



Minutes of Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting – March 28, 2017

Convened: 7:15 p.m. Adjourned: 8:15 p.m. 28 attendees

Meeting chaired by TGHNA President, Barbara Gilchrist (president@towergroveheights.com)

- **Opening of meeting and welcome**
 - **Newcomer recognition**
Several first-time attendees were recognized. Welcome to all!

- **Neighborhood business/announcements**
 - **No Aldermanic report available**

 - **Propositions on April 4 Ballot**
 - *Nahuel Fefer, Director of Economic Policy, Office of the Mayor, provided information about Proposition 1. Visitor Tom Schmitt offered information on Proposition 2.*
 - *Opinions about each ballot issue are widely available from many news outlets. TGHNA encourages residents to educate themselves and vote. See official ballot at:*
<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/board-election-commissioners/documents/upload/Apr17-All-Races-Ballot-2.pdf>

 - **SLMPD 2nd District Liaison Officer, Ed Slade (edslade@slmpd.org)**
 - *Encouraged residents to practice a heightened sense of alertness while entering or exiting their vehicles/garages, especially as the weather warms up. Crime usually increases with warmer weather.*
 - *Almost all recent robberies involved the use of a firearm.*
 - *Having camera systems is encouraged. Resident's cameras have helped identify perpetrators of recent crime in the neighborhood.*
 - *Having dusk-to-dawn or motion-detector lighting is very important in deterring crime.*
 - *Officers are conducting Field Interview Reports (FIRs) in neighborhood.*
 - *In response to a resident's question: The 16-year-old male arrested in the recent homicide has not yet been certified as an adult. Juveniles cannot be questioned beyond name, parent's names or if they are hurt. They are taken to the Juvenile Center at 920 Vandeventer 63108.*

- **Featured Speaker: Sean Spencer, Executive Director, Tower Grove Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation (<http://towergrovecdc.org/>)**

TGNDCDC represents the areas of Shaw; Tower Grove South, including Tower Grove Heights; and Southwest Garden. They have recently concentrated their efforts in the southeast corner of TGS, from McDonald to Chippewa. TGHNA has financially contributed to this organization as well as provided volunteers for its annual fundraising event. Some highlights from Sean's presentation:

 - *Bought and rehabbed a nuisance property on Bamberger and provided space for a police substation.*
 - *Increased number of units to rehab from 14 to 69 over the last two years.*
 - *Presently converting 3571 Potomac from a two-family to a single-family residence. This property has been vacant for seven years.*

- Working towards obtaining and cleaning up a nuisance property off S. Grand that was recently featured in a Post-Dispatch article as a heroin hotspot.
- Conducted landlord training for over 600 participants.
- Created and distributed a Community Resource Guide.
- Provides a tenant-screening service, "Screen Door," which went from 800 screenings in 2014 to 1800 in 2016.
- Received an "Excellence in Not-for-Profit Community Building" award in 2016 from the Community Builders Network of Metro St. Louis.

- **Featured Speaker: Rachel Witt, Executive Director, South Grand Community Improvement District** (www.southgrand.org)

The South Grand Business District is bounded by Tower Grove Heights to the west and Tower Grove East to the east. It includes both sides of S. Grand from a bit north of Arsenal (at Salon St. Louis), south to St. Pius V Catholic Church. One half cent of every dollar spent in the district supports the organization. Their budget is about \$345,000/year, two-thirds of which comes from the district's property owners. TGHNA has consistently supported this organization with substantial annual financial donations as well as providing volunteers for many of its events. Rachel Witt is on the TGHNA Social Committee; TGH resident, Myrinda Grantham sits on their Cultural Alliance board. Some facts from Rachel's presentation:

- A kiosk, designed by TGHNA and Social Committee member, TGHNA 30th Anniversary Event Chair and architect, Patrick Weber, will be installed in Ritz Park on April 21.
- The popular annual event, International Dine Around, will take place on May 30, 5-10 p.m.
- New event this May in the Ritz Park will be a Health Seminar on May 6th from 9AM-noon. Noon a healthy cooking class will be held at Rooster South Grand.
- In a joint event with Missouri Coalition for the Environment, "We the People 2.0," a documentary film will be presented in Ritz Park on May 19.
- This summer, vines are expected to finally cover the supporting structures at the rear of Ritz Park. Six flower beds will be completely replanted along S. Grand in May.
- Pizza Head, a vegetarian/vegan eatery is expected to open in April at 3196 S. Grand (location formerly occupied by Absolutely Goosed and Brickyard Tavern).
- VP Square, a Vietnamese restaurant is expected to open in May at 3609 Juniata, in the location formerly occupied by Verve Salon (behind the King & I).
- There have been 52 arrests resulting from the camera surveillance in the District, resolving 130 cases. These include both LPR (License Plate Recognition) and PTZ (pan, tilt, zoom) cameras on S. Grand.
- Presently there are about 27,000 cars per day traversing the District. This number will likely decrease when the Kingshighway construction project ends at the end of April/beginning of May.
- Plans to erect the Ritzia facade in the Ritz Park, designed by Walter Gunn and Andrew Petty, (<http://southgrand.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/RITZIATA-.pdf>) have been shelved due to financial constraints.
- In response to a resident's question about the opening of a rumored "headshop" (CBD Kartom) at 3161 Morgan Ford, Rachel had no information.
- In response to a resident's question about automatically activating the pedestrian walk signals on S. Grand, Rachel stated the Streets Department says they are built to be manually activated.
- For more information all events and annual report can be found at www.southgrand.org

- **TGH Safety Committee**

- Barbara reported that the Safety Committee toured and heard a presentation by Captain Angela Coonce at SLMPD's Real Time Crime Center, 1915 Olive 63103. There were opportunities to ask questions and we are getting smarter about what kinds of questions to ask regarding both public and residential cameras in our neighborhood. (<http://www.slmpd.org/RealTimeCrimeCenter.shtml>)
- The committee is also researching lighting options.

- **Social Committee**
 - *Rachel Witt thanked everyone for the record turnout at the last Heights Nights event at Tower Grove Creamery on March 14. She hopes to see everyone at next Heights Nights [details under “New/Old Business/Announcements” heading below.]*

- **Block Captains**
 - *Debra Knox Deiermann reported Beth Austin, Master Gardener, TGH resident and Gazette contributor, demonstrated planting two spring container gardens at the March 13 Block Captain meeting.*
 - *New TGS-TGH Block Captains: Jill Aboussie (3600-3700 Wyoming) and Courtney Weible (4100 Juniata).*
 - *We are still seeking a Block Captain for 3800 Wyoming. Anyone interested in becoming a Block Captain is encouraged to email blockreps@towergroveheights.com. Attendance at all meetings is not required and there are lots of resources and a training packet to help new Block Captains get started.*
 - *No permanent Neighborhood Improvement Specialist (NIS) has been named for Ward 15 yet.*
 - *TGSNA seeking designs for their new logo.*
 - *Block Captains meet on second Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at Oak Hill Presbyterian Church, 4111 Connecticut at Oak Hill.*
 - *The complete and updated list of all TGS-TGH Block Captains is located on www.towergroveheights.com and all Block Captains can be contacted through the website.*

- **Treasurer Report**
 - *Rick Stein reported our net balance for February 2017 is about \$14,000.*
 - *Expenses: \$500 to South Grand Cultural Alliance*
 - *Revenue: \$355 from memberships; \$220 from Gazette ads*

- **TGHNA 30th Anniversary Block Party**
 - *Save the date! Saturday, September 23. Details to follow.*
 - *The committee has met and plans are moving forward for a neighborhood block party.*

- **New/Old Business/Announcements**
 - *Everyone is invited to the inaugural post-meeting Social Hour – address announced.*
 - *Barbara reported that she wrote personal letters on behalf of TGHNA expressing gratitude to the individuals who provided direct assistance to the victim and his family during the homicide event that occurred in the neighborhood in February.*
 - *Next Heights Night: April 11 at Aesh Design, northeast corner of Connecticut and Spring, hosted by Patrick Weber.*
 - *The next TGHNA meeting on Tuesday, April 25 will feature St. Louis Recycles, with a special focus on reducing and reusing.*
 - *Next TGSNA meeting: April 19, 6:30 p.m., Oak Hill Presbyterian Church*
 - *Be sure to vote on April 4.*

- **Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Knox Deiermann
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www.towergroveheights.com

Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association values and seeks a diverse membership. The TGHNA Board recognizes and values the importance of diversity.