The Heritage Hill Association’s 2016 Report to Neighbors

"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."

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 per the 2010 U.S. census. 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!

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 us 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
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 with 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
Marla Zache, Administrative
Barb Lester, Office

The Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors
President
*Jim Payne, 27 College NE, (H) 459-2367
Vice President
*Mark Hutchinson, 38 Prospect Ave SE, (C) 214-7384
Treasurer
*Erin Shupe, (C) 633-8946
Secretary
**Suzanne DeHaan, 573 Prospect SE, (H) 742-0451

*Peter Albertini, 540 Prospect SE, (C) 291-3758
Lisa Baars, 139 Prospect NE, (C) 616-540-9356
*Wes Beck, 225 Fountain NE, (H) 456-5144
**Kate Bedrich, 536 Prospect SE, (H) 451-9211
*Teresa Dittmer, 100 Jefferson SE, (W) 685-1485
*Mary McCarthy-Fuller, 203 Morris Ave SE Apt 1, (C) 616-773-9187
*Michele Giordano, 444 Union Ave SE, 862-7069
*Todd Hoert, 135 Lafayette NE, (C) 813-6026
*Ryan Huizenga, 433 Madison SE, (C) 634-2417
*Wayne Nutlin, 508 Morris Ave SE, (C) 292-8263
**Charles Roelfs, 614 Sheldon SE, (C) 446-2730

* 1st Term
** 2nd Term

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.

Heritage Hill Association Contacts:
Finance: Erin Shupe, (C) 633-8946
Newsletter: Jan Earl, 459-8950
Preservation: Ryan Huizenga, (H) 459-2417
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

The 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 any exterior work or repairs.
Contact 456-3451 or rhaber@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.

Typography & Printing: Storr Printing Services, Inc.

Annual Report (Continued from front page)

A new house grows on Pleasant SE – Welcome!

Neighbors cheer the “righting of the wrong” at GRPS’ demo ground breaking at 11 College SE.

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 1986, 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.

OUR SERVICES:

The Crime Prevention Program is provided to increase neighborhood safety with services that activate neighbors in Neighborhood Watch, Drug 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 2016, this program was primarily funded by federal Community Development Block Grants that the City of Grand Rapids receives and in turn funds a myriad of community programs, one being the Heritage Hill Association.

Neighborhood Improvement Program addresses all the other quality of life issues that are not crime related. Its purpose is to generate resident involvement, educate and train, and encourage leadership to preserve, protect, and maintain the residential qualities and bridge commercial development of Heritage Hill; to resolve issues of concern; and build upon neighborhood strengths that improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. Issues commonly include land use conflicts, traffic/parking struggles, institutional expansion, promoting neighborhood schools, etc. Additional components consist of educating, referring and assisting residents with available City services and community resources and implementing and re-evaluating 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 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
The Heritage Heralds: 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 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 2017 is May 20 and 21.

**The Heritage Hill Garden Tour:** A fun-raiser for Heritage Hill gardeners, the Garden Tour is held nearly every year. The 2017 Garden Tour is headed back to south end of Heritage Hill. This is the call-out to all you south Heritage Hill gardeners! Please consider opening your quiet space a Saturday in mid-July and call or email the office and let us get you on our garden line-up in 2017.

**Social Events:** The Association hosts two annual neighborhood wide events to bring neighbors together to gather around our community table. The Neighborhood-Wide Night Out 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.

**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.

**THE ASSOCIATION AND NEIGHBORS’ ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2016:**

**LAND USE ISSUES:**

As the City of Grand Rapids booms with development, the few remaining vacant parcels in Heritage Hill are in demand. It is very hard to add units to residential homes in Heritage Hill due to its zone classification of LDR - low density residential; very difficult to convert a single family to a multi-family unless there is a past use as a multi-family. However larger parcels such as the 50 College SE is 2.5 acres. Depending on the zone classification and surrounding use patterns, higher density developments will be allowed per the GR Zoning Code. Much of 2016 centered on guiding large 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 at heritage@heritagehillweb.org. Also like us on Facebook.

