

Heritage Herald

JULY/AUGUST 2014

The Newsletter of Heritage Hill

Volume XL, No. 4

Heritage Hill Association's Neighborhood-Wide Potluck Picnic It's National Night Out!

**Tuesday, August 5, 2014
5:30 to 8:00 p.m.**

**On the Green behind
Innovation Central High School
In the 400 block of Lyon NE**

Potluck Picnic

Bring a dish to share and a chair or blanket.

We'll provide hot dogs, brats, beverage and utensils.

Fun Stuff

- ◆ Meet the new Police Chief
- ◆ Arts Activity
- ◆ GRPD K9 Unit
- ◆ City Officials
- ◆ Bounce House

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.
Voicemail 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:

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Barb Lester, Crime Prevention Organizer
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* 1st Term

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The Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors meets at 7 pm the third Wednesday of each month at the Hauenstein Center - H1 Community Room at Mercy Health Saint Mary's. The meeting is open to the public.

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If you seek a pleasant place ... Wow is that an understatement! Pleasant Park is a gorgeous, *knock your socks off* visual and physical treat. We've waited a long time for this space to be depaved and it is beyond what we even dreamed about. It took a village to make this a reality and the *process* of building our park is a wonderful tribute to our organized communities. It has forged the perfect connection to our South Hill neighbors.

There were many players who need applause in the orchestration of Pleasant Park but there are two who were critical to making the park happen. Huge thanks and bows go out to Suzanne Shultz and Steve Faber as they each were pivotal in making all the pieces come together. Without their determination and magic, we might

be still skinning knees on the broken asphalt. Come play in our new park.

The hugs continue to all for making the Weekend Tour of Homes a great success. 243 volunteers aligned to guide our tourists through the Saturday and Sunday tour. An incredible effort by Kate Diedrich must be recognized. Kate gives so much of herself to Tour and we thank her. She did not even take time to breath after Tour before plowing right into Garden Tour. She nearly singlehandedly made Garden Tour happen too. Kate is an amazing neighbor who gives her many talents so generously. We are grateful for Kate.

Enjoy the sun and spread some to all our new neighbors.

Jan Earl

Executive Director

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(These sponsors were not recognized in the May / June issue due to the timing of that issue.)

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Home Tour 2014 - A Smiling Success

With 1,700 tickets sold, the 45th Annual Weekend Tour of Homes was definitely a happy, smiling success. We haven't seen those sales numbers since 2008. Tour-goers and volunteers alike were smiling and laughing through the tour and the weather for the very most part was exceptionally lovely. Another big thanks is due to Home Tour Hosts David and Leah Muir, Kay Courtney, Scott Walters, Jeff Vandenberg & Carolyn Schaut, Thomas Mooney & Sandi Jensen, Scott Kammeraad & Deb Cloney and Tom and Shelly Sinas. What incredible homes you have shared with us while continuing to make our neighborhood somewhere we all want to live and visit.

Home Tour would not exist without the hundreds of volunteers, many of whom have been helping out at Home Tour for many, many years. A dedicated bunch, no doubt! This year, we were also assisted by the cadre of R.O.T.C. Cadets from Innovation Central who happily went wherever needed, adapted to the task at hand and logged 179 community service hours.

House Captains noticed a contingent of new, first-time, younger tour-goers, many of whom were in town for an additional event or draw and decided to make a Grand Rapids weekend out of it. Advance sales show a return to a four-state regional draw. While Home Tour still does

not raise as much money as it did in the past, it seems to be on the way back up. All proceeds are used for neighborhood programs including block club organizing, crime prevention, land use planning, engaging community resources and preservation of the district's historic character.

Thoughts from some of this year's Hosts:

"Well it's an ego boost because people love what we have done and compliment us on all of our hard work!"

"Also, it gets us in action so we do some things we've been putting off - small things - not huge jobs like a new roof - no one thinks about that."

I spent a lot of time in my yard, enjoying my garden and chatting with old friends and new. I strongly recommend it. It was so much fun. I know some owners leave town but people should consider my way. Tour goers knew mine had been one of the worst "slum houses" in Heritage Hill and that may be why so many questions but whatever it was - I loved it. I had been on tour three times before and I stayed away every time. This way was better."

-Kay Courtney, 231 Paris SE

"Our house is so well known as an architectural icon, that we felt an obligation to open the doors to share the interior with neighbors, friends, and historical enthusiasts. And with the extensive renovation work that we have been doing since we purchased the home a year ago, the Tour gave us a firm deadline to work toward. It was a great pleasure to welcome so many enthusiastic visitors to our house. We served as docents in our own home and thoroughly enjoyed it."

*-Scott Kammeraad, 505 College SE,
The Amberg House*

"We were very happy to help support the work of the Heritage Hill Neighborhood Association by putting our house on tour. The tour planning team and event coordinators did a fantastic job and made it as easy as possible for our family to participate. It was very interesting to hear what people had to say about our home and Heritage Hill and we ended the tour with an even greater appreciation for our neighborhood. And, best of all, our home was so carefully taken care of we never would have guessed that so many people had toured it."

