Michigan Street Corridor Development

As a Heritage Hill neighbor, how do you feel about the traffic that you encounter along Michigan Street; the Medical Mile; the intersections of Michigan at Lafayette, College or Fulton Avenues? How do you feel about the empty storefronts and buildings; available services? What about the sea of parking lots? What would you like to see happen? Be on the alert for opportunities in the upcoming months to voice your concerns and views in the development of the Michigan Street Corridor Plan.

You may already have participated in a community forum last fall at Central High School or had an opportunity to play a Quality of Life game this winter. Neighborhood activities are being planned to gather your ideas on what you would like to see happen.

While the focus is on Michigan Street and adjacent areas, the planning area reaches from the Grand River to the East Beltline and parts of it extend from Wealthy Street to Leonard Street. Activities in these areas help to define what the needs are for the corridor and how it should be developed. Using multiple sources of funding, consultants have already compiled a variety of population and market data to use in the planning process. With a large Federal grant award that you may have read about in the Grand Rapids Press, the process has already begun to move forward more quickly.

To help guide this process and involve a wide variety of stakeholders, the Grand Rapids Planning Department established a Steering Committee last summer to work with the Planning Department staff. Most stakeholder groups are represented on the steering committee, including neighborhoods, businesses, religious organizations, restaurants, utility companies, educational institutions, health care institutions, advocacy organizations, government organizations, City departments, and more. Representing Heritage Hill interests are Craig Nobbelin, Zoning Chair, with Jan Earl as an alternate. This committee continues to meet monthly.

In February, committee members traveled along the corridor on a special Rapid bus to view and discuss characteristics of the corridor. One of the exercises split the members into two groups to go by foot west up the Michigan Hill from Eastern to McDonald. One group alternated going up the hill in wheel chairs, while the other group was blind-folded, guided by the “seeing” person as they walked up the hill. Every participant will always remember and appreciate the challenges of pedestrians who are disabled and have to travel the uneven and dangerous sidewalks of Michigan Street.

For more information or to share your ideas/frustrations for development of the Michigan Street Corridor, please contact the Heritage Hill office at 459-8950 or Craig Nobbelin at 458-0471.

Heritage Hill
Weekend Tour of Homes
May 19 and 20

15th Annual Heritage Hill Yard Sales Day! *
Saturday, June 9

*Plan your Sale! - Email the Association office at heritage@heritagehillweb.org by June 1 and your location will be included in the list that is posted on HHA’s website.
Is this weather wacky or what? Now that Tour is securely situated in May, these summer-like days are really confusing me! Am I in the spring or transported to the fall planning? But absolutely no complaints here... Probably when you’re reading this, these 87 degree days will be a fond Michigan memory.

Hopefully there will be a few spring tulips left for the 43rd Heritage Hill Weekend Tour on May 19th and 20th. Please, please help spread the word that Tour is coming and invite everyone. Please use all your social media tricks and your face-to-face charm and get people excited to see inside this great Tour line-up. Send people to our Website, heritagehillweb.org for all the enticement. It will be a beautiful weekend to walk this great place in whatever bloom that is blooming. Tour’s gardens are an added splash so get your people on Tour.

There is another way to support the Association and get a FREE ticket to Tour. We need volunteer guides right up to the days of Tour to cover any cancellations. Please call today, 459-8950, or email heritage@heritagehillweb.org

The Association is trying a new date for the Heritage Hill Yard Sales Day. We had a lot of complaints about the August date last year so we are setting June 9th for 2012. Sorry to keep hopping the date but when Home Tour supplanted the Yard Sales former date, we have had to try new times. Be flexible is what I always say, so plan your sale in June if you are so inclined.

The Association and neighbors are forging a closer relationship with Mary Free Bed Hospital. We welcome this communication network with this influential neighbor and are excited about getting better acquainted with the new administration. The Hospital will be constructing an addition to the west side of the hospital that will begin this summer. If you want to be on this notification network, please email or call the HHA office.

Welcome back Maria Zache (and Jim Starky too) from their winter break. The HHA office is cheering her homecoming!

Renew, renew, renew .. ‘tis the season and it feels good!

Jan Earl
Executive Director
The Season of Renewal
Support the Heritage Hill Association with your 2012 Pledge!