- **50 College SE:** This large and vacant commercial parcel that was home to the Social Security Administration office was purchased by
Orion Construction in the summer of 2016. Meetings began with neighbors in August to guide this redevelopment. The Report for the Reuse of 50 College SE that the Association facilitated with neighbors in 2015 was the starting vision. Six community neighbor meetings were held to shape and tweak details of this major development and address neighbors’ concerns. Orion developers were very accommodating to neighbors’ voices and addressed most issues that were within the parameters of the City’s zoning code and legal rights of the owner. Not all neighbors approve of the 4-story, 84 unit apartment building but most appreciate the numerous changes that made the development more appropriately tailored to its historic urban setting and made the project a better neighbor. The 50 College SE parcel is a complicated zoning mix of commercial and LDR plus it is large at 2.5 acres. The pattern on the square block where it is located contains many larger apartment buildings. What zoning interprets as the square block is the east side of College, north side of Cherry, west side of Union, south side of Fulton. The density ratio on the block is 40 units per acre. This is what the City’s Zoning guidelines use in judging the appropriateness of this use. The property owner has legal rights that apply to their parcel if the pattern of surrounding uses is similar to what they intend.

At this writing the plans are nearing approval through the GR Historic Preservation Commission and will be before the City’s Planning Commission on January 26.

- **Oakwood Manor – 547 Cherry SE:** Owners presented plans in early summer to re-use the commercial space of the first floor. Many neighbor meetings were convened to address all aspects of plans for a restaurant, tasting room and other retail establishments as well as outdoor seating areas. An initial request before the City’s Planning Commission was rejected due the non-specific nature of the request. Plans are currently on hold until a prospective tenant can be found. Neighbors meetings will resume once a specific request is proposed.

- **363 State Street:** A first in the City of Grand Rapids, a micro-unit development will be coming to the State Street Corridor. A 71-unit (350 sq. ft. per unit) building will be constructed at the site of the former Clark’s Food Store. This development complied with the zoning classification of State Street and no land-use approvals were needed. The Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission approved the demolition of the nondescript cement block building and design of the proposed building. The Association and most neighbors supported the demolition request. A neighbors’ meeting was convened and many neighbors objected to the few parking spots provided on-site. The parking complies with City code but the issue is controversial in the neighborhood with neighbors on both sides of the issue. Ground-breaking is likely in the spring of 2017.

- **11 College SE – former Kent Skills/City High building:** It is a rare day that Heritage Hill supports a demolition in our neighborhood but the former Tech Center, City High School at the corner of Fountain and College was the exception. Neighbors have asked for its removal for decades and GRPS Superintendent Neal called it “righting the wrong”. Many 1880-1890 period houses were razed to make room for this 1960s concrete bunker that was not a contributing building to Heritage Hill. When its demise finally came, the massive concrete walls and structure did not fall easily. There are former City High parents and students that have fond memories of that building ... but for many more, the eyesore is gone and shouts of hooray resonated. The Innovation Central and Fountain Montessori buildings are out of the shadow of urban renewal and can shine once again. The campus is beautiful and will only get better with the future planned improvements.

- **Preservation Modernization Bills:** Responded and organized neighbors to oppose proposed legislation that would have dramatically changed historic preservation in Michigan. The proposal sought to sunset historic districts, remove standardized guidelines, and make local decision-making a political process rather than a preservation process. These bills were damaging to Heritage Hill and districts throughout the State. It was a 3-month massive campaign in concert with neighbors and Preservation groups throughout Michigan. The sister House and Senate bills never reached a vote due to this successful campaign. We remain on alert for any reintroduction of this legislation.