-Sinases, 550 College SE

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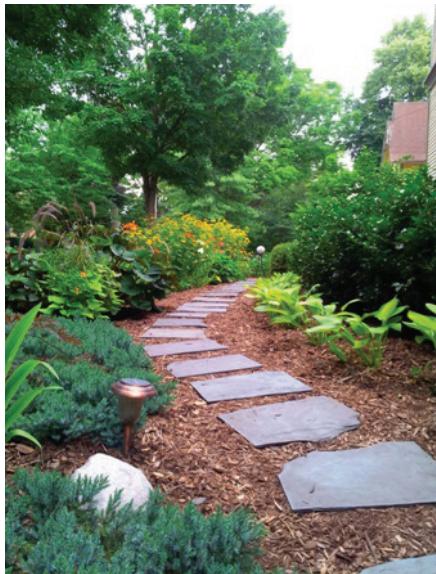
200 Union NE GR, MI 49503 - Next door to Nantucket Bakery

Garden Tour 2014



What is lush with fragrance and color and is filled with warmth and laughter when mixed with a little sunshine and rain? That would be the Heritage Hill Garden tour. The 2014 edition had all the above ingredients and more, with ten private gardens on tour as well as the Voigt house gardens. The intrepid Kate Diedrich, our current board Vice-President, has a passion for gardens (and her neighborhood) that is something to behold. Kate trolled the south Hill in search of gardens for the 2014 tour, peeking over fences and hedges, risking a call to the police by concerned neighbors thinking she looked "suspicious". "I always carry a clipboard with me while I'm snooping so it makes me look official So far, so good ... no one has called the police." - Kate Diedrich.

Now in its seventh consecutive year, the Heritage Hill Garden Tour is termed more as a "funraiser" than a "fundraiser". The focus is on bringing gardening neighbors



together who share a mutual passion for gardens and gardening and inviting the public to come and experience the results of their labor and our neighborhood in general. In the process we also raise needed funds for the Association. On the "eve" of the tour, the participating gardeners of the tour are invited to an evening "garden crawl". Since the host gardeners are in their gardens during the tour and unable to take the tour themselves, this event gives them opportunity to see the gardens in a social setting and a chance commune with their neighbors and fellow gardeners. The event kicks off at one of the gardens, with spread of food and beverage, and "crawls" its way around the tour. This is a big part of the "fun" in the "funraiser".



With ample rain this spring summer, the gardens were brimming with color and deep green foliage; the day of the tour the rain held off long enough for the visiting tourists to make the rounds. Included in the tour were two Garden Shoppes situated at the gardens of Kay Courtney and



Suzanne DeHaan. The "Shoppes" offered garden-inspired arts and crafts from local (mostly Heritage Hill artisans). Kristine Jacobsen was there as well selling honey from her hives in Heritage Hill. The tour started at 9 a.m. with a steady flow of ticket sales and visitors that lasted throughout the day. With the

host gardeners in their gardens acting as ambassadors for our neighborhood, visitors came away with a great experience and pleasant memories to take home. A big "Thank-You" goes out to all the gardeners for opening up their garden spaces and showcasing our neighborhood in such a positive way.

We also want to again thank our generous sponsors: Martha's Vineyard, 616 Lofts, Wealthy at Charles, Storr Printing, The Gardening Angel, Art of the Table, Peninsula Trading and Romence Gardens. Next year the tour will swing up to the north end of Heritage Hill, so all you north end gardeners start thinking about what to put in your gardens to get them in shape so you too can get in on the "fundraising".

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Huge thanks to our recent Heritage Hill Association contributors:

In Memory of Esther Tanis Van Allsburg:
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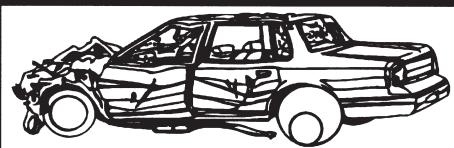
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Call the Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission at 456-3451 for information on approvals. You can access the application form at the City's website,

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.



Land Use Changes and Challenges in 2014

There has been significant zoning and land use activity in the Heritage Hill neighborhood in the first half of 2014. This activity shows that the neighborhood is a dynamic area and often neighbors are required to get involved to maintain a strong residential community. The following is a summary of this activity:

- **Pleasant Park** – The long-awaited

park replacing the asphalt parking lot had a ribbon-cutting event on July 31 at 5:00 pm, dedicating the first new park in the city in roughly 20 years. Pleasant Park was a joint effort made possible by the efforts of the City of Grand Rapids, Friends of Grand Rapids Parks, the South Hill Neighborhood Association and the Heritage Hill Association. Neighbors

were intimately involved in making this happen.

