The Heritage Hill Association’s 2017 Report to Neighbors

WHO WE ARE:
The Heritage Hill Association is the neighborhood organization of the Heritage Hill Historic District. Our boundaries are the northern rear property lines of Crescent Street to the southern rear property lines of Pleasant Street (including the 600 block of Union SE); the eastern property lines of Union Avenue to the western property lines of Lafayette Avenue; also included is a jog down State Street to Jefferson Avenue to Fulton Street. Everyone who lives within these boundaries is a member of the Heritage Hill Association. Non-residents can also be members by contributing annual membership dues. Resident neighbors and businesses are encouraged to support the work of the Association through its annual pledge drive.

Population Stats: There are 1,300 Heritage Hill structures that are occupied by 3,467 households. The total population is 4,103 and that averages to 1.2 people per household. Of the total population, 81% are Caucasian, 9% are African American, 4% are Hispanic or Latino, 2% are Asian, the remaining 4% are mixed races; 70% are tenants and 30% are owners (Heritage Hill has the largest concentration of rental opportunities in the city of Grand Rapids) 64% are our residents are moderate to low income; 66% of our structures are either owner occupied or neighbor owned and 34% are absentee-owned. The concentration or density of our housing is over twice the GR average; 19% of our households do not own cars (this trend is growing as residents seek out non-auto alternatives; walking, public transportation, bikes).

The Association’s Programs: Heritage Hill is an urban neighborhood and the Association’s programs inform, assist and work with neighbors to address urban problems -- neighborhood safety, land use conflicts, increasing traffic and parking demands, institutional expansion/construction containment, housing and preservation issues, promotion of neighborhood schools, access to services, and other issues inherent in a densely populated, core city neighborhood. Just as with old houses, a neighborhood is dependent on a good and ongoing maintenance program!

Heritage Hill is grateful to one of our key activists John Logie. His vision and tenacity saved our neighborhood from demolition.

(Continued on page 2)
The Heritage Hill Association
126 College S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-459-8950 Fax 616-459-2409
Hours: 9 am - 5 pm, Mon. - Thurs.
Voice mail available for after-hours messages.
EMAIL: heritage@heritagehillweb.org
WEBSITE: www.heritagehillweb.org

Purpose:
The purpose of the Heritage Hill Association is to provide neighbors a way of collectively building a healthy, historically preserved community in which people can live and work in a secure and stable environment.

Office Staff:
Jan Earl, Executive Director
Tanya Harris, Crime Prevention
Marta Zache Starkey, Administrative
Barb Lester, Office

The Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors
Co-Presidents
Lisa Baars, 139 Prospect NE, (C) 616-540-9356
*Wesley Beck, 225 Fountain NE, (H) 456-5144
Vice President
Mark Hutcheson, 38 Prospect Ave SE, (C) 214-7384
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*Suzanne DeHaan, 573 Prospect SE, (H) 742-0451

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Wayne Norlin, 558 Morris Ave SE, (C) 292-8263
Nathan Slauson, 65 Union NE, (C) 616-304-5113

* 1st Term
** 2nd Term

The Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors meets at 7 pm the third Wednesday of each month at the Hausenstein Center - 81 Community Room at Mercy Health Saint Mary’s. The meeting is open to the public.

Heritage Hill Association Contacts:
Finance: Erin Shupe, (C) 633-8946
Newsletter: Jan Earl, 459-8950
Preservation: Rhonda Baker, (H) 456-3451
Traffic and Parking: Jan Earl, (W) 459-8950
Zoning: Craig Nobbelin, 458-0471
Home Tour: Suzanne DeHaan, (H) 742-0451
Home Tour Sponsorship: Peter Albertini, 291-3758
Social Media: Tanya Harris, 459-8950
State Street: Tanya Harris, 459-8950
Block Issues: Tanya Harris, 459-8950

Heritage Hill Association provides information and encourages neighborhood participation to keep Heritage Hill safe and vital. This community organizing engages neighbors to work on issues that arise. As an association of neighbors, we have a strong voice but we have no regulatory authority.

The GR Historic Preservation Commission regulates the City’s Preservation Ordinance. Applications and approvals are needed from this city department before beginning any exterior work or repairs.
Contact 456-3451 or rbaker@grcity.org.

The Heritage Herald - Circulation 4,800
The Heritage Herald is published by the Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors six times a year (bi-monthly). The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors. We reserve the right to edit. Address correspondence to The Heritage Herald, 126 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

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Annual Report (Continued from front page)

Active, engaged, and mobilized neighbors, working with our neighborhood institutions, the City of Grand Rapids, and all respective community resources, are the best indicators that Heritage Hill is a vital place to live and work. (Please be engaged! Email your email address at heritage@heritagehillweb.org.)

Heritage Hill is recognized by the American Planning Association as A Great Place in America. This Old House magazine has named Heritage Hill as one of the Best Neighborhoods in the United States.

A LITTLE HISTORY:
In 1968, neighbors organized together to stop mortgage red lining (banks would not loan money to buy a house in Heritage Hill) and urban renewal plans that would have demolished over 75% of Heritage Hill structures. The first goal of the Heritage Hill Association was to block the bulldozers. Neighbors worked diligently to invoke national preservation legislation that put Heritage Hill on the National Register of Historic Places. This stopped the demolitions and set a precedent throughout the U.S. that is still cited today. In 1988, the Association was the first Grand Rapids neighborhood to establish its own Master Plan of Heritage Hill. Today this plan continues to be updated and guides the Association and the City regarding life in the neighborhood. A 200-300 Prospect Plan, the State Street Corridor Area Specific Plan, and the 50 College SE development report are additional planning guidelines developed by the Association and neighbors. And in 2018 – We celebrate our 50 years of service to Heritage Hill – and they said it wouldn't last.