- **221 John NE:** A proposal to create a male residential treatment center (a twin of the women’s center at the Sanford House at 550 Cherry SE) was approved by the GR Planning Commission in September. A neighbors’ open house was held with light attendance. Several neighbors supported the project although the proposal also drew opposition from neighbors at the Planning Commission’s public hearing. (The Association encourages neighbors to contact the Association if you have concerns. Additional meetings can be organized to discuss issues in advance of the formal approval process.) The John Street house has had both commercial and institutional uses for 40 years; it is an architectural treasure; is in serious disrepair; has had
institutional alterations that need to be removed and occupies a corner lot adjacent to mid and large apartment buildings. The same owners opened the women’s facility over a year ago and neighbors of this Cherry Street facility report that it is a good neighbor. The John Street house will be managed equally. All of these issues were taken into consideration in the Planning Commission’s decision to grant this special use proposal.

- **54 Jefferson SE – GRPS Museum School:** Association reps were involved in the early community engagement planning in preparation of the school’s opening in 2018. Community meetings with neighbors will begin in February 2017.

- **Pleasant Park** is the neighborhood gathering green spot in 2016 - 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. We organized the Pleasant Park Tenders to maintain the gardens – we are organizing this again so if you want to adopt a plot call Jan at 459-8950. Pleasant Park Pals Facebook page is a good way to stay connected to the happenings.

- **State Street:** Continues to be the focus of our commercial corridor and implementation of the State Street Corridor Area Specific Plan. The developments at 363 State Street and the GRPS Museum School will add PEOPLE to hopefully attract retail services.

- **Potpourri of land use/traffic issues:** The Association reviews and investigates all zoning variance and traffic requests in Heritage Hill. Positions are proposed based on the Heritage Hill Master Plan, the City’s zoning code criteria, and neighbors’ feedback. In 2016 the Association was involved in the following:

- **560 Madison SE:** Arranged open house for prospective owner and proposal to resume multi-family use. Neighbors were generally not in favor and prospect decided not to purchase home.

- **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. Petitions are being circulated in two areas however it has yet to be determined if there is enough neighbors’ support. It remains on option but needs a majority of residents support in a defined 3-block minimum area.

- **400 – 430 Madison SE:** Numerous inquiries regarding possible uses from neighbors and prospective buyers. These lots are in the LDR (low density residential) zone and the large berm is protected. Potential uses are limited with these restrictions. As of today, there are no active proposals.

- **200-300 College SE speed humps:** A proposal to remove the speed humps in the City’s re-surfacing work was resoundingly opposed by neighbors. The City re-installed the humps.

- **Mobility:** As the GR Forward plan begins implementation, reps provided updates regarding improved public transportation access that was published in the Heritage Herald. Updates were also provided regarding the BRT Laker Line.

- **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.
# 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>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>Income:</th>
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<td>64% of Heritage Hill households are low to moderate income.</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</th>
<th>Boundaries:</th>
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<td>Occupied 66%</td>
<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>Heritage Hill offers the largest concentration of rental housing in the City of Grand Rapids.</td>
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### 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 4000 tourists.
- Compiled and produced 6 issues of the **Heritage Herald** and 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** in June;
- and the **Holiday Potluck and Annual Meeting** in December.

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

**And we carry on in 2017 and work with you to make Heritage Hill the best it can be. We welcome all new neighbors in 2016 and encourage you to get active with your fellow neighbors on your block and in your neighborhood. It’s your community and our shared place!**

### Crime Prevention in 2016

The current trend for both our City and our State of Michigan is to see crimes drop. Many serious felony crimes have decreased according to monthly reports that the Neighborhood Associations receive from the Grand Rapids Police Department. Complete statistics for 2016 are not yet available at the time of printing for this issue of the Herald but we expect to close the year without an increase of most felony crimes. Vehicle theft has seen a spike this year within our neighborhood.

**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.

**Neighbors are heartbeat of Heritage Hill:** Board members, Committee members, Block Club Representatives and hundreds of individuals within...
our community who are invested in helping each other stay safe and healthy within our neighborhood. We recognize and thank you for all your efforts.

