

Message from the President: *Status Quo? Not Always so.*

By *Timothy G. Zinn, AWCC President*

Last month, members of AWCC's Executive Committee participated in a board "retreat" to strategize and make plans for the years ahead. I was encouraged by the many ideas we discussed during the evening-long meeting and by the enthusiasm of the committee members. One of the evening's topics was AWCC's ongoing efforts to encourage more participation in the organization and to attract new members. Beginning with my first *Gazette* article back in January and in each President's Message since, I have been encouraging both long-time and more recent neighbors to become involved in the Civic Council and have even added a column highlighting one AWCC committee each month. At the retreat, it occurred to us that the 40-year struggle to create the neighborhood we now know as Allegheny West may be foreign to our newer neighbors. The early struggles to stave off the demolition of historic buildings, clashes with various city administrations that had other design plans for our neighborhood, the battles to create city-listed and National Register historic districts to safeguard our historic fabric, the creation of master planning studies to guide compatible development, and many bricks-and-mortar projects that saved countless historic properties may not have been passed on to our newer neighbors.

I've heard many of these stories during my 20 years here, and I am sure there are many more. I had the opportunity to witness our progress during a recent trip to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) in Harrisburg, where I pulled the file on our attempt to have the neighborhood listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The file contained two dozen or so 8x10" black-and-white photographs of the neighborhood in the early 1980s. The neighborhood depicted in the photographs was far less desirable than the Allegheny West we know today—there were no tree-lined streets, no cast-iron lamp standards, and very few restored homes. The state of the neighborhood was such that the PHMC nearly denied National Register historic district status. The intervening 30 years has so changed the image of Allegheny West that it has become a neighborhood known for its historic character, its strong sense of place, and one of the most highly-recognized and accepted historic districts in the entire city. No, the current look, feel, and stability of the neighborhood was not always so and should never be taken for granted, nor should we forget the struggles of our urban predecessors—many of which are still active, invaluable members of the neighborhood and AWCC—that transformed this neighborhood.

But, our story cannot end here, as there is still much work to be done, not only to maintain our "status quo" but to create an even more vibrant neighborhood. This 40-year momentum can only be sustained by the continued involvement and commitment of our resident base. New talent, new ideas, and new projects will continue to ensure a bright future for our neighborhood in the years to come, but that will only be possible through the participation of our younger property owners. So again, I encourage you, especially our younger neighbors, to join and actively participate in AWCC, and to help continue our long and proud tradition of community involvement and neighborhood transformation.

Also detailed in this edition of the *Gazette* are many activities occurring in the weeks ahead. Announcements of neighborhood events are sent weekly via our AWCC-Announce email list. If you would like to be added to the list, please email me at the address below.

Again, I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to serve this neighborhood. I am always available and look forward to receiving your comments at tzinn106@msn.com.

Allegheny West June Mixer
Friday, June 17, 6 p.m.
Georgio's Place—908 Western Ave.

BYOB and enjoy your favorite Italian dish

JUNE / JULY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AWCC GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Calvary United Methodist Church (Beech Ave. entrance)

Tuesday, June 14 @ 8:30pm (please note time change)

Tuesday, July 12 @ 7:30pm

HOUSING & PLANNING/NORTH AVE. COMMITTEE MTG

Tuesday, June 21 @ 7:30pm

Tuesday, July 19 @ 7:30pm

AWCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MTG

944 Western Ave.

Tuesday, June 28 @ 7:30pm

Tuesday, July 26 @ 7:30pm

AWCC MEMBERSHIP MTG. AGENDA TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2011 7:30 P.M.

