municipality.

As the new village had no tax money to pay its legal expenses the residents held a community fair at the grange on South University called the "Greenwood Gambol." A calf was auctioned off and rumor has it that there was some gambling as well. About \$500.00 was raised.

The form of government of the new municipality was that of a statutory town with a mayor and a six-member Board of Trustees. Charles R. Rnos served as the first mayor of the village, while the trustees in 1951 were Stewart Bales, Dr. Robert Liggett, Harry E. Jones, Mrs. Ira Elder (elected to succeed Theda Barnes), John Calkins, and George Tubbs. The town clerk was Mrs. Lotys Smith, the village attorney was C. Charles Buchler, and the marshal was Gary Marbut.

Meetings were held first at Cutis School, and later at the Cherry Hills Fire Station. A participant remembers that the audience for the meetings usually consisted solely of the wives of the mayor and trustees. From this small beginning 26 years ago, Greenwood Village started on its way.