**Crime Issues in 2016:** Some of our hot topic crime issues we worked on in 2016 included:

- **Illegal Dumping:** One property was seeing multiple illegal dumping on their property, causing those who resided at the property to not be able to dump their own trash. It was being hauled there in pickup trucks from other communities. It took Management catching the truck in the act and getting a plate number, the suspect showing up at my front door in Baxter asking to haul any trash away for me, to the involvement of our Community Officer, Craig Glowney as well as the South Service Team getting involved to curb this illegal dumping.

- **One of our biggest issues is unlocked vehicles and valuables left in vehicles.** From our North Service Area Captain, “We do not see cars broken into without there being clear and visible things of value.” – Captain Maycroft. Never leave computers, tablets, book bags, workout bags in view in your car. If you need to leave a bag in your car, transfer it to your trunk. Never leave any vehicle titles in your glove box; these should be in your home in a fire safe box. Always lock your car. **And never leave ANY spare keys to any home or vehicle in your car.**

- **Vehicle thefts were on the rise in 2016.** None of the vehicles that were stolen in our neighborhood were hotwired. NONE. So how did it happen? Spare keys being left in the vehicle or a nearby vehicle. Make sure when you give your spouse a spare key, that they do not put it in their own vehicle. It was common to find out that a spare set of keys were in center consoles. This is not a safe place for keys. Sadly it has been next to impossible to pull prints off any of the returned cars. We remain vigilant on this issue.

- **Our parks have seen a huge drop in crime activities in 2016.** Both Pleasant Park and Foster Park had fewer issues all around. Part of this is due to resident ownership and pride in our parks.

- **As with any city, we struggle with graffiti.** In 2016 we did see an increase on the South end as well as the Mid Hill. Graffiti struck private property, street signs and electrical boxes. Quickly removing graffiti helps keep the tagging at bay.

**Housing Code Enforcement:** While Heritage Hill does not seek out Housing Code Violations nor are we regulatory, we do help those who come to us with concerns and issues.

In 2016 concerned neighbors have been watching a few properties that suffered from fires. Restoration on such properties can take time.

- **133 Union NE suffered another fire.** Work is nearly complete on this property as of today.
- **512 College SE is still undergoing total top to bottom repairs.**
- **16 Portsmouth suffered from a large fire;** luckily the outside of the home was spared pretty well. Owners live in California. Lots of back and forth with Historic Preservation Commission and Code Compliance. Permits are starting to be pulled on this property so we should see some restoration happening soon.

We still field calls regarding **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. Education on Lead Safe Practices continues. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Tansy at 459-8950.

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**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](http://www.ci.grand-rapids.mi.us) at the Planning Department section or at the Heritage Hill Association’s [www.heritagehillweb.org](http://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.

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STONECASTLE DENTISTRY

Juli S. Wemmer DDS, FAGD
Jon C. Feinauer DDS

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- 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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Happiest of New Year’s Residents! I hope everyone had a Happy Holiday and that the New Year is starting off healthy and safe!

January is National Radon Action Month. From our friends at Healthy Homes Coalition; “Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas produced by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water within the earth. As this gas moves up from the ground, it can find its way into homes through small openings and can build up inside the home. Many things contribute to a home’s radon levels, including characteristics of the home itself. As a result, radon is very site specific. Just because your neighbor doesn’t have radon in their home will not guarantee that you don’t have radon in yours!

Elevated radon levels in homes are common in colder climates where homes are sealed against the weather and kept closed for much of the year. Of the tests conducted in Kent County homes during recent years, one in every seven (16%) have come back elevated.”

