

Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting

August 23, 2011 7:18 p.m. 27 Attendees

The TGHNA meeting was chaired by President Marilyn Browning. Newcomers were introduced.

Rachel Witt, South Grand Community Improvement District (CID) Executive Director, reported that she tried to get the weeds cut in the rain garden areas on Grand before our last meeting. They did cut the weeds shortly after the last meeting and cut them again yesterday. They also treated them so they don't grow so fast. Spring is the best time to plant the native plants planned for these areas, so until then, we'll have some temporary plantings. Striping of the street has started on Grand for the parallel parking spaces, crosswalks and turn arrows. They will uncover all the permeable concrete so there will be no more traffic cones. The Phase 2 plan of the Great Streets Initiative covers the rain gardens with native plants, trees, new traffic signals at Juniata, synchronizing all traffic signals and the Utah Place/Grand intersection build out. We're still waiting for Phase 2 bids. Phase 2a is in MoDOT's hands to go to bid. Phase 2b will go in at the end of the week for approval. This phase probably won't start until winter. Alderman Florida will have the trees put in this fall from her budget since we didn't get Phase 2 done in time. We're getting a grant and will have a volunteer coordinator to work with rain gardens. We will also be getting grants to put signs out so people can learn more about rain gardens, permeable concrete, etc. Cobra lights are staying until decorative lights are installed. Holiday lights will be turned on earlier to help with lighting (by the end of September). Rachel is talking with the church where we hold our meetings about parking. The CID will try to do some updates to the parking—better lighting, striping, sealing, etc. so residents and visitors can park when church isn't in session. The first of South Grand's Back Lot Films, featuring "Spirited Away", was a success and over 250 people attended. The film "Persepolis" will be screened on Sept. 13th at 7:30 p.m. with Webster University students bused in to see it. Please call Rachel at (314)772-5750 or send e-mail to scoop@southgrand.org if there are questions or issues.

Lance LeComb, spokesman, and Kelly Kinder with the engineering group from the [Metropolitan Sewer District \(MSD\)](#) made a presentation. MSD has reached a settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over a lawsuit filed in 2007. The issue of the lawsuit was that sewer system overflow during heavy rainfall discharges sewage into the rivers. St. Louis has a legacy of sewers built prior to Abraham Lincoln; some are even made of wood. Sewers in the county used outdated standards. There were 79 different sewer systems that were combined to form MSD in 1954. We have the fourth largest sewer system in the United States—it is the same size as LA. Since we have fewer people, the rates are higher to support the system. Spending on these system improvements will also create many jobs in St. Louis to benefit the local community. The consent decree calls for \$4.7 billion to be put into the sewer system over next few years. The money will go toward expanding treatment plants and increasing the capacity of the system. When the city system was first built in the 1800's, it was considered to be a marvel. In 1969, only 50% of waste water was going through sewer plants. Most of the county has separate systems for waste and storm water but there are volume and capacity issues there. They will try to mitigate as many of the overflow issues as possible since it isn't possible to control all of them. There will be increases in the average monthly rates of \$28.73 per month to \$47.05 per month, over four years. Historically, rates were very low and work that should have been done wasn't done. The money will be spent in the community. They will also float a bond issue to help fund this effort. The work at Roger and Utah involves replacing the 80-year old sewer system there and replacing it with a larger and newer system. Because of the way the utilities were placed, they also have to replace other utilities such as gas and water. This work will go through 2013.

[Urban Future](#) representatives Jessica Neal and Ashley Krominga made an announcement about this student mentoring organization. Urban Future works to restore the bonds between family, community and schools with tutors for reading and math, as well as mentors to serve as positive role models. Mentors also reach out to the family once a week to increase the contact between the family and the school. The program involves one hour per week of volunteer time from community members. Their office is at 3145 S. Grand Blvd., Suite A, by the City Diner. Come by Fanning school any time to observe the program. They have 100 students enrolled in the program at Fanning and they need three volunteers per student. They passed out volunteer sheets for signing up. Find out more at www.Urbanfuturestl.org or call them at (314)776-3434.

Jennifer Florida, 15th Ward Alderman, says that you can now volunteer online to get involved with the St. Louis Police Dept. in the program called Citizens on Patrol. We now have Officer Robert Davis who is dedicated to TGS.

A Police substation will be at the Grand Oak Hill Center. Officer Davis is our officer on the street, so contact him if you have any doubts, questions or see anything suspicious-- rldavis@slmpd.org or call him at (314)556-1835. Mark your property—they have markers you can borrow at the 3rd District. On Sept. 1st, there will be a 3rd District Police barbeque from 11:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Tower Grove Park, the Sons of Rest Pavilion. They would like donation of desserts and ask residents to come by and enjoy the picnic.

The [15th Ward Democrats](#) Town Hall meeting featuring Mayor Francis Slay and Alderman Jennifer Florida will be Sept. 22 at the Carpenter Branch Library at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 8:28 p.m. The next meeting will be September 27, 2011.

Claudia Seifert, Secretary