

Heritage Herald

MAY/JUNE 2023

The Newsletter of Heritage Hill

Volume MMXXIII, No. 3



52ND Heritage Hill Annual Weekend Tour of Homes May 20 & 21, 2023



**Tour Hours: Saturday 11am–5pm
Sunday 1pm–5pm**
*All tickets are valid for both days!
Houses can be seen in any order*



**Advance tickets purchased through May 19: \$20 each
Tickets purchased on days of Tour: \$27 each**

Age 12 and under – Free
Tickets are not refundable



Tickets can be purchased in advance
by scanning this QR code:



OR:

- Online – www.heritagehillweb.org
- Martha's Vineyard 200 Union Ave NE
- Art of the Table 606 Wealthy St. SE
- Select Lake Michigan Credit Union branches:
342 Michigan NE
1820 Leonard St. NE
260 Jefferson (*inside Trinity Health*)

**Tickets can be purchased on the days of the tour online or at
GRCC DeVos Campus 435 E. Fulton Ave**

Free shuttle buses provided by Corewell Health will pick up and drop off at each open house
Curious about group discounts? Call us at 616-459-8950 for details!

The Heritage Hill Association

126 College S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-459-8950
Facebook: @heritagehill
Instagram: @heritagehillassociation
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:

Barbara Draughon, Executive Director
Maria Zache Starkey, Office Manager
Laska Nygaard, Community Organizer

The Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors:

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**Wayne Norlin, Morris Ave SE

Matthew Smith, Lafayette NE (appointed)

*1st Term

** 2nd Term

Heritage Hill Association board of directors meets at 7pm at the Community Education room of Trinity Health at 200 Jefferson Ave SE. The meetings are open to the public. Please contact the office at heritage@heritagehillweb.org or 616-459-8950 for access codes for any upcoming meeting.

Heritage Hill Association Contacts:

Finance: Carolyn Ferrari
Newsletter: Barbara Draughon
Preservation: Rhonda Baker
Traffic and Parking:
Zoning: Wayne Norlin
Home Tour: Suzanne De Haan
Home Tour Sponsorship: Barbara Draughon
Social Media: Barbara Draughon
State Street: Barbara Draughon
Block Issues: Laska Nygaard

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). 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.

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This and That

by Barbara Draughon, Executive Director

It's here! On May 20-21, HHA brings to you the 52nd Heritage Hill Annual Weekend Tour of Homes. This year, food trucks will be added to the dining options available to tour-goers and passers-by, alike. *El Chef* and *Toya's World* will be on Prospect Ave. SE between Cherry and State Streets serving up Mexican & Southern fares on Saturday starting at 11AM. *El Chef* will be joined by *Semifreddo* (small sandwiches and frozen desserts) on Sunday starting at noon. Foster Park is adjacent and will feature tables and chairs for enjoying lunches or taking a quick break in between houses.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

Make sure to patronize your neighborhood supporters and thank them for their contribution to this much-favored event that showcases the beauty and history of Grand Rapids' largest historic district. See the full list (to date!) in this issue of the Herald.

We ask that our Home Tour Steering Committee Chairs take a bow in center stage: Thank you to neighbors **Suzanne De Haan, Kate Diedrich, and Christine & Tom Truesdale.**

HHA thanks **Don Rietema** and **Tom Postma** for their YEARS of providing the behind-the-scenes support. A big shout out to **Mei Chow** for her artistic talents and gifting each of our Home Tour hosts with original paintings of their homes. And, of course, we extend our immense gratitude to the fabulous hosts who have opened up their homes: **Micki & Roger Ackerman, Eric & Liz Hoonhorst, Mary & Fred Host, Cullen & Katie Kronemeyer, and Dave & Andrea Nemes.** We cannot forget the generosity of **Redstone Properties, Stonecastle Dentistry, Cornerstone Church,** and the **Meyer May House** for opening up their spaces to tour-goers. Our generous friends make things a little easier, too: **GR Community College** for parking, restrooms, & ticket sales space; the **Meyer May House Visitors Center** for hosting our planning meeting, opening up their restrooms to tour goers, and providing beautiful items that will go to some lucky volunteers; **Elders' Helpers** for tour parking; graphic design help from **Dusty Scheuerman** of **Dust Design;** **Central Reformed Church** for access to restrooms and parking; and the



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Chop House for donating a gift card for a lucky volunteer. It takes a village and we have a pretty special village!