Faced with cuts in federal budgets and decreasing revenues in our apartment listing (because most apartments in Heritage Hill are rented (Yea)!), the Association needs your help more than ever. We need our neighbors to give what they can (dollars that is) in support of the programs of your neighborhood association. Please keep the wheels on - join us for the first time or recommit and keep us all together!!

Your contribution is vital to the HHA budget that directly benefits your neighborhood. Your support is critical to:

- Organizing neighborhood watch and crime prevention programs that keep you aware and safe.
- Working with the major institutions surrounding Heritage Hill to bridge the needs of our residents and our institutional neighbors. Our focus is to protect our neighborhood from development that could harm our residential quality. Our work also helps our institutions do their work better.
- Providing vital neighborhood information via our office, the e-alert network, the newsletter and our Web site that keeps people connected and informed.
- Monitoring land use and zoning requests and voicing positions that maintain our neighborhood’s stability.
- Addressing parking and traffic issues and working with stakeholders to develop programs that ease congestion (or at least don’t make problems worse!)
- Promoting neighborhood occupancy through apartment listings, our Weekend Tour of Homes and community building events.
- Assisting tenants and property owners with rights and responsibilities.
- Using the Master Plan of Heritage Hill that guides development in our neighborhood. This dog-eared plan is used in every issue faced by the Association and by city departments as a reference guide in planning projects in our neighborhood.

Our pledge drive begins now. Pledge $100.00 by May 1 and we’ll send you a FREE Home Tour ticket! Or just pledge now and you’ll not get one phone call from us!

For the 2012 continuation of the Heritage Hill Association, I pledge:

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Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
Phone ____________________________ Email ____________________________

Please return this coupon and check to: HHA, 126 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 or go to the web www.heritagehillweb.org and you can pledge online!!!!
Weekend Tour of Homes
May 19 and 20, 2012

Give a shift for Home Tour!
We Need You!
Please volunteer to work a 3.5 or 4 hour shift and you will get a free Tour ticket!

Home Tour Shifts:
Saturday, May 19: 10:30 am to 2:30 pm or 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm
Sunday, May 20: 11:30 am to 3:30 pm or 3:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Please CALL or EMAIL the HHA office at 459-8950 or heritage@heritagehillweb.org with your preferred day and shift time. Office hours are 9 am to 5 pm; an answering machine is available for after hour messages.

GRCC on the Ballot
May 8th

Grand Rapids Community College is asking voters in May to approve a levy of an additional 0.35 mills, which would generate about $100 million over 20 years. It would cost the owner of a $150,000 home about $26 per year, according to administrators. The college now levies 1.78 mills.

What will GRCC’s $100 million bond proposal cover?
• Make improvements in most of the downtown campus’ buildings, focusing on $30 million for the Main Building, the central classrooms and an office building constructed in 1917.
• The 1930s-era Music Center, 142 Ransom Ave. NE, would get around $6 million in renovations, about half designated for heating and cooling, fire suppression and other systems.
• About $6 million is targeted for a new Early Childhood Center, which would be attached to the Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center, 151 Fountain St. NE. Classes now are taught in the basement of a church across the street.
• About $22.7 million is planned for technology improvement spread over the entire campus, important given that a growing number of courses are taught online.
• About $32.4 million would be spent throughout much of the rest of the main campus, with many of the buildings approaching their 40th year. Maintenance projects could include roofs, heating and cooling systems and energy efficiency items.
By Tom Truesdale

Just like the ages-old wedding practice that forecasts a bride's bright future to what she wears – something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue – this spring's Weekend Tour of Homes will likewise wear those same attributes. The Tour will run the weekend of May 19 and 20 and, as always, you're cordially invited to attend.

**Something Old**

This may seem a bit obvious... isn't everything we tour in the neighborhood supposed to be old? In this case, however, we're referring to some past gems whose owners have generously consented to reopen their homes once again. We will give you more details in the next issue of the Herald, but these popular houses (two on the north end and two on the south) graced previous Weekend Tour of Homes over the past 15 years. We know you'll enjoy seeing them again – or for the first time – as much as we enjoy welcoming them back to Tour.

**Something New**

There are three offerings that are new to tour this year. The three homes, two on the south end and one on the north, are very different styles from one another. Their locations, too, help us span the north/south boundaries of the Hill in two giant leaps. One borders the newly proposed park on the extreme south end of the neighborhood, one borders the GRCC campus on the north end, and the last – about midway between the other two – is tucked away in a spot, that unless you've been paying close attention, you may never have suspected a house to sit. As before, all will be detailed in the next Herald – our annual Tour issue.

