
ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

March 2018

President's Message

So what are you doing on Tuesday evening? Join your neighbors on TUESDAY March 13 at 7:30 p.m. at Calvary Church for the March meeting of the Allegheny West Civic Council. This is where the important decisions about our neighborhood are made - and your voice can't be heard if you're not in the room. Find out what's going on; speak up; get involved!

For our March Membership meeting, we'll have a presentation by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy of their final recommendations for implementation of the 2002 Allegheny Commons Master Plan. There are some significant changes to "our end" of the park included in the proposed document. Over the next two months, AWCC will be determining which components we support and which we would like to see removed from the implementation plan before it moves forward.

Join us for this important discussion - and much more. Everyone is welcome - second Tuesday of each month, 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!

The Allegheny West of 2018 is the result of many years of deliberate effort. Across five decades, The Allegheny West Civic Council has been the largest single developer of real estate in our community. Our "bricks and mortar" projects totaling more than ten million dollars have been under the direction of Allegheny West Development Corporation - AWCC's not-for-profit construction arm. This "CDC" was one of the first in the nation, and one of the most active in Pittsburgh.

Although Allegheny West has been blessed for many years with healthy market-rate real estate activity, there have been - and continue to be - problem areas that the market simply doesn't address. Or, worse still, would address in ways that are incompatible with the direction that the neighborhood has worked so hard to move.

Our first project - McIntosh Row - was a mid-1970's trendsetter using innovative financing that was widely praised and rapidly copied in cities around the country. Six vacant buildings and an adjoining weed-filled lot on Western Avenue at Brighton Road became four commercial storefronts, ten apartments, and a landscaped garden at the entrance to the neighborhood. The apartments were initially intended to provide affordable housing for long-time neighbors whose rental apartments were displaced as the community gentrified. For forty years the Civic Council continued to own and operate these units, and now retains the corner parklet and the first building in the row - serving as our community office.

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from front.)

Nevin Row followed in 1979, after a fire that gutted the two buildings at the corner of Lincoln and Galveston Avenues. The Civic Council signed the sales agreement even as a wrecking crew was tearing through the upper floors - and then had to pay the demolition company the entire contract NOT to finish the destruction. These became five new condo apartments, and also replaced a seedy hot dog shop facing Galveston with two off-street parking spaces for the units. Within months, the adjoining three empty buildings on Galveston were being restored privately.

Allegheny Court at the Corner of Western and Galveston targeted removal of the neighborhood's worst problem bar - The Hobnob - and a nuisance 24 hour convenience store that we knew as "The Stop and Die" after many assaults and a stabbing death. The buildings were restored as rental office space, and the mud lot along Galveston (where two houses had earlier been demolished) provided a new infill office structure with parking.

Denny Row on North Avenue transformed nine mostly dilapidated houses, concentrating on restoration of the exterior facades and porches with rehabilitation of the structural envelopes. These finished exteriors were then sold to new owners who renovated the home interiors to their own specifications.

On Allegheny Avenue, Fitzsimmons Square consolidated and restored another row of badly deteriorating houses facing the architecturally important Emmanuel Church, and added off-street parking on adjacent vacant lots with a landscaped side garden to the intersection.

In the 800 block of North and along Galveston, AWDC commissioned the Allegheny West Lofts District Plan to guide future development. To advance the plan, we purchased a large industrial structure on Galveston and sold it into more sympathetic hands for conversion to housing. At the Allegheny Stables Building and a large adjoining lot, we bought the last remaining municipal building of the former City of Allegheny. Holding it for several years, we sold it to a development firm which plans to build substantial apartments in the restored Stables and a large new construction apartment building on the open lot.

And on Western Avenue, we've created the "Western Renewed" public space makeover. This dramatic and comprehensive two million dollar facelift was supported by the R.K. Mellon Foundation with assessment contributions from all of the property owners in the renovated area. The Civic Council actually loaned several hundred thousand dollars to the City of Pittsburgh so that it could fulfill its part of the project. Western Renewed has included new curbs and brick sidewalks, historic street lighting, trash receptacles, trees, and utility relocations which will lead to the removal of all of the overhead wires and utility poles in our business district. The improvements have sparked a wave of private restorations in both blocks.

If we've learned anything from all of these projects, it's that there will always be times when the best way to move our neighborhood in the direction that we want is to do it ourselves. Each of these examples brought substantial and permanent positive change to a problem spot in our community. And each forestalled other possible outcomes that could have been truly devastating for the whole community.

When the need arises again - and it will - we'll be prepared. And with the benefit of plenty of solid experience: the fruits of our labor are all over the neighborhood!

