



Heritage Herald

March/April 2026

The Newsletter of Heritage Hill

Volume MMXXVI, No. 2



2025 Annual Report



The Heritage Herald newsletter of
Heritage Hill Association
252 State St SE, Ste 101
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-459-8950

Email: heritage@heritagehillweb.org
Website: heritagehillweb.org

Facebook:  @heritagehill

Instagram:  @heritagehillassociation

Hours: 9am-5pm, Mon-Thurs

Contact us to be added to our email alerts on public safety, community engagement, and all things HHA.

HHA's purpose:

- To promote communication, cooperation, and friendship among neighbors
- To help maintain and improve neighborhood property and the physical appearance of our community
- 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
- To identify neighborhood problems and social needs, and to develop and implement solutions
- To initiate neighborhood programs to improve the quality of life
- To develop a spirit of pride and individual obligation to the neighborhood
- To promote and develop a successful multi-racial, and multi-ethnic neighborhood

Heritage Hill Association Staff:
Laska Nygaard, Executive Director

Board of Directors:

*Kris Alderman, Paris Ave SE
*Cathy Bosscher (Treasurer, Finance Chair), Morris SE
**Denise Cook (Home Tour Co-Chair), College Ave SE
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*Delores Deen, Morris Ave SE
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Paris Ave SE
*Jim McClurg (Vice President), College Ave SE
*Jennifer Meeks, College Ave SE
*Jeff Phillips (Home Tour Co-Chair), Paris Ave SE

*1st term
**2nd term

The HHA Board of Directors meets at 7pm on the third Wednesday of most months, in the Community Education Room of the Hauenstein Center, Trinity Health, 200 Jefferson Ave SE. Contact us to confirm meeting details and location in any given month.

HHA provides information and encourages neighbor participation to keep Heritage Hill safe and vital, including working on community issues as they arise. As an association of neighbors, we have a strong voice but no regulatory authority.

The Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) regulates all exterior work and repairs to buildings in Heritage Hill and approval is required before any work begins. HPC: 616-456-3451; rbaker@grcity.org.

Heritage Herald – Circulation @4,000

The *Heritage Herald* is published by the HHA 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 address above.

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Annual Report to the Neighbors

Neighborhood Health & Safety

Staff and our Community Health and Safety Committee worked to keep neighbors informed and supported around issues with potential broad health impact in Heritage Hill.

- As a neighborhood of historic homes built before the outlawing of lead paint, all of our homes, unless remediated, will have lead paint or paint dust, which is an especially serious health danger for children. During National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, we distributed information on blood testing for lead exposure and home inspections for lead hazards. At the National Night Out picnic, the Community Health and Safety Committee set up a display showcasing the precautions necessary to safely renovate or paint houses in Heritage Hill, and continued to inform neighbors and answer questions throughout the year.
- In February, we provided free radon tests to neighbors upon request. Radon gas is another health concern in our part of Grand Rapids. The naturally-occurring scentless, invisible gas, radon can seep up from the ground and is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking.
- We have and continue to work on partnering with the Healthy Homes Coalition on home safety hazards and solutions, including consulting on their toolshare program that loans out lead abatement and remediation tools and supplies.
- Responding to years of complaints from neighbors, HHA staff worked closely with neighbor representatives, City Commissioners and the City Attorney's office to express the need for a solution to amplified noise nuisances and urge narrowly tailored ordinance language for this purpose. The ordinance was passed in early 2026.

Crime in 2025 was fairly reflective of recent years in the Hill. We consulted with the GRPD and sent email alerts as car-related break-ins and thefts occurred in repeated spurts. Yard signs and flag were also reported stolen. There were several incidents of repeated destruction of landscaping and garden work done by neighbors, and destruction to property such as graffiti and sign defacement. By reporting crime incidents to GRPD and to HHA, we are able to focus resources into those areas and prevent hopefully recurrence.

Responding to neighbor requests, HHA is pursuing neighbor info sessions and/



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or training on practical family preparedness and home climate adaptation for historic homes, as well as practical sustainability information. We are working to build neighbor connections, block-by-block, which help increase safety and quality of life.

