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# ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

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May 2017

## President's Message

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So what are you doing on Tuesday evening?

The May meeting of the Allegheny West Civic Council (**Tuesday, May 9 at 7:30 P.M., in the Calvary Church**) is packed with exciting new developments for our community—including FIVE new proposals for businesses and residences on Western Avenue!

There is great serendipity in the timing of these new developments for the center of our neighborhood—coming as they do exactly 55 years ( to the month! ) after the founding of the Allegheny West Civic Council in May 1962. All five of these new plans come to our May Membership meeting with a positive endorsement from the AW Housing & Planning Committee. They include the dramatic transformation of a former problem bar, the rehabilitation of a property neglected for decades, and our first new construction of single family houses in more than a quarter century. AND those new houses will rise from currently vacant lots, in an attempt to replicate the appearance of the original houses on that site —demolished more than forty years ago!

This flurry of great new vitality for our neighborhood would undoubtedly have been beyond dreaming to the dozen long-ago residents who gathered on May 24, 1962 in the Community House of Calvary Church. Their goal was to find a way to shape and direct the fate of their tiny community, faced with grand plans by powerful outsiders for transforming all of the “lower Northside” into a cloned suburban utopia. The plan that was formed that night in 1962 was recorded as a single sentence: “Don’t sit back and complain — joint collective action gets results.”

Across the many years since that proclamation, those folks—and the hundreds who have succeeded them—have taken that mantra to heart. The people of Allegheny West have worked long and hard together to determine what we want for our part of Pittsburgh, as well as what we don’t want. We have articulated that vision to others persuasively, ceaselessly laboring to attract new companions who would embrace the challenge and become part of its realization. We have aggressively (and successfully) supported those new recruits in their efforts, even as we have aggressively (and successfully) opposed those whose efforts were contrary to our cause.

It is true that Allegheny West has a reputation for being tough. That attitude was born in 1955, when a handful of our predecessors resolved to protect and forge their own community in the face of overwhelming odds. That couldn’t happen without a willingness to take a responsible position and then stand your ground. Even more fundamental was their core belief that this neighborhood already is a great place to live and work and play. And for those who would diminish or jeopardize this place, they learned how to say “NO”—to government officials, institutions, developers, speculator, and all manner of interlopers. The fruits of this unwavering conviction, and the courage to defend it, could not be more clearly visible than in these new development proposals being unveiled at our May 2017 Membership meeting this Tuesday.

Why would we spend endless energy and dollars fighting the abuses of a problem bar? The answer is on Tuesday night’s agenda.

*(Continued on next page.)*

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Why would we buy and hold vacant land for forty years, rejecting proposals for gravel parking lots and storage yards? The answer is on Tuesday night's agenda. Why would we spend many millions of dollars and many years of volunteer lives saving and restoring derelict and burned-out buildings, again and again? Well you get the idea... Please join us on Tuesday May 9 at 7:30. It isn't often that you get to witness a victory 55 years in the making.

- John DeSantis, AWCC President

## Allegheny West Wine & Garden Tour, 2017

We're still seeking neighbors to help house-sit, run supplies, or help with food for this year's Wine and Garden Tour. The tour will be held **Friday, June 2nd, from 5:00–9:00 P.M.** and **Saturday, June 3rd, from 1:00– 5:00 P.M.** and **5:00– 9:00 P.M.** Contact Carol Gomrick at [carolgomrick@gmail.com](mailto:carolgomrick@gmail.com) if you are able to help.

## Neighborhood History Website Updates



*The Neighborhood History section of [alleghenywest.org](http://alleghenywest.org) has expanded!*

As part of the 55th Anniversary of our little corner of Pittsburgh, we have been curating an informative resource on our website that aims to paint a picture of life here over the years. We have more historic home information (23 and counting thanks to the tireless efforts of Jim Wallace in collecting Carol Peterson histories), details on the formation of Allegheny West as a civic council and neighborhood concept and interviews with our friends and neighbors, both long-standing and new to the area.

Take a look, tell us what you think and, if you've not already done so, share your materials with us! House histories, old photos, etc can be dropped off at the council office at 806 Western Avenue or you can make arrangements for pick up by emailing [webmaster@alleghenywest.org](mailto:webmaster@alleghenywest.org).

### Neighbor of the Year:

#### Dr. Dan

Dr. Dan Strinkoski has been nominated as Allegheny West's Neighbor of the Year for his tireless efforts in cleaning up the neighborhood! He will be honored at the Northside Leadership Conference's annual Neighbor of the Year Banquet in June. Details to come.