OUR SERVICES:
The Crime Prevention Program is provided to increase neighborhood safety with services that activate neighbors in Neighborhood Watch and Block Club Organizing. Key components include free home security surveys, personal safety information, victim assistance, and producing and distributing crime information alert/e-alert notices and fliers. Block Club organizing keeps neighbors working together to prioritize problems, identify resources, and develop and implement action plans to resolve problems. In 2017, this program was primarily funded by federal Community Development Block Grants that the City of Grand Rapids receives.

Heritage Hill mourned the passing of Gert Calmese, a most dedicated and long serving Block Captain.
and in turn funds a myriad of community programs, one being the Heritage Hill Association.

The Neighborhood Improvement Program addresses quality of life issues that are not crime related. Its purpose is to generate resident involvement, to educate, train and encourage activism to protect and strengthen the Heritage Hill neighborhood; to bridge commercial development with the residential nature; and to resolve issues of concern. Issues commonly include land use, traffic and parking, institutional expansion, neighborhood schools, etc. Additional elements include educating, referring and assisting residents with available City/community services and resources and implementing needs identified in the Master Plan of Heritage Hill. Like the crime prevention program, this program is partially funded by the federal Community Development Block Grant funds that the City of Grand Rapids awards to the Heritage Hill Association’s program.

Apartment and Homes Listing Service: Due to our large rental community, the Association produces and publishes a list of available apartments in Heritage Hill whose landlords choose to list with us. It is an extremely popular service and Heritage Hill apartments are in demand. Our list is free to tenants and available on our Web site (www.heritagehillweb.org) and at the HHA office. To list an apartment, landlords pay a fee: $45 for a studio apartment; $50 for a one-bedroom; $55 for a two-bedroom and $60 for 3 or more bedrooms. The listing is for 2 months or until the apartment is rented, whichever comes first. The list also includes Homes for Sale in Heritage Hill. For Sale listings cost $100 and run for two months. Additional services that we offer landlords and tenants include assistance with their respective rights and responsibilities.

The Heritage Herald: The Association produces and publishes 6 bi-monthly newsletters that are mailed to a combined 4,500 addresses in Heritage Hill, non-resident members, businesses, city offices and other community resources. It publicizes events, issues, and other information of interest and concern to neighbors. The Herald provides information, promotes neighborhood identity and fosters community. The Association also uses Email alerts and Facebook to keep people informed and activated. Please forward your email address to us heritage@heritagehillweb.org to be added to this distribution list.

Heritage Hill Website: The Association’s website hosts a variety of information regarding our neighborhood. The apartment listing is posted on the website as well as the guidelines of the City’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and the application for all exterior work. There is information and links to the Federal historic tax credits. Most every house in Heritage Hill has historical, architectural information and photos from 1969 and 2004 posted on our site. Go to the “about” heading on our home page and scroll down to the “house search”. The Association’s Facebook is also easily accessed from the home page of the website.

The Weekend Tour of Homes (3rd Weekend in May) This is the largest fundraising and promotional effort of the Heritage Hill Association. The funds are needed to sustain our Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Improvement programs. It also promotes our architectural heritage and neighborhood as a great place to live, work and visit! The date for 2018 is May 19 and 20.

The Heritage Hill Garden Tour: A fun-raiser for Heritage Hill gardeners, the Garden Tour is held nearly every year. The 2018 Garden Tour is headed up to north end of Heritage Hill and this is the call-out to all northend Heritage Hill gardeners! Please consider opening your quiet space the third weekend in June. Please call or email the office and let’s get you on our garden line-up in 2018.

Social Events: The Association hosts two annual neighborhood wide events to gather neighbors together. The Neighborhood Night Out Ice Cream social is the first Tuesday in August; the Holiday Potluck and Annual Meeting is typically the first week in December. The Association also invites neighbors to hold an annual neighborhood-wide Yard Sales Day the first Saturday in June. Beyond the Association’s events, neighbors organize backyard movie nights, evening concerts, yoga, tai chi, dance classes and all kinds of fun at Pleasant Park, block parties and whatever a connected community dreams up. In 2018, the Association will be hosting a community calendar on its website where neighbors can post their events.
**ARCHITECTURAL FILES:** The HHA office maintains the architectural survey files of each house in the neighborhood that were compiled in 1969. This survey was needed to place Heritage Hill on the National Register of Historic Places that effectively saved over 75% of the neighborhood from demolition. Much of the information from these files is posted by address on our website in the house search category under the “About” heading.

**Etc. Etc. Etc...** The Heritage Hill Association office is often the first place neighbors call with numerous questions regarding ... most anything. Common questions are historic preservation guidelines, apartment seeking, neighborhood issues, who is my neighbor ... who to call for ... how can I handle “this problem” ... what is that house zoned for; landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities, service provider referrals, ... when is garbage day ... etc., etc, etc. We welcome you to call, email and we welcome you to come visit.

**THE ASSOCIATION AND NEIGHBORS’ ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2017:**

**LAND USE ISSUES:**
As the City booms, so goes Heritage Hill. Everything is in demand: our houses, our apartments and our few parcels of vacant land. It is very hard to add units to single family residential homes in Heritage Hill due to its zone classification as LDR - low density residential - unless there is a recent past use as a multi-family. The same is true of institutional/commercial use. Much of 2017 centered on guiding unique projects within our boundaries and engaging neighbors in that process.

Make sure you stay in the know and are engaged! If you are not receiving our emails, please send us yours to heritage@heritagehillweb.org. Also like us on Facebook.

- **50 College SE:** The visioning process of this 2.5 acre parcel began in 2015 and culminated with the ground-breaking in the fall of 2017. The spring/summer months were spent working out the final site plans of this 86-unit apartment building, Heritage Place. Look for occupancy in 2018.