We update neighbors on neighborhood crime, safety and health through this *Herald* newsletter and our email alerts. **If you do not receive our emails, call or email us to sign-up: heritage@heritagehillweb.org / 616-459-8950.**

Improvements & Preservation

Neighborhood improvement and preservation concerns came together this year, as they must do in our historic community.

- **Boundary Markers.** In time for Tour of Homes 2025, our contractor completed the repair and revitalization of several of Heritage Hill's boundary marker signs, thanks to grant funding from the Historic Society of Michigan.
- **Heritage Hill Part Art Selection.** HHA brought together the neighbor committee that worked with HHA and Parks and Rec to select the art work to be installed in the park thanks to a Parks and Rec grant. Staff change and reorganization have delayed scheduling of the art installation, but it is still expected to occur in 2026.
- **Voigt House and its grounds** are a public resource treasured by Heritage Hill neighbors. From spring through early fall, several occurrences raised neighborhood concerns about its care. Early in the year, Heritage Hill neighbors who had been volunteer groundskeepers for decades were unexpectedly let go. HHA inquired into the

state of care of the house and grounds and toured with leadership and staff of the Grand Rapids Public Museum, which has responsibility for upkeeping the estate, as well as City officials. While the house was largely in good order, HHA staff noted to City officials that any plan to change the estate from a historically-preserved public resource would face opposition. Concern for the house and grounds became louder as summer storms dropped trees from a neighboring homes onto Voigt's grounds and neighbors saw that grounds were not being upkept as they had been for so long. GRPM was very responsive to HHA's request to make sure the grounds were cleared. Subsequently, reports of trespassing on the grounds and house became public on social media, along with rumors about proposals to take the house from its current use and possibly split it into separate units. In order to make sure neighbor concerns were addressed, HHA invited Mayor LaGrand to our August Board meeting to speak to concerns about the house possibly being split up and about its care in general, which was reported on by local media. In addition, HHA created an online survey for neighbors, who strongly voiced their concerns about keeping the house and grounds safe, and our Board has created the Voigt House Preservation Committee to research and collaborate with the City and GRPM on the best ways to keep the house and grounds safe for future generations. The Voigt groundskeepers have been reinstated.

(cont'd on page 4)

New! State-Funded Lead Removal & Painting Program

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Annual Report *(cont'd from page 3)*

Connecting and Engaging Neighbors

HHA helped neighbors to establish a Heritage Hill Environmental Club, putting out calls for interested neighbors, offering office space for meeting and other support. The club set up an information session on the City's draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), and is now looking at environmental sustainability, community gardening, and other issues.

Our Community Engagement Committee Co-Chairs, staff, volunteers and partners carried out events that engaged, inspired and nurtured both neighbors and visitors we welcomed to the Hill.

- Spring Clean. We were proud to organize and enlist dozens of neighbors in spring-cleaning dozens of blocks for the fourth year in a row, and look forward to even more blocks cleaned this year!
- Foster Park. Our Community Engagement Committee Co-Chairs helped maintain

Foster Park in the summer.

- Food trucks in Mooney Park during the Tour of Homes.
- Square dancing for all ages and experience with the Grand River Squares at Child Discovery Center in August and October. Another round coming up in June!
- Shakespeare in the Park in Pleasant Park in July.
- Another amazing National Night Out, for the first time with visitor booths from HHA Committees, community organization, GRPS, and City offices such as Historic Preservation.
- 'First Wednesdays' Happy Hours at The Commons.
- A special Happy Hour and mixer hosted by the Sweet House.
- Our first potluck Annual Membership Meeting / Holiday Park in many years, held at the Public Museum High School and visited by Santa (Jeremy) Czubko.

