



HSNA NEWS

Highland Square Neighborhood Association
www.highlandsquare.org

New HSNA Board Elected

The Highland Square Neighborhood Association (HSNA) recently elected its new Board of Officers and Members for 2008.

The following were nominated and elected as HSNA Board Members at a public meeting on March 12: Geri Ashby, Lisa Bostwick, J.T. Buck, Chuck Collins, Linda Henretta, Nina Hollister, Kay Kelly, Jim King, Jeremy Koosed, Tomie Netting, David Purcell, Rosemary Reymann, Michael Russell, Mark Smith, and Effie Stewart.

The following Board Members were nominated and elected to executive office by the Board on April 8: Michael Russell and Chuck Collins, Co-Presidents; Tomie Netting, Vice President; Kay Kelly, Treasurer; Amy Purcell, Secretary; and Rosemary Reymann, Meeting Coordinator.

A co-president relationship was established to ensure that Board responsibilities could be

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

TUES, AUGUST 5, 6:30 P.M.

HIGHLAND SQUARE LIBRARY

Special Guests from the Cleveland
Restoration Society!

See page 2 for details!

managed effectively and efficiently. Michael Russell and Chuck Collins have been residents of Highland Square for several years. Mr. Russell also serves on the Board of the Better Akron Recreation for Canines (BARC) Citizens Committee.

"We are pleased that the new board has been established, and look forward to serving the neighborhood," said Michael Russell. "The board will look for ways to collaborate with the city and with other organizations to make Highland Square an economically vibrant, attractive, diverse, and safe neighborhood for residents."

Welcome From The Co-President – Chuck Collins

I look forward to working with the people of Highland Square, and continuing our passion to make this a great neighborhood and the shining jewel of Akron.

I am enthusiastic about developing a positive relationship with your city and council members while standing firm on our ideas that we believe will embrace our vision for this area.

It's a brand new day and we have a new board that is committed to making a difference in our neighborhood.

I hope that the people of Highland Square will "get involved" and come join us in celebrating the diversity and creativity that make this community so special.

Want To Make This Old House New Again? Let the Cleveland Restoration Society Help! Learn More on August 5!

If you're considering rehabbing your Highland Square home, the Cleveland Restoration Society wants to help make it easier. Join representatives from the Cleveland Restoration Society (CRS) at the Highland Square Library on August 5, 6:30 p.m., to learn about the Heritage Home Program and the benefits of historic preservation.

Kerrington Adams, Senior Historic Preservation Specialist, and Breanna Boulton, Historic Preservation Specialist who is rehabbing her home on West Hill, will explain the CRS programs offered in Summit County.

The Heritage Home Program, in partnership with KeyBank, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency, and the City of Akron, offers assistance in historic areas within the city of Akron. The program provides assistance for owners of older and historic homes (built 1955 or earlier) through low-interest financing and free technical advice.

Homeowners can use a 3.5% fixed rate, ten-year rehab loan to fund a large variety of home maintenance and improvement projects. Non-owner occupied properties up to three-family units are eligible as well. Projects range from new roofs, painting, landscaping, porch repair, additions, window repair, driveways, storm windows, kitchen and bath renovations, and much more. KeyBank is the lender for the program. There are no out-of-pocket costs, no closing costs, and no points.

Our CRS representatives will show us how to take advantage of this low-interest loan, with free historic preservation consultation.

Please join the Highland Square Neighborhood Association and our guest speakers from the Cleveland Restoration Society for an informative evening that will help us continue to preserve the beautiful, historic homes in our area.

Did You Know...

...You live among many historic buildings! Highland Square has several properties on the National Register of Historic Places!

- Glendale Cemetery and Hall Park Allotment (historic district)
- Edward P. Werner House, Wells Merriman House, Barder House, Charles Sieberling House, Stacy Carkhuff House – all on West Market Street!
- Westmont Building on Rhodes Avenue
- Dr. Bob Smith House on Ardmore Avenue

Grocery About More Than Convenience in Urban Neighborhoods

There was a time in the not-so-distant past when the corner market was the epicenter of the community - a place where residents could shop, visit with friends, catch up on the latest neighborhood news, and support the local business operator who very likely lived just a few blocks away.