**Congratulations Dr. Dan!**

### AWCC Calendar

**Tuesday, May 9 @ 7:30 P.M.**

General Membership → Calvary Church: 971 Beech

**Tuesday, May 16 @ 7:30 P.M.**

Housing & Planning Committee → Office: 806 Western

**Tuesday, May 23, @ 7:30 P.M.**

Executive Committee → AWCC Office: 806 Western

**Monday, May 29 @ 4:00 P.M.**

Memorial Day Block Party: Stay tuned for more info!

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## 2017 Allegheny West Preservation Awards

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The Allegheny West Local Review Committee, along with The Allegheny West Civic Council, announce the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Allegheny West Preservation Award. This award is presented to property owners in the Allegheny West Historic District who have completed projects over the past year which retain and restore appropriate elements of historic character and adhere to the neighborhood HRC Guidelines. Success was achieved by doing research, creating well thought-out plans, following neighborhood guidelines, and working with the neighborhood LRC and City HRC to seek advice.

The 2017 award recipient is **909 Western Avenue**, owner, **Sally Graubarth**.

This was an extensive restoration of both the interior and exterior, as well as the carriage house. Sally and her architect, John Francona, worked with the LRC and the HRC to make this project an example of the highest quality of historic restoration.

The exterior work included: a new storefront and door consistent with that of the original; new entrance doors to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor living space with transom and trim; new front wood, double-hung windows, including circle-top windows on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor; new stable-style, carriage-house doors; restoration of the carriage house dormers; cleaning and painting the brick and stone on the façade.

This project is a great addition to the Western Avenue streetface. It adds to the historic ambience of the street, contributes to the economic development of our neighborhood, and serves as an example of how restoration should be done.

To celebrate Preservation Month, the award will be presented at the May Civic Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 9 at Calvary Church, corner Beech and Allegheny. Everyone is invited to come and meet Sally.

## Neighborhood Cleanup

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This month's neighborhood cleanup will take place on May 20 at 9:00 A.M. Meet at the AWCC office at 806 Western Avenue. This event is BYOB - bring your own *broom*, that is! (And gardening gloves, too!) Contact Trish Burton with any questions: [tdburton3@gmail.com](mailto:tdburton3@gmail.com) or 412-523-9402. We'll see you on the 20th!

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**Reminder:** Street Sweeping May 8 and 9. Please be sure to move your car!

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### The Allegheny West Gazette

**Editor: Karen Haller Beer**

The monthly newsletter of the Allegheny West Civic Council. Letters, submissions, advertising and other notices by the first of the month to: [gazette@alleghenywest.org](mailto:gazette@alleghenywest.org). Submission does not guarantee publication.

**A publication of the Allegheny West Civic Council**

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## DRAFT Agenda: AWCC Membership Meeting

Tuesday, May 9 @ 7:30 P.M.

Calvary United Methodist Church, 971 Beech Ave

- **Visitors:** Councilwoman Harris' office  
Mayor Peduto's office  
Representative Wheatley's office  
Pittsburgh Police Zone 1  
Allegheny Commons Initiative, Update Master Plan
- New neighbors & guests
- Reading of last month's minutes
- **Treasurer's report**
- Finance Committee volunteers **STILL** being sought
- **Presentation of the Preservation Award**
- **Committee Reports**

### Membership:

- Bocce on Wednesdays
- May Mixer
- AWCC 55th Anniversary Celebration (October, 2017)

### Ways & Means:

- Wine Tour updates (June 2 & 3)
- Update on five-year Calvary Plan
- Alleys, Axles & Ales (September 23)
- Christmas Candlelight House Tour (December 8 & 9)

### Friends of Allegheny West: Green Space

### Property

### Housing & Planning:

- 901 Western - New tenant: Pgh Acupuncture & Massageworks
- 827-829 Western - Sale of land for construction of 2 new houses
- 900 Western - New business owner: plans for Benjamin's
- 917-919 Western - New property owner: plans for Shamrock/Carmi
- 907 Western - New property owner: plans for storeroom & 2 apartments

### Updates:

- Trucks through the neighborhood
- Stadium events parking and traffic issues
- Blocks bounded by Western, Allegheny, Ridge, Bridge - MCC
- Western Avenue revitalization
- Light of Life Ridge Avenue project
- Film Guidelines
- Historic District enforcement issues – old cases
- Proposal for Medical Marijuana Dispensary
- Comprehensive guidelines for new construction on vacant sites

- **Northside Leadership Conference**
- **Other business (Old & New)**

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