The outdoor holiday decorating contest that was planned for December did not occur due to sub-zero temperatures and widespread seasonal flu. **Our events and efforts are made possible by generous donations from neighbors like you**, our sponsors, and grants from the City's Office of Special Events. Our office works to keep you aware of these and other social and civic engagement opportunities through this *Herald* newsletter and our email alerts. **If you do not receive our emails, call or email us to sign-up: heritage@heritagehillweb.org / 616-459-8950.**



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Land Use and Zoning

We were busy on land use and zoning issues again in 2025, keeping neighbors informed on, and fielding their concerns and concerns about, street and traffic safety concerns, parking issues, and development issues. Our Land Use Committee monitored, reviewed and made recommendations on development proposals and public policy changes affecting land use, from zoning text amendments to traffic patterns to changes to the parks, including the following.

- Reviewed Grand Rapids' draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) and provided the City with specific recommendations related to energy conservation within historic homes.
- Reviewed and liaised with City departments on proposed street reconfigurations. We expressed concern about parking issues at Cherry Street between Lafayette Avenue and Madison Avenue where bike lanes are set to be installed, and continue to inquire as the configuration is not finalized. We gave feedback on the inadequacy of community engagement and information provision concerning proposals to turn Fountain and Lyon into two-way streets on the North End.
- Reviewed and supported plans for expansion of the Fountain Hill Center at 534 Fountain Street NE, which were approved by City.
- Attended – at short notice – community engagement events held by Mary Free Bed and provided comment on a new parking garage to be built on the block of MFB's new Children's Rehabilitation Hospital on Wealthy. The garage was not included in original plans for the hospital reviewed and supported by our Committee and Board. The garage was approved, with minor exterior modifications, by the City.
- Monitored a proposal to reconfigure some one-way streets in the neighborhood as proposed earlier by the City. (As far as we can tell, no further action has been taken to advance this proposal.)

(cont'd on page 6)



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Annual Report (cont'd from page 5)

- Monitored progress of other projects reviewed earlier, such as Heritage Court at 300 Wealthy St. SE. (One house was moved; two houses have been renovated; utility work completed; still waiting to see new condos.)

Some of our areas of focus in 2026 will include:

- Continued monitoring of current ongoing development projects such as the Heritage Court townhomes planned for 300 Wealthy.
- Keeping neighbors informed about City proposals concerning expanding AirBnB permits, and density-heavy zoning changes, that may impact Heritage Hill.
- Working closely with Corewell Health on their upcoming proposed developments on the end of the North End of the neighborhood.
- Strengthening our relationships with Mobile GR and City Engineering (re street and traffic configuration and parking), City Planning and other major partners such as Trinity Health, Corewell Health, and Mary Free Bed.

Governance

The HHA Board approved a new Bylaws Committee to review and update our Bylaws to meet the needs of today. The committee, renamed Governance earlier with the intent of taking a broader look at procedures and practices, is currently working on Bylaws revisions to ensure election inclusiveness and integrity and strengthen conflict of interest and ethics rules for the Board and HHA staff.

This work builds on last year's work by our Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC) to create a manual for NEC's carrying out of elections and beginning to utilize digital formats for voting processes. NEC also initiated a fresh focus

on the process of identifying and nominating future Board members. This is currently being looked at with regard to current vacancies with an eye to broadening Board diversity, having legal expertise, or strengthening neighborhood representation in the North End.

FUNDRAISING TOURS

HHA's 2025 tours were a success again, with nearly 1800 visitors buying tickets.



GARDEN TOUR

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WALKING TOUR

270 attendees



TOUR OF HOMES

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Twelve gracious neighbors opened their beautiful gardens to the public to benefit HHA. Garden Tour continues to be lead by artist and master gardener Kate Diedrich of Prospect Ave SE. Preparations are underway for this year, on Saturday, June 20. Get in touch to showcase your garden and benefit HHA.

Last fall and winter, the amazing Caroline Cook of GR Running Tours thrilled attendees at two Victorian Christmas Tours, three hauntings tours, and two graveyard tours. We look forward to Caroline’s tours again this year. She is also working with our 2026 Tour of Homes team on special event historic talks.