Did you know? The purpose of the annual tour is 3-fold:

1. The tour serves to **promote** how Heritage Hill contributes to the diversity, charm, and quality of life in Grand Rapids and near-downtown living.
2. Tour-goers leave more **informed** of the value of historic preservation efforts.
3. It's the largest **fundraiser** of the Heritage Hill Association and accounts for about 1/3 of its operating budget to facilitate neighborhood programs, support the publishing of this newsletter and, in general, to assist residents and businesses in building a healthy and historically preserved community.

We need Home Tour volunteers!

Volunteers are needed to staff the homes and direct foot traffic through the homes so that everyone can proceed at a comfortable pace and avoid over-crowding spaces. House volunteers who complete their duties will be entered into a drawing to win one of several items:

- 2 nights at the Parsonage Inn B&B in Heritage Hill
- Gift card to Chop House
- Coffee mug featuring Frank Lloyd Wright's "Michigan Masterpiece" that is the Meyer May House
- Print of the original mural in the Meyer May House dining room
- Matted prints of the prairie-style leaded glass windows at the Meyer May House

We also need logistical support to make supplies available at each home (make sure each home has enough hand sanitizer, booties to protect floors, and other supplies for visitors & volunteers). If you are not available on the days of the tour, we need people to help place promotional signage around the neighborhood during the days leading up to the event. Contact us to volunteer.

Attention Gardeners!

The Heritage Hill Garden Club will

be kicking off its 9th season this spring! The kickoff meeting will be held on Thursday, May 11 at 6:30pm at the home of Kerry & Mitch Baldwin, 320 College Ave. SE. We typically meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month from May - September. It's a wonderful chance to check out the lovely gardens in our very own neighborhood, increase your gardening knowledge, and go on fun and educational field trips. No gardening experience necessary! For more information, or to be added to the contact list for upcoming meetings and events, please contact Karen Coy at karen_coy@yahoo.com.

Board Vacancy

Have you been engaged in making your piece of Heritage Hill a better place? Are you looking for ways to get more involved? Consider applying for an appointment to our board. Call or email us for details.




Celebration of Life

We are informed by the family of Margaret Bowles that there will be a Celebration of Life in her memory at Fountain Street Church on May 3 from 5-7pm. Margaret, a long time neighbor and volunteer of Home Tour, passed away on February 9 of this year and will be dearly missed.


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ANNUAL WEEKEND TOUR OF HOMES ~ Sneak Peek!

532 PROSPECT S.E. | HOSTS: MARY & FRED HOST

This stately home was built circa 1908 as a Midwestern interpretation of the classic English Tudor Style, with its stucco facade, steeply pitched roof, prominent gable, leaded windows and the characteristic half-timber trim. The large front porch is a pleasant place for an iced tea on summer's day. Oak graces the floors, pocket doors, and trim throughout the interior of the main floor. A lincrusta border in the entry, a tiled fireplace in the living room, a coffered ceiling in the dining room and a refreshed, tin-ceiling kitchen complete the first floor. At the top of the stairway there is a sunny window seat to catch you before you proceed to the four bedrooms with dormer bump-outs and a unique ceiling treatment in the primary bedroom. The finished third floor is a perfect living space for kids and grandkids when they come to visit, with an open bedroom, an office and a full bath. The mix of family heirlooms and cozy furnishings create a warm, welcoming ambiance throughout the home.



522 PROSPECT S.E. | HOSTS: MICKI & ROGER ACKERMAN

You will literally be “in the pink” when touring this newly painted Shingle Style home. Built in 1900 for Gerrit J. Johnson, the president of a cigar company, the house has exquisite detailing in the façade: a full-length porch with stately columns and wood railings, a large gable with an ornate oval window above, a sunburst design in the windows below, and some of the most beautiful leaded windows in Heritage Hill. The interior is as lovely as the exterior, with a wide stairway in an airy foyer, oak fluted columns in the center of a large living room and a newly renovated dining room, kitchen and bath. Upstairs, a sleeping porch has been repurposed into a sun-filled primary bedroom. The beauty is in the details of this elegant home.



