Grand Rapids Neighborhood Summit 2017  
*By Tansy Harris*

On Saturday, March 4th, the City of Grand Rapids hosted the third annual Neighborhood Summit. The theme for this year was “Organizing Our Power for Change” stating that “the Summit is designed and centered around core values of racial equity and resident voice, with a purpose to increase resident awareness, skills and networks for improved sustained change for stronger neighborhoods resulting in a stronger City.” With workshops on Mobilizing Racial Equity in Policy and Practice, Knowing the Signs and Addressing Trauma in the Black Community, Sisters Arm in Arm, and Grassroots Community Organizing for Justice; the summit this year filled capacity in less than four days. Luckily the City of Grand Rapids saw the demand and added even more workshops to the Summit, allowing even more residents to attend.

The morning started with a light breakfast and the Keynote Speaker, Gyasi Ross, motivating the diverse crowd of several hundred. Mr. Ross, a Native American Lawyer, Author, Speaker, Commentator, Rapper/Poet, Filmmaker and Podcaster; spoke on leveraging our power and story to make positive change. He drove home the lesson and value of storytelling and how people of the community need to be vocal. Making special note to pay attention to the youth of our communities and their personal strengths they bring to the table.

After his speech, attendees then picked from the plethora of workshops to attend. We were treated to a delicious free lunch and two more opportunities for taking part in more workshops. I did not get a chance to see the other workshops since I was lecturing my own; Building Blocks: How Neighbors Shape the City, a workshop on how to start your own Block Club and the things that can be accomplished with block clubs. My workshops were filled with diverse individuals who were all engaged on how to effectively create change within their communities. I was happy to meet so many, some from our own neighborhood, excited about engaging their neighbors and being part of the community.

I am excited to see this Summit grow and change. This year was a real special. I am very grateful for the hard work that Stacy Stout from the City of Grand Rapids put into this year’s Summit as well as those on the Committee.

The Spark that Started the Heritage Hill Association – Linda DeJong

“I was there when HH started and Linda was definitely the person who led the fight to save our neighborhood. She deserves a huge thank you from all HH residents. Without her, Barb Roelofs & John Logie I am not sure where we would be” – Joyce Makinen

Linda DeJong, a long-time resident and one of the founding members of the Heritage Hill Association passed away February 6. Though she spent most of her life in the city, Linda grew up in a small town in the Upper Peninsula where the family owned a resort with 17 rustic cabins on Big Manistique Lake. Her sister Carol said Linda loved the resort life though the girls had to pitch in and help. After Linda graduated from Michigan State University she moved to Grand Rapids and worked for various media outlets including WOOD TV.

Linda and her former husband Frank bought 505 College SE on a land contract. The home was initially designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. In 1967 they applied for a mortgage to replace the land contract but Union Bank declined the request stating in a letter that the bank “did not make loans in that geographic area,” basically “redlining” the neighborhood.

Out of that insult was born a group of neighbors who founded the Heritage Hill Association, and fought redlining by financial institutions and also fought off an urban renewal plan that would tear down about 75 percent of the neighborhood. Many neighbors, including former Mayor John Logie, worked to get the Heritage Hill on the National Historic Register and that stopped the wrecking balls. So, Linda’s frustration with a bank that would not make loans to core city residents became the impetus that helped to save a neighborhood of over 1300 historic structures.

Linda will forever be recognized as a good neighbor and a passionate advocate for the preservation of the Heritage Hill neighborhood.
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:
Jan Earl, Executive Director
Tansy Harris, Crime Prevention
Maria Zache, Administrative
Barb Lester, Office

The Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors
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**Jim Payne, 27 College NE, (H) 454-2367
** Mark Hutchison, 38 Prospect Ave SE, (C) 214-7384

Vice President
**Tansy Harris, 427 Prospect Ave SE, (C) 633-0946
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** Suzanne DeHaan, 573 Prospect SE, (H) 742-0451