- **54 Jefferson SE – GRPS Museum School:** Community meetings with neighbors were held in March and April 2017 and renovation of the interior space quickly followed. We’ll see the students in the fall of 2018.

- **Oakwood Manor – 547 Cherry SE:** Over the past two years, owners have worked to lease the garden level of this graceful apartment building to a restaurant. Neighbors met in March to review a specific restaurant proposal that was supported with conditions. City approvals are all in place for both the restaurant and a fitness studio. The installation has stalled due to the initial restaurant’s change of plans. A new restaurant is likely coming and the fitness studio is prepping its space.

- **363 State Street:** Plans collapsed for the City’s first micro-unit development at this site. Instead the former Clark’s Food Store was repaired and a Dollar General opened late in 2017. The store offers everything you would need to setup a household and is being well received. Don’t forget that this is just around the corner when running out for this and that.

- **74 Lafayette NE – the McCabe Marlow house.** This home that had for decades been owned by GR Community College for use a hospitality center was put on the market. The College attempted to sell it as a single family home but it languished for nearly a year. Next door neighbors purchased the home for use as a residential...
suite on the 2nd floor and administrative/counselling offices on the first floor. The use sparked controversy as neighbors felt passionate about residential vs. the proposed institutional use. The GR Planning Commission approved the proposal with strict conditions on the counselling services.

- **Pleasant Park** - is the neighborhood gathering green spot - a true public space embraced by its community. Planned and spontaneous events happened including the Association's ice cream social, yoga, dog trainings, kite flying, sledding, ball games, Frisbee flying, trick or treating and everything play for all ages. Pleasant Park won the ping-pong table contest in 2017 and the table will be installed in 2018. A new level of competition at the Park will evolve! HHA organized the Pleasant Park Tenders to maintain the gardens under the leadership of Joshlyn Litzenberger in 2017. We are organizing this again so if you want to adopt a plot, call Jan at 459-8950. Pleasant Park Pal’s Facebook page is a good way to stay connected to the impromptu happenings or just wander over to the Park.

**State Street:**
Continues to be the focus of our commercial corridor and implementation of the State Street Corridor Area Specific Plan. The opening of the GRPS Museum School in the fall of 2018 will add more activity and vitality to the street.

- **Potpourri of land use/traffic issues:** The Association reviews and investigates all zoning variance and traffic requests in Heritage Hill. Neighborhood positions are based on the Heritage Hill Master Plan, the City’s zoning code criteria, and neighbors’ feedback. In 2017 the Association was involved in the following:
  - **523 Lyon NE – Jellema House:** This former treatment facility was vacated and put up for sale. Neighbors met with prospective owner for use as a 7-unit but the use was not pursued due to the lack of a parking plan. The building remains for sale.
  - **402 – 430 Madison SE:** Numerous inquiries regarding this 5 lot availability in 2017. It was sold near the end of the year to a builder that is concentrating on renovations to the home at 430 Madison SE. There are no plans on the use of the 3 vacant parcels fronting Madison. Neighbors will be involved once further developments are planned.
  - **568 Madison SE:** The Association and neighbors opposed a proposal for use as a 3-unit. The GR Zoning Appeals Board denied the request due to the lot size and parking concerns.
    - **423 Madison SE:** This B&B request was approved for a 5-bedroom facility. Neighbors were generally supportive of the proposal.
    - **Residential Permit Parking:** The City enacted a permit parking ordinance early in 2014 however no established districts have yet to be requested by Heritage Hill neighbors. The Association has advertised and encourages this option on those blocks that meet the criteria for permit parking and whose neighbors support the installation. It remains on option but needs a majority of residents support in a defined 3-block minimum area.
    - **Antisdel:** The City informed neighbors that it would be removing one side of parking on this street due to accessibility. Very few off-street options are available on this small street. Neighbors met with City reps to plead their need for parking and present how accessibility works on their street. The City is not removing parking.
    - **Mobility:** Various public transportation information was published in the Heritage Herald/Facebook. Updates were also provided regarding the BRT Laker Line.

**2017 HHA INCOME - $159,184.**

**2017 HHA EXPENSES - $166,264**
Heritage Hill At a Glance

2010 Census Figures

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<th>1,300 Structures</th>
<th>Architecture:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>National, State and Local Historic district that offers Michigan's largest and finest concentration of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses. Nearly every style of American architecture, from Greek Revival to Prairie, is represented by homes that date from 1843.</td>
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<th>3,467 Households</th>
<th>64% of Heritage Hill households are low to moderate income.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>19% do not own a vehicle – higher than GR average.</td>
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<th>4,103 People</th>
<th>Demographics:</th>
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<td>81% are Caucasian, 9% are African American, 4% are Hispanic or Latino, 2% are Asian, the remaining 4% is a mix of Native American, Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander and mixed races.</td>
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<th>Owner/Neighborhood Occupied 66%</th>
<th>Boundaries:</th>
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<td>North rear property lines of Crescent St. South rear property lines of Pleasant St. (including the 600 block of Union SE) East property lines of Union Avenue West property lines of Lafayette Avenue (also included is a jog down State Street to Jefferson Avenue to Fulton Street)</td>
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<th>70% Tenants 30% Owners</th>
<th>Rental Units:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Heritage Hill offers the largest concentration of rental housing in Grand Rapids – over 2x the City average.</td>
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Mercy Health serves patients across West Michigan, providing access to cardiovascular services, cardiac surgery and electrophysiology services through the same health care system for continuity of quality care.