While it may seem an idyllic rendering of the past, this present-day scenario is revitalizing urban neighborhoods around the country. Independently-owned grocers in cities from Madison, WI to Burlington, VT are offering improved food choices, increased livability, and more business opportunities for residents. Akron, OH could rise among the ranks of these cities should a grocer make its new home in Highland Square on West Market Street.

A market on Market Street is not so ironic given the neighborhood's history of having a grocer operate in the area for several years. A grocer would also be a key anchor in maintaining this area's economic viability and walkability, a new measure of success for urban neighborhoods.

"Residents, especially the elderly, deserve easy access to healthy food options," said Tomie Netting, new Vice President of the Highland Square Neighborhood Association and owner of Highland Hair on Jefferson. "Finding healthy alternatives at Walgreens or finding transportation to other nearby grocers is virtually impossible for some of our residents. As a community and a city, what does it say when we are not supporting those in our community who need us most?"

The City of Akron could take a lesson from the Jenifer Street Market in Madison, Wisconsin. With just under 10,000 square feet of retail space, Jenifer Street Market offers a wide variety of both organic and conventional products, including fresh produce, prepared foods, high quality meats, alcoholic

beverages, and household products. With a customer base dedicated to fulfilling their weekly (even daily) shopping needs at the Market, costs for rent, building maintenance, and staffing needs are covered. The staff believes that people support the business for several reasons: it is close to home, they do not like Big Box retailers, and they identify the store as "theirs".

Another benefit of a local grocery is the "walkability" it brings to the area. A recent article by Dom Nozzi, a certified urban planner and designer, stated that "an attractive community is walkable and an unpleasant community is unwalkable. Walkability exists when there is convenient access. The home is so close to a park, a grocery store, a movie theatre, places of work, nightlife and civic institutions that it is an easy, short walk to nearly all of life's daily destinations."

Highland Square has the theater, places of work, nightlife and civic institutions within walking distance but the missing link continues to be convenient access to a grocer, thus reducing its walkability score.

Walkability is about much more than convenience. It's also about safety, something on the minds of many Highland Square residents. With walkability comes increased citizen surveillance, as larger numbers of pedestrians on sidewalks increases the "eyes-on-the-street" phenomenon, which can significantly increase public safety.

From business, economic, safety, and health perspectives, a grocer in Highland Square makes sense. A market on Market Street is the best option for Highland Square residents as well as the City of Akron.

Urge our City representatives to bring a grocer to Highland Square! (See contacts on page 4.)

Take Action – Let City Leaders Hear From You About The Grocery

By Michael Russell - Co-President

If we build it, will they come? That continues to be the important question for Highland Square.

What our city officials and local developers miss is that “they” are already here. Highland Square is a walking and biking neighborhood with a younger demographic than any other area of the city. We want to keep a walking neighborhood. The south side of Market is still under threat. Rumors continue to circulate that the city and developers want to remove the historic Highland Theater and adjoining buildings to develop a high-end strip mall and continue the gentrification of the area. The problem with rumors is that they are hearsay, and impossible to confirm.

Highland Square residents continue to wait for progress on the north side of West Market Street. To date, there is no new grocery and no significant update from the city. On the south side, businesses are at least sustained, if not thriving.

On the south side, businesses are at least sustained, if not thriving. You moved into Highland Square for variety of reasons and you continue to live here for a variety of reasons, which may include the convenient stores located on the south side of Market Street.

According to the City of Akron’s 2008 budget, our Mayor and Council have secured over \$71 million for Goodyear, \$11 million for Infocision, 2 million for FirstEnergy, and \$22 million for the non-neighborhood of Downtown. But the City has been unable to find money to assist in the development of a grocer for the Square, or the less than \$1 million price tag to secure preserve the Square. This despite the ongoing efforts of concerned locals who have provided a complete business plan for a community center run from the Theater.

