

**Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting**  
**April 22, 2014** 7:20p.m. 30 attendees

The Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association (TGHNA) meeting was chaired by President Mike Newsham.

**Kristan Nickels** of Tower Grove Neighborhoods CDC informed everyone of the monthly safety meeting to be held Wed. April 23rd at Grand Oak Hill Community Center. Included in this meeting would be court advocacy training. She spoke of the importance of court advocates in impacting the sentencing of perpetrators who commit crimes in our neighborhood. She circulated an impact statement for signatures. This petition will be taken to court on April 24 and given to the judge on a burglary committed three months ago. Court advocates and impact statements are helpful in influencing judges to deliver tougher sentences for crimes that affect neighborhoods negatively. A community that is branded as unsafe suffers serious economic repercussions, both on residents and businesses.

She also spoke of the event planned for May 10<sup>th</sup> in the 3200 block of Morganford. It is a one day event organized by Better Block Initiative, designed to bring attention to an underdeveloped area. There will be pop-up shops, music, and beverages. Bump outs will be temporarily set up to slow traffic on Morganford. Permanent improvements will include crosswalks at Arsenal and at Wyoming and plantings along Morganford for visual appeal.

Anyone who wishes to volunteer for the event, or present at the event, should e-mail Kristan at [Kristan@towergrovecdc.org](mailto:Kristan@towergrovecdc.org). Some of the presenters already committed are Stray Rescue, Local Harvest and a bee keeping presentation.

A question about parking along Morganford was raised and Jennifer Florida said there was an effort being made to raze the car wash for a potential parking lot.

**Heights Nights** The next Heights Night will be held on May 13<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 at Chimichanga Mexican Restaurant at 5425 South Grand. Ten dollar gift certificates were raffled for the upcoming event.

**Matt Bush** of Better Together St. Louis spoke of his research work on the current status of fragmented government agencies in the greater St. Louis area. His goal is to document how this system is working, get people thinking about the results of his research, and get people involved and communicating about it. They are looking at Louisville and Indianapolis as examples of cities that have merged successfully. They are looking at ways to make city services safer and more efficient. He mentioned that currently tax incentives create competition between municipalities for business development. The result is that a company will relocate and close the previous locations so that it is really just a lateral move within greater St. Louis. The hope is to unify St. Louis and create an atmosphere where working together benefits all. He was asked if they were taking into consideration public opinion. He responded that that would come after all the data is out and the public has a chance to evaluate that information. Information about Better Together St. Louis is available at [www.bettertogetherstl.com](http://www.bettertogetherstl.com)

**Suzanne Carron** spoke about the Sustainable Backyard Tour scheduled for June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11-4. There are currently 36 yards on the tour and more are being accepted. Anyone interested in being on the tour must be vetted before being accepted. The tour is free. Registration is on line and tour guide books are emailed with a map and description of each yard so that visitors can select according to their interests. More information is available at [www.sustainablebackyardtour.com](http://www.sustainablebackyardtour.com)

**Anita Barker** gave a recap on the first Spring Cleanup saying approximately 60 people turned out to clean in the alleys. Second round of cleanup is scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup> from 9-10:30. This coincides with our regular bulk pickup. Available tools include flat shovels that are great for getting the dead leaves away from the curbs. Between 300 and 400 flowers seedlings are ordered and available for planting in public spaces. Following the cleanup there will be an opportunity to

gather in the 3800 alley between Humphrey and Utah Pl. for a BBQ. Grills will be provided by Mike Newsham and participants are invited to bring a dish to share.

**Mike Newsham** said he had received a report from Rachel Witt that some residents on Wyoming have complained about lack of parking spaces on their street due to overflow from Grand Ave. The prospect of permit parking was discussed. It was determined that there is a lengthy process in getting such an ordinance passed and enforcing it is a low priority. Members in attendance expressed several disadvantages to such an ordinance. That raised the question of how the large parking lot behind Commerce Bank could be put to better use. Most in attendance felt that visitors were unaware of the lot. Some suggestions were, better signage, alerting restaurants to add that info to their websites and/or menus, more security, and an inviting and friendly walkway from the parking lot to Grand Ave.

**Jennifer Florida** spoke briefly about the Hot Spot Policing Policy. Although TGHN has seen a downward spiral on crime for several months, we recently experience a spike due to burglaries and larcenies on Grand Ave. She also addressed the tree situation in the area. She has allocated \$15,000 for a survey on the status of the trees in the neighborhood and public education regarding the importance and care of trees as an economic and environmental asset. The Utah Boulevard is included in the survey.