In collaboration with University of Michigan Health, the Mercy Health cardiac surgery program is led by distinguished cardiac surgeons Dr. Richard Downey and Dr. Nabeel El-amir, who together bring 50 years of surgical experience and perform more than 350 cardiac surgeries annually.

YourHeartTeam.com

All physicians and staff participating in this program provide services in a manner consistent with Mercy Health’s Catholic mission and the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services.
And in 2018 we celebrate our 50 years of working with you to make Heritage Hill the best it can be. We welcome all new neighbors in 2017 and encourage you to get active on your block and in your neighborhood. It's your community and our shared place!

- **Maintained a communication network** with each of our neighboring hospitals, colleges and universities, and neighborhood associations. Met with Mercy Health Saint Mary's to continue strong working relationship on areas of common interest.
- **Preservation:** Co-hosted with the GR Historic Preservation Commission a window’s workshop to teach attendees how to fix broken cords, glazing and installation.

**Neighborhood Fun and Fund Development:**
- Organized and orchestrated the annual **Weekend Tour of Homes** in May. Recruited hosts, house captains and 240 volunteers to staff the homes and welcomed 4,000 tourists.
- Compiled and produced 6 issues of the *Heritage Herald* that were distributed to 4,500 neighbors and friends.
- Produced and updated the apartment listings on a minimum weekly basis.
- Organized the Heritage Hill **Night Out Ice Cream social** at Pleasant Park in August; organized the annual Heritage Hill **Neighborhood-Wide Yard Sale Day** in June; and the **Holiday Potluck and Annual Meeting** in December.

**Texas Hold-em** - Staffed 2 gaming events at TJ’s Game Room throughout 2017.

**Plus:** Assisted 1000’s of calls and requests regarding a multitude of quality of life issues in Heritage Hill

And in 2018 we celebrate our 50 years of working with you to make Heritage Hill the best it can be. We welcome all new neighbors in 2017 and encourage you to get active on your block and in your neighborhood. It’s your community and our shared place!
A 100 year old house, with a new garage door to match.

Proudly Serving Heritage Hill for 69 Years
The Genuine. The Original.

OVERHEAD DOOR COMPANY
OF GRAND RAPIDS

Crime Prevention in 2017

New Neighbors: For tips on keeping your home, apartment or business safe from burglaries, give Heritage Hill Association a call and talk to Tansy Harris, our Crime Prevention Officer, at 459-8950. We offer FREE Home Security Checks to all of our residents.

Neighbors are heartbeat of Heritage Hill: Board members, Committee members, Block Club Representatives and hundreds of individuals within our community are invested in helping each other stay safe and healthy within our neighborhood. Without you we simply could not be the community that we are! We recognize and thank you for all your continued efforts.

Crime Issues in 2017:

- Our major crime issues continue to drop, a trend we are seeing as a city as well as a community.
- Our biggest crime issues are crimes of opportunity. Particularly with the Vehicle Break-ins. Most of the time these break-ins are due to unlocked cars. We have seen an increase of broken windows in 2017. However, nearly all of these were also due to valuables being left in the car in plain sight. Common items that have been left in vehicles and stolen are: Purses, Wallets, Spare Change/Money, Book bags, Gym Bags, Electronics, Tools Spare Keys and Designer Sunglasses. The best thing to combat this sort of thing is to keep your car completely clean and free of anything that might be valuable. A criminal who is looking for goods will want a car that seems to have a lot of stuff in the car or has a clear vision of something of value. It is also important to always lock your vehicle.
- Another typical crime of opportunity we see too much of is items stolen from porches and garages. These items tend to be things like Bicycles, Ladders, Lawn Mowers and even Porch Furniture. For Bicycles, invest in a really good lock but also be mindful of where you lock up to. It is not recommended to lock to say your porch spindle railing. Why? Because your bike will be stolen and you will have to repair your porch. Those spindles are easily broken. The other issues with stolen lawn mowers and garage items are most commonly caused by leaving your garage door open. Running to the store? Be sure to
secure your garage. Even a half hour away is plenty of time for someone to take your mower and be on their way.

- While Vehicle Theft was high in 2016 we saw this dip down in 2017. Again, much like 2016, none of the vehicles were hotwired. All were stolen with their keys. Make sure that you are not leaving spare keys in your vehicle or a partner/roommates vehicle. This seems like the most common way people are gaining access to keys.

- We did have a Drug/Flip house in 2017. After a home was empty and on the market, multiple people were breaking and entering into the home to live and use drugs. With the due diligence of concerned neighbors who looked out for suspicious behavior and the help of GRPD, this home was secured and cleaned out.

- Illegal dumping issues are fairly common all around our city and our neighborhood is no different. In 2017 the struggle was at 363 State Street. While the old Clarks stood empty before development started on the new Dollar General, the parking lot became a dumping ground for loads and loads of trash. By working with the property owners, all trash was removed and the grounds secured to prevent such dumping.

(Continued on page 10)
Housing Code Enforcement: While Heritage Hill is not a regulatory body, we do help those who come to us with concerns and issues.

- Our number one call was over concern of Lead Safe Practices. Neighbors reported seeing dry sanding/scraping and not properly attaching plastic sheeting to catch chips. These are not only local City Regulations, but also State and with the EPA. Due to the ages of our homes in our neighborhood, we have lead paint. This is of concern as we watch the population of families grow in our community. Children are at the greatest risk for Lead Poisoning. It is also recommended to test your soil if you plan on planting a food garden. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Tansy at 459-8950.

- Other common complaints were concerns over tall grass and weeds. When property owners were brought to attention regarding tall grass and weeds, all complied and corrected the matter within 48 hours of contacting. Trash was sometimes a longer issue to correct.