**Something Borrowed**

For a short – and fun - detour from our neighborhood fare, we are going to sneak out of the district a few blocks and “borrow” downtown Grand Rapids’ St. Mark's Episcopal Church for the weekend as its congregation shows off this architectural gem and its even more amazing pipe organ. Joining St. Mark's this year are three other landmark institutions within the Heritage Hill historic district. You'll see the recently renovated White Hall (formerly Warren Hall) on the GRCC Fulton Street campus, Child Discovery Center’s new home (formerly Vandenberg Elementary School) and, of course, the always popular Steelcase-owned and Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Meyer May House.

**Something Blue**

This doesn't refer to any house or actual color for that matter. In fact, it should be “somebody” blue, as in sad. Many people think that Heritage Hill is just a place, a place filled with old houses. Heritage Hill did not become Heritage Hill solely because of the houses. It’s the people, too: people who fought for these houses in the early years of this neighborhood’s survival, people who, in subsequent years, helped revitalize a nearly forgotten era and the people who live here now, who continue to love these homes, understand their history and know the importance of preserving them in a livable manner. It’s sad that more people cannot know the folks who span those years, who open and have opened their homes for Tour, and see just how proud they are to show off what they have done as caretakers of their little part of Heritage Hill’s history. They are what is vital to the Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes.

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**2012 Tour Weekend:**

**May 19 and 20**

Now let's get back to the issue at hand... Tour weekend! It’s coming up fast and all the information you need to remember about tour is at your fingertips: just go to www.heritagehillweb.org. Or you can call the Heritage Hill Association office at 459-8950.

Advance Tickets are already available at the office for $15 (they will be $18 day of tour). They will be available at satellite outlets (Martha’s Vineyard, Wealthy Street Bakery, Family Fare and D&W stores, and Lake Michigan Credit Union) starting in April. Watch for more information in your local news media sources.

And if you’re reading this, you must be a resident and/or supporter of the Heritage Hill neighborhood. It’s your turn to make this Tour or Homes vital. You owe it to your friends and family – especially those who don’t get a chance to see the Hill in all its spring beauty - to do your part and bring them in and show off this place you call home.

See you the weekend of May 19 and 20!
Since 2005, VanDerKolk Painting has provided architectural paint restoration for the Cornell residence in the Heritage Hill District.

Roger, what would you like your Heritage Hill neighbors to know about VanDerKolk Painting?

I am very pleased with your company. You show up when you say you will and you stay on the job until it is completed. That, in itself, is noteworthy.

What impressed you most about VanDerKolk Painting’s craftsmen?

Your crew is professional and courteous. Attention to detail is commendable. It’s not just a job...your crew and yourself are as proud and pleased with the finished project as much as the customer is. The clean-up upon completion is outstanding, often difficult to find a stray paint chip on the ground.

How was your budget addressed for your painting project by VanDerKolk Painting?

You tailor the project with the customer’s budget; sometimes doing a side or sides a year...very important, especially in today’s economic climate.

Overall, how would you grade VanDerKolk Painting’s quality, value and customer service?

You provide A+ service. VanDerKolk Painting makes what could be a negative contractor experience a surprising pleasant one. I would highly recommend VanDerKolk Painting.

NEW EPA LEAD LAW MANDATES CONTRACTOR TRAINING.

On April 22, 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandated that all contractors have proper certification for dealing with lead on homes built prior to 1978. For example, pressure washing for paint removal is prohibited. VanDerKolk Painting has completed their certification process, and our employees are trained in the safety practices and removal of lead-based paints. VanDerKolk Painting’s paint shaving system utilizes HEPA equipment to safely contain lead based paint. This process provides 15 years of durability and has a 5 year warranty. If you have any questions about a painting project that involves lead paint, contact us today.

Schedule an estimate 24/7 at www.vanderkolkpainting.com or call 616-475-4300
Neighborhood Watch: Two residents blocks apart saw the same prowler on March 1 and each took action that likely prevented a crime. At around 12:28 p.m. an Avalon neighbor saw a young man squeezing through a fence to the parking lot of the old Social Security building.

Moments later she saw the same young man walking past windows at the side of her house. She ran to lock her back door and called 911. Officer Tom Gootjes responded and started looking for the suspect.

