
ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

December, 2018

President's Message

So what are you doing on Tuesday evening? There's a lot going on in our neighborhood, and there's one way to find out what it is...

Join your neighbors on Tuesday, December 11 at 7:30 P.M. at Calvary Church, for the December meeting of the Allegheny West Civic Council. Each month this is where we make decisions about our neighborhood—decisions that in ways both small and large will affect you. And we always have a good time socializing and enjoying refreshments.

Everyone is welcome – second Tuesday of each month, 7:30 P.M., in the Calvary Church social hall, corner of Beech and Allegheny. (Use the Beech Avenue entrance.) The meeting is usually over by 9. It's also a great way for newer folks to meet your neighbors and get involved! We hope to see you on Tuesday evening!

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The coming year will bring more exciting growth in our tiny neighborhood than we've experienced in many years. Many projects that we've nurtured—including some for more than a decade—are finally ready to become everyday reality for those of us who live and work here.

Some of that change will be just plain beautiful or fun, while some will continue to require careful balancing to assure that “change for the better” stays that way. And still other growth is the harbinger of much more to come—it will be up to us to remain vigilant in assuring that what is new doesn't bring unintended consequences for the quality of life that is the core reason all of us—old and new—are here.

On Western Avenue, our “Western Renewed” makeover of the entire street has been 14 years in the making! The final element—removal of the overhead utility lines and poles—will allow installation of the remaining historic street lights along the north curb. The Civic Council created the two million dollar project, raised more than half of that money from outside sources to augment the contributions of the Western property owners, and has kept the faith across years of delay on the electrical wiring final phase.

Even before completion of the Western Renewed improvements, the dramatic new streetscape has encouraged long-time owners to make improvements of their own, while new neighbors and investment were attracted for both residences and businesses. Several of these new businesses will be opening in the months ahead, following dramatic renovations of their buildings. And the first new AW house in nearly three decades is being planned there as well, joining historic houses in both blocks which boast fresh restorations and enthusiastic new residents.

On West North Avenue, the Allegheny Stables renovation will begin construction in the spring, with completion a year later. Three dozen new apartments will transform the derelict historic building and the long-vacant lot next to it. These Stables residences are the long-awaited “first shovel in the ground” that will finally provide a catalyst for the residential makeover of the surrounding empty properties.

The Civic Council purchased and held these and other nearby parcels until a developer could be found who would fulfill our vision for the North Avenue Lofts District—a comprehensive master plan that we initiated, spent nearly a million dollars for site assembly, and have worked hard to implement. Part of that hard work has been in protecting this vision while some could see only rundown old buildings. Over the next five to eight years this whole section of the neighborhood will transition from “abandoned” to “vibrant” with as many as 150 new units of high quality housing. That’s a very real validation for our faith in this part of Allegheny West. It’s also a whole lot of new Allegheny West neighbors!

Across the years the AWCC has spent many millions of dollars “doing the projects that the private market can’t or won’t.” Western, North Lincoln, Galveston, West North, Brighton, and Allegheny all boast “bricks and mortar” projects that saved the surrounding blocks at a critical point in time. In the past decade we’ve concentrated more on facilitating such projects to be implemented by others - by initiating area plans, attracting developers, and even acquiring sites until we can find the right partner with the right intentions.

So much has been accomplished, but of course there is more to do. And we will always continue to face challenges both large and small. There are plenty of other folks with other kinds of ideas for this prime land at the very center of the entire region—always have been, always will be. We see “home” where they see “\$\$\$.” We have remained true to our vision and steadfast in defending and advancing it across six decades. The rewards are all around us every day... and the best is yet to come!

- John DeSantis, AWCC President

Mentors Wanted for Northside Students

Be a Middle School Mentor (BAMSM) is a school-based mentoring program focused on career readiness and academic achievement. They pair participating students with mentors that promote academic success and character development by: 1) offering guidance and encouragement; 2) piquing interest in career pathways; and 3) modeling positive behaviors. BAMSM mentors meet with their mentees once a week, during lunch, from October through May.

BAMSM is a program of the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania and that Communities in Schools of Pittsburgh (CIS) operates at 5 sites on the North Side of Pittsburgh, including King PreK-8 and Allegheny Traditional Academy. This year we have a wait-list of 50 students between the five sites we serve. In order to provide every interested student with their own mentor, we are reaching out to the community in an effort to recruit community members to our program. If you are interested in learning more about the program, please contact Julianna Sehy (VOLunteer and Mentor Coordinator at Communities in Schools of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County). She can be reached at 412-361-4945 / jsehy@cispac.org.



The Allegheny West Gazette: A publication of the Allegheny West Civic Council

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. Submission does not guarantee publication.

Editor: Karen Haller Beer

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DRAFT Agenda: AWCC Membership Meeting

Tuesday, December 11 @ 7:30 P.M.

Calvary United Methodist Church, 971 Beech Ave

- Visitors:
 - Councilwoman Harris' office
 - Mayor Peduto's office
 - Pittsburgh Police Zone 1
 - Representative Wheatley's Office
 - Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy -
 - Allegheny Commons
- New neighbors & guests
- Reading of previous meeting's minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Committee Reports
 - Membership*
 - Ways & Means:*
 - Christmas Candlelight House Tour, Preliminary report
 - Friends of Allegheny West*
 - Property*
 - Gutter and eave repairs for 806 Western
 - Housing & Planning:*
 - Western Avenue revitalization/electric relocations
 - Proposed sale of Western Avenue lot for house construction
 - CCAC new building, Ridge at Brighton
 - Stables Building project, W. North Avenue
 - Former A&P lot, Brighton and West North
 - Light of Life Ridge Avenue project
 - Expansion of Historic District
 - Historic District enforcement issues – old cases
 - Air BnB issues/impacts on AW
 - Allegheny Commons proposed implementation plan
 - Railroad bridge replacements, double-stack train Impacts
 - Authorize Executive Committee to negotiate sale of Western Avenue lot
 - Adoption of AWCC guidelines for new construction on vacant sites
- Northside Leadership Conference
- Old business
- New business
- Adjournment

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AWCC Calendar

Friday, December 7 @ 5:00 - 8:00 P.M. Saturday, December 8 @ 10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Old Allegheny Victorian Christmas House Tour

Tuesday, December 11 @ 7:30 P.M.

General Membership Meeting → Calvary Church, 971 Beech

Tuesday, December 18 @ 7:30 P.M.

Housing & Planning Committee → Office: 806 Western

TBD

Executive Committee → AWCC Office: 806 Western

NOTE: Enclosed, please find the Draft Design Guidelines for New Construction outside the Historic District.

Reminder: Tour Street Closure

Beech Avenue will be closed during the tour, starting on Friday, December 7 at 4:00 and again on Saturday, December 8 at 10:00. Parking will be available in the lower Babb, Inc. parking lot. Please move your car off the street for the tour!

AWCC Officers for 2019

- President Ann Gilligan
- Vice President Tom Barbush
- Treasurer Cathy Serventi
- Secretary Bob Griewahn
- Sergeant-at-Arms Sara Sweeney
- Housing and Planning Committee Ashley Webb
- Membership Committee Greg Coll
- Ways and Means Committee Annette Trunzo
- Communications Committee Trish Burton
- Property Committee Michael Shealey
- Friends of Allegheny West Diane Caruso