- **Three New Homes** – Three new neighbors are moving into three, new houses which should be completed, or nearly so, by year's end. These houses are on Union (south of Wealthy), at Pleasant and Madison and on Prospect between Cherry and Wealthy (several doors down from the last new house to be built in the neighborhood, completed in 1996).
- **543 Prospect SE** – The purchaser of this house wanted to convert it into a two-family dwelling and add bedrooms, even though it was zoned a single-family dwelling. The house had been separated into two units by long-time former neighbors for privacy reasons, but always lived in by family members. Neighbors and the Heritage Hill Association tried to convince the developer to rehab it as a single family. The neighbors mobilized, supported by the HHA Zoning Committee and Board of Directors with a letter and spoke at the Zoning Board of Appeals public hearing urging denial of the variance request. While the developer stated that it wouldn't be financially viable as a single family, neighbors pointed out that a young couple had purchased another house, almost exactly the same size, across the street and had put in the "sweat-equity" to realize their dreams of single-family ownership in Heritage Hill. The developer's variance request was denied.
- **540 Cherry SE** – Based on the zoning along Cherry Street, a special land use application was filed to rehab this house and use it for the provision of substance abuse treatment services. Creating this residential, 10-bed treatment center for women required an approval process by the Grand Rapids Planning Commission. Built before 1850, the dwelling is one of the earliest homes built in Heritage Hill and was in need of serious restoration. An open house was held at the property for nearby neighbors to gather, tour the property and overview the proposal. Most neighbors believed that the proponents would operate a good and needed treatment service but all were concerned about future owners. This is always the concern with land use issues as the use runs with the land not with the owners. For this reason, neighbors and HHA decided to oppose the use, but also identify issues that concerned neighbors. Many residents realized that the



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(Continued on page 10)

Land Use Changes and Challenges in 2014 *(Continued from page 9)*

Planning Commission might approve the use, but neighbors expressed concerns and requested conditions placed on the use that future owners would also need to follow. In the end, the Planning Commission did approve the use, but with the conditions that neighbors wanted. These conditions should protect the neighborhood and help women who deal with difficult substance abuse issues, while also allowing the restoration of a significant historic structure in our district.

- **616 Lofts on Prospect** – Since the congregation of Bethlehem Lutheran Church moved over seven years ago, the church and adjacent building (and adjoining lot) have been in transition as a series of developers were unable to package their redevelopment plans. The church

and building had been granted a variance for 22 units several years ago by the Zoning Board of Appeals over the objections of neighbors who wanted just 16 units. 616 Lofts, LLC stepped forward in 2013 to complete the transition from a religious facility to apartments. 616 Lofts has developed several old buildings in the downtown area and is knowledgeable about the property. (616 Lofts on Prospect is leasing apartments as this is being written.)

- **320 State Street** – The Heritage Hill Association and neighbors were surprised when one of our neighbors heard that a drop-in center for homeless youth was being developed at this property. This use is allowable in the zone (TN-TCC) that covers State Street. There is a review process by the City's

Planning Department to ensure that the proposed use complies with the intent of the zoning code and that was done in early March. The Mars Hill Bible Church was not advised by Planning Department to talk with HHA and the neighbors.

Mars Hill is partnering with Arbor Circle and Bethany Christian Services to provide a skilled-based space for youth (ages 14-22) who could lack housing, education and/or adult living skills. The center, called HQ, will offer a variety of scheduled classes, but most services will be referred to existing community organizations that are best able to meet the youths' needs. It will operate only during the week and have drop-in hours from 3-6 pm. It will be staffed by a full-time director, three part-time staff, plus Arbor Circle staff. An informational meeting was held on June 25, which was attended by about 9 neighbors and State Street businesses along with representatives of the church. An open house for neighbors and businesses will likely be held in the fall when the center nears completion.

- **345 State Street** – Construction is slated to begin soon on the old city office building on State Street (approved last year), with completed apartments ready for rent in the summer of 2015. Two stories will be added to the main structure, while the parking ramp will be replaced and two floors of apartments added. The 34 apartments, plus two first-floor retail spaces, a leasing office and a meeting room will have ample off-street parking. In the space between the parking ramp and the main building will be a finished courtyard. Keep an eye on the property as State Street begins its redevelopment.

- **Ordinance Changes for Short-Term Rental** – Last fall when zoning code and licensing amendments were proposed for home occupations (including Bed and Breakfast and other short-term lodging), residents voiced concerns during a public hearing. The City Commission referred the issues to the Planning Department which brought together people with a variety of perspectives to serve as an *ad hoc* committee. Several Heritage Hill residents representing differing perspectives were members of the committee. During four meetings, the members shared their ideas and opinions which resulted in a greater understanding on all sides. Changes in the wording of the

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ordinance were developed to clarify issues. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the zoning code amendments in May and at the request of HHA, time for public comment was extended to the June meeting to allow more time to review and comment on the proposed changes to the zoning code. Most of the comments referenced the term "sharing economy," and many individuals inside and outside our neighborhood were already operating in conjunction with the marketing firm "Airb&b." The proposed changes to the ordinance were passed on a split vote and referred to the City Commission. A public hearing on the ordinance changes will be held at 7 pm on August 12. Copies of the ordinance can be found at the City Clerk's office on the 2nd floor of City Hall and may be available for inspection on-line or at the Heritage Hill Association Office.