At about 12:50 p.m. a neighbor on the 300 block of Paris SE noticed a young man standing inside the fence at this neighbors’ house. He asked, “What are you doing there? And the suspect replied, “I’m waiting for my sister to get off the bus.” John said, “You’re trespassing. You better get out of there.”

As the suspect walked out of the yard and south to Wealthy, John walked a distance behind him and called 911. Because of the call moments before, Officer Gootjes was on scene minutes later. He stopped the 20-year-old suspect (who lives about a mile way), put him in cuffs and into the cruiser.

Officer Gootjes spoke with the first caller from Avalon and to the Paris Avenue neighbor. After taking all the information, including the suspect’s side of the story and his name, age, address, phone, Officer Gootjes opened the door of the cruiser; took off the cuffs and let the suspect go.

WHAT! You might ask!

Well, this is a lesson in the law: since prowling is a misdemeanor, an officer must witness the incident to make an arrest. That is the case in a number of other types of crime including disturbances, littering, urinating in public and many more.

There is good reason for this but it can be frustrating for police and neighborhood watchers. But, the suspect is not free and clear.

With the information gained from the witnesses, Officer Gootjes filed a request for a warrant with the prosecutor’s office.

(Cont’d on page 8)
The prosecutor will determine if another charge can be brought against the suspect. The neighbors’ contribution in this incident is that no break-in occurred; this suspect knows that two neighbors in our area called the police; the police officer was on the scene almost instantly and the police have his identifying information on file in case he is found prowling again.

The outcome is about as good as it gets without an arrest. Heritage Hill Association commends the witnesses and Office Tom Gootjes for their excellent response to very suspicious activity.

Note: At no time was aggressive action taken by the witnesses or the suspect. The witness had no weapon and the suspect walked away at a normal pace. Neighborhood Watch urges us to observe and call the police and to take no action that is a threat to our own safety.

Firepits and Fire Regulations:
The Association received an e-mail asking if firepits are allowed in Grand Rapids. This question comes up at block meetings and calls from neighbors. We asked the Grand Rapids Fire Department to interpret their open burning regulations in light of the popularity of firepits and other similar devices so we could give you the correct information.

Not allowed are: Outdoor Portable Firepits, Chimeneas and Recreational Fires.

The question of cooking often comes up: For the purpose of the Fire Ordinance, the mere presence of nearby food DOES NOT qualify as an exemption to the open burning ordinance. For the food preparation to be considered a number of factors need to be present including but not limited to:

- The device being used for the fire is designed for the cooking of food as its primary purpose.
- The fire will be small in nature, and would depend upon the heat from the embers for cooking.
- When the food preparation is completed, the fire would be extinguished.
- The gathering of food and support goods after the arrival of the fire department will exclude consideration as a cooking fire.

Fires on or in the ground will not be considered (for any exemption from the ordinance).

Should the Fire Department encounter repeat offenders of the ordinance the fire officer is required to notify the Police Department.

February Police Responses

There were 100 police responses to the neighborhood last month. The responses not listed are for miscellaneous non-crime issues, “gone on arrivals”, littering, and requests for service.

The most serious crime was the killing of Lance Beyers who was driving through...
the area on his way to work and was shot during a road rage incident. The suspects were arrested.

There are ebbs and flows with crime numbers, so we keep track and can see trends up or down over a period of years.

Serious crime has shown an overall downward trend in the United States in the last decade. In Heritage Hill, that trend has been even steeper since we started keeping records (based on GRPD Stats) in 1986.

Bylsma Painting Company
Excellence since 1972

Rick Bylsma has given presentations to Historic Societies, Old House Expo events, and to the Michigan Historic Preservation Network.

Some of our projects:
- 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

No one in Michigan has more experience, expertise, or volume of projects in restoration painting.

616-308-8849
www.bylsmapainting.com

POLICE RESPONSES FOR 2012

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In the next Herald, we will use the crime stats that we have collected to compare 1986 to 1996 and 2010.

The Carts are Coming
New Curbside City Collection Services

This summer, the City will offer curbside refuse collection services using a Smart Cart and a pay-as-you-throw system. The City’s curbside services will use reusable, recycled-plastic carts provided to the customer at no charge. Customers will pay based on the size of their cart and the number of times that their cart is serviced.