Core members of HHA’s long-standing Tour of Homes Committee took their well-deserved retirements last year. Enough thanks cannot be paid to Suzanne De Haan, Tom & Chris Truesdale, Kate Diedrich and Rich App for their years of service. Tom Postma has stayed on in his role (and Don Rietema hasn’t *quite* retired yet!), and has been joined by Co-Chairs Denise Cook, Jeff Phillips, Kim Lucas, and numerous other neighbor volunteers serving on subcommittees for the event.

The new team has taken on refreshing the Tour of Homes, balancing tradition with innovation in order to expand and diversify audiences, increase sponsor engagement and visibility, and strengthen volunteer and homeowner recognition. These changes come about given the increasing threat to grant funding and the consequent pressure for a nonprofit like HHA to raise more funds from fundraising events and promotions. The team’s energy is already paying off, with 12 historic homes and buildings secured for this year’s Tour.

Financial Report

In 2025, the Annual Weekend Tour of Homes continued to be the major fundraising source. Thanks to the hard work of all the volunteers, HHA netted \$43,935 in ticket sales and sponsorships. Revenue between the tours of 2025 and 2024 were equivalent, yet net revenue increased by nearly \$7000 due to the diligent efforts of staff and Tour of Homes Committee volunteers to reduce expenses. Nevertheless, the 2025 Tour of Homes revenue reflected a pattern of falling ticket sales and of sponsorships that began with the advent of COVID and is similar to issues reported by many nonprofits.

The Garden Tour continues to be well-appreciated tour and

Condensed Statement of Activities			
	2025	2024	Difference
Total Revenue	\$ 157,386	\$ 180,466	\$(23,080)
Total Expenses	168,156	174,418	6,262
Change in fund balance	\$ (10,770)	\$ 6,048	\$(16,818)
Condensed Statement of Financial Position			
	12/31/2025	12/31/2024	Change
Assets			
Cash	\$ 123,871	\$133,843	\$ (9,972)
Fixed Assets (Net)	-		
Total Assets	123,871	\$133,843	\$ (9,972)
Liabilities and Net Assets			
Accounts Payable	\$1,053	\$1,053	\$ -
Unrestricted Net assets	\$122,818	\$132,790	\$ (9,972)
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	--	--	
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$123,871	\$133,843	\$ (9,972)

source of revenue, netting \$6737.

Walking tour revenue increased to \$5788, a 13% increase.

HHA is also funded by contributions from residents and local businesses for which we are very grateful.

Landlords continue to take advantage of advertising their available apartments on our website. Contact us for advertising rates to secure new tenants, a new roommate, or to sell your home or condo!

We are also thankful for the support we receive from advertisers in our Herald newsletter.

Grant funding is currently under threat. Approximately one-third of HHA’s revenue comes from federal grants awarded by the City through an application process in which HHA has participated for many years. While the City Office of Community Development expects grant funding to continue at this time, meetings with government officials and Board member experience in grant loss have shown the necessity for careful planning. Efforts to address potential shortfall are ongoing. Staffing levels are being addressed. The 2026 Tour of Homes will be expanded with additional hours, a VIP night, and additional properties to bring in more revenue.



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Garden Tour

Looking For A Few Great Gardens

It's snowing, it's freezing - another lovely Michigan winter! At this time of year, nothing warms a gardener's heart like paging through seed catalogs by a cozy fire, dreaming of Spring and the garden to come.

You could bring joy to fellow garden lovers and support your neighborhood by sharing your garden with the **2026 Garden Tour**, to be held on **Saturday, June 20th**. You have invested so much time, effort and love into your little bit of heaven - just think of the enjoyment it will bring to others. Your only obligation is to prepare your garden (which you would be doing anyway) and to be present during the tour from **9:00am-3:00pm** on tour day to answer questions and to soak in all of the compliments. Its fun, rewarding and includes a wonderful party the night before.

To volunteer your beautiful garden or ask any questions, please contact Kate Diedrich at 616-780-3260 (phone or text) or at kateddiedrich@gmail.com.



