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CONTACT:

Margaret L. Murphy
Executive Director
Wick Neighbors, Inc.
330-259-1750

Wick Neighbors, Inc. Announces Completion of Wick District-Smoky Hollow Redevelopment Plan

YOUNGSTOWN, March 30, 2005 - Wick Neighbors, Inc. today announced that the Wick District-Smoky Hollow redevelopment plan has been completed and is ready to move to the public approval process.

The Wick Neighbors, Inc. Board of Trustees today approved the plan and the Board of Trustees at Youngstown State University, which owns much of the land in the redevelopment area, has reviewed the plan. The process now will move to Youngstown City Hall. Wick Neighbors, Inc. will seek approvals from the city planning commission and city council.

Wick Neighbors, Inc. will conduct a public meeting from 5 to 6:30 p.m. tonight at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church to explain the plan to all stakeholders in the project.

The \$250 million mixed-income, mixed-use project features a three-acre "central park;" more than 400 townhouses, condominiums, single-family homes and apartments; commercial and retail space; senior citizen housing; and office space. City Architecture in Cleveland designed the project.

"Your front door is Bliss Hall, the Butler Institute of American Art, the McDonough Museum of Art and Harrison Commons. It's a seamless community," said Margaret L. Murphy, executive director of Wick Neighbors, Inc.

Wick Neighbors, Inc. can engage interested developers once the plan receives its public approvals.

The goal is construction of the first homes and renovation of some existing homes in 2006.

Central to the redevelopment plan is Harrison Commons, now known as Harrison Field. The plan turns the park so the green space stretches from Walnut to Harrison streets and serves as a "central park" for the redevelopment area. The Rotary Club of Youngstown has announced plans to adopt the park project and take a leadership role in raising funds to develop the new green space.

The redevelopment plan involves a variety of housing types, from loft apartments and townhouses to condominiums and single-family homes. Some of the new housing is to overlook Harrison Commons.

More than 400 townhouses, condominiums, single-family homes and apartments, not including the nearby University Courtyard Apartments, are planned.

Senior citizen housing also is planned near Rayen Avenue and office space is planned near the Madison Avenue Expressway.

CT Consultants of Willoughby, with offices in Austintown, did surface and subsurface engineering studies on the 66-acre Wick District-Smoky Hollow redevelopment area bounded by Wick, Andrews, Rayen and Madison avenues. The studies recommend all water, sanitary and storm sewer lines be replaced because of their age and layout. The estimated cost is about \$4 million. Other needed infrastructure improvements to items such as streets and utilities are estimated at about \$6 million.

Wick Neighbors, Inc. is a nonprofit development corporation formed in September 2003 with a 40-member board of trustees led by Rev. John Horner of St. John's Episcopal Church. WNI's mission is: Empowered by stakeholders, Wick Neighbors will promote and guide their interests through collaboration, planning, development and the promotion of the Wick District's cultural, religious, educational and business community with the redevelopment of Smoky Hollow.