- A City customer will be charged only when their City-provided cart is emptied at the curb.
- Residents already using City refuse carts will have an RFID chip installed in their cart and charged only when the cart is tipped.

By using refuse carts, we should minimize loose trash and the persistent problem of stolen refuse tags.

- City refuse customers may continue to use the City’s bags and tags.
- When your supply runs out you can convert to the pay-as-you-throw, Smart Cart City Refuse Service.
- The City will eliminate refuse tags.
- The City will continue to sell City refuse bags at their offices.
- No more bulk item tags or appliance sticker for city refuse customers.
- Drivers will use on-vehicle computers to add the cost of this service to your account. (A chip attached to your cart will keep track.)
- The customer fees for bulk and appliance pick-up will be $12.50 to $25 for appliances and from $7.50 to $20 for bulk items. These fees are comparable with fees charged by private refuse companies.

For current Information On Yard Waste Services: Visit the City’s Website at www.grcity.us/solidwasteservices

Barb Lester

Water, fire, and wind don’t care about the historic value of your home.

Team does.

Call the Experts. Call the Team.
616.863.8118
www.teamrestoration.com
The Heritage Hill Association has been at work for the Heritage Hill neighborhood for the past 44 years! Financially, we have remained sustainable with the support of the federal Community Development Block Grants via the City of Grand Rapids, successful Home Tours, pledges from neighbors and commercial member support, as well as an apartment listing service. These larger efforts have also been supplemented with smaller fundraisers and advertising revenue. The Association has been frugal in its financial management so that HHA could offer the best services to neighbors without major fundraising efforts.

Currently, lean economic times call for Heritage Hill Association to expand its financial efforts. In light of this financial need, the HHA Board has created a fund development plan that focuses on support from organizations, institutions, companies, and other entities that are connected to or gain from this outstanding historic neighborhood and its residents. Philanthropic resources are vital to the continued sustainability of the Heritage Hill Association. Saint Mary’s Hospital and its leaders have been an integral partner in this planning process and they are offering invaluable assistance.

We could also use your help and ideas with this fund development plan. If you work with or have interaction with an institution, corporation, foundation and or individuals that understand the value of the Heritage Hill neighborhood and Association for the greater Grand Rapids community, we’d so appreciate knowing who best to approach. Your connections can make a positive difference.

A snapshot of the Association may trigger some thoughts:

**Heritage Hill - A Vibrant Historic Neighborhood a Heartbeat from Downtown Grand Rapids**

**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.

**Its guiding principles**

- Guiding and improving a vital central city neighborhood
- Preserving and protecting a national, state and local historic district.
- Developing and promoting a strong and diverse neighborhood
- Bridging the residential and Downtown to Uptown business communities.

Please call the Association at 459-8950 or email, heritage@heritagehillweb.org if you have suggestions and connections. Thanks so much!

---

**Huge thanks to the Association’s recent contributors:**

- Deb and Bill Bryker
- Grand River Builders
- Jack and Rebecca Hoffman
- Nikki Hoort
- Mike Mesnak
- Morris Manor
- Jim Payne and Char Kruzich
- Team Restoration
- Chris and Tom Truesdale
- Patricia Watkins

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**OUR QUALITY IS NO ACCIDENT**

**FREE LOANER PROGRAM**

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For Quality Body Repairs Come To Wealthy Body Shop Inc.

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www.wealthybodyshop.com

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Call the Griffin Properties Team if you would like to sell or buy a home.

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Discussion at the January 2012 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Bill Kirk, a representative of The Rapid, presented changes/enhancements to The Rapid's service and routes. Frequency and longer hours on many of the routes were mentioned. He also pointed out that the ridership was approximately 4 million in 2000 and grew to more than 10 million in 2011. Thanks to the agreement via the last vote for the Silver Line, the new route is on schedule for a 2014 implementation. A question was asked about an airport bus and he said the airport is currently accessible by way of route #17 from the Woodland Mall hub. Another question was asked whether the "road diet (the narrowing of Division for bike lanes, etc.)" presented any problems to the routes traveling that section of street. He said no obstacles/problems have been reported following those lane changes.