- We also hear of issues with individuals parking on the front lawns of homes. Depending on the individuals and the property management, sometimes these can be cleared up by a simple conversation. Other times it means involving our Community Officer, Craig Glowney, for enforcement. Sometimes continually.
Parks
Our area parks have seen very little in any crime activity in 2017. If anything resident ownership keeps increasing. For Foster Park, one neighbor in particular has taken it upon himself to maintain bushes. Tom Logan regularly visits Foster Park and due to him the park is cleaner and tidier. The latest improvement was getting the City of Grand Rapids to keep the trash container in the park all winter long. Typically this gets removed which adds to the winter buildup of trash. We recognize and thank Tom for all his work in Foster Park. Stay tuned for a park clean up in the spring in this area. Pleasant Park continues to be a huge draw for the South End neighbors as well. It is clear that area residents are invested in this park and call it their own. From resident led gatherings of Easter Egg Hunts to local child group hang outs, the fun never stops in this much loved and used park. We also thank South Hill Area Neighbors which boarder this park for their continued investment in this park as well. What is new for 2018? Stay tuned for the installation of Table Tennis and replacement of plaques. Huge shout out to all the Pleasant Park Tenders and Pleasant Park Pals who continue to care for this park.

Landlord Tenant Issues
In 2017 Heritage Hill Association advised both Landlords and Tenants on a variety of rights. From security deposits to lease terms, we help both sides with responsibilities. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Tansy at 459-8950 or Heritage@heritagehillweb.org

REMEMBER HERITAGE HILL PROPERTY OWNERS:
There is a City Preservation Ordinance that governs all exterior changes, repairs and/or additions to Heritage Hill properties. Call the Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission at 456-3451 for information on approvals. You can access the application form at the City’s website, www.ci.grand-rapids.mi.us at the Planning Department section or at the Heritage Hill Association’s www.heritagehillweb.org. This ordinance applies to all exterior changes, repairs, and/or additions to your home and property. Items such as doors and windows including storms, yard structures, driveway and sidewalk approaches, and fences do need HPC approvals.
You make us so happy.
Thanks to the generosity of our neighbors, the 2017 HHA Pledge Drive increased by nearly $6,000. That is huge in our tight budget and the HHA Board decided to keep our programs running without reductions for at least the next 6 months. Thank you very much for responding to HHA's plea and to our recent contributors:

Dave and Mary Annis
Paul Asselin and Jack Sytsema
David E. Bahle and Jean Reed Bahle
Ronald Beecham
Jason and Beth Boogholdt
Emily Brink
Don and Mindy Bryant
Mike Cary and Marjorie Loughrin
Central Reformed Church
Julianne Davis
Tina De la Fe
Kim DeStigter and Patricia Gardner
James and Marian DeVries
Margaret Dietrich
Teresa Dittmer
Carol Dodge
Doug Dok and Diann Landers
in memory of Mike Chielens and Gert Calmese
Maureen Fahey Dreher
Bruce Drotleff
Mark Dykstra
Glenn and Lannie Eisenbrandt
David and Wendy Falb
Family Promise of Grand Rapids
Lynn Ferrel
First Park Congregational Church
Minnie Forbes
Fountain Hill Counseling and Consultation
Jay Fowler and Cathy Neis
Mary, Julia and Edith Freyer
Mary McCarthy-Fuller
Margaret L. Gage
Geoffrey and Susan Gillis
Michele Giordano
Khalid and Stefanie Goudeaux
Peter and Amelia Grayson
Mike and Janet Hanson
Doug and Korry Hoeksema
Jack Hoffman and Rebecca Smith-Hoffman
James R. Honeycutt
Mark Hutchison
Carl Johnson
Mary Johnson
James and Linda Jones
Suzanne Karsen
Jim and Tammy Koop
Leslie Bellavance, Kendall College of Art and Design
Liz Klinzing
Lawrence and Roberta Kok
John and Patricia LaGrand
Dean and Rebecca Lantinga
Barbara Lowe
Faite Mack and Von Norasing
Chris and Laura Martin
Lesley Mayer
Mike Mesnak
Gary and Faye Myers
Midtown Craftsmen LLC
Ivan and Linda Nordstrand
Wayne and Jana Norlin
Oakwood Manor Apartments
John O’Connor and Gay Works
Clay Palmer
Jim Payne and Chet Kruzych
Josh and Sarah Pfennig
Charles and Patricia Posthumus
Robert Roche
Stu Saints and Eliza McManus
Sandford House
Don Smalligan and Mary Kenyon
Gary Walker
Michael and Erin Shupe
Mary Lou Smith
Ben Tamminga
Judith Telgenhof
Bill and Bridget Tingley
UDM Properties
Mark VanAllsburg
Richard and Susan Van Houten
John and Gwen Varineau
Donald and Ruth VanStee
Barbara Voshel
Gary Walker
Sandy Ward
Marjorie Welsma
Ken and Sharon Wierenga
Rick Winn
Winston Holdings
Fred and Wendy Wooden
We are 50. Happy Anniversary to the Heritage Hill Association .... and they said it wouldn't last. We are making every HHA event in our 50th year a celebration. We’ll give you updates as the year progresses but to kick it off we are publishing the initial organizing minutes of the small group of people that began the discussion. The Association was formally founded in November of 1968 when the Articles of Incorporation were submitted.

To add to the community celebration, we’d like to hear your stories of the neighborhood. If you’ve been here since the beginning or anytime throughout, send us your story of life in Heritage Hill. If you just moved in, you are vital too, so share your experience. It is all of us, our eclectic community, that would not exist without the tenacity of a handful of people that started it 5 decades ago – and grew that activism that stopped 75% of our houses from being demolished. And we continue to organize today so that Heritage Hill is the place where we all want to be.