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** Lisa Baas, 139 Prospect SE, (C) 616-540-9356
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** Kate Bedrich, 536 Prospect SE, (H) 451-9211
** Teresa Dittmer, 200 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 Hoort, 135 Lafayette NE, (C) 633-0946
** Ryan Huizenga, 433 Madison SE, (C) 634-2417
** Wayne Notlin, 558 Morris Ave SE, (C) 292-8263
** Charles Roolofs, 614 Sheldon SE, (C) 446-2780

* 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 Shope, (C) 633-0946
Newsletter: Jan Earl, 459-8950
Preservation: Rhonda Baker, (H) 456-3451
Traffic and Parking: Jan Earl, (W) 459-8950
Zoning: Craig Nobbelin, 458-0471
Home Tour: Suzanne DeHaan, (H) 742-0451
Home Tour: Tansy Harris, 459-8950
Sponsorship: Peter Albertini, 291-3758
Social Media: Tansy Harris, 459-8950
State Street: Tansy Harris, 459-8950
Block Issues: Tansy Harris, 459-8950

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

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

The Heritage Herald - Circulation 4,800
The Heritage Herald is published by the Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors six times a year (bi-monthly).

Happy Spring Heritage Hill – wiggle your toes, feel the renewal of the sun, watch the budding earth, hear the woodpeckers -- the neighborhood is back outside.

The 48th Annual Heritage Hill Weekend Tour of Homes is just weeks away. May 20 and 21 are the dates and 8 private hosts invite you into their homes to share their architecture, design, art, and home’s history. Please, please help spread the word - use all your social media tricks and your face-to-face charm and get people excited to see the insides of Heritage Hill. Send people to our website, heritagehillweb.org for more excitement. It will be a beautiful weekend to walk this great place that we call home and catch what’s blooming.

There is a way to get a FREE ticket to Tour: We need volunteer guides right up to the days of Tour to cover any cancellations. Please call today, 459-8950, or email heritage@heritagehillweb.org) and help Tour work smoothly with an easy 4 hour shift.

Leaping into summer is the purge (or splurge) at the Association’s annual Heritage Hill Yard Sales Day on June 3. Call or email the HHA office, heritage@heritagehillweb.org 459-8950 and we’ll get you on the list that we’ll post on our website. And soon to follow, the Heritage Hill Garden Tour is in late June. The date will be finalized soon. And not to zoom through the summer but our Night Out Ice Cream Social is August 1. Mark your calendars and more details will follow.

The 50 College SE development has received all its City approvals to move forward. We will organize a neighbor’s meeting to discuss the construction process once those details are available. A new request at the Oakwood Manor, 547 Cherry SE for a 99-seat restaurant is being reviewed by neighbors. Plans include an additional 50 seats in the interior courtyard that will be open in the warmer months. A tentative hearing before the GR Zoning Appeals Board is May 18.

We are singing our welcome back song to Maria Zache (and Jim Starkey too) from their 4-month winter break. Maria returned to work on March 20.

Say Hi to one another.

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

For the 2017 continuation of the Heritage Hill Association, I pledge:

___ $25   ___ $35   ___ $50   ___ $75   ___ $100   ___ $250   ___ $500
___ Other $ ___________

Name ________________________________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________________________

Phone ____________________________ Email _____________________________________________

Please return this coupon and check to: HHA, 126 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 or go to the web www.heritagehillweb.org and you can pledge online!!!!

Remember Heritage Hill Property Owners:

There is a City Preservation Ordinance that governs all exterior changes, repairs and/or additions to Heritage Hill properties. Call the Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission at 456-3451 for information on approvals. You can access the application form at the City's website, www.ci.grand-rapids.mi.us at the Planning Department section or at the Heritage Hill Association's www.heritagehillweb.org. This ordinance applies to all exterior changes, repairs, and/or additions to your home and property. Items such as doors and windows including storms, yard structures, driveway and sidewalk approaches, and fences do need HPC approvals.
A grandfather clock, an engraved gold watch, great grandmother’s patchwork quilt, a fine mahogany table where generations of a family have shared dinners and dreams—heirlooms that have been lovingly passed down from one generation to another. Family treasures are precious whether as grand as a piano or as small as a baby’s silver spoon. They connect our past to the present, preserve our history, tell our stories.