The zoning text amendments clarified issues for Bed & Breakfast operations (Class C home occupation). Examples include that: (1) the property shall be the principal residence of the owner/operator; (2) B&Bs are limited to 5 guest rooms with a maximum of 2 adults per room; (3) length of stay shall not exceed 30 days; (4) on-site parking must be provided for each guest room; and (5) the city will limit B&Bs from operating within 500 feet of other B&Bs. The zoning code would continue to require that owners who want to develop a B&B would still have to obtain a use variance granted by the Planning Commission. Costs would run roughly about \$2,000 for the inspections and process of review by staff and the Planning Commission.

Suggested code amendments also include uses of dwellings as Short Term Rentals (STRs). These "Class B home occupations" are uses frequently listed online with Airbnb and its competitors. Changes would allow an owner/operator-to rent space to up to two adults overnight. This limit is consistent with other parts of the ordinance that restricts occupation of dwelling to 4 unrelated adults. Owners wanting to operate a one-room rental would need to secure a Class B license (limited to 200 initially) and related basic inspections to assure safety. Neighbors within 300 feet would be notified of the use. Cost would be under \$300 for the first inspections and processing the application.

This last category has been the

most controversial, with advocates wanting less regulation and more rooms in order "to share" Grand Rapids with visitors. Other home owners want a "go slow" approach to protect our residential neighborhoods; while still allowing this new form of home occupation to develop. It should be noted that home occupations, by their very nature, are commercial activities. The Heritage Hill Association has

dealt with many varied issues over the last 40+ years in order to preserve and develop the now very desirable neighborhood we live in today. As this year's activities show, the need for these skills is still in great demand.

Craig Nobbelin, Chair,
HHA Zoning Committee

Vicki Hudson, Board Member and Chair,
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Neighborhood

Neighborhood Night-Out Potluck Picnic!

Bring a dish to pass and a chair to the Night Out Picnic which features grilled brats and hotdogs. The Association is hosting this community crime prevention event on **Tuesday, August 5 beginning at 5:30 and ending about 8:00 p.m.** We have invited all the usual suspects including: New Police Chief David Rahinsky, Community Officers from the North Team, the drug sniffing dog (a word to the wise!) and neighbors from all over the Hill. The picnic location is the 400 block of Lyon NE, on the "green" behind Innovation Central High School.

345 State Street: Developer Karl Chew of Brookstone Capital will begin construction on the rehabilitation and expansion of the long vacant building on the corner of State and Prospect SE. By the time you read this, the parking ramp will be demolished with plans to rebuild it with apartments above. The main building will have two commercial spaces on the first floor with apartments up. **Spring of 2015 is the target for completion.**

Hillmount Condos: Have you noticed the park-like gardens with the new lawn furniture at the corner of Cherry and College SE? Thanks very much to those who have spent years designing and

landscaping the grounds that create a peaceful oasis at a busy corner of the Hill.

Speaking of the Hillmount: The owners there are very active when it comes to taking care of the grounds but the dumpster? Yes, that is right. Resident Mike Buller solved a case of illegal dumping at the dumpster at the Condos. See related article in this issue.

Neighbors Wipe Out Graffiti: **Bob Mueller, Jim Payne, Patti Neva** are among neighbors who have adopted a utility box and have painted over tagging that often shows up.

Perking up the Park: **Jack Barnaby** is earning volunteer hours this summer by weeding and edging flower beds in Foster Park with his mom **Alicia**. The city takes care of the lawn but we "adopted" the park long ago. This year we have not had the volunteers to keep it weeded and trimmed as we have in the past. So, big Thanks to Jack and Alicia.

Neighbors provide "Easy In and Easy Out" for Thieves

I don't like to pick on victims because it is the thieves that are our big problem. But, some of us offer the bad guys easy entry into homes in the area. I found info on how suspects got inside some home this spring and summer. Burglars are walking

or crawling right in through doors and windows. Here's how:

- A thief poked two holes at the bottom of a window screen on the front porch and then pushed the tabs to release the screen. He pushed up the unlocked window to get inside. There were tall shrubs in front of the porch so he was hidden from view. Daytime.
- A door set back from the street was kicked in. This was an actual *break-in*.
- Attempted Break-in: A man tried to get into a first floor apartment but left on his bike when the door would not open. Daytime.
- All windows and doors were shut and locked except for a window on the back of the house over the kitchen sink—it was left open. The thief used a chair to reach the window and cut the screen to climb in. Daytime.
- A closed but unlocked window between two houses was the point of entry. The screen was cut to enter the first floor apartment. Daytime.
- An air conditioner was removed by a thief who stood on a chair to reach the first floor window and enter the home. Daytime. (A witness saw a

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Black or Hispanic male, 5' tall, stocky build.)

- Suspect entered open front door while occupant was in basement. Daytime. (A witness saw a white man with long blonde hair, 18-22 years old, about 5'6" to 5'8" tall, run from the scene.)