Join the celebration and the conversation. We’ll be sharing stories in the newsletter and we can post them on our website. Please email them to heritage@heritagehillweb.org.
Typically what happens is that someone walks around the neighborhood and tries door handles. If the vehicle is locked, they keep moving. If the vehicle is unlocked this offers the opportunity for the suspect to gain entrance to the vehicle and look for items of value. Sometimes they find nothing and you might just barely notice that someone was in your vehicle. It is still important to report these cases to the GRPD so we can track this behavior. You can do so online at your convenience at: http://grcrimereporting.grcity.us

It is important to know that this is happening on the street as well as your driveways.

Things you can do:

1. Keep your vehicle LOCKED.
2. Keep your vehicle free and clear of anything of value. This includes but not limited to: Purses, Wallets, Book Bags, Electronics, Sunglasses, Money/Change, Spare Keys to home or other cars, Tools, Coats… Simply put, bring everything inside every time.
3. Make sure porch lights are on at night in front and back of home. While lights might not deter a person from looking in your vehicle, the light allows you and your neighbor to see the behavior.
4. Consider installing security cameras. I personally just ordered two cameras that were very reasonable on Amazon that link up to my smart phone. If you are a renter, be sure to get permission in writing from your landlord first. If you are wondering where the best location would be to install, I would be happy to walk the grounds with you and talk about your concerns.
5. Know your neighbors. The more you know one another the more you will know and understand suspicious behavior.

Fire Safety

With winter in full swing, we are seeing a few more home fires. It is imperative that you have working smoke detectors in your home. If you are a home owner, you are able to get a whole house full of FREE smoke detectors from our Grand Rapids Fire Dept. The GRFD will come through and personally install the smoke detectors as well as let you know if you have any possible fire risks commonly seen (combustibles near the water heater for example). To schedule an appointment, please call 311. This service is quick and could save your life.

If you are a renter and are without working smoke detectors, please let Tansy Harris know at 459-8950 or Heritage@heritagehillweb.org
Dog Owners, It’s Time to Stoop & Scoop!
With the weather warm ups we have been seeing the snow melts and then we have the dirt and grime left behind. Several area neighbors on all ends of the neighborhood have reached out to HHA about the amount of dog poop they are seeing left behind. No one likes picking up poop, trust me I know…I have a little poop machine at home myself. But let us be good neighbors and always clean up after our pets. Please bring with you a few bags when you walk your dog, because let’s face it; sometimes our dogs go more than once on a walk. Run out of a bag? Consider knocking on a door. I have a feeling your neighbor would gladly give you a bag to use. PLEASE be kind and pick up your dog poops.

Pothole City
With weather warming up and cooling down back and forth, we can see some monster potholes. These can damage cars. I even once totaled a car by bending the frame so out of line that it could not be fixed…all from a local pothole I could not safely avoid.

During winter months the city only can use a winter patch mix which tends to only last until spring at best…often we need to re-report the pothole when warmer weather allows for more permanent patches to be done.

We have multiple ways of reporting potholes:
- Call 311
- Use the city’s smartphone application for iPhone and Android users. Find it by searching “Grand Rapids 311”
- Visit the city’s online portal: http://grcity.spotreporters.com/reports/list_services

When reporting a pothole, the city will ask for the location and for a brief description. In the online portal, users have the option to upload a photo.

Stay Up To Date With E-Alerts!
Are you up to date with Heritage Hill E-Alerts? Make sure we have your information so you are in the loop! Head over to our membership form on our website at: http://www.heritagehillweb.org/about/membership-form/

All of our residents are members. No membership dues are necessary but pledges always appreciated.
Neighbors Celebrating Neighbors at the 2017 Annual Potluck & Meeting

Big Applause to:
Martha's Vineyard, Good Pizza and GRCC for the holiday spirit.

Newly elected Board members
Wendy VerHage Falb
Sarah Green
Nicki Hoort
Nathan Sauer
plus returning Board member
Erin Shupe

Distinguished Service Award Recipients
Antisdel Block Club
Tony Davis
Suzanne DeHaan
Kate Diedrich
Jill Eggers
Joshlyn Litzenberger
Jim Payne
Jim Talen
Tom Truesdale
Zoning Text Changes Proposed by City Remove Neighbors Input

Four recommended text changes to the Grand Rapids Zoning Code are proceeding through City approvals. The changes will make it a right to add units in specific circumstances in residential zones. This recommendation will increase the #3 recommendation remove neighbors input from the approval process.

While the Heritage Hill Association strongly supports affordable housing, it opposes silencing neighbors. We question the math that more units equal more affordable housing. Heritage Hill has the highest concentration of rental housing in the City, over twice the Grand Rapids average. If density of housing units encouraged affordable housing, rents in Heritage Hill should be lower. Instead rents have increased steadily over the last several years. It is demand that drives rents and higher demand areas of the city will command higher rents. 80% of the 3,500 Heritage Hill households are tenants. Adding more units by right will tenancy. Adding more units by right will make it a right.

The HHA Board presented the following to the GR Planning Commission.

Recommendation #3: Incentives for Small Scale Development
1. We oppose allowing proposals for 2-units by right on corner parcels and 2 to 4 units within 100 linear feet of commercial areas. While there could be instances where increased density would work in the cited areas, neighbors have the right to comment. Not every corner or corridor property is appropriate and neighbors bring that insight to the decision making body.
2. The recommendation will increase density, but will likely not result in affordable housing. The cost of construction and market rate will set the cost of the apartment.
3. While limited in Grand Rapids historic districts, what will prevent an investor from buying entire blocks adjacent to commercial zones, demolishing the existing housing, and constructing a series of 4-unit structures. New construction is rarely affordable.
4. The Proposed Design Guidelines Manual should be developed before any action proceeds on this recommendation, with input from independent architects experienced in urban planning and neighborhood representations.