The Mayor has been quoted as saying that “citizens need to put up cash if they want to have a say in city

development. What he and other city officials seem to forget is that we have. Our investment deserves as much respect as the investment of any developer. As a group, our investment is more. Unfortunately, many of our fellow investors have been choosing to abandon their investments.

If you care about the Square, please write or call the parties listed below. Let them know that you want the south side of Market Street preserved and improved as is. Let them know that you want a time-out from further development plans until the north side of the street is filled and the agreement regarding our much-needed corner grocery is completed. Let them know that the citizens of Highland Square are still paying attention.

Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic
Suite 200 Municipal Building
166 South High Street
Akron, Ohio 44308
330-375-2345 (voice)
330-375-2468 (fax)

Akron City Council
166 S. High St., 3rd Fl.
Akron, OH 44308
Phone: (330) 375-2256
Fax: (330) 375-2298

Ward 1 City Council member, Jim Hurley
ward1@ci.akron.oh.us

Ward 4 City Council member, Renee Greene
ward4@ci.akron.oh.us

Ward 8 City Council member, Bob Keith
ward8@ci.akron.oh.us

HSNA Community Outreach Program

Do you have a neighbor who could use assistance around the yard or is in need of light home repairs? The Highland Square Neighborhood Association would like to “adopt” a person in need this summer to assist them with tasks they could otherwise not complete. Applications will be accepted through August 30 and reviewed by the Board. The person will be selected and announced at the July meeting. Outreach to this person will occur in a single day and is limited to volunteer time and efforts by Board Members.

If you know someone in need of assistance, complete the application and mail to:
HSNA Community Outreach Program
960 Jefferson
Akron, OH 44302

Or, email chasband@yahoo.com

Your Name _____ Phone _____

Please provide the following information for the person you would like the HSNA Outreach Program to consider:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (optional) _____

Please provide a brief description of the person who is in need of assistance:

Please provide in detail what this person’s needs are (i.e. mow lawn and clean yard, paint garage etc.) and what the HSNA can do to help:

Please circle what day of the week would be preferable for this person to receive help:

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

Highland Square Neighborhood
Association Board Members

Co-Presidents
Chuck Collins and Mike Russell

Vice President
Tomie Netting

Secretary
Amy Purcell

Treasurer
Kay Kelly

**Preservation/Meeting
Coordinator**
Rosemary Reymann

Website/Communications
David Purcell

Urban Development
Jeremy Koosed

Senior Outreach
Nina Hollister

Arts Events
Geri Ashby

General Assistance
Lisa Bostwick
Mark Smith

Bring Bike Lanes to Akron

The ability to commute safely by bicycle is a high priority for Akronites on-the-go. The City of Akron is working with Keep Akron Beautiful and the University Park Alliance to install bike lanes downtown.

AMATS, our transportation planners that administer funds from the Federal Highway Administration, has made completing the Towpath trail their most pressing bike project.

Unfortunately, bike lanes on city streets have been left out of the AMATS plan. The need for bike lanes that connect the neighborhoods with downtown has been demonstrated by petitions submitted by GAPS, Greater Akron Partnership for Sustainability.

Allies in Columbus are propelling multi-modal transportation on many fronts. The Strickland administration and ODOT support the development of bike lanes in the State. AMATS and Akron City Council need to hear from us.

Please write or email our City Council Members and AMATS to secure safe bike lanes for the City.

AMATS Suite 806 CitiCenter
146 South High Street
Akron, OH 44308-1423
(330) 375-2436 (Phone)
(330) 375-2275 (Fax)
AMATS@ci.akron.oh.us

Ward 1 City Council member, Jim Hurley: ward1@ci.akron.oh.us

Ward 4 City Council member, Renee Greene:
ward4@ci.akron.oh.us

Ward 8 City Council member, Bob Keith: ward8@ci.akron.oh.us

SAVE THE DATE - UPCOMING HSNA MEETINGS!

- August 5 HSNA General Meeting, Highland Square Library
 – Cleveland Restoration Society to explain Heritage Home Program and more!
- September 2 HSNA General Meeting, Highland Square Library