Drivers are awfully trusting too:

- One man reported leaving over \$300 in cash in his parked car. He was disappointed to find it missing the next day. He thinks he locked the car door but there was no sign of force (no broken window or scraped paint next to the lock).
- Another driver left his wallet on the seat along with a dollar bill. Both were gone the next morning. The car was not locked.

I suspect that most of the victims in these cases are not aware of the need for basic security because they may be new to city living. Some are students and have not lived on their own before. Some just forget a door or window is unlocked. I have done it too.

Do the best you can to secure your home or apartment and if you want some free advice give me a call and I will check your doors and window security for you. Call me at 459-8950 after August 5.

Barb Lester, HHA Community Organizer

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In Memory of Glenn

Converse, our Washington Street neighbor who was killed in late May in an incident that is under police investigation.

Mr. Converse lived on Washington SE for about six years with his "buddy" Duchess, a very friendly feline according to Glenn's landlord Michael Wright. Mike was able to arrange for a new home for Duchess with another cat-lover. Mike said even though it was not expected of him, Glenn would often shovel the walk and keep it clear and even weeded the yard until his health began to fail last winter.

We are saddened that our thank you note to Glenn for his recent contribution was returned to us after his death.

We mourn the loss of friend and neighbor, Martha (Freeman)

Palmer who lived at the end of the 500 block of College SE for many decades. She was a respected educator, a great friend to many and mother to Saundra, Tracey and Stephon (Chief).

Gert Calmese of the 500 block of Morris met Martha in 1951 when Gert moved to Grand Rapids from New York City. They have been friends ever since. Gert says she "adopted" herself into the Freeman family and became long-time friends with Martha. Martha had a big heart for children, a sharp wit and mind of her own. Martha is among a significant number of African American families who lived in Heritage Hill long before it became an historic district. They raised their families here and then stayed on after retirement. They are part of the unique heritage of the Hill and the city.

The 2014 Heritage Hill Garden Tour is underwritten by these wonderful local service agencies and merchants:



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Board Notes

Discussion at the May, 2014 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Public Comment: All present from Innovation Central spoke to their Home Tour experience with the R.O.T.C. cadets working at all 7 of the residential homes as well as at Fountain School. The cadets expressed thanks in being able to participate and reported that they logged 179 community service hours; many House Captains passed on positive comments about how helpful and friendly the cadets were. Gideon Sanders suggested that he could initiate coordination between the students and HHA earlier and that other partnerships with Innovation Central and Home Tour could be a good fit.

Gideon Sanders introduced Dr. Andre Perry who is heading up a new Teaching Masters Program at the Davenport downtown campus starting this fall. Davenport Students will be imbedded at Innovation Central and will only be given teaching certificates after showing proficiency in all required areas. Davenport University will also be coordinating with GRPS to court students in areas where GRPS is in need of teachers.

Short Term Rental / B&B Text

Recommendations: Craig Nobbelin and Vicki Hudson presented a draft letter as HHA reps on the City's Task Force concerning zoning text changes for short term rentals and Bed and Breakfast establishments. Other HH neighbors served as members of the committee as well. Proposed changes/clarifications include licensing, owner-occupancy, proximity limits, signage, and being subject to hotel and/or income tax. Vicki stressed that the zoning code is complex and that suggestions as to text changes should be kept simple as there are others in the city who would support no regulations for short term rentals. A motion was made, seconded and passed to post a .pdf link of the Association's draft letter and the full text change recommendations on Heritage Hill's Facebook page to welcome input. The summary of input is to be emailed to board members for review before approval of the draft letter to Planning.

Tina Demling added additional notes per the ordinance language and distributed a copy to each board member.

Treasurer's Report: Mary R. commented that membership dues and residential pledges are doing well. Mary also reported that the Texas Hold 'Em events

may not continue due to legislation being proposed by the casino lobby; it's time to start planning for the WHAM event.

Staff Reports: Members were directed to Jan and Barb's Staff Reports. Barb reminded members to lock their cars and remove all valuables.

Committee Liaison Reports:

Land Use – Members were directed to Jan and Barb's Staff Reports.

An Open House is scheduled at 540 Cherry SE on May 28th to introduce the proposed use as a 30-day residential treatment facility. The Special Use hearing will be before the Planning Commission on June 12th. Discussion included an inquiry concerning the number of social service facilities operating in the neighborhood. The board will be presented with a draft letter from the Zoning committee via email before the June 12th Planning meeting.

Fundraising –

Garden Tour: July 12th, gardens in the south end are needed, hoping to have 10.

Home Tour / Friends and Sponsors: Went very well, waiting for final numbers. Communication with Institutional neighbors on tour needs a little tweaking and will be addressed in committee. \$13,000 was raised in the Friends and Sponsors campaign. Tansy suggested

adding Home Tour videos to our Facebook page and also reported that HH received 100 new Likes during Home Tour. Jan E. reported that there is growing numbers of younger people on Tour and the regional draw has returned.