Testing your home for radon is very simple with a do-it-yourself test kit. These kits are easy and take just 3-7 days and are available from either the Kent County Health Department or the Healthy Homes Coalition for $5.00. You can find out more at: www.healthyhomescoalition.org/radon

Winter Parking Woes
Parking has been our biggest issue in the month of December with 45 reported violations. Currently as I write this, we have no snow. But it is Michigan, so in an hour that could change! Even without the snow, seasonal parking restrictions are in full effect until APRIL 1st. Odd-Even parking restrictions mean that, on each even numbered day, starting at 1 a.m. and until 6 p.m., parking is prohibited on the odd numbered side of the street. On each odd numbered day, starting at 1 a.m. and until 6 p.m., parking is prohibited on the even numbered side of the street. If you are having issues with this on your street please call Tansy at: 459-8950 or the GRPD at: 456-3400

Be Mindful of What You Dispose Of
A resident called me from the South End of Heritage Hill, concerned because there was a man who was going through trash along the street. There is no law against this or going through recycling. Make sure that you are shredding anything of importance before disposal.

Pothole Season
Constant freezing and thawing really causes havoc on our area roadways. Manhole covers can sink and we get a lot of pot holes as well. As we all know, potholes can cause a lot of damage to our vehicles. We need to be proactive in reporting these potholes as they open up.
Luckily, our City makes this easy.

- CALL IT IN – Call 311 or 616-456-3000 M-F 8 AM to 5 PM
- Download the free 311 App (both Android and Iphone) Report and track right from your phone!
- Submit online – 311.grcityus
- Or the least convenient way is to report in person at City Hall at 300 Monroe Ave. Free ½ hour parking in the City Lot.

Old School Crimes New Again
One of the oldest crimes in the book is the good ol’ crime of stealing catalytic converters. We have had reports of two stolen in our neighborhood and one just outside of our area. Cherry and Wealthy seem to be target areas at this time. The suspect uses a reciprocating saw and slides under a SUV. They then cut the catalytic converter off and take it to the scrap yard/junkyards for their 50-150 dollar reward. Thieves target catalytic converters because they contain precious metals, like platinum, palladium or rhodium. This act is noticeable because when you start your vehicle, it will be MUCH LOUDER. And exhaust work is never cheap. I have spoken with other neighborhoods and so far we are the lone neighborhood with this issue. We have no description of the suspect, but I have a feeling we are dealing with one person, perhaps two and one as a lookout. All of these cases have been with vehicles that are parked on the street.

What can we do to prevent this?

- If your converter is attached with bolts, mechanics often suggest welding the bolts in place or cutting the bolt heads off, making it impossible for the bolts to be loosened.
- Get your converter etched or engraved with your license number so metal shops can identify the vehicle from which the converter was taken. Etching or engraving can be done without removing the catalytic converter by a mechanic.
- Purchase catalytic converter theft prevention kits, designed to create a cage around your converter, making it more difficult for thieves to steal it.
- Listen for tool sounds and sounds of metal being cut in the middle of the night or the wee hours of the morning and call the Grand Rapids Police (616-456-3400), tell them we have had catalytic converters stolen recently in our area and you are concerned.

Questions, comments, concerns, free home security checks – Please give Tansy a call at 459-8950.
Tidy Home Helpers offers very affordable and professional home and small office cleaning services to those in the greater Grand Rapids area. We use environmentally friendly Green Seal certified products so you, your loved ones, and your environment are safe in our hands.

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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!

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Heritage Hill Apartment
Rental and Home Sales Listings
All sizes and prices—Spread the word!!!
Discussion at the November, 2016 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Public Comment: Shane Malone, representing the developers of the micro-apartment project soon to replace Clark’s grocery store, provided the board an update. The project was approved for 71 apartments and it looks like there will be 68 or 69 when completed. There have been talks with Enterprise Car Rental with regard to initiating a car-share program in response to parking issues. There is no retail interest in the site as yet.

Mei Chow Creations

watercolors
calligraphy
Chinese Brush
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meichowcreations@sbglobal.net
Grand Rapids, MI 49504-0071

Treasurer’s Report: Financial status reported to be right on schedule with planned budget, especially as monetary gains in the 2016 Home Tour seem to have made up for a large portion of the 2016 Garden Tour and Texas Hold’em shortfalls.