414 WASHINGTON S.E.

HOSTS: KATIE & CULLEN KRONEMEYER



Tucked away behind a graceful evergreen is a gem of a house that has been a labor of love for the most recent owners who have put their heart and soul and artistic efforts into the extensive renovation of their home. This Gothic Cottage was built in 1878, reportedly from parts left over from the large home to the west

for that owner's daughter. The steeply-pitched, gabled roofline, the decorative trim and the unusually tall, narrow windows give the detailed facade a vertical feel. The interior contains all kinds of

surprises, with interesting nooks, faceted ceilings, a raised kitchen, back-to-back fireplaces, a sunporch and pinecone-adorned window latches. The windows fill the home with light. The owners have tried to maintain the original “bones” of the house whenever possible while being creatively modern in the decor.

26 UNION S.E. | HOSTS: ANDREA AND DAVE NEMES

Built in 1870, this Neoclassical Style beauty arguably is the oldest and grandest home on tour this year. The symmetrical facade has a central porch supported by stately columns with a steep gable above whose angles are echoed in the first story window trim. Arched domes with decorative pediments over the upper story windows and the rounded gable window soften the otherwise formal geometric design. The interior is just as grand, with 11 foot-high ceilings and elaborate trim. The cherry wood-encased library is extraordinary. There is a wonderful flow between the spacious rooms and the large windows allow for plenty of natural light. There is a sunporch just off of the dining room and a new deck on the other side of the house. The new kitchen is designed as much for beauty as for function. How many mudrooms have you seen that are big enough for a basketball hoop? Both of the owners are in the design industry and the harmonious blend of historic architecture and modern design elements make for a perfect family home.



17 & 25 LAFAYETTE S.E. | HOSTS: REDSTONE PROPERTIES



If you have ever wondered what apartment living might be like in Heritage Hill, these two examples will give you a taste of the finest! Fortunately, the owners of both apartment buildings over the years

have taken care to preserve as much of the original character as possible. The apartment on tour at 17 Lafayette, an 1875 Italianate Style home, is one of 18 that now occupy what was built as two separate living areas for the two sons of Martin L. Sweet. His home was right next door on Fulton and, at one time, a tunnel connected the two buildings. A stairway separates what were the two distinct “homes within a home”. The foyer has high ceilings, ornate woodwork and oak floors. The apartment has original French doors, narrow plank wood flooring, a fireplace, large closets and the bathroom has original fixtures and tile. A kitchen and laundry space have been added.



The apartment at 25 Lafayette is stunning! It is one of nine in this

building. Every detail of this Eastlake Style home, built in 1896, displays the height of craftsmanship. There is French tile in the vestibule that opens to a foyer with a parquet floor and a hand-carved stairway. The woodwork is decorated with intricately carved floral designs in the foyer and in the apartment. Huge cherry wood doors lead to this first floor, 3-room apartment (which was most likely a parlor) with a sculptured tile fireplace, a dining room featuring a built-in corner hutch, and a smaller, simpler room in the back. Elegant cherry doors and windows with elaborate moldings reach almost to the top of the eleven foot-high ceilings. There are light oak floors throughout. Perhaps the most striking feature is the colorful nature-themed stained glass windows with birds, animals and floral motifs etched into the glass.

48 LAFAYETTE SE | HOST: CORNERSTONE CHURCH



This imposing brick and limestone Greek Revival edifice was built in 1904 for a congregation of Christian Scientists and was purchased by the United Methodist Church in 2013. As the church’s needs have changed, the facility has been sensitively expanded and adapted to meet those

needs, always with the historic significance of the building in mind. Architectural elements that were removed from one area found a creative application in another. A recent addition blends seamlessly with the original structure. After climbing the steps past the towering columns at the front of the church and passing through the vestibule that still has the original tile, guests enter the “Gathering Hub” – an inviting meeting place with a cafe. Two original reading rooms are located here with fireplaces and leaded glass windows. The Worship Center is the heart of the church with a magnificent stained glass sunburst dome set into a vaulted ceiling. A substantial section of the building is devoted to the children’s and youth programming with a large area for the little ones and a new addition dedicated to teens. Creative design and fun colors make these welcoming and inspiring spaces.