The homes in Heritage Hill are the heirlooms of the Grand Rapids family. Some are magnificent reminders of our Furniture City past. Some are more modest, but no less significant to the history of our neighborhood. The homes on Tour this year are varied in architectural style, dimension and grandeur, but each one has a unique and fascinating story. All of our hosts have come to love their homes and realize that these treasures have been passed down to them for safe-keeping and for sharing with the next generation. They invite you in for a tour and a tale.

There are three homes located in the northern part of Hill on tour this year. An Italianate Revival home has been preserved like a jewel, with an ornate facade, a beautiful staircase as you enter, open, airy rooms and a redesigned kitchen that is a chef’s dream. Around the corner you will find a Gothic-influenced Shingle-Style home where significant remodeling has moved the kitchen to the front of the house. The master bedroom suite has been custom-designed with a creative use of built-ins and a stunning bath. Modern decor and artistic lighting fixtures have transformed the interior. Small, but sweet, an 1882 gingerbread bedecked Stick-Style charmer has amazing woodwork and a welcoming, warm feeling from the moment you step through the door.

Moving south, Oakwood Manor, one-time Grand Rapids home to the stars, has offered to open their spacious lobby and an apartment, and the Women’s City Club will provide tours and an opportunity to buy lunch for our touring guests. If you take a trip to Paris, a lovely front porch will welcome you to a gracious home filled with antiques and family treasures. The dining room is quite elegant and the large windows flood the downstairs with light.

Our last sites are south of Wealthy, including the old Vandenburg School which now is the home of the Child Discovery Center. If you love a “spirited” story, there is a Queen Anne home on tour with a resident, very friendly ghost. Once you see the home, you will know why she doesn’t want to leave. A very unusual floor...
plan with seven doors off of the foyer and ubiquitous natural woodwork make this home unique. The Prairie Style of Frank Lloyd Wright is on display in the Amberg House. The owners have spent the last few years restoring and making improvements on the home, and from the new kitchen to the glorious gardens, this home is amazing. Across the street, there is, perhaps, one of the most unusual and fun homes to ever be on tour. A huge carriage house has been transformed into an open-concept living space that has been designed to respect the history of the structure, yet it has a current, modern flair. Just down the block is a Craftsman-Style home with a front porch that beckons you to visit and an elegant entry that makes you want to stay. The owners’ interest in music is reflected throughout the home.

As our city was growing, the furniture magnates, the business leaders, the craftsmen and the factory workers were all building these treasures, these heirlooms, that have been passed down to a new generation of caretakers. It is now the present owners’ turn to create their own history in these homes and, fortunately for us, they have generously offered to let the Heritage Hill Home Tour be a part of their story. Please join us on the weekend of May 20th and 21st for a walk back through time, where the beauty of the homes is made more precious by the secrets and the stories they hold within.
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The Heritage Hill Association publishes available apartments.

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

Check out available apartments at HERITAGEHILLWEB.ORG

Heritage Hill Apartment
Rental and Home Sales Listings
All sizes and prices—Spread the word!!!
Heritage Hill Garden Club 2017 Kickoff

The 2017 Heritage Hill Garden Club season kicks off on Tuesday, April 11 from 6-7:30 pm at the Downtown Market in the second floor Greenhouse. Our featured speaker is Danny McGee from Well House Urban Farm who will show us the heirloom organic vegetables they are growing, and share how Well House, a non-profit that provides affordable housing, is not only creating a healthy food source, but providing jobs for their tenants. Afterward we’ll head downstairs to the Social Kitchen to enjoy food and drinks.

To find out more information, or to be added to the Heritage Hill Garden Club email distribution list for future meetings, please contact: Karen Coy, karen_coy@yahoo.com, 773-520-5383, or Martha Edwards, marthag.edwards@hotmail.com, 616-481-5609.

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/
Trash, Trash and months of Trash -
Let’s All Clean-up Heritage Hill and Keep it out of the Grand River

Did you know that any trash that washes through the street grates, goes directly into the Grand River! Storm sewers have no filtration so whatever flows down our streets and into the grates, keeps flowing directly into the river. Please help clean up our neighborhood! It is great exercise bending, stooping and stashing trash in whatever receptacle you can carry -- not only for our streets but for our river too.