Staff Reports: Tansy talked briefly about her Foster Park walk-through with the City Parks Director. Discussion included lighting, seating and other accoutrements especially important with the coming of another new apartment building in the vicinity. There was one car stolen in the neighborhood in October... the keys were left in it by the owner. Cherry Health was vandalized and in lock-down during a business hours trade. Dog attack issues on south Prospect. Tansy reinforced the need to recognize Grand Rapids’ Leash Laws in preventing attacks.

In Jan’s report, brief discussion concerning GRCC’s sponsorship of Home Tour by way of their offer of the use of their property and services at East Fulton campus. Questions were raised as to what the Public Museum might do in regard to the Voigt House as the ballot proposal has passed for funding aid. No answers were heard.

Committee/Liaison Reports:

Community Engagement – • Annual Meeting/Potluck sign-up sheet circulated; proposed a drawing the event. Restaurant participation/food donations will again be a part of the festivities.

Land Use: • Ryan spoke briefly concerning the updating of the Historic Preservation Commission’s report regarding the historic significance of Heritage Hill structures. • The 50 College SE plans are still being scrutinized by neighbors/stakeholders.

Administration: • The 2017 HHA draft budget was scheduled to be discussed in an executive session following the regular meeting.

• Institutions – Meeting scheduled with Mercy Health, Saint Mary’s.

• Nominating - Reported on the slate of candidates for board election at the Annual Meeting.

Fundraising: • Home Tour 2017 – Peter A. still looking at single/whole house sponsorship this year - a new take on Tour sponsorship – and is approaching architectural firms. • Still in need of one more home and several captains for 2017 Tour.
Board Notes
(Continued from page 13)

Discussion at the December 2016 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Welcome 2017 HHA Board/2016 HHA Board send-offs: Jim P welcomed new members Lisa Baars, Wes Beck and Mary McCarthy-Fuller to the Board; welcome back to Charles Roelofs. And with welcomes, there are farewells: Marie Koster, Mary Robinson and Deanna Smith were thanked for their years of service and encouraged to remain active.

Mary R. added: “Remember that you are all neighbors.”

New Business: No new business but Erin Shupe thanked all for efforts on the Holiday Potluck and Meeting. The drawing was a festive accent and raised $238.00. The drawing will be back.

2017 Officers Election: Board members voted to unanimously approve the 2017 Heritage Hill Association Officer’s Slate which is as follows: Jim Payne as President, Mark Hutchison as Vice President, Erin Shupe as Treasurer and Suzanne DeHaan as Secretary. Thanks were given to each for their service.

2017 Board appointment: The Executive Committee recommended appointing Wayne Norlin to the open term (2017-2019). Wayne has lived in the neighborhood for 30+ years, was active in the 50 College SE report, and is interested in land use. His profession as an architect is a benefit. The Board unanimously supported the appointment.

Parks: The contest for a ping-pong table at 5 City Parks was mentioned; neighbors will be encouraged to “vote” for Pleasant Park.

2017 Draft Budget: Per the Board discussion at the November Board meeting, a community events line-item was broken out from office expense. A new $1,000 line item was added. This is an allocation change and did not change the total budget. The 2017 HHA Budget was unanimously approved.

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.

If you would like to receive monthly Board agendas via email, please email us your request (heritage@heritagehillweb.org)
City parks, public open space, and recreation facilities Master Plan review

The City has completed its draft Strategic Master Plan that creates a vision for the long-term development, programming, and sustainability of City parks, public open spaces, and recreation facilities. This roadmap for the future of the parks in Grand Rapids was assembled from residents’ comments and suggestions made at numerous community meetings and events over the past nine months. The plan considers community needs, recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities, environmental conditions, economic development, priority projects, department organization and funding.

