

THE Volker News

November—December 2011

www.volkerkcmo.org

Next Meeting

January 12

Immanuel
Lutheran Church

1700 Westport Rd at Bell

6:30 pm Social Time

7:00 pm Meeting

VNA meets *EVERY 2nd*
THURSDAY, 7 PM except
August & December

Neighborhood History: The High Grade Food Store, 3522 Genessee Street in 1940



photo: Kansas City Historic Preservation Office

Until the last few years this building at the southwest corner of 35th Terrace and Genessee had operated since 1982 as a guttering company, owned by longtime resident Ray Perez Sr. and his son, Ray Jr. Mr. Perez Sr. passed away a couple of years ago and his son hired Cates Auction Co. to auction off the building and the house next door.

The auction was held on October 28th and was auctioned off to a young man who will live in the house and will use the building for maintenance and office space to manage several other properties that he owns.

During the auction I talked with *really* longtime residents Terry Trost and Susan Bell—who have lived in the immediate area since 1946—most of their lives! They can remember going into the little neighborhood grocery store and buying candy as kids! They said the store was in existence well into the 1950's.

-Diane Capps

. VNA Meeting Highlights / October 13, 2011

A very full slate of guest speakers contributed to an informative and varied agenda. Starting off the evening was Kite Singleton, Volker resident and current chair of the Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance. Kite's subject, What's Happening in the Transit World Today, is apt because of the amount of public discussion and pronouncements by local elected officials that the subject has generated this year. Kite delivered his story with verve and sparked group discussion about our Midwestern view of public transportation. It all amounts, according to Kite, to a change in attitudes about public transportation. Some recent developments of interest:

Final selection nearing on a preferred route for a two-mile downtown corridor between River Market and Crown Center/Union Station based on public input at three open house forums; yet to be determined: modern, electric streetcars or hybrid buses on the MAX model. A ballot initiative on this proposed Transportation Improvement District for voting by residents and business owners along the corridor is expected in 2012.

Vision Metcalf, a proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor starting at 135th Street and Metcalf Avenue in Johnson County and extending via Shawnee Mission Parkway to 47th Street and Troost Avenue in midtown Kansas City.

A bus route along State Avenue in Kansas City Kansas from the Speedway into downtown Kansas City, Missouri

Studies underway for BRT or commuter rail service over rights-of-way connecting Blue Springs with Union Station through Raytown; Belton/Grandview to Union Station; or Pleasant Hill to Union Station. Proposed routes involve sections of travel on abandoned rail lines, over sections of line owned by existing freight railroads, and blocks of running on Truman Road, all of which present significant challenges to resolve. In their favor is strong advocacy by Jackson County Executive Mike Sanders. Voters can expect to see the issue on the ballot in April 2012.

Also under consideration in Johnson County is commuter service between Olathe and downtown Kansas City on I-35 in which BRT's would utilize a dedicated lane of the Interstate to get around traffic delays and blockages.

For several years now, a smoking ban imposed on the campus of the University of Kansas Hospital has caused Volker residents in the 3900 block of State Line Road to fume. The policy has resulted in employees, patients and visitors to cross the street to smoke, where their cigarette butts create unsightly litter. In some cases, smokers have occupied the porches or driveways on private property. After a recent exchange of e-mails between VNA Board members and hospital executives., an emissary in the form of Gayln Gorup came to the meeting to undertake some outreach on a sensitive subject. Mr. Gorup, Director of Business for Facility Operations, explained the separate lines of authority between the hospital and the KU School of Medicine which in the past prevented solution to the problem. Recently a realignment has taken place promises improvement which tightens Mr. Gorup's control over security personnel. He promised that he would use this extended authority to hold security responsible for more vigorous oversight of smokers and their offensive behavior. Another source of concern, threatening behavior by dogs around the 4100 block of Wyoming Street., led to the appearance by a staff member from the city's Animal Health and Public Safety Division. The representative announced that 15 new officers have been hired and trained. In addition officers now have the capability to issue e-tickets. He advised that the best way to get action is to fill out and sign a complaint form. That will result in a court hearing before a judge. Fine for a first offense is \$25.00.

In the case of barking dogs, a common complaint, animal control officers do not respond. Instead a letter is sent to the dog owner suggesting different methods of suppressing the tendency to bark.

An announcement should be coming from the City Council regarding appointment of a new operator for the animal shelter on Raytown Road. It will be a local consortium called KC Pets.

More on Housing Codes Project

One of the purposes of Volker Neighborhood Association (VNA) as expressed in the By-laws (Article III, Section 2, Objectives and Goals) is to "support the enforcement of city codes and ordinances for the good of the neighborhood" and to "encourage maintenance and improvement of residential and commercial properties through cooperative efforts."

While individual residents can anonymously file complaints—for example, as a result of "codes wars" between quarreling neighbors—VNA represents the interests of residents as a group in dealing with city codes enforcement employees to carry out the objectives and purposes specified by the Association's By-laws. Unlike a homes association whose covenants convey enforcement authority, VNA has no enforcement power.

Nevertheless, the reality is that codes violations do exist, a few worst cases are troublesome to adjacent neighbors; they project an unwholesome atmosphere of neighborhood neglect and invite criminal activity. These are the conditions that the housing committee notice specifically targets. Aesthetic judgments do not figure in any decisions regarding the sending of a codes violation notice.

A year ago, the Board invited Stephanie Bowman from the city's codes Enforcement Division to speak at a general meeting of the Association regarding the division's policies and procedures. Following her informative talk, Ms. Bowman provided a template for a letter which the Board could use to reach out to property owners potentially at risk for receiving an official codes violation notice. The Board's intent is to take an advisory, helpful stance by including in the notice offers help in finding remedies to fix a cited violation before the matter reaches the attention of the codes enforcement division.

Decisions whether to send out a notice are made by the entire Board, not by any individual member. We are confident that this procedure effectively thwarts any individual's ability to extract commercial gain from the process.

It ' s Membership Renewal Time

Membership renewals for 2012 are now being accepted. Any dues paid from September 2010, or later, automatically extend to the end of 2012. Your dues pay for services such as dumpster day and graffiti day.

Look for membership forms at the November and January meetings. The form (with dues) can be submitted to Susan Kysela at VNA meetings, mailed., or ONLINE at www.volkerkcmo.org.

Renewal reminders will be mailed after the November meeting. All current (2012) members will be automatically entered in a drawing for prizes at the January 12th VNA meeting. Don't miss out!

City Debuts On-line Budget Forum

KCMO asks residents to make their voices heard regarding the next fiscal year's budget by logging onto www.KCMOMomentum.com, an interactive website that allows public input.

"KCMOMomentum.com is providing residents a unique opportunity to become involved in the budget prioritization process," said Mayor Sly James. "We are listening to these online discussions and encouraging all civic minded individuals to engage in the process and help shape the future of our city."

Operating as a virtual town hall, KCMOMomentum.com is currently seeking input for making budget decisions on a wide range of services and programs that impact the quality of life in KCMO.

Said Fourth District Councilwoman Jan Marcason: "This is the people's budget and we want their input as we strive to improve how the City serves its residents with a limited revenue stream."

Here are the topics:

- Public Safety