**450 MADISON AVE SE/ MEYER MAY HOUSE
HOST: STEELCASE CORPORATION**

Among the jewels of Heritage Hill is this meticulously restored Prairie Style home, built by famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright in 1908 for a wealthy clothier. Wright designed his buildings to blend into the landscape with low, extending roofs, horizontal brick patterns, long rows of windows and the use of natural materials. A tucked away entry opens to rooms filled with the glow of nature-inspired stained glass windows and beautiful oak woodwork. Every detail was carefully planned by Wright himself, including the furniture, the lighting fixtures, the rugs and even the dishes. The interior colors were drawn from the earth,



with soft golds, oranges, greens and browns used in the windows, paint colors, fabrics and in the poppy-themed mural on the central wall by the dining room. From the living room with fireplace tile that glows in the sunlight, to the dining room that enfolds its guests in an intimate cocoon to the private family rooms with unique design elements in each, every room is an awe-inspiring visual delight.



248 MORRIS AVE. SE | Hosts: Elizabeth and Eric Hoonhorst

Impressive stonework seems to reach out from the earth to enfold the first story of this 1890s intriguing variation of a Shingle Style house. An off-set front porch with a bay window is nestled under a prominent gambrel-roofed extension that displays a detailed, arched and bracketed bay. A half-moon, stained-glass window sits at the base of a steeply-peaked tower. Delicately-carved brackets on the porch, another bay on the south side, leaded windows and a small back porch add to the character of the exterior. A parquet floor, extraordinary, quarter-sawn, beaded oak woodwork on a winding stairway and intricate hardware greet you in the foyer. Pocket doors separate the rooms – a lovely parlor with a stained-glass and a bay window, a generous living room with music area, a fireplace and a sunlit sitting space, a dining room with unusual circle-patterned, leaded windows and a remodeled kitchen. The stair landing has a cozy window seat in a delightful bay window with floral stained-glass. There are six upstairs bedrooms including a primary with an attached sunporch filled with sunshine and plants.

THE CASTLE / 455 CHERRY ST. SE | Host: Stonecastle Dentistry

Built in 1884-1888 by two bachelor brothers, Ethelbert Crofton Fox and Charles Fox, this Chateau Style masterpiece has always been a landmark in Heritage Hill. Designed by prominent local architect, William G. Robinson, the home is made of rusticated granite imported from Scotland with towers, bays, galleries, gables, arched and Palladian windows as well as numerous examples of leaded and stained glass. The oriel, two-story bay window on the west side is made of metal but tooled and painted to perfectly match the natural stone. The home has had many uses over the years: from a boarding house to an exclusive restaurant to its current use as dentist offices. The tour will include



much of the first and second floors. The interior is breathtaking with a parquet floor in the entrance, and magnificent woodwork and fireplaces in every room. Many of the original gas / electric light fixtures and chandeliers have been preserved. A graceful Art-Deco figure will light your way up one of the most amazing stairways you will ever see – the centerpiece of the home. The Fox brothers were kings of the lumber, banking and railroad worlds and they built a castle to prove it!

*Heartfelt Thanks to our 2023 Heritage Hill Weekend
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Annual Heritage Hill Yard Sales Day

Saturday, June 3, 2023

***It's time!
Host your sale and join neighbors
throughout Heritage Hill!***



Would you like to host a yard sale? – Email or call the Association office at heritage@heritagehillweb.org or 616-459-8950 with the address of your sale. We'll put a list together and post it on our web site and social media. Please let us know by Friday, May 31 for inclusion on the list.

For best results, advertise your sale on your own social media and with free-standing signs in the neighborhood. HHA will publish a 9AM to 3PM time period as general guidance; however, individuals may start and end at the times of their choosing. ***Remember to please take down your signs after the sale!***

What you don't get rid of, please consider donating to various charities and recycling or upcycling options. If all else fails, mark your calendar for the neighborhood-wide "Dumpster Day" on September 30. The city will provide neighbors free access to dumpsters hosted in Cornerstone Church parking lot. Details coming later.



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2:00pm - 5:30pm

Sunday, May 21

12:30 - 5:30pm



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Energy Efficiency in Heritage Hill

Contributed by: Nate Rauh-Bieri, College Ave. NE

Your Heritage Hill home can become more comfortable, cost-effective, and climate-friendly at the same time. How?

Two main ways: 1) energy efficiency, and 2) electrification.