Emil & Jono Klooster
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Visit WeAreGR.com for more information.

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Park Tenders Needed!

Pleasant Park has beautiful flower beds but they need help staying that way! The city helps with grass maintenance but does not perform flower or tree bed maintenance.

We are seeking 13 (we already have 3) persons/households to commit to taking a section to maintain this summer. If you don’t feel you or your family alone can commit but you have some friends you want to team up with, that is great too. We are asking that you or your team commit to joining us for the initial neighborhood wide cleanup on May 13th, if possible, and to doing at least 2 hours of weeding in each of the months of June, July, August and September.

If you are interested in helping out but cannot commit to this much we could still use your help throughout the summer should someone need extra help on their section. If you are interested please email Joshlyn Litzenberger at joshlynlitzenberger@gmail.com for more information.

Pleasant Park Flower and Tree Cleanup Kickoff!

Please join neighbors of Heritage Hill and South Hill to get Pleasant Park flower and tree beds off to a pretty start. Come help weed and cleanup the beds on May 13th from 9-11am. You can also meet the section tenders who have committed to keeping the beds looking nice the rest of the summer. Bring any tools you love using and a wheelbarrow if you have one.

If you have any questions please contact Joshlyn Litzenberger at joshlynlitzenberger@gmail.com for more information.

Celebrating Our Lord and Savior for Holy Week

April 9 | Palm Sunday Worship 9:30AM
April 13 | Family Style Seder Meal 5:30PM
& Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Worship 7:00PM
April 14 | Good Friday Worship 12:00PM
April 16 | Easter Worship 9:30AM

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- 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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Continuing thanks to our recent Association contributors:

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Rick Bylsma Painting
Dennis Delano
Jennifer and William McDermott
Joseph Jones
John and Patricia LaGrand
Jim Payne and Char Kruzich
Midtown Craftsmen
Erin Miller
Phil Ondersma
Michael and Miriam Wassenaar
Seasonal Parking. Spring Cleanup

We are nearly done with Seasonal Parking Rules! The odd even parking rule will be lifted April 1st 2017 so no more figuring out which side of the street to park on.

This also means spring has sprung! While we had a mild winter so hidden snow surprises should be lower, it is still a great idea to bring a plastic bag or two for walks. As it warms, it is time to remember that even if we didn’t make the mess, we should still be okay with doing some of the cleaning to make our community shine. I personally like to bring two bags, one for trash and one for recyclables.

Spring Crimes

As temps rise as does the activities of any city environment. It is easy to be excited to enjoy those first few warm days but be sure to still be smart about things.

- Make sure you are always putting your bike away. Each year we have a lot of stolen bikes. Simply locking your bike to the front porch is not recommended. Not only is it in plain sight for all, but it is easy to break spindles on porch railing. Consider bringing it inside if that is an option.
- Make sure to keep your car free and clear of anything valuable. This also means in your glove box. Never keep vehicle titles in your car or spare keys. Things like book bags and gym bags often look appealing to thieves (even if they only find your dirty gym clothes). And never leave laptops, tablets, phones or guns in your car. You would be shocked how often registered weapons are stolen from unlocked vehicles.
- PIN YOUR WINDOWS. Window pinning when done right will prevent a burglar from getting inside your home while allowing some fresh air to still pass through. If you would like to know more, contact Tansy at: 459-8950 or at Heritage@heritagehillweb.org for more info.

Home History Training

Ever wonder who built your home? Ever wonder what early City Leaders lived in your home? Join Heritage Hill Association and the Grand Rapids Main Library on April 8th to learn how to research your home’s history. We will meet at the downtown Library on the 4th floor. The first hour will be a presentation followed by Q&A. Afterwards you can stick around for a tour of the floor and get into some research materials or you can take your new found knowledge and come back another time to do your research. Please contact Tansy Harris at 616-459-8950 or at Heritage@heritagehillweb.org with any questions.