Community Involvement –

Education: Tansy H. reported that due to the budget, that GRPS summer programs will be greatly reduced and that there will be no B to B program, which provided 300 lunches to students.

Hospitality: The Picnic location needs to be determined, either Pleasant Park or Innovation Central on Lyon if the park will not be ready.

Old Business – Gideon Sanders reported that there is a 5 x 5 gardening competition called kinder earth.

Public Comment – Mr. Sanders also commented that there are now 109 commercial partnerships with Innovation Central.

Discussion at the June, 2014 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Public Comment: Nick Monyios of the Rapid presented plans for the planned Laker Line, a BRT line, or Bus Rapid Transit, which is akin to light rail or street cars, just like the Silver Line (opening August 15th, 2014). This enhanced route will replace route 50, which will continue



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the conduit between downtown and the GVSU campus in Allendale. The Laker Line will also have a downtown component, on both the west and east sides of the river and will share some stations with the Silver Line. The buses will be articulating and will stop at fixed stations, much like subways. Mr. Monoyios commented that land use planning based on cars is not a good urban model anymore. The Laker Line is in the planning stages and will go next to the technology and policy experts after which time the Rapid would like to come back to neighborhoods for communication and input.

Treasurer's Report: Mary Robinson reported that things were quite good at this point of the year, though Foundations and Grants fail to have any contributions to date. Mary commented that Home Tour expenses were kept quite low considering the scope of the event and that the gas bill is acceptable for such a cold winter.

Staff Reports: Members were directed to Jan and Barb's Staff Reports.

Committee Liaison Reports:

Land Use – Members were directed to Vicki Hudson's report as well as Jan and Barb's staff reports. Craig Nobbelin commented that the change in language (including 200 permits annually for short-term stays in the city and a limit of number people allowed to stay in a room ((2 adults, + kids also allowed)) for the short-term rental city ordinance was passed in a split vote by Planning and will go to the City Commission in July with a Public Hearing in August. Craig noted from the hearing that proponents of Airbnb were not in favor of regulation; several neighbors spoke to the issue of impact to neighborhoods.

Craig also reported that the special application for 540 Cherry SE (to add a residential component) was passed by the Planning Commissioner with restrictive conditions suggested by neighbors. Though neighbors had concerns about future owners of the property, the current owners should be good stewards. Through the planned restoration by the current owners, the house will be granted much-needed preservation efforts.

Jan Earl provided a re-cap of intended use by the new owners of 320 State Street as a drop-in center for homeless youth coordinated by Mars Hill Bible Church, Arbor Circle and Bethany Christian Services. Though this use is allowed in this zone – a TN-TCC (Traditional

Neighborhood – Transitional City Center), some wished for a retail use at this location instead of more social services on this somewhat short street. An extended discussion ensued concerning the State Street Corridor Plan and whether or

not the plan might need a tweak before final approval from the city to ensure a balanced mix of uses on State Street. The suggestion was made for members to re-read the plan and for staff to set up

(Continued on page 16)

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Board Notes

(Cont'd from page 15)

meetings with co-creator Mike Clark and Suzanne Schultz at Planning.

Administrative -

Fund Development / Finance: Jim Payne reported that he had met with the interim President of Kendall College of Art and Design and encouraged the college to continue its support of HHA.

Fundraising -

Garden Tour: July 12th, 11 gardens are now signed up – 10 private homes + the Voigt House garden. Kate Diedrich requested that each member talk to 10 people about attending Garden Tour. Deanna Smith volunteered to sell tickets.

Home Tour / Friends and Sponsors:

Four houses are signed up for 2015. The Steering Committee held its 2014 wrap-up meeting in June and has its first 2015 meeting scheduled for the end of July.

WHAM: Date is set for November 7, 2014 at the Women's City Club. Committee is working on planning. Some artists secured for the silent auction.

Community Involvement -

Hospitality: The Picnic is August 5th at the Central High green space on the 400-block of Lyon St. NE. The volunteer sign-up sheet was circulated among members. The date and location for the Annual Meeting / Holiday Potluck are yet to be determined.

The HHA Board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third WEDNESDAY of every month at the Mercy Health Saint Mary's campus, either in the Hauenstein or Wege centers. Please call the office (459-8950) or visit the website (www.heritagehillweb.org) to confirm the exact meeting room. 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.



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Health, Function, Wellness

Heritage Hill Neighbor Tracks Down Trash-Dumping Suspect

On Wednesday, July 2 at 8:30 a.m., Mike Buller, an owner at the Hillmount Condos on Cherry, noticed a large black plastic bag of building construction and demolition materials blocking the gate to the dumpster at the condos. Mike related his experience as a crime fighting sleuth in an e-mail later that day.

"I noticed building materials along the side of the dumpster and on top of it as well as more black bags. When I opened a bag I noticed a receipt from a paint store, a partially-filled can of paint and miscellaneous drywall and plaster materials. None of these materials were present the night before."