... and, Looking For A Few Gardeners

The volunteer gardeners at the Voigt House are looking for a few recruits willing to help out one day a week for a three hour shift from spring to fall. Enjoy the outdoors and making our neighborhood even more beautiful.

Volunteer hours can be applied to Master Gardener Program requirements. If you are interested, please contact Kate Diedrich at 616-451-9211 or kateddiedrich@gmail.com.




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Calling All Neighbors!!!

We are so excited for this year's Tour of Homes, and it's time for YOU to sign up to volunteer! Your gift of time and effort supports HHA and all of our work to engage community and keep Heritage Hill a safe, vibrant, neighborly place to live.

Tour of Homes 2026 will bring our neighborhood tradition together with exciting new experiences, including a Friday evening "Tour & Tastes" VIP preview, and a volunteer appreciation event after Tour. **This year 12 of our historic homes and buildings are on tour. Our May-June Herald will give the full roster of homes, but they include:**

- **The Voigt House** – Victorian elegance with original furnishings
- **Meyer May & Amberg Houses** – Prairie School masterpieces
- **Gerald R. Ford's boyhood home** – Childhood home of the 38th President

Call or email us with your preferred shifts, or fill out our online form on our website.

- ☐ **Shift One: New! Twilight Tour and Tastes – Friday, May 15, 5:30-9:00pm**
- ☐ **Shift Two: Saturday, May 16th 10am-2:00pm**
- ☐ **Shift Three: Saturday, May 16th 2:00-6:00pm**
- ☐ **Shift Four: Sunday, May 17th 10am-2:00pm**
- ☐ **Shift Five: Sunday, May 17th 2:00-6:00pm**
- ☐ **If these full shifts don't work for you, you can still volunteer!**

TO SIGN UP!:

Email: heritage@heritagehillweb.org

Call: 616-459-8950

Go to <https://heritagehillweb.org/volunteer/> and click on "Tour of Homes Volunteer"

Neighborhood Potpourri

Pet Reminders – Leashes and Waste Disposal Please

We have received multiple complaints of unleashed dogs in Heritage Hill and particularly in Pleasant Park and Foster Park. Michigan law and Grand Rapids ordinances require that all dogs be kept on leashes, six feet or shorter, whenever they are off the dog owner's property. Please be respectful of your fellow neighbors and keep your dogs leashed at all times.

And, Dog waste continues to be a problem with multiple complaints of bagged and un-bagged waste being left behind. Please be a responsible pet owner and clean up after your dog!

Yard Waste Services

Grand Rapids offers many options for yard waste removal. The season begins in April (date depending on weather) and extends to the second Friday in December. Curbside waste options are available and collection day is the same as your regular waste pick-up and all tags can be purchased at city hall and select supermarkets.

- **Yard Carts-** \$30 to order and each time you would like your cart

emptied, a tag must be attached (\$6.50 per tag).

- **Yard Waste Paper Bag-** Paper bags are 2.75 each and are useful for leaves, grass clippings, and small twigs. They must not weigh more than 30 lbs.
- **Yard Waste Bulk Tag-** purple yard waste tags are 2.75 each and are for bundles of larger twigs or branches. Bundled branches and twigs should be under 4 feet long and 2 inches or less in diameter.
- **Drop Off -** Yard Waste can also be dropped off in person at 2001 Butterworth St SW, April-mid December 7:30 am-4:30 pm (Winter hours differ).
- **Yard waste includes:** Grass clippings, leaves, brush, twigs (less than 2 inches in diameter), garden plants, tree limbs (cut 5' or less). **Yard waste does not include:** Sod, dirt, stones, broken concrete, trees, railroad ties, stumps, animal feces or dead animals.
- **Call 311 or (616) 456-3000 with any questions, or email publicworks@grcity.com.**

Income Tax Help & Volunteering

April 15 comes up fast every year, doesn't it?

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free, reliable tax help to income-eligible individuals, ensuring that more people can confidently navigate tax season. Learn about GVSU's program at www.gvsu.edu/accounting/volunteer-income-tax-assistance-vita-121.htm.

