

**Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting  
July 19, 2017 Minutes**



HERITAGE HILL ASSOCIATION  
126 COLLEGE AVE SE  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503  
(616) 459-8950 FAX (616) 459-2409

**In Attendance:** Peter Albertini, Lisa Baars, Wes Beck, Suzanne DeHaan, Teresa Dittmer, Mark Hutchison, Jim Payne, Erin Shupe, Mary McCarthy-Fuller, Todd Hoort, Michele Giordano, Kate Diedrich

**Absent:** Wayne Norlin, Charles Roelofs, Ryan Huizenga

**Staff:** Jan Earl

**Public:** Steve and Deb Koster, GRFD Scott Stevenson, Mark Azkoul, Paul and Elizabeth Helm, Lori Stegmeir

1. **Call to Order:** 7:00 pm
2. **Call for New Business:** Via email adding 423 Madison SE special use request as Action Item 5.A. Also added was the use of HHA emails under new business.
3. **Minutes:** Minutes of the June, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.
4. **Correspondence:** Files circulating amongst board members.
5. **Public Comment:**

Paul Helm: Questioned why neighbors have not yet received a response from the HHA Board per variety of questions regarding the special land use approval at 74 Lafayette NE; stressed his support for residential structures for residential use. (Erin Shupe explained that the HHA Board is drafting a response but this is the first meeting scheduled meeting of the full Board since June. A response will be coming.) Parking remains a huge concern; Also questioned why the HHA Board meets at the same time as the Historic Preservation Commission. He had to split his time between the HHA Board meeting and the HPC public hearing regarding the Historic study.

Lori Stegmeir: Lori too voiced concerns with the lack of response from HHA; feeling the need to be more involved. Requested information regarding the neighbors meeting at 523 Lyon; she was informed there is not an application submitted; the prospective owner is looking at 7 units but there is no parking and virtually no options to provide near parking spaces. Lori, Paul and Elizabeth Helm and Mark Azkoul will be added to the email group receiving HHA Board agendas.

Mark Azkoul: Stressed improvement in how HHA communicates with everyone.

**Action Items:**

- 5a. **423 Madison SE: Special use request for 5 bedroom Bed and Breakfast:** The HHA Zoning Committee submitted a draft position letter (motion) opposing a 5 bedroom but expressed merit as a 3 bedroom. Craig Nobbelin introduced the request and added brief remarks on the Zoning Committee's discussion on a 5 room B&B. Parking and the amount of guests were issues that led to the recommendation of 3 rooms. Applicant owner, Steve Koster, distributed a revised and more accurately scaled parking plan that switches parking to the south side of the driveway – opposite the garage as previously shown. It removes some green space but likely would allow a turn-around for cars eliminating the need to back down a very long driveway and into the very busy Madison Street. The plan shows space for total of 8 cars (3 included in the garage). Because of this new parking arrangement, Steve encouraged the Board to reconsider a 5 bedroom B&B. Currently there is an apartment on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and this would be converted to 2 guest bedrooms. If the owner was limited to 3 rooms, he doesn't know how to use this 3<sup>rd</sup> floor space. As a B&B, he could not use it as a rental unit. Board comments included that the special use goes with the land and not with the owner so applicant's intentions regarding the limited use of the B&B would not apply to future owners; there is no on-street parking and thus all parking needs to be on-site; parking not only issue, potential of 10 guests creates people traffic; members debated increasing recommendation to up to 4 rooms based on the revised parking plan. Motion of the HHA Zoning Committee was moved and seconded to amend to allow up to 4 B&B rooms. HHA's position is to oppose

a 5 room B&B but offer that 4 rooms has merit. Motion unanimously passed.

**Information Items:**

9. **Treasurer's Report:** Erin S. commented that May report still does not have the the final numbers of Tour; some coming in June. Regardless we know the numbers are not great and changes will need to be made to address Tour's shortfall. The Executive and Finance committees will meet in the coming months to address. HHA needs to raise an additional \$15,000 or reduce expenses by that amount. HHA's CDBG grant is also tenuous for 2018.

(GRFD Scott Stevenson was allowed time to address Board; touted free smoke detector program that just reached a milestone of 7,000 homes outfitted with smoke detectors. There are still many houses that need detectors and the program continues. The GR recreational fire pit ordinance does not allow the GRFD to issue warnings; if a complaint is received and verified, tickets are issued. Board members complained about the private fireworks on holidays; GRFD receives training funds with the money raised by the State from sales of fireworks (part of the law when enacted) - an awkward position for GRFD. )

10. **Staff Reports:** Written staff reports were supplied. Jan overviewed neighbors' discussion regarding potential uses of 523 Lyon NE. The structure was built as a residential school, the first in the State, and several neighbors want to celebrate that distinction in future use. The 7-unit request that is being discussed is not supported due to total lack of parking. Antisdel currently has more residents needing on-street parking than available spots. It is a narrow, dead-end street. There are several neighbors interested in pursuing Spectrum Health's use as a patients' family short term residence. A shuttle service could be used and/or walking. This could eliminate the need for parking. Conversations of interest are on-going with Spectrum. Jan will soon email neighbors regarding the residential permit parking details that will call for neighbor engagement to survey neighbors' interest on their blocks. Cannot gauge at this time if there is enough interest to pursue any permit zones. In attempts over the last several years, permit parking has not been popular. Has it reached a pivotal point of need in 2017?

11. **Committee/Liaison Reports:**

**Community Engagement:** The Picnic is August 1; met with South Hill to co-plan. All arrangements in the works.

**Land Use:** Wes Beck briefly outlined that 50 College SE, newly named Heritage Place, is set for demolition the week of July 24; Moony Park planning was well attended; HQ is in meetings with GR Planning, GRPD, near neighbor, and HHA on how to resolve some issues within Zoning's allowance. Wes also mentioned the Historic Study public hearing that was happening at the same time as the HHA Board meeting and the need to discuss process regarding 74 Lafayette NE.

**Administrative:** Jim P. reported that the Finance Committee will be meeting with the Executive Committee after the June Treasurer's report is available and reviewed. The Garden Tour had great sponsorship thanks to Kate Diedrich.

**Fundraising:** Kate Diedrich overviewed the garden tour and the fun expressed by the gardeners;

The 2018 Home Tour is beginning house recruitment.

12. The Board **moved into Executive Session** to discuss issues related to volunteer personnel. Result was to send a letter regarding email use; draft response to neighbors is being written.
13. **Adjourned @ 9:40 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Jan Earl