**ACTION ITEM:**

**Grand Rapids Bed & Breakfast ordinance:**

The Executive Committee recommended and proposed a motion to forward a letter to the Grand Rapids Planning Director that "states its support for the current Grand Rapids Bed & Breakfast ordinance in conjunction with the Planning Director’s Determination dated December 15, 2011." The board unanimously passed the motion. The letter goes on to say: "The Heritage Hill Association is in support of traditional bed & breakfasts which preserve the residential character of the neighborhood. We believe the current ordinance, combined with the determination, are sufficient to guide individuals wanting to develop Bed & Breakfasts. We would oppose amending the language to permit any increased number of events."

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

**Treasurer's Report** – A deficit of nearly $20,000 was reported at year-end. A wine social held in October and a better-than-expected pledge drive helped lessen the severity of the loss. Financial reserves are available to keep the organization secure. A year-end gift of $5,000 from Kameel Chamelley at Martha’s Vineyard was announced as well as an application for $6,000 for promotion/involve/work with the Michigan Corridor Project that is in the works.

**Staff Reports** – Questions to Jan: One regarding the Website and more specifically the house search function were posed. She said a quote to reactivate the house search, apartment listing, etc. functions would run about $4,000. Jan’s searching elsewhere first. Another question was about the Pleasant/Madison Park. Currently the funding for that park sits at about $412,000. The goal is approximately $800,000 (the planned $730,000 construction cost plus a maintenance fund). Donors will be approached along with community fundraisers (bricks/trees/etc.). A city/parks assessment was discussed at a meeting Jan attended for those households within the park’s district that would raise about $400,000 within a 3-year period. Jan did not encourage that. Questions for Barb were brief: one concerned window pinning and the other was about bed bugs at rental units.

**Committee/Liaison Reports** –

**Administration** – Jim Payne reviewed the board/committee structure and encouraged new members to find a place to get involved.

**Fundraising** – The Garden Tour is moving along with garden recruitment on the south end of the neighborhood by Kate Diedrich. She's currently working in concert with...
Jim Payne, one of the 2011 tour organizers. Yard Sale dates will be explored; probably sometime after Aug. 1, but before Labor Day weekend. Home Tour is actively searching for at least two more homes to round out the 2012 line-up. The two institutions currently on the list may be joined by the Child Development Center (Vandenberg School). Pledge Drive and Texas Hold’em (in July, August, November and December) are also on tap for the new year.

Community Involvement – Block Issues – referred to Barb Lester’s report. Talked about neighborhood communications and further involvement in social media with the help of new member, Tansy Harris. Education – The Child Development Center is currently in its fundraising mode for an addition at the south end of building (housing the pre-school). Upon HPC approval, construction should begin this summer. Central High School’s 100th birthday and graduation of its last traditional high school class takes place in 2012.

Neighborhood Safety Taskforce – work on the State Street Envisioning continues with another meeting/envisioning session tentatively scheduled for sometime in February. Building repurposing and streetscape issues are just some of the things to be discussed.

A welcome-wagon-type introduction to new neighbors was discussed as a means to promote Heritage Hill activities. Land Use Issues – Mike Clark reminded all of the Old House Expo, March 24 at Park Congregational Church. HPC approved the request to remove the stained-glass windows at Bethlehem Lutheran Church (and stored on-site). The windows will be replaced by more resident-friendly windows. Snow removal parking enforcement was discussed. So too, the construction to begin on West Fulton from Division to the river as well as work coming up (or currently happening) on the 200/300 block of Union, Evans and all of James. Discussion at the February 2012 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

**ACTION ITEM:**

HHA’s CDBG Request for Continued Funding: Permission from the board to submit the annual request for funding from the CDBG was unanimously passed with no discussion after a motion and second.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

Treasurer’s Report – Because HHA’s bookkeeper submits monthly reports on the 20th of each month, there was not a treasurer’s report available due to early date of the Board meeting. Instead the report for January and the report for February will be discussed at the March 21, 2012 meeting.

Staff Reports – From Jan: A clarification was made regarding the funding from the administrative/work/support of the Michigan Street Corridor project - $6,000. Jan also had a Game of Michigan Corridor “LIFE” (similar to the game used for the Green Grand Rapids) to help with the visioning work on Michigan Street.