- John DeSantis, AWCC President

2018 Wine Tour and Tasting : *A Toast to the Central Coast*

The wine tour is coming up soon, and work is underway. This year, we'll feature California wines, specifically from the Central Coast of California.

Details about this year's tour:

- Price and dates: \$75 pp. / Friday night 6/22 5–9 PM and Saturday 6/23 1–5PM and 5–9 PM.
- Showcase Event at Holmes Hall: \$150 (max 50 tickets available) / Saturday 6/23 7–9 PM.
- Note that the dates are later in the month than normal due to competing events in Pgh and other calendar conflicts, but good for the gardens to thrive!

How can you help? Please email me directly (carolgomrick@gmail.com) if you are interested in any of the following:

- **Homes:** If you would like your home on the tour (focus on the garden). A total of 6 properties needed. The home must have a garden space.
- **Advertising and Social Media:** Work with local media outlets, promote through social media and help secure program advertisers.
- **Food Committee:** Work with friends to confirm the pairing menu and prep food for the event.
- **Tour Guide Lead:** Make sure the docents know the route, their shifts and neighborhood history to lead the guests.
- **Volunteers Lead:** Oversight of tour volunteers (help for the homeowners). We will need additional volunteers for the Showcase event.
- **After Party Planners:** Always one of the most fun volunteer opportunities!

AWCC Calendar

Tuesday, March 13 @ 7:30 P.M.

General Membership → Calvary Church: 971 Beech

Tuesday, March 20 @ 7:30 P.M.

Housing & Planning Committee → Office: 806 Western

Tuesday, March 27 @ 7:30 P.M.

Executive Committee → AWCC Office: 806 Western

AW Bowling every Wednesday at the Elks Lodge @ 7:30 P.M.

Alleys, Axles & Ales

This year's Alleys, Axles & Ales tour will be held on **September 29th**. Cecile Canales will chair this tour and Tom Barbush will co-chair. If you are interested in having your garage on tour or would like to volunteer, please email Cecile at ccanales13@icloud.com. An initial meeting is scheduled for May.

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. Submission does not guarantee publication.



A publication of the Allegheny West Civic Council 806 Western Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15233
www.alleghenywest.org ~ info@alleghenywest.org ~ (412) 323 - 8884

DRAFT Agenda: AWCC Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March @ 7:30 P.M.

Calvary United Methodist Church, 971 Beech Ave

- Visitors: Councilwoman Harris' office
 Mayor Peduto's office
 Pittsburgh Police Zone 1
 Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy - Allegheny Commons
- New neighbors & guests
- Reading of last month's minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Recommendation for Allegheny Commons: Presentation by Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy on proposed implementation plan
- Committee Reports

Membership:

- Bowling at the Elks
- Volunteers to coordinate the Memorial Day Picnic

Ways & Means:

- 2018 Wine & Garden Tour (June 22 and 23)
- Update on five-year Calvary Contract

Friends of Allegheny West: Green Space

Property

Housing & Planning:

Updates:

- Parking and traffic issues, Galveston
- North Avenue lighting
- Western Avenue revitalization/electric relocations
- Light of Life Ridge Avenue project
- Rejuvenation plan
- Expansion of Historic District (LRC report)
- Historic District enforcement issues – old cases
- Five for five, park donation, directed fund projects
- ZBA Appeal, new City zoning: Medical Marijuana Dispensary
- Air BnB issues/impacts on AW
- Comprehensive guidelines for new construction on vacant sites
- Railroad bridge replacements
- Allegheny Center Master Plan
- North Shore impacts
- Northside Leadership Conference
- Other business (Old & New)
- Adjournment

LeClaire, Griewahn & Scott, LLC
Attorneys-At-Law

835 Western Avenue
 Pittsburgh, PA 15233

Email: Coordinator@lg-law.com

Phone: 412-321-9300

Estate Planning
Real Estate * Taxes
General Business * Collections

Notary Service by Appointment
Free Initial Consultation

IF ANYONE'S GOING TO LOSE SLEEP, IT'LL BE US.

Our 24-hour service means that you can rest assured. Because whenever you need help with your furnace, air conditioner or heat pump, we'll get it to you. **Whatever it takes.**

Call Bryant to the rescue!

Eugene Beck Company
 Heating • Air Conditioning
 24 Hour Emergency Service

INSTALLATION, CLEANING, REPAIRS & TUNE-UPS

DON SCHNARRENBERGER
 OWNER
 321-3356 • 931-0949

924 WESTERN AVE.
 PITTSBURGH, PA 15233