"I found a receipt from the paint store listing Mr. XXXX, a contractor, as the purchaser and called him to say we needed the materials removed by the end of the day or we were calling the police. I got a call back from Mr. XXXX who assured me he had not used that company name in over 4 years but lots of his acquaintances use his account at that paint store with his approval. After a while of talking the discussion got heated and he hung up."

"The manager for the paint store said the account had been used for two recent purchases from the store and that a Mr. YYYY was the actual purchaser of the paint on June 23, 2014."

"I talked to another resident about the incident and was advised to contact Barb Lester, Crime Prevention Organizer for the Heritage Hill Association. Barb advised me to file a police report with Community Officer Aaron Rossin, our liaison with the Grand Rapids Police Department, and she put in a call to have him stop by and interview me."

"Officer Rossin came over to the Hillmount. We had a thorough discussion of the incident. He agreed to call Mr. XXXX. I promised him a complete report

and pictures of all the evidence gathered."

"That same day, Officer Rossin returned and said Mr. XXXX had been cooperative and said it was his relative who was the "suspect". Officer Rossin interviewed the suspect and he admitted to the whole thing, including dumping things on *multiple occasions*. Officer Rossin said that the suspect was sorry for what he had done and would not do it again. Officer Rossin suggested that the dumpster gates be kept locked."

"I compliment Officer Rossin, Barb Lester and staff member Maria Zache, at Heritage Hill and Paul VanderVeen and Marilyn Heiss at the Hillmount for their support with this problem. Officer Rossin went way out of his way to follow up on the evidence".

Proud to be a Hillmounter,
Mike Buller

Note from Barb Lester:

After Mike was finished with his detective work, he then cleaned up the area around the dumpster. He took a large TV, Mac computer, microwave oven, floor fan, and exterior light fixture to Comp-Renew at 453 Division SE. There is no charge to recycle electronic waste there. He then packed up scrap metal and plastic products to recycle. After a long day of crime fighting, Mike finally put cat litter into the partly filled paint cans so they could be placed in the garbage when it hardened and ended the day by writing out a letter to his neighbors at the Hillmount letting them know that justice had prevailed!

Thanks, Mike; you are a great neighbor!

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New Construction in an Old Neighborhood

Heritage Hill is proud to welcome three new neighbors who are building new homes, all in the south part of the neighborhood. Historic Preservation guidelines are quite different for new construction than the guidelines that apply to "old" homes in historic districts. The following are comments (paraphrased) by Historic Preservation Commission staff member Rhonda Baker:

"New builds are about not creating a false sense of history and main street Disney. It can be hard to understand that the Federal Government prohibits creating fake old; they require that a building built in 2014 be a product of 2014 but be compatible with its surroundings. It's important to retain the true historic story as well as add new chapters. (As to the new house on Pleasant at Madison) the HPC found this design to be both differentiated yet compatible with its surroundings. It was found to be a fairly traditional style of house with a few modern window and design elements. It draws from the Craftsman Styles found in this area both in its massing, roof shape, structure shape and design elements like the porch and expanded eaves.

It can seem frustrating that new buildings can have cladded wood windows, cement board siding and fiber glass doors, but with a new building, emphasis is split between compatibility and being a product of its own time. It's also important to realize that the new construction is being held to a higher

standard as a product of its time. Cheap vinyl windows and vinyl siding are not permitted; new builders are required to use a higher grade and quality of product as well as design, above the "typical new house of today." When many of the "old" homes were built, they utilized quality material and designs of their time and it's that historic nature the guidelines preserve. The new house is no different; it is being built with quality products of its time, which is today and it will be held to that standard in 50 years when it becomes historic. Products and design may change in 50 years but they will need to continue with elements that are compatible with the era of their building."

Federal Guidelines: NEW CONSTRUCTION

The introduction of a compatible but contemporary new construction project can add depth and contribute interest to the district if the new design and location reflect an understanding of and compatibility with the character of the district.

The success of new construction within a historic district relies on understanding the distinctive architectural character of the district. The first elements that should be considered are height, form, massing, proportion, size, scale and roof shape. For example, if the street facades of most nearby buildings are vertical inappropriate, taller than they are wide, then maintaining the vertical orientation



of the building facade will result in a more compatible design.

A similar study of materials, building features, and details typical of existing buildings along the streetscape or block will provide a vocabulary to draw on in designing compatible buildings. Particular attention should be given to spacing, placement, scale, orientation, and size of window and door opening as well as the design of the doors and windows themselves. In addition, the selection of appropriate exterior materials and finishes depends on an understanding of compatibility of materials and finishes in composition, scale, module, pattern, texture and sheen.