Let's start with efficiency. Increasing your residence's energy efficiency is among the most effective ways to improve your household's quality of life while also reducing its carbon footprint.

Here's why: the cheapest, cleanest energy in the world is the energy you don't use in the first place. Increasing efficiency makes an especially big

difference for households whose budgets have been strained by recent energy price increases, and in older homes built before modern efficiency standards.

How can your residence become more efficient? Replacing windows and doors may seem like obvious places to start, but according to the pros at GreenHome Institute (a wonderful local resource), these usually fall a few places down the priority list. Moreover, in Heritage Hill such projects require special approval.

Insulating and sealing leaks are better places to start, in many cases. Sealing

can be done through noticing drafts and patching them with inexpensive materials.

Professional insulation is both more effective and more expensive. The good news is, sizable incentives are available to make such projects more affordable, with more on the way.

The Inflation Reduction Act—the 2022 federal clean energy bill—pays up to \$150 for a home energy audit to assess your home's energy use. It also offers up to \$1,200 annually for energy-efficiency home improvements. And a large rebate program is forthcoming for households that reduce their home's overall energy use.

You can take steps now to prepare. Usually, the best place to start is with a professional home energy audit, ideally with a blower door test. You can see where you're losing energy. And it will set you up to gain the most cost savings from future efficiency projects and rebate programs. (Again, you can get \$150 off.)

Of course, not every household can afford the investments required to prioritize efficiency. Households facing financial hardship can apply for the state's MI-HOPE program—early is best—for efficiency assistance.

A good overall resource is the Department of Energy's: <https://www.energy.gov/policy/articles/making-our-homes-more-efficient-clean-energy-tax-credits-consumers>.

A second way to cost-effectively improve your home's comfort while reducing climate pollution is to electrify your appliances. When it's time to replace an appliance, choose an efficient electric option—which can be powered sooner or later by clean energy—rather than a gas one, which cannot, and is subject to price swings and can leak pollution into your home. Heat pumps, heat pump water heaters and dryers, and induction stoves have all gotten extremely good. Here too, there are major incentives available, especially for lower-income

(Cont'd on page 10)

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Energy Efficiency

(Cont'd from page 9)

households. See what's available at the DoE site above, or rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator.

Making your home more energy efficient and swapping in electric appliances has never been more important or cost-beneficial.

If you'd like to discuss these topics, or join me on a Heritage Hill working group on energy use and/or environmental stewardship, please contact the HHA office for details. heritage@heritagehillweb.org or 616-459-8950

Nate Rauh-Bieri



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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 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.

2023 DATES TO REMEMBER

All Heritage Hill Association Meetings are open to neighbors.

May Board Meeting
Canceled due to its proximity to Home Tour

Wednesday, June 7, July 5*, August 2, 5-7pm
 Heritage Hill First Wednesdays
Happy Hour
The Commons
 @ The Oakwood, 547 Cherry St. SE
 *Please contact the restaurant to confirm holiday week's operating hours

Saturday, June 3, 11:30am – 4pm
 Versiti Blood Drive
 The Leonard at Logan House
 440 Logan St. SE

Saturday, June 10 (rain date June 17) at dusk
 South Hill & Heritage Hill
 Movie Night at Pleasant Park ~ "Encanto"

Monday, June 19, 2023
 Herald content deadline – July / August issue

Wednesday, June 21, 7pm
HHA Board Meeting
 Community Education
 Conference Room
 Hauenstein Center, 220 Cherry St. SE

July Board Meeting
Canceled due to vacations

July 1, 8, & 15
 Shakespeare in the Parks

Tuesday, August 1, 6pm – 8pm
 National Night Out /
 Annual Neighbor Picnic
 Pleasant Park, 400 Pleasant St. SE

Annual Dates

Saturday and Sunday, May 20 & 21
Annual Weekend Tour of Homes
 Sat. 11-5 & Sun. 1-5
See page 2-5 in this issue for details

Saturday, June 3, 9am – 3pm
(Individual sale times may vary)
 Annual Heritage Hill Yard Sales Day
www.heritagehillweb.org for sale addresses

Saturday, June 17, 2023, 9am – 3pm
 Heritage Hill Garden Tour
See page 13 in this issue for details



THE HERITAGE HILL GARDEN TOUR BLOOMS AGAIN!

SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2023 9 AM- 3 PM

The scent of roses, winding flowered paths, bursts of early summer blooms, what could be more inspiring than a peaceful stroll through some of the most beautiful gardens in Heritage Hill? A ticket or two would make a thoughtful Mother's Day present or could be a delightful way to gather with friends for a shared adventure.

Tickets are only \$12 in advance or \$15 on the day of the tour.

For ticket information please contact the HHA office at heritage@heritagehillweb.org or (616) 459-8950. Or follow our Facebook and Instagram or go to our website www.heritagehillweb.org for tickets and details.

If your garden is unique, charming, creative, quirky or a labor of love that you would like to share, **we are still**

looking for a few gardens for the tour. Other than being at your home to answer questions on the day of tour, there is not much else required- just planting and preparing your garden as you usually do. There is a fun "garden crawl" the night before with treats and wine, so that all of the garden hosts can see each other's growing works of art.

Besides the joy of watching people love your garden as much as you do, garden hosts **will also receive 6 free tickets** to share with family and friends -- a thank you gift and the eternal gratitude of the Heritage Hill Association.

If your business is interested in **sponsoring** the Garden Tour, please contact the office for further information. You will receive free tickets and recognition in the tour



booklet, on our website, and in an upcoming issue of the Heritage Herald.


Tour occurs rain or shine. Tickets are non-refundable.



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THE ART IS IN THE DETAILS

Let's go (Block) Clubbing

Laska here, and I'm going to start a Block Club. It's not something I've ever done before, and I'm sure that there will be bumps in the road, but I'm looking forward to it. And I'm going to take you with me as I go long, updating you on progress (and

will inform and, maybe, inspire.

I've had a little block club experience. When we lived in East St Paul, Minnesota, for twelve years before moving to Heritage Hill in 2019, we had a close-knit block. There was a Fourth of July picnic and parade of kids every summer. Most winters,

there was a progressive dinner where we trudged through -40 degree windchills to have hors d'oeuvres at one house, soup at the next, and dessert and hot beverages at the last. Throughout the year, all the parents at home during the day helped herd - and corral - the pack of kids we were spawning. Some neighbors kept more private, but overall we looked out for one another. There was nothing formal, though Diane was our unofficial "Captain", because she kept a list of who lived where and had the only yard big enough for a large picnic.

It seems there is no one right way to have a block club, based on what I've read and people I've spoken to. No doubt, each has its own personality, distilled out of varied elements. There's the city and larger neighborhood, the economic environment, the variety of home types and styles, the history of what has come before and all the personal history that each resident brings, their interests and concerns. But something most block clubs have in common is a lot of potential benefits for member neighbors. Once a club is started, it is easier for all of this to happen:

- socializing with neighbors (a personal favorite)
- working together for community changes
- sharing information about local issues and meeting with local officials
- ensuring your block has a voice
- organizing block cleanups and events
- identifying and taking turns checking up on vulnerable neighbors
- exchanging child care or finding babysitters
- sharing things - like rakes or snow shovels - and services - like raking or painting
- addressing safety concerns
- keeping in communication about all of the above
- becoming a conduit for information from your friendly Neighborhood Association ☺

My 'block' in Heritage Hill is actually

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the two sides of Madison Avenue SE, between Cherry and Wealthy. From neighbors, I know there once was an active block club before, and we'll see what we build next. What I'm thinking of now is *getting started: starting* to connect with neighbors, *starting* to get us a little organized, *starting* to find out what we would like to do together, what a block club could be for us. In conjunction with this, I'm going to write about it for you in this hardcopy 'blog' of sorts. And, I'll be creating a 'block club kit' for Heritage Hill neighbors. It will include something like a handbook, but nothing prescriptive – more a collection of information, insights, ideas and possible practices. And we will have sample resources – from a sample meeting agenda to a sample list of roles – that neighbors can refer to in setting up a club, and so on.

As this begins, I'd love to hear from you. What are your thoughts about block clubs? Do you have one now (I know some of you do!)? What would be your ideal? And a big thing we'll work on here at Heritage Hill Association is, *how can we help you get there?* Reach out at: laska@heritagehillweb.org, or 616-459-8950.

