

AWCC July Agenda

AWCC General Membership Meeting
Calvary United Methodist Church
971 Beech Avenue
Tuesday, July 14th @ 7:30pm

- City Capital Budget meetings
- Allegheny Commons Update
- 50th Anniversary Update
- Committee Q&A
 - Housing & Planning
 - Ways & Means
 - Membership
 - Property
 - Friends of Allegheny West
 - Communications
 - NSLC

Neighborhood Clean Up
806 Western Avenue
Saturday, July 25th @ 9:30am



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The Gazette

The monthly newsletter of the Allegheny West Civic Council.
Editor: Fran Barbush
Letters, Submissions, Advertising and other notices:
Gazette@alleghenywest.org.

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ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

July 2015

President's Message by Cathy Serventi

So I get to talk to a lot of interesting people since I finally managed to figure out the phone system enough to get the AWCC office number forwarded to my cell phone. One of the most common types of calls we get is from neighbors who have questions about complying with the historic guidelines for renovations. Well, aside from the electric company scammers trying to get me to tell them our account number so they can process our "rebate"; seriously guys, if you were Duquesne light you would KNOW our account number ALREADY. Anyway. Those calls from neighbors coupled with the fact that I seem to have spent more than the normal amount of time this month in meetings that have "Enforcement" as an agenda item, means that I have been doing a lot of thinking about why it's so important, as a property owner in the neighborhood to continue to follow the historic district guidelines. So even though it was, frankly, really frustrating that in order to replace the person-door on our garage, of which approximately one square foot of was actually visible from the street, we ended up paying more in permit fees than the door itself cost AND we missed the deadline for the May Historic Review Committee agenda so we didn't actually manage to get the approval in time to get the door replaced for the wine tour which was the entire point of replacing the door in the first place.... Anyway.

My point is that it can sometimes be challenging to explain to new neighbors, or even neighbors who have been here a while, WHY those rules are so important to follow even though they can be inconvenient and expensive. There's some really interesting (well at least to me, but I'm kind of an archaeology nerd) work being done looking at the positive effect that enforcing historic preservation guidelines have on local property values. If you're the kind of person that finds abstract evidence based arguments compelling a quick Google search on "historic preservation property values" should keep you happy for a good long while. Honestly, though, I'd really like some help making a more visceral case to folks about why the guidelines are important whether it's a new neighbor or our new building inspector from BBI. I think for the neighbors who have spent the last 30+ years watching their hard work come to fruition the need to enforce the historic guidelines is obvious. But when we moved in even 7 years ago, Allegheny West was already gorgeous; our street was described as "the most beautiful street in Pittsburgh". Our house was (and still is - we appreciate your patience!) one of the few houses not completely restored on Beech.

I realized this month though that the only photos I've seen of Allegheny West are either from the very early days of the neighborhood (1870-1910) before urban "renewal" (ha!) and the collapse of the steel industry wreaked havoc or more recent photos meant to showcase the neighborhood for tours or the website. What I haven't seen and what I'm hoping neighbors (you!) can provide are essentially the "before" pictures from the time period when the historic preservation guidelines went into effect. Before AWCC spent 50 years putting on tours and buying and stabilizing properties with the proceeds. Before neighbors got together on Saturdays to literally hand build brick sidewalks. Before folks wrote grants and property owners paid assessments to completely redo Western Avenues' infrastructure. As part of the lead up to the 50th Anniversary of AWCC we'd like to share some of those "before" pictures. If you have photos of your house, interior or exterior, or even better, of the street, from "before" it was renovated please send them to: president@alleghenywest.org. We'd like to start a section in the newsletter on the website of "Then and Now" so that we have something concrete to point to about what can happened to our neighborhood without the protection of the Historic District guidelines and how various neighbors have been inspired to preserve and restore their own homes and streets.

Neighborhood Cleanup!

Submitted by Michael Shealey

Saturday, July 25th at 9:30 A.M.

The July neighborhood cleanup will be held from 9:30 - 11:00 AM on Saturday, July 25th. We will be both picking up trash and cleaning a few tree wells, if possible. Gather at the AWCC office at 806 Western Ave. (next to the parklet). Refreshments will be provided.

JULY MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Mary Callison

The largest event for July has already happened! The 4th of July Block Party occurred last Saturday with possibly the best weather I can remember for the event. Also I was thrilled with the number of neighbors who helped with setting up and cleaning up the party. It was very much appreciated. As usual special thanks to: Howard Brokenbek (and his truck), Gloria Rayman (her brother John and her large vehicle) for bringing all the tables and supplies from the office. Because the weather has been so rainy, the council decided to buy two large easy to put up tents. John Burton purchased the tents and had them on site for several men of the neighborhood to show off their construction skills. Thankfully we did not need them for rain but it was still nice to have shade over the food tables. Special thanks to Doug Lucas and the use of Calvary's kitchen, to Linda Iannotta for fixing the turkey breasts and John, Tom, Scott, and Devin for fixing ribs.

Neighborhood Mixer will be at Giorgio's on July 17th, it is a BYOB and you can order from the menu. Time is 6:30 PM, but any time after is fine!

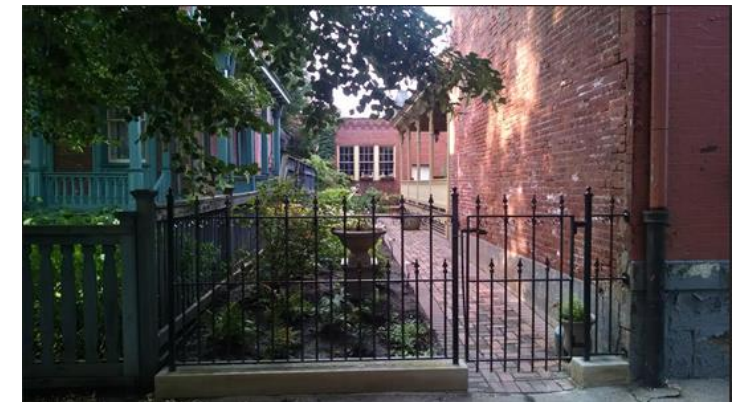
We are still trying to play Bocce each week on Thursday evenings starting at 6:30 PM. We play until it begins to get dark, so if you cannot come 'till 7 or 7:30 it will be fine. Turnout to play has been very small, so if there is no interest in playing let me know.

Address for Jane Johnson

Neighbor and one of the AWCC founding members, Jane Johnson, broke a bone in a recent fall and is now recovering at Vincentian Rehab. That address is 111 Perryman Road, Room 2-133, Pittsburgh, PA 15237



Allegheny West Then and Now: 851 Beech Avenue



The Baskets on Western are up!

Thank you to all the sponsors and other folks who made this happen!