Copies of the final draft are available starting Friday, January 20th at the City’s website, Parks and Recreation Depart and 4 public library locations (West Side, Van Belkum, Seymour and Cook Library Center).

http://grcity.us/parks/Pages/parks-recreation-forestry.aspx

Highlights of the plan include water-based recreation facilities and park development along the Grand River, trail connections to neighborhoods and regional trail systems, indoor recreation facilities, signature park amenities and enhanced recreation programming for adults, families and seniors.

A public hearing is set for February 21, 2017 at 7 pm in the City Commission Chambers to consider adoption of the 2017 Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan.
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We Work Together as Neighbors

As residents of the Hill, we all made a choice to live here. In so doing we are rewarded a quality of life that we commonly enjoy and appreciate. We may not always agree on the best way to maintain and enhance that quality of life, but in the end we still all want the same thing—a great neighborhood in which to live. Hopefully, as we work through our issues of concern, we’ll remember and appreciate the ideals we share in common. A common refrain still rings true—divided we fall, united we rise. I hope we can all rise to the level of what it means to be called a “Neighbor.” All the best to all of us in the coming year.

Jim Payne
HHA President

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Neighbors close out 2016 Neighborhood style at the Annual Potluck & Meeting

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

Newly elected Board members
Lisa Baars
Wes Beck
Mary McCarthy-Fuller
plus returning Board member
Charles Roelofs

Distinguished Service Award Recipients
Andy Brookhouse
Suzanne DeHaan
Dave Eppelheimer
Mary Gleason
Grand Rapids Public Schools
Nikki Hoort
Marie Koster
Kim Koster
Craig Nobbelin
Mary Robinson
Charles Roelofs
Chelsey Roelofs
Erin Shupe
Deanna Smith

Happy 2017 Heritage Hill
TASTE OF SOUL! February 19, 2017, 1:00 – 4:30 pm.

Join us as we celebrate African American history and culture at Taste of Soul Sunday. Listen, learn, create, and eat.

This popular event is free and open to the public thanks to the support of the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation.

Schedule of events:

1:00 pm  Glenda Williams, gospel singer
1:30 pm  Sound Proof, R&B, Motown, Pop, & Jazz band
1:30 pm  Beautifully Wrapped, headwrapping workshop
2:15 pm  Ordinary Black Folk with Dr. Benjamin Wilson
2:15 pm  Looking Back, Facing Forward with Granville T. Woods
2:30 pm  Kathy Lamar, vocalist
3:00 pm  Beautifully Wrapped, head-wrapping workshop
3:30 pm  Young Men 4 Christ, gospel group
3:30 pm  Ordinary Black Folk with Dr. Benjamin Wilson
3:30 pm  Looking Back, Facing Forward with Granville T. Woods

All day  Activities for Kids
Wilhelmina Daniels
7-16-1931 – 12-26-2016.

Wilhelmina worked at the Association office as our afternoon receptionist for over 10 years. She was the definition of kindness and light. She lives in our hearts forever.

A happy day - Wilhelmina Daniels, Maria Zache, Jan Earl, and Barb Lester enjoy Wilhelmina’s retirement lunch in 2015.

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I was a bit late to the game of downloading this parking app but it is a great tool in Grand Rapids. No more hunting for change to feed the meter or avoiding them because you have no change. It is simple to use; it’s free and you just pay for the time you start and stop your parking session. Check it out! You can YouTube exactly how it works.

Download app here: http://us.parkmobile.com/

[Image ofWilhelmina Daniels with colleagues]

[Image of parking app and Team Restoration logo]
DATES TO REMEMBER
All Heritage Hill Association Meetings are open to neighbors.

Wednesday, February 15, 2017
HHA Board Meeting – 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary’s
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
Cherry Street, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Herald Deadline:
Monday, March 13, 2017

Wednesday, March 15, 2017
HHA Board Meeting – 7:00 pm.
Mercy Health Saint Mary’s
Hauenstein Center, H1 Community Room
Cherry Street, between Lafayette and Jefferson Avenues

Saturday and Sunday, May 20th and 21st, 2017
2017 Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes

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