Thanks for reading and, until next time, thanks in advance for being a good neighbor!

Safety Corner **Eliminating Hiding Places**

As spring springs, keep in mind Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Trees, shrubs and structures around our homes add beauty but can also provide a handy hiding place for trouble. Trees and plants close to your home should be maintained so that they cannot be used for cover. In landscaping, you may want to opt for smaller flowers and bushes. If you have trees near windows, consider removing the tree or removing lower branches, or taking extra steps to secure the windows or even planting shrubs of the thornier type. Also, to avoid attracting thieves, keep possessions such as ladders and tools

stored away. Lock gates, sheds and garages. Avoid keeping pricey items on display in your yard. And consider posting security signs and stickers – even if you don't have a system – to dissuade intruders. Please chime

in and let us know if you take any of these steps! Contact us as well if you would like a free Home Security Assessment based on CPTED so that we can help you with solutions.

(Cont'd on page 17)



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SAVE THE DATES SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK(S)

Shakespeare Returns to Heritage Hill

Heritage Hill Association is planning more Shakespeare in our parks this summer. We are working to secure the Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company again to perform various condensed Shakespeare pieces at no cost to attendees on July 1, 8, and 15. Visit our Facebook, Instagram, or web pages for details as they develop.

Whether you're considering Buying or Selling, let me open some doors for you!



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JULY 1, 8, & 15

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A Pleasant Movie is scheduled for
June 10 at Pleasant Park!

ENCANTO

Who: **Anyone** is welcome to join South Hill Neighborhood Association and Heritage Hill Association neighbors for this community screening event.

When: **June 10 (rain date, June 17) from 8:00pm-11:30pm**

What: **Food trucks** and information tables followed by the movie

The crowd-favorite animated film, **Encanto**, will start at dusk. Spread out your blanket, eat some delicious food picnic-style, and stay to watch the movie as the sun sets.

Food trucks include **Kona Ice, Let's Taco Bout It, & Haggerty's**.

Parking is limited, so Mobile GR is reminding us to walk, bike, take the Rapid, carpool or ride scooters. Rain date is June 17.

If you represent a business or non-profit and would like to have a free table at this event, please contact Katy: southhillneighborassoc@gmail.com. More details can be found www.southhillgr.com.

Many thanks to the City of Grand Rapids Office of Special Events and Mobile GR for a grant supporting this event.

Neighborhood Potpourri

Car Thefts Continue

Car thefts continue in the city, particularly of Kias and Hyundais. A limited number of steering wheel locks may be available for Kia and Hyundai owners. Contact us if you are interested.

Unwelcome Visitors

We have reports of individuals going onto neighbors' property to look into garbage and recycling bins. If you know they do not have permission from the property owner, you can remind them that they are not permitted in a yard that is not theirs, and that you recommend they leave before police are contacted, and not return. To report an incident, you can call the GRPD non-emergency line at 616-456-3400.



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1st Quarter 2023 Heritage Hill Market Snapshot:



Average Sold Price - \$379,878

- Average price/square foot: \$274



Number of Homes & Condos Sold - 9



Average Days on the Market - 22

Statistics reflect 1/1/23-4/6/23 Heritage Hill Single Family Homes and Condos



For Illustrative Purposes Only



Would you like to make improvements to your home, but don't know which ones will have the most impact?

With the annual Tour of Homes this May, it's easy to dream about the improvements you want to make to your own home!

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I've compiled the following list to help you get the most out of your investment.**



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Project	Average Cost	Cost Recouped
Garage Door Replacement	\$4,051	89.0%
Minor Kitchen Remodel	\$27,527	69.0%
Roof Replacement	\$28,983	57.0%
Bath Remodel (mid-range)	\$24,968	54.4%

Before starting any home projects in Heritage Hill please visit the "Historic Preservation" link on the Heritage Hill website.

**2022 Grand Rapids Average Costs

Thinking about selling your home? Contact me to find out the best projects for a quick and profitable sale.



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Board Notes

Discussion at the February 2023 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Public Comment: Alex Smart, Executive Director of Facilities and Operations at GRPS, introduced himself and left business cards. Inquiries were made concerning possible meeting space for board meetings and survey listening sessions as well as progress on the Central High School renovation project.

Treasurer's Report: Budget adjustments were to be discussed in the closed session at the end of the meeting.