1. READING OF MAY 2011 MINUTES
2. REPORTS OF OFFICERS
 - Treasurer's Report
3. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES
 - Housing & Planning/North Avenue Committees
 - Development Proposals*
 - Stables Proposals
 - Western Avenue Proposal
 - North Avenue Sub Committee*
 - Value Added Foods Building
 - Western Avenue Project*
 - Project Update
 - Allegheny Avenue Properties (1003, 1005, 1007)*
 - West Ohio Street and Ridge Avenue Bridges*
 - Membership
 - Memorial Day Picnic/Block Party—REPORT*
 - AW June Mixer*
 - Saturday Tennis Club/Clinic*
 - July 4th Picnic/Block Party*
 - Property
 - Realtor report*
 - Ways & Means
 - Friends of Allegheny West
 - Neighborhood Cleanup: June 18, 9:00 a.m.
 - Communications
4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - Heinz Field additional seating—UPDATE
 - Stage AE Sound Study
 - NSLC NID Steering Committee
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - Noise Task Force
6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Allegheny West May Neighborhood Cleanup: Saturday, June 18: 9 a.m.

Please meet at the AWCC office (812 Western Ave.) at 9 a.m. on Saturday, June 18 for our May cleanup. We'll provide the bags and gloves, please bring your rakes, brooms and clippers.

Fourth of July Neighborhood Block Party

Mark your calendars for another A-West holiday classic: The Fourth of July Block Party. This event will begin at **4 p.m. on Monday, July 4** and more info will be forthcoming.

Important Meeting: City of Pgh. Discusses W. Ohio St. Bridge Project Tuesday, June 14, 6-8 p.m. at the New Hazlett Theater

The City of Pittsburgh is conducting a public meeting for the proposed rehab/removal of West Ohio Street and Ridge Avenue bridges, at which they'll present the proposed project purpose and need, schedule, alternatives, impacts on environmental and historical resources, and solicit input on a preferred alternative. The city and its consultants will be available to answer questions and gather feedback. The New Hazlett Theater is located at 6 Allegheny Square East, Pittsburgh, PA, 15212. **The AWCC Membership Meeting, also scheduled for that evening, will be pushed back to 8:30 p.m. to accommodate those who wish to attend both meetings.**

Meet the AWCC Membership Committee by Tim Zinn

As we continue to highlight one of the AWCC's standing committees each month to encourage greater participation in the organization, this month we feature the Membership Committee. According to AWCC's Bylaws, *the Membership Committee shall be responsible for adding new members to the roll and for maintaining present membership. It is also responsible for maintaining contact with all residents of Allegheny West, both members and non-members of Civic Council, to keep them informed of neighborhood and Council activities.* In addition to the duties outlined in the bylaws, the Membership Committee is better known for its role as the neighborhood social committee, which brings you such events as the Memorial Day, July 4th, and Labor Day block parties, the monthly neighborhood mixers, the Allegheny West bowling night, and hopefully, a new event this year—a Saturday morning summer tennis clinic in West Park. Some other events the Membership Committee has sponsored in years past include a neighborhood auction night, pot lucks, movie nights, and even overnight excursions. Committee meetings are held on an as-needed basis, usually prior to major neighborhood events. If social events and party planning are your forté, this is the committee for you!

The current chair of the Membership Committee is Tom Barbush, a resident of the 800 block of Beech Avenue. Since becoming chair of the committee in January, Tom has been doing an outstanding job of coordinating our traditional events and adding new and exciting ones to our social calendar. The success of his efforts was evidenced by the record-breaking attendance at our Memorial Day block party, where over one hundred neighbors gathered in the 800 block of Beech Avenue for a "Burger Cook-Off." Congratulations to Tom and his committee for coordinating this huge and successful event.

Each month, I will continue to highlight one of our committees. As you become familiar with the duties and functions of the various committees, I encourage you to contact our committee chairs and join one that interests you or would benefit from your time and talents.

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Noise Task Force: A Pittsburgh City Council task force has established a "noise line" to gather public input about aggravating sounds across the city. Residents may phone or text noise pollution concerns to 412-223-7620. They also may email comments to noisetaskforce@gmail.com

THE GAZETTE

The monthly newsletter of the Allegheny West Civic Council *Valerie Nagel, editor*

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