Board Liaison Groups - A 10-minute Breakout Session was held for board members to gather in their chosen area of commitment/involvement, name a chairperson, start to discuss goals and objectives if time, and, more importantly, set an offline meeting time to expand on each group’s objectives. New chairs include Mike Clark (Land Use Issues), Stephanie Eckley.
Committee/Liaison Reports – Administration – Jim Payne reported that Tom Czerwinski and Jim Talen will remain on the Finance Committee. A date for the association’s self-audit will be set in the next couple of weeks. A plan is in the works, driven by Micki Benz/Phil McCorkle of St. Mary’s, to conduct a fund development event with the purpose of attracting business/organization donations to the Association. St. Mary’s would host this event attended by other corporate sponsors, etc., and possibly emceed by the mayor of Grand Rapids. Will make the correlation that the success of GR and the success of Heritage Hill are intertwined and the support of each mutually beneficial.

The next State Street Envisioning will take place 6:30pm, February 22 and will again be hosted by the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Fundraising – Home Tour is one house away from a full line-up. Introduction of new Friends & Sponsors brochure. Urging board members to start canvassing businesses, friends to support Tour. Texas Hold’em dates are set (July 5-7, August 5-8, November 1-3 and December 2-5, 2012). The 2012 Garden Tour recruiting is underway with gardens on the south end of the Hill being sought. No date of event is set yet. Question brought up as to the possibility of a partnership with the GR Parks Department (communication-wise, not monetarily). Finally, with the approach of pledge time, Jackie urged all board members to give first.

Community Involvement – Barb Lester continues working with the new management company overseeing the Stuyvesant Apartments. Barb reviewed the recent break-ins at two apartments on the 500 block of Prospect SE. The “Listening Tour” of GRPS interim-Superintendent Neal was mentioned, as well as the application for historical designation by Congress Elementary. The Child Discovery Center (former Vandenberg School) will be starting on its capital improvements this summer with help from the Frey Foundation. The south side pre-school addition is slated first up. The Discovery Center will definitely be on the 2012 Home Tour as one of three other institutions opening for our tour-goers this year.

Land Use Issues – Mike Clark revisited the Bethlehem Lutheran Church project and the stained-glass windows issue: Yes they will be removed and either stored on site or used as interior architectural décor (also on site). Mentioned demo of 444 Union SE that has been approved by HPC. Also mentioned new park (Pleasant and Madison SE) will be in fundraising mode through June of 2013, at which point groundbreaking and construction is due to begin. Reiterated areas of construction surrounding the neighborhood: West Fulton from Division to the river as well as work coming up (or currently happening) on the 200/300 block of Union, Evans and all of James. As an aside in this area of involvement, a mention was made to the rise in “over-renting,” or the increased renting of bedrooms in single-family homes. As stated, there is no easy solution to this problem of increased density, as it is not zoning-specific. Also mentioned were a recent sign for condos coming at 44 Lafayette NE and knowledge of an expansion coming to Mary Free Bed on Wealthy.

The HHA Board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third WEDNESDAY of every month at the GRCC DeVos Campus, 415 East Fulton, at the Robert Sneden Lecture Hall. Neighbors are welcome to attend. 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 regarding an agenda item, public comment is taken at the beginning of each meeting. For non-agenda items, public comment is taken at the end of each meeting. Typically, Board meetings run from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.
The Pleasant Park is very real and moving forward. The Park’s steering committee is currently developing Part 2 of the funding campaign. The City received the DNR Trust Fund grant and that will cover about 50% of the needed funds. These funds also need to be matched. The park construction plus a small maintenance fund is about $800,000 so we need to raise an additional $400,000.

We are hoping that most of the needed funds can come in from local foundations. However, there will be a community support portion because that’s important for public buy-in. In what form that will be is not yet defined but will likely be purchasing bricks, benches - hardscape needs.

The time line for raising funds is now through June 2013, with construction to begin shortly thereafter. Hopefully by June 2012 the fundraising plan will be scripted so we can announce the campaign. Stay tuned!
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**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Wednesday, April 18, 2012**  
HHA Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - GRCC DeVos Campus  
Robert Sneden Academic Building Lecture Hall, 415 East Fulton  

**Tuesday, April 19th**  
May June Heritage Herald Deadline  

**Tuesday, May 8 Election**  
Be sure and vote!  
GRCC Bond Proposition  

**Wednesday, May 16, 2012**  
HHA Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - GRCC DeVos Campus  
Robert Sneden Academic Building Lecture Hall, 415 East Fulton  

**Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20, 2012**  
2012 Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes  
11 am to 5 pm on Saturday; Noon to 6 pm on Sunday  

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