Recommendation #8: Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) by Right
1. The proposal would allow an ADU to be built in conjunction with a principal residence (owner-occupied). Since the unit would have a kitchen, a bathroom and a separate entrance, we are concerned that these eventually could be converted to a rental two-family at a later date. Specifically, how will the owner-occupancy requirement be enforced over time?
2. If the purpose of this change is to increase affordability of home ownership by allowing rental income, the cost of constructing an ADU can be daunting. A non-profit developer stated that adding an ADU over an existing garage could cost at least $50,000.
3. Rather than making ADU a right, we suggest that the application fees be waived to applicants meeting income guidelines. This would make the “ask” affordable but would not take away neighbors’ ability to comment on the appropriateness.
4. An ADU should be registered and periodically certified in a manner similar to rental dwellings. Enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance is a major concern among many neighborhoods and any changes like this must be accompanied by a commitment by the City to increased funding and staffing for enforcement.
5. Two parking spaces are required for a single family dwelling, while 1 space is required for an ADU (3 total). HHA would support a restriction that the parking requirement cannot be waived.

(Editor’s note: As of this writing, the City Planning Commission approved all 4 text changes and increased the #3 recommendation to allow 2-4 unit conversion/development within 500 of commercial zones. There is city-wide concern regarding these text changes and we will keep neighbors informed through the email alert network and Facebook.)
Hi Neighbors and Movie Lovers. Please join us this Spring/Summer for Heritage Hill Backyard Movie Nights. We show movies in several backyards in Heritage Hill.

Last year we had eight different hosts and would love to add more this year. We supply the popcorn, the screen and the projector and the movie is chosen by the host. Let us know if you are interested. The size of your backyard doesn't really matter.

All movies are family friendly and it’s a great way to meet your neighbors. The day of week also changes depending on who hosts and when they want to show the movie.

Please go to our Facebook page Heritage Hill Backyard Movie Nights for the most current schedule and times. You can also call Chris Tallarico at 616-307-3516 or Doug Meeks 517-803-7339 or email us at heritagehillbackyardmovienight@gmail.com. All you have to bring is a chair and whatever beverage you want to drink.

Kick-off party – Saturday, Feb. 24 - 6:00 pm at Doug Meeks, Greg McNeely’s – 226 College SE. Please RSVP to heritagehillbackyardmovienight@gmail.com. And BYOB.

Last summer we showed Star Wars, Message In A Bottle, Steel Magnolias, Romeo & Juliet, Sandlot, Princess Bride, The Color Of Money, O Brother, Where Art Thou?, Moulin Rouge, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, National Treasure, Pollyanna, The Jerk, Finest Hours and Deepwater Horizon. We also had homemade pizza night, an ice cream social and a potluck dinner. It is totally up to the host to have or not have an added attraction.
We remember

Our College Avenue NE neighbor Don Kerr passed away December 21, 2017. Don and his wife Sharon Sandberg were members of the North College Block Club for several decades. He is remembered by family, friends and students for his kind and gentle nature, generosity and his creative, curious mind. Don was an accomplished painter and a dedicated educator. He served as the Chair of the Grand Valley State University Art Department where he taught for nearly 30 years.

There will be a Celebration of Life for Don in the Spring.

Welcome to First Church in the heart of the city — a progressive Christian community of faith that embraces all. We are committed to faith development that leads to engagement in acts of justice, mercy, and service.

We look forward to connecting with you!

Sunday Worship: 8:15 and 10:45 am

First United Methodist Church
227 Fulton St E • Grand Rapids
www.GrandRapidsFUMC.org

The Heritage Hill Annual Weekend Tour of Homes – May 19 and 20, 2018
Tickets on Sale online - $18/advance
Heritagehillweb.org

Celebrate Spring
Celebrate 50 years

First United Methodist Church
227 Fulton St E • Grand Rapids
www.GrandRapidsFUMC.org
Discussion at the November, 2017 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Staff Reports: In addition to her printed report, Jan talked briefly about the City’s plan to remove one side of parking on Antisdel and neighbors work, meetings to change this plan. On-street parking is desperately needed and neighbors have orchestrated an amazing system of cooperation to overcome the difficulties of this small street. Also spoke about the pending sale of 402 – 430 Madison SE home and lots. Not much is known yet, but neighbors will be brought up to speed once intentions are revealed. (As of January, 2018 – the buyer is beginning the restoration of the house as a single family. There are no plans for the 3 adjacent vacant lots and it will be some time before any are considered.) Jan mentioned an ongoing plan to redevelop the Association’s website and some plans for the Association’s 50th anniversary in 2018. And finally, Jan is exploring the possibility of a pilot program for Heritage Hill that would have the City enforce Odd/Even Seasonal Parking Law only when necessary for snow removal. This would increase much needed on-street parking throughout the winter.

A couple of things Tansy highlighted from her report include a mention of the opening of the new Dollar General store – pretty well received by neighbors.

Committee/Liaison Reports:

Community Engagement: Todd H. discussed the Holiday Potluck and Annual Meeting.

Land Use: Wes B. talked briefly about the city’s affordable housing proposals (Housing Now) and the HPC Historic District survey update (all public hearings on this have been pushed into 2018). He then yielded the floor to Craig Nobbelin who spoke on the City’s affordable housing proposals. Craig went through a summary of several meetings he attended. Of the 11 proposals, he said, the city seems poised to make changes to the zoning ordinances which would include three of the proposals: 1. Allow accessory dwelling units by right; 2. Permit non-condo, zero lot-line units; and 3. Provide incentives for small-scale development. Craig remarked it seemed as though the city was rushing through this process without a lot of public input and was very worried the results may not be what the city wants, but more importantly, could cause harm to the current make-up of Heritage Hill. Hopefully more will come of this later as it seems the decision will be postponed to a later date beyond the initially determined date of December 14.