For those new to Grand Rapids, be aware that a city tax form must be filled out by full- or part-time residents, as well as by nonresidents who have taxable income from working within the city limits. Visit www.grandrapidsmi.gov/departments/fiscal-services/income-tax/ to learn more.

Volunteering to Help with Severe Weather Damage Recovery

Severe storm season comes with springtime. When disasters strike, those who want to help with recovery are urged to register with organized volunteer efforts, to ensure the safety of volunteers and to ensure that efforts go where they are most needed. To join up and help, you can sign up at www.volunteermichigan.org/, then search for weather-related recovery efforts to get involved.

Caretaking for Homes and People

Homeowners take pride in the appearance of their homes, especially in a historic district like Heritage Hill. But sometimes, neighbors can worry about making a complaint about the condition of a house or building, because they are nervous about the impact that it may have on vulnerable individuals who live in or own the location.

Rest assured that the Grand Rapids Code Compliance Department is sensitive to the plight of those who may have problems with upkeep due to vulnerabilities. Code Compliance now has a full-time social worker on staff who helps to address the issues individuals face that have impacted on their ability to stay compliant with City ordinances. The social worker helps with hoarding and with finding

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by *Laska Nygaard*

resources and help for other problems that individuals face.

If you need to make a report to Code Enforcement, you can go to their website (www.grandrapidsmi.gov/departments/code-compliance/) and click on the corresponding report type on the right-hand column.

New Medical Priority and Wellbeing Response (MPWR) Program

The Grand Rapids Fire Department (GRFD) and Corewell Health are partnering on a 6-month pilot Medical Priority and Wellbeing Response program designed to improve care coordination and help Grand Rapids residents access the services they need. The initiative integrates a full-time community health worker into GRFD response teams. The goals are to reduce preventable emergency department visits and redirect 911 calls to the appropriate level of care, by connecting community members to non-emergency medical services or other essential resources. By addressing social needs alongside emergency response, this initiative represents a new model for community health and safety and is the first of its kind in West Michigan. If the program shows success, it may be continued long-term. Much more information is available here: [//www.grandrapidsmi.gov/city-news/posts/grfd-and-corewell-health-launch-improved-emergency-care-coordination/](http://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/city-news/posts/grfd-and-corewell-health-launch-improved-emergency-care-coordination/)

Zoning Ordinance Update

<https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/departments/planning-department/zoning-ordinance/zoning-ordinance-update/>

The City is updating the Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance to align with the Community Master Plan. The changes will shape the future development and shape of the City, and brings up issues that Hill neighbors have been concerned about in the past, from density, to streetscape, to short-term rental rules.

Phase 2 of the process is currently underway, which "includes the writing of the Zoning Ordinance text and map

(cont'd on page 13)



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Neighborhood Potpourri

(cont'd from page 11)

creation, test concepts with the public, and hold work sessions and briefings with the City and Planning Commission and spans the Fall of 2025 through Winter of 2027."

HHA has invited the City Planning to come speak to Heritage Hill neighbors about how zoning works, about proposed revisions to the Zoning Ordinance, and related issues. We hope you will attend one of the meetings, which are identical and which both will take place at Central Reformed Church (10 College Ave NE):

- Wednesday, March 18, 1:00pm-2:30pm
- Tuesday, March 24, 6:30-8:00pm

HHA and Hill neighbors were very involved during the Community Master Planning process.

The final steps of the Zoning Ordinance update will be a public hearing of the Planning Commission, its recommendation of a final draft, then City Commission consideration and adoption, expected before Summer of 2027.

Neighborhood Spring Litter Clean

It takes people like you who care to make our streets and parks beautiful for all to enjoy.