GUIDELINES

Recommended:

- Retaining site features that are important to the over-all historic character.
- Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, landscape features and open space.
- A new feature may be designed that is compatible with the historic character of the site, district and neighborhood.
- New construction siting should be reviewed based on existing district setbacks, orientation, spacing and distance between adjacent buildings.
- Design new construction so that the overall character of the site, site topography, character-designing site features, and district vistas and views are retained.
- Conform to design guidelines involving the site and environment.
- Design new buildings to be compatible with surrounding building that contribute to the overall character of the historic district in terms of height, form, size, scale, massing, proportions and roof shape. Giving special attention to the

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(Continued on page 18)

New Construction

(Continued from page 17)

- proportions of the front facade.
- Utility connections shall be paled to minimize visibility from the street.
- Design the spacing, placement, scale, orientation, proportion, and size of the window and or openings in new construction to be compatible with surrounding historic buildings.
- Utilize windows and doors in new buildings that are compatible in material, subdivision, proportion, pattern and detail with the windows and doors of surrounding historic building that contribute to their character.
- Select materials and finishes that are compatible with historic materials and finishes found in surrounding historic buildings that contribute to their historic character.
- Design new buildings so that they are compatible with but discernible from adjacent historic buildings.

Not Recommended:

- Introducing any new building that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the settings historic character.
- Introducing a new feature that is visually incompatible with the site or that destroys site patterns or vistas.
- Introducing new construction onto a site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color and texture or which destroys relationships on the site.
- Introducing any new building that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the settings historic character.

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These are some great kids and they are so excited to come to study in the U.S. Help them make their dream come true by hosting a student or referring a family that is willing to host.

If you are interested in providing a culturally enriching experience for your family, our international guests, and the students at Grand Rapids Public School District, please contact me directly at Melanie.smith@educatius.org or 602-820-6642 or Jessica Olson as Jessica.olson@educatius.org or 517-515-2330.

Best Regards,

Melanie M. Smith

Director, Host Family Division

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Heritage Hill Association

126 College SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

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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.

DATES TO REMEMBER

All Heritage Hill Association Meetings are open to neighbors.

Tuesday, August 5
ELECTION DAY - PLEASE VOTE!

Tuesday, August 5 @ 5:30 pm

Annual Picnic –
National Night Out
Lyon Street, on the Central High Campus north lawn
Bring a lawn chair and a dish to pass
We'll provide table service, brats and dogs

Wednesday, August 20, 2014
HHA Board Meeting - 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary's
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
Cherry Street, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Monday, September 8, 2014
Heritage Herald Copy/Ad Deadline
for September/October issue

Wednesday, September 17, 2014
HHA Board Meeting - 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary's
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
Cherry Street, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Upcoming HHA Events for 2014

WHAM, Friday, November 7, 2014

Annual Meeting / Holiday Potluck,
December, 2014

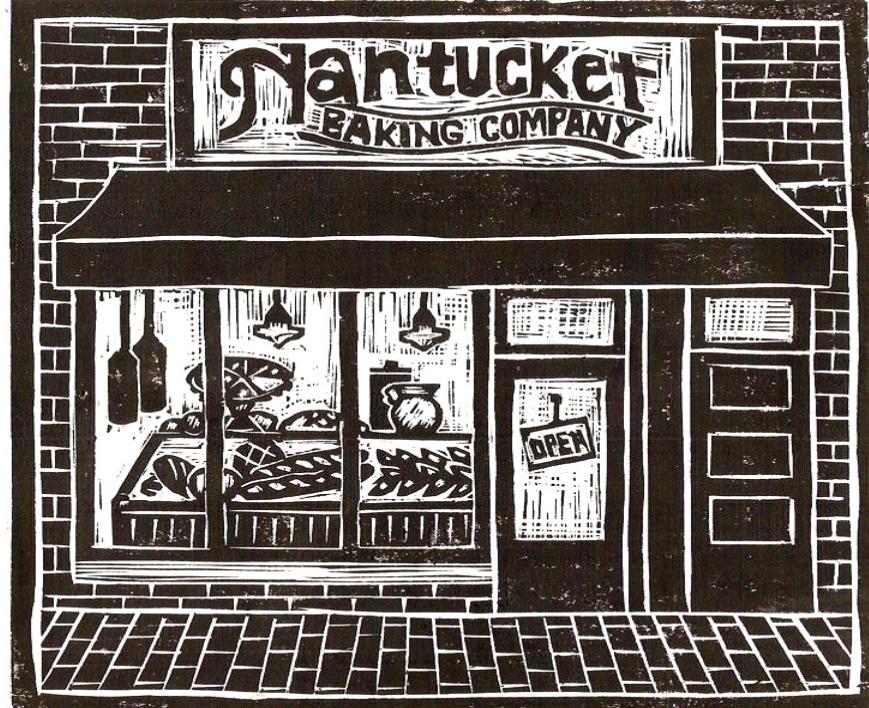
Classifieds

WANTED: Small-to-medium-sized safe for Heritage Hill Assoc. office. Prefer donation; tax deductible to extent of law. 459-8950 or heritage@heritagehillweb.org



A Heritage Hill Neighborhood Bakery.

Taste Something Great! Morning, Noon, & Night!



7 days a week - 7am to Midnight (616) 726-6609

208 Union NE GR, MI 49503 - Next door to Martha's Vineyard