Committee Reports: Administrative:

Neighborhood survey: Executive Committee members and staff met to discuss follow-up steps and scheduling listening sessions.

Carolyn F. asked for input for block club kits. Reminder of the City Master Planning process and engagement, including neighbor round-table events. Carolyn F. distributed City Master Planning launch party flyers.

Office relocation discussions: staff and board will be looking at two temporary spaces later in the month that might be coming available in the spring/summer. Members suggested the long-term goal is to have space that can be used for community meetings/events. Rich A. suggested tabling discussion of long-term needs and concentrate on moving into a space more immediately accessible to neighbors.

Fundraising: Home Tour: 5 homes, 2 commercial spaces (Meyer May House and Cornerstone Church) have been secured; looking for one more single-family home. There will be a drawing for volunteers (grand prize = two nights at the Parsonage Inn B&B, recruiting other prizes). Food trucks will be added to the event, likely on or near State St. Suzanne D. distributed House Captain sign up forms.

Community Engagement: Considering art show/marketplace at Pleasant Park in future pending volunteer and/or financial support to make it happen. Moving forward with theater performances (Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Co) at one or more of HH parks this summer and a movie night at Pleasant Park in June with the South Hill neighborhood.

Land Use: Wayne N. attended HPC meeting on 1/17/23 regarding 300 Wealthy, a.k.a., "Townhomes of Heritage Hill" where a letter of endorsement from HHA was read at meeting. Developer to have updated drawings by end of February. Committee will meet to discuss HHA master plan (not to be confused with city of GR master plan). Pertaining to street lighting on Morris SE - neighbors find LED lights recently installed to be disruptive and intrusive. Wayne spoke to "Alex" at Energy, Lighting, and Communications at the city to push for standardization of lighting in historic districts. Lastly, Wayne noted that a memorial service for (former Land Use Chair) Craig Nobbelin will be in April at Fountain St. Church and that the family has directed donations to the HHA.

Staff Reports: written reports were submitted. Staff and several members attended affordable housing meeting hosted by Dwelling Place.

Old Business/New Business: Abi L. presented final drafts of new logo(s). Refurbishment of Historic Marker Signs: HHA was not awarded grant of \$5,000 for 10 signs. Jeremy offered to explore any in-kind donation to refurbish the signs.

Directors/Officer/Trustee Liability Insurance - \$450 per year - moved to purchase, carried unanimously.

Liz H. Requested info about safety measures pertaining to lead paint be run in an upcoming Herald.

Closed Session: Motion to appoint new board member Matthew S. carried unanimously.

Board vacancy appointment (Matthew Smith) - move (Rich), 2nd (Carolyn), carried unanimously

Budget adjustments in relation to staffing and new bookkeeper carried unanimously.

Discussion at the March 2023 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:

Public Comment: Madison SE neighbor reported that the storm drains are clogged with tree roots. Staff suggested that they reach out to 311.

Committee Reports: Administrative: New prospective office space tour will be videoed for those who cannot attend.

Fundraising / Home Tour: Suzanne D. reported that volunteers' names will

be put in a drawing for various prizes for those who complete their shift. The steering committee continues to seek that final home for the tour. Liz H. and Jeremy C. asked what the criteria is to be on tour and wondered if their homes could be considered. Suzanne D. made herself available to talk to them after the meeting. Discussion included the importance of the tour to HHA's budget and suggested further discussions about diversifying our revenue stream in future years.

Community Engagement: Shakespeare in the Park: Three performances are tentatively planned for July 1, 8, and 15, 2023. Movie in Pleasant Park with South Hill Neighborhood is scheduled for June 10 (June 17 rain date).

Discussion included what other events the committee might pursue in future.

Land Use:

The committee will welcome a new neighbor-member, Rowan Brady, at the next meeting; the agenda will include discussion about:

- HH Master Plan (different from the city master plan)
- 300 Wealthy Development
- LED street lights
- Green space at NW Fountain and College

Staff Reports: written reports submitted.

New Business: Jeremy C. asked about creating a committee for new website design; three other board members volunteered to participate.

The board unanimously expressed gratitude to exiting board member Wendy Falb for her years of service and leadership and wished her well as she moves out of the neighborhood and away from board service.

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)

Heritage Hill Association

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