Administration: Jim P. reported on two task forces formed at the latest finance committee meeting. One is for Home Tour and another for individual and institutional contributions which would explore new and/or enhance current fund-raising efforts. Also talked about an upcoming liaison meeting with Mercy Health and that the slate of nominees for the next board election was set.

Fundraising: Kate D. reporting - Home Tour 2018 – five homes are now committed. Still looking for two to three more and asking for suggestions. Pledge drive going well and 300 letters set to go
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Rick Bylsma has given presentations to Historic Societies, Old House Expo events, and to the Michigan Historic Preservation Network.

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- Frank Lloyd Wright/Meyer May – Steelcase – Grand Rapids, MI
- Frank Lloyd Wright Studio/Amberg home - Grand Rapids, MI
- Gibson Restaurant/Mangiamo’s - Grand Rapids, MI
- Voigt House – Grand Rapids Public Museum - Grand Rapids, MI
- Senator William Alden Smith Estate – Grand Rapids, MI
- Hackley and Hume Estate – Muskegon County Museum, MI
- St. Marks Church – Grand Rapids, MI
- First Methodist Church – Grand Rapids, MI
- Westminster Presbyterian Church – Grand Rapids, MI
- Reagan Marketing – Grand Rapids, MI
- Wealthy Street Theater – Grand Rapids, MI
- Graham Home – Lowell Museum, MI
- Women’s City Club – Grand Rapids, MI

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out for end-of-year donations. A major sponsor – Grand River Builders – is already on board for the 2018 Home Tour. And Texas Hold’em events continue to do well and four are scheduled for 2018.

Old Business – Talked about perhaps conveying the need for Texas Hold’em volunteers at the Annual Meeting.

Executive Session: 2018 HHA Budget: The budget was passed as presented by the HHA Finance committee.

Discussion at the December, 2017 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Call for New Business – Kate Diedrich discussed a city proposal for street leaf disposal and expressed her concern of clogging streets, drains, and mess of rotting, frozen leaves. The City has virtually abandoned this suggestion for all the reasons Kate cited.

2018 HHA Board Welcome/ 2017 HHA Board Send offs – Jim Payne introduced new Board members Wendy Falb, Sarah Green, Chris Grygiel and Nathan Slauer and thanked outgoing Board members Peter Albertini, Ryan Huezinga, and Teresa Dittmer. Applause to all.

Appointment of Suzanne De Haan to fill one year Board vacancy (Jim Payne’s term) - Jim explained that he is resigning his seat a year early. The Executive Committee is recommending the appointment of Suzanne DeHaan to complete his term. Moved and approved.

Welcome back Suzanne.

2018 Officers Election – The slate as presented was moved and approved – Lisa Baars and Wes Beck as co-Presidents, Mark Hutchison, Vice President, Erin Shupe, Treasurer and Suzanne DeHaan, Secretary. All were thanked for their service.

2018 Board Hospitality Sign-Up – The sign-up sheet was circulated and completed.

Adjourn: 8:00 pm – but not before giving Jim Payne glowing remarks for all his years of leadership to the Board. Huge applause, thanks and laughter.

If you would like an item placed on the Board agenda, please call the HHA office at 459-8950 before 4:00 p.m. of the second WEDNESDAY of the month. If you would like to address the Board, public comment is taken at the beginning of each meeting. Typically, Board meetings run from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.
If you would like to receive monthly Board agendas via email, please email us your request (heritage@heritagehillweb.org).

THANK YOU HERITAGE HILL

For making Griffin Properties the top residential real estate team in your area!

Our valued past clients will tell you, no one works harder to get your home sold than Griffin Properties. We have taken the time to understand the unique Heritage Hill area, and it shows—since 2015 we’ve sold more homes than any other agent or team—nearly $9 million in volume.

The Griffin Properties team is here to assist you in all of your real estate needs in Heritage Hill and in the Greater Grand Rapids area. Call us today at 616.915.6060 for a free market evaluation of your home.
DATES TO REMEMBER
All Heritage Hill Association Meetings are open to neighbors.

Thursday, February 15, 2018 – 5:30-7:30 pm
State of the City Address – Mayor Bliss
1430 Monroe NW
Need to RSVP through the GR Mayor’s office

Wednesday, February 21, 2018
HHA Board Meeting – 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary’s
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
220 Cherry SE, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Monday, March 12, 2018
March April Herald Deadline

Wednesday, March 21, 2018
HHA Board Meeting – 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary’s
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
220 Cherry SE, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Wednesday, April 18, 2018
HHA Board Meeting – 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary’s
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
220 Cherry SE, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Upcoming:
Saturday and Sunday, May 19th and 20th, 2018
2018 Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes

Saturday June 2, 2018
Heritage Hill Yard Sales Day

Saturday June 16, 2018
Heritage Hill Garden Tour

Neighborhood Improvement & Public Safety
organizing efforts of the Heritage Hill Association
are in part funded by the City of Grand Rapids’
Community Development Block Grant Programs.

ABSOLUTELY EVERYONE IS WELCOME.
We don’t presume you to be Christian, but being Christian to us means that we welcome absolutely everyone.
Sundays at 8:30 & 11:00a
www.westminstergr.org

The Heritage Hill Association publishes available apartments.
Please remember us when your apartment needs renters. Your dollars not only find you tenants but also support the programs of the Heritage Hill Association! You can list your apartment right at the website or stop by the HHA office. We welcome you!

Check out available apartments at
HERITAGEHILLWEB.ORG

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Rental and Home Sales Listings
All sizes and prices—Spread the word!!!