4th Annual Heritage Hill Spring Litter Clean

Saturday, April 18 – Sunday, April 26

Let's make our neighborhood sparkle! Sign-up for our **4th Annual Spring Litter Clean** at and join neighbors in cleaning up a block (or two) whenever it works for you during the week of **April 18-26**. Grab your crew, roll up your sleeves, and pitch in to make a difference. To make it flexible, we have sign-up slots for all the blocks in the Hill for you to clean at your convenience. To sign up go to **signup-genius.com** and search by our office email **heritage@heritagehillweb.org**. Contact us to borrow **garden gloves!**

Pleasant Park Clean-up & Park Keepers

Saturday, April 25, 9am-noon

On the last Saturday of the Spring Litter Clean, **come enjoy the outdoors and beautify Pleasant Park for the season**. Pleasant Park Pals, South Hill Neighborhood Association and HHA come together to clean out the garden beds, weed, and spread mulch! Bring a bottle of water and any tools you have. Contact HHA to borrow garden gloves. And, Pleasant Park needs caretakers to keep the flower and tree beds gorgeous all season long. A big thank you to all the faithful neighbors who've tended for years, and a big **invite to new volunteers**. Please contact Joshlyn Litzenberger at **joshlynlitzenberger@gmail.com** to get involved.

Share your pictures! We love to see and share you enjoying all of your good works. Email us any photos you take to heritage@heritagehillweb.org.



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Board Notes

Discussion at the October, 2025 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

President's Report:

J. Czubko discussed improving transparency through consistent committee reporting and developing a standardized reporting template.

Conflict of Interest Policy:

The Board approved a strengthened Conflict of Interest Policy establishing a clear process for identifying and addressing potential conflicts.

New Committees:

The Board voted to form a Bylaws Committee to review and update governing documents. The Board also voted to establish a Voigt House Preservation Committee, with membership to be finalized after the New Year.

GRPD Presentation:

Captain Brad Bush presented an overview of the Central Service Area and reporting procedures for crime, noise, and nuisance concerns. He encouraged residents to register exterior cameras to assist investigations and will serve as a key contact for Heritage Hill.

Treasurer's Report:

Finances remain on track, and budget development is underway.

Committee Reports:

Community Engagement: The Board approved a \$240 payment to the Museum School for hosting the December Annual Meeting.

Land Use: The Board determined it would not take a position on the proposed Mary Free Bed parking structure, as the project is outside the historic district.

Public Comment:

The Board voted to publicly share the Voigt House Survey Summary with the community and reference it in the next Herald.

Executive Session:

The Board approved in concept proposed additions to the 2026 Home Tour, including a VIP Twilight Tour, expanded sponsorships, volunteer appreciation activities, and additional programming elements.

Discussion at the November, 2025 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

President's Report:

Preparations for the Annual Meeting were reviewed, including potluck coordination and officer elections. The Board adopted a new committee reporting format requiring written reports in advance of meetings.

Community Health & Safety Committee Appointment:

The Board voted to appoint Nat Rauh-Bieri

as Co-Chair alongside Chris Ervine.

Governance Committee Formation:

The Board voted to rename the previously approved Bylaws Committee to the Governance Committee, expanding its scope to include bylaws, policies, procedures, and governance oversight.

Committee Recruitment & Block Groups:

The Board discussed strengthening committee recruitment efforts and rebuilding an updated block group network.

Treasurer's Report:

L. Bracken reported finances remain steady, with a projected \$2,600 year-to-date shortfall largely dependent on neighborhood contributions typically received in January. Additional expenses included computers and printers, with a goal of finishing the year at net zero. M. Hoexum suggested a donation request be made at the Annual Meeting. This marked L. Bracken's final Treasurer's report, and the Board expressed appreciation for her service to HHA.

Committee Reports:

Home Tour: Planning for 2026 continues, with one home remaining to be secured. Sponsorship outreach is underway. The committee met with an aide from Congresswoman Slotkin's office and was informed that CDBG funding will not return in 2026.

Land Use: The Planning Commission approved the Mary Free Bed parking structure. The committee had previously determined not to take a position, as the project is outside the district and permitted under existing zoning and height limits. The Board discussed continued communication with city partners.

Nominating & Elections Committee: The Board voted to interpret "telephone" ballot requests to include email communications and adopted a tie-breaking procedure for elections.