Home History Training

*NEW* Neighborhood Match Fund

The purpose of the Neighborhood Match Fund (NMF) is to invest strategically in resident and neighborhood leadership, with an emphasis on communities with the greatest need to leverage these small financial contracts to
achieve the following NMF objectives:

1. Identify, develop and network resident leaders
2. Build stronger connections among residents and in their neighborhoods
3. Address and promote equitable outcomes

“Equitable outcomes” means the NMF project is intentionally designed and implemented to lift up the power and leadership of historically marginalized communities. The target NMF contract recipients are Grand Rapids resident volunteers and small community-based grassroots organizations and informal groups comprised of Grand Rapids residents (i.e. Block Clubs). NMF funded projects must be led by Grand Rapids residents from the community of project impact. NMF contracts are between $200 and $2,500, depending on the requested amount, scope of the project, alignment with NMF objectives, and balance of funds. Applications are reviewed by committee on a quarterly basis.

The maximum contract is $2,500.

If awarded NMFs, the contractor must “match” the contract dollar for dollar; Match contributions can be any combination of volunteer labor, in-kind goods and services, and cash donations. For example, a NMF contract for $500 could be matched with $100 worth of volunteer labor (valued at $20/hour), $300 of in-kind/donated materials (e.g., Food, Supplies), and $100 cash donation from a local business or from a grant. Find out more at: http://grcity.us/city-manager/Pages/Neighborhood-Fund-Match.aspx or feel free to call me with questions or ideas. I would love to help you organize. Heritage@heritagehillweb.org or at 616-459-8950

Local History Documentary

The Grand Rapids Community College Library and Archives recently made available the 2007 local history documentary “Landmarks of Grand Rapids: a look at the neighborhoods of Sacred Heart Church, Heritage Hill, and Eastown.” From the description, “This short film brings to life three significant areas of Grand Rapids: the Sacred Heart Church parish, Eastown, and Heritage Hill. Residents, activists, and scholars, including Dr. Norbert Hruby, Mary Alice Williams, Caroline Matecki, Father Edward Hankiewicz, Father Dennis Morrow, Joyce Makinen, Tom Logan, and Barbara Roelofs, share their memories of the past and describe how these neighborhoods have helped Grand Rapids become the vibrant city it is today.” This hour long documentary was produced by the now dormant Grand Rapids Area Council for the Humanities in partnership with the Michigan Humanities Council.
To qualify for the program, homeowners must meet the following requirements:

Reside within the City of Grand Rapids and be a home owner, residing within the dwelling.

Logan, and Barbara Roelofs, share their memories of the past and describe how these neighborhoods have helped.

Mary Alice Williams, Caroline Matecki, Father Edward Hankiewicz, Father Dennis Morrow, Joyce Makinen, Tom Grand Rapids Area Council for the Humanities in partnership with the Michigan Humanities Council, Aquinas College, Calvin College, Grand Rapids Community College, Grand Valley State University, and Kent District Library.

The Grand Rapids Community College Library and Archives recently made available the 2007 local history documentary "Landmarks of Grand Rapids: a look at the neighborhoods of Sacred Heart Church, Heritage Hill, and Eastown."

This short film brings to life three significant areas of Grand Rapids: the Sacred Heart Church parish, Eastown, and Heritage Hill. Residents, activists, and scholars, including Dr. Norbert Hruby, Eastown. From the description, "This hour long documentary was produced by the now dormant Be Safe Friends!"

Homeowners can ensure their safety by scheduling an appointment. Contact them at 311.

Be Safe Friends!

The Grand Rapids Fire Department and our partners are offering the following:

• Free in home fire safety assessments
• Free smoke alarm upgrades and installations
• One-on-one fire safety consultations specific to the residence
• A connection with our partners to assist with fire safety issues

To qualify for the program, homeowners must meet the following requirements:

Reside within the City of Grand Rapids and be a home owner, residing within the dwelling.

Homeowners can ensure their safety by scheduling an appointment. Contact them at 311.

Be Safe Friends!

Poop, there it is.

I am not sure about all of you, but I have yet to master training my dog to clean up after themselves like this fine dog friend in this photograph. Being a responsible dog owner means being prepared for the one dog job that we can always count on, pooping! I have had a few residents reach out complaining that this year there seems to be even more dog poops on the sidewalks and easements. Please be responsible pet owners and bring poop bags with you on every walk. If you forgot a bag (or realized you needed to bring more than one or two bags), knock on a house and ask politely for a bag. Many residents will be glad to give you one.

I am not sure about all of you, but I have yet to master training my dog to clean up after themselves like this fine dog friend in this photograph. Being a responsible dog owner means being prepared for the one dog job that we can always count on, pooping! I have had a few residents reach out complaining that this year there seems to be even more dog poops on the sidewalks and easements. Please be responsible pet owners and bring poop bags with you on every walk. If you forgot a bag (or realized you needed to bring more than one or two bags), knock on a house and ask politely for a bag. Many residents will be glad to give you one.
Discussion at the January, 2017 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

**Action Item:** Board approval sought to submit Notice of Intent for Community Development Block Grant funding. HHA is requesting the same funding level as 2016: $43,756 – there is not a choice to change the request amount. Motion to approve submission of notice made, seconded and approved unanimously.

**50 College SE:** The GR Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approved plans for the 50 College SE project at its meeting at the same time as the HHA Board meeting. HHA will now finalize its review and draft a position letter for the City Planning Commission.

**HHA Committee/Issues contacts:** The representation of Committee Chairs, committee members and those who serve as information conduits for the neighborhood were reviewed and approved by board vote.

**Staff Reports:** In addition to written reports, discussion on Tansy’s report centered mainly on snow removal (sidewalks and roads) and the high number of parking violations/tows (45 in December) due mostly to snow removal parking restrictions.

**Jan’s report:** A series of community engagement meetings are in the works for stakeholders in and around the new GRPS Museum School (at State & Jefferson). The intent is to review and discuss how the school will interact with the surrounding community.

**Administration:**
The annual formality of board members signing conflict of interest forms was completed.
The annual fiscal assessment was completed in November: everything is in order.
Institutional Liaison meetings: Report that December meeting with Bill Manns, CEO of Trinity Health Saint Mary’s went well. Mr. Manns shared that a master campus plan of St. Mary’s is currently in the works. Also discussed was the GRPS Museum School and that GRPS is a good neighbor to Heritage Hill.

**Fundraising:** Home Tour 2017 – eight homes and three institutions are signed on for this year’s Tour and all homes have assigned house captains.
A request for Garden Tour hosts will be in the next edition of Heritage Herald – looking at a late June weekend for the event.
Texas Hold’Em events are scheduled for June 5 – 7 and October 9 – 11, 2017.

**Land Use:** It was announced that Clark’s Food Center was officially closed. The micro-apartment project has been given a green light and demolition of the old grocery store will begin this spring.

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

**Action Item:** Discussion on the request for a 3-unit variance at 568 Madison SE. Via email, the HHA Board had approved the HHA Zoning Committee’s recommendation to oppose this variance based on the Master Plan of Heritage Hill, City zoning guidelines and neighbors’ opposition. Subsequent discussion centered on the need for those applying for zoning variances to follow advice of City’s Planning Department in meeting with neighbors in the effort to garner as much neighbor support as possible before getting too far along in the application process.

**Treasurers Report:** Year-end report for 2016 will be included with January’s report at the March 15 board meeting.

**Staff Reports:** Jan talked briefly about her written report – no news or announcements from owners of Oakwood Manor yet, 50 College SE has a greenlight on development.

(Continued on page 14)
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Board Notes

(Continued from page 13)

and will be meeting with neighbors prior to demolition to discuss process. Demolition of 363 Madison (Clark’s) should begin in the spring and GRPS Museum School planners will be showing drawings of plans soon to neighbors.

Tansy mentioned that the State Street repaving/paving brick project (Lafayette to Madison) is being discussed. Attempts to salvage as much of the old pavers and curbing are under discussion. No timeframe has been determined as grants will be needed.

Tansy also spoke briefly on two attempted car thefts – botched hotwiring on both, leaving no theft but much damage.

Jan spoke to the passing of two icons of the neighborhood: Linda DeJong – the spark that founded the Heritage Hill Association, and Gert Calmese – a neighborhood leader/activist on the 500 Morris block.

Land Use: Chairperson, Teresa Dittmer will try to put a member of the Land Use committee in contact with the city to garner information and provide the board with street project updates in and around the Hill. Request for permit parking in the neighborhood has not progressed by neighbors as of late.

Administration: Jim Payne told of an upcoming meeting with Museum School planners and neighbors. Jim also said he plans to start attending GRCC Trustee meetings to strengthen our relationship with one of our largest institutional neighbors on the north end. The executive committee is also looking at and for more fundraising and/or partnership opportunities for the Heritage Hill neighborhood.

Fundraising: Home Tour 2017 – eight homes and four institutions are signed on for this year’s Tour. All but two homes have been toured by the staffing committee. All homes are captained and volunteer guide recruitment begins March 1.

Request for Garden Tour hosts will be in the next edition of Heritage Herald – Currently have 4 and would like about 10. Looking at a late June weekend for the event.

Texas Hold’em events are scheduled for June 5–7 and October 9–11, 2017.

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).
Running with the big dogs ....
But not in our City Parks

We have been receiving complaints about unleashed dogs especially in our parks. As a loving dog owner myself I know the temptation to let your pet run free. They love it. Unfortunately your dog's freedom prevents other dog owners from walking through the park with their dogs on a required leash. And even more important, children are playing in the park. Many children and adults are very afraid of dogs. Parents and dog owners have commented that they just avoid the park if they see a dog that is not on a leash.

Please be considerate of all who want to use the park. Keep your dog leashed. It is a City ordinance because the City Parks belong to all of us. The City's dog parks are where you go when you want that off-leash experience.

Sec. 9.209. - Running at Large Prohibited; Leash or Lead Required; Clean-Up Required.
(1) A person who owns or has custody or control of a dog shall prevent the dog from running at large. A person who owns or has custody or control of a dog shall, at any time the dog is off that person's property, restrain the dog with a lead or leash no greater than six (6) feet in length.
(2) A person who owns or has custody or control of an animal shall prevent the animal from defecating on any public or private property other than his or her own or shall immediately collect and properly dispose of all fecal matter deposited by the animal while it is off his or her property.

Ord. No. 2003-06, § 1, 1-28-03

The Garden Tour Is Waiting To Bloom

You plant and prune, you sew seeds and search for slugs, you weed and water. Wouldn’t you love to share the garden you’ve been creating with people who will appreciate it as much as you do?

This year’s garden tour will be on a Saturday in late June and we are looking for 10 gardens- small or large, free flowing or formal. There is a rollicking garden crawl the evening before with wine and treats and a chance for the hosts to see each others’ gardens. On Saturday we ask that someone be in the garden to answer questions while basking in the glory of your rhodies and roses.

If you are interested or have any questions, please contact the HHA office (459-8950) or Kate Diedrich (451-9211). Wishing you a warm Spring!
**Top 5 misconceptions about the Heritage Hill Association - HHA**

1. HHA is the "HISTORIC" Police, with nothing better to than go around issuing fines for bad color choices in painting one’s home, or replacing an old door with a modern one, demolishing an old garage without approval, or dancing in the district after 9PM with the lights on ...

   Not true!! We don’t issue fines, and we are not the “AUTHORITIES” when it comes to enforcing infractions in the City’s Historic Preservation Code, ... that is the purview of the HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, HPC, which is the City administered body that oversees the city’s historic districts. The Heritage Hill Association assists property owners in providing information regarding the historic preservation regulations and the process for getting approvals. Generally, we do not weigh in on matters before the commission and rely on their expertise in rendering decisions. Oh, and by the way, neither Heritage Hill or HPC has any say as to what color a house is painted and you dance until dawn with the lights on or off for all we care ... so long as you’re not disturbing your neighbors.

2. The Heritage Hill Association is opposed to any increase in DENSITY, (i.e. increase in resident population). under any set of circumstances ...

   While we are very sensitive about any development or request that results in an increase in residential density ... it is not a hard and fast rule. The Master plan of Heritage Hill states that the Association should “rigorously scrutinize any requests to increase density in existing residences.” Given that Heritage Hill is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the city, it follows that the majority of the time increases in density would be opposed. In some rare instances, an increase could be supported provided adequate parking, green space are available and support from the surrounding neighborhood is determined.

3. A historic home that has been used as an institution or commercial business but is now returning to a residential use, will automatically become a single family residence.

   Not necessarily, it depends on the lot...
size that the residence sits on. There is a formula that the City Planning Department uses to determine how many units a property can support. If the lot is large enough a prior institutional use could be converted to a multi-unit residence if requested.

4 The people that live in Heritage Hill are mostly wealthy college educated hipsters that grew up in the suburbs and think it’s cool to live in an urban crime ridden neighborhood ...

This is wrong on multiple fronts. Over 60% of residents are moderate to low income with 70% as tenants and only 30% as owners. They come from all walks of life and from places near and far; what’s more, the crime rate in Heritage Hill is among the lowest in the City.

5 The Heritage Hill Office with it’s tiny staff are actually a front, for vast complex that is tied to the media, (the enemy of the people), via an underground tunnel into Wood TV 8 which works around the clock to make life miserable for people living in historic districts across the country ...

This is true actually ... just kidding!!

What is true is that Nexstar Broadcasting Group, which owns Wood TV 8, owns the old home that the Heritage Hill Office operates out of. They lease the building the Association for 1$ per year, which is a good deal but, HHA does have to do the maintenance on the structure. We just finished putting on a new roof which was done in 3 phases over three years as we could afford it ... and yes the tiny staff does do all that neighborhood improvement, crime prevention and safety work all by themselves ... You can show your appreciation by stepping up and sending a donation ... or better yet, log onto our website and become a sustaining member by clicking on our recurring contribution and show your solid support for the facts ... no misconceptions!

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Gertrude Fletcher Calmese
October 13, 1926 – February 3, 2017

Whereas
Gert Calmese was a neighbor on 500 block of Morris Avenue in Heritage Hill for over fifty years, and served with distinction as the Block Captain since 1986, distributing thousands of fliers door-to-door and reminding each and every neighbor to call her about any neighborhood problems;

And Whereas
She was a faithful wife to her beloved husband Ben Calmese and a good parent to her niece Claudia, nephew Daryl and stepson Gerald; teaching them the value of early rising, hard work and proper use of an iron;

And Whereas
She placed a high value on civic responsibility, serving as a precinct captain for several decades and was known city-wide among poll workers for banning beverages and snacks at the poll workers table at her precinct;

And Whereas
She was a wonderful neighbor who maintained a lovely home and kept her lawn and garden weed-free, green and precisely trimmed, and was occasionally seen picking leaves off the lawn one-by one in the fall when one or two dared to float down after raking was done;

And Whereas
She carried out her duties as a representative of the Heritage Hill Association and the 500 block of Morris Avenue, often speaking at city commission and police department community meetings. This included her weekend calls to Mayor Logie when Gert felt it was necessary.

And Whereas
Gert was beloved by her neighbors, who became her family as one-by-one her loved ones passed away before her; and who cared for her when she was sad, or lonely or sick, and who visited, or called or sent cards and by those who kept her in their thoughts always.

We, the Heritage Hill Association Board and staff, hereby convey our respect and condolences to all those neighbors and friends who cared for Gert, supported her spiritually, emotionally and physically until the end of her days.

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DATES TO REMEMBER
All Heritage Hill Association Meetings are open to neighbors.

**Wednesday, April 19, 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, May 15, 2017

**Wednesday, May 17, 2017**
*(may be canceled due to proximity to Home Tour)*
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

**Saturday, June 3, 2017**
Annual Yard Sales Day

Coming on a Saturday in late June
The Heritage Hill Garden Tour

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www.parkchurchgr.org

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**Heritage Theatre Group**
FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT HERITAGETHEATREORG OR CALL US AT 616.951.4842

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**Heritage Hill Association**
126 College SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

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