Executive Session:

Discussion included Distinguished Service Awards, strategic planning priorities, block group engagement, and scheduling the first 2026 Board meeting in executive session for strategic planning purposes.

Discussion at the December, 2025 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

2026 Officer Elections:

Officer elections were conducted in

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accordance with the Association's Bylaws using a secure electronic voting platform. The following officers were elected:

- **President:** Kimberly Lucas
- **Vice President:** Jim McClurg
- **Secretary:** Katie Heneveld
- **Treasurer:** Cathy Bosscher

Elected officers will serve until the next annual Board meeting or until successors are elected and qualified.

**Discussion at the January, 2026
Heritage Hill Association Board
Meeting included:**

Public Comment:

A resident raised concerns regarding neighborhood safety and strengthening block-level relationships. The Board reaffirmed that supporting block clubs remains a priority.

President's Report:

Board members signed annual Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy documents. Committee chair nominations and committee preferences were reviewed. K. Lucas also reported the office has received a new printer/scanner.

Treasurer's Report:

C. Bosscher reviewed the financial report prepared by Marcus Rich, CPA, who is assisting with bookkeeping. Expenses were elevated due to severance costs. The Board was notified that the previously filed Form 990 required revisions. The Board approved a \$200 expenditure to amend the 2024 filing to ensure accuracy. Discussion also included strengthening offboarding procedures and securing access to organizational platforms.

Committee Reports:

Home Tour: Ten homes have been secured for 2026, with two remaining. Sponsorship outreach continues, and promotional partnerships are being developed with local businesses. A VIP event is scheduled for Friday, May 15.

Governance Committee: The Board approved the Governance Committee charter and discussed committee membership expansion.

Nominating and Election Committee: J. McClurg raised discussion regarding the two vacant Director positions. The Board discussed bringing forward a recommendation to fill L. Bracken's former seat and considering appointment of an additional organizational

representative

Executive Session:

The Board reviewed the strategic planning framework and discussed alignment of the Home Tour within broader organizational priorities. Emphasis was placed on strengthening community storytelling,

improving demographic data collection, enhancing block club engagement, and aligning committee goals with strategic priorities. Operational discussions included technology access, volunteer coordination, office planning, and data privacy considerations.



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2026 DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesdays, March 18 &

April 15, 2026 @ 7pm

No May Board Meeting due to

Tour of Homes

HHA Board Meeting -

open to Heritage Hill neighbors

Community Education Room

Hauenstein Center of Trinity Health –

200 Jefferson Ave. SE entrance

Wednesday, April 1, May 7,

June 4, 2026, 5-7pm

Heritage Hill First Wednesdays

Happy Hours

The Commons @ The Oakwood,

547 Cherry St. SE

March 18 @ 1:00pm and

March 24 @ 6:30pm

Neighborhood Public Meetings on

Zoning Changes with

Planning Director K. Turkelson and

Planning Supervisor R. Brady

@ Central Reformed Church,

10 College St. SE

June 2026 – Date and Time TBD

Square Dancing at Child Discovery Center

July 2026 – Date and Time TBD

Movie in the Park in Pleasant Park

Annual Dates

Saturday, April 18 – Sunday, April 26

Annual Neighborhood Spring Clean

Go to SignUpGenius.com and search

“Heritage Hill Spring Litter Clean 2026”

to sign up!

Saturday, April 25, 2026

Pleasant Park Spring Clean

with Pleasant Park Pals

Friday, May 15, 2026

“Twilight Tour & Tastes”

First Annual Tour of Homes

Preview Evening

Saturday and Sunday,

May 16 & 17, 2026

The Heritage Hill Annual Weekend

Tour of Homes

May 2026 - Date and Time TBD

First Annual Tour of Homes Volunteer

Appreciation Celebration

Saturday, June 6, 2026

Yard Sale Day

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Heritage Hill Garden Tour

September 2026 – Date and Time TBD

Dumpster Day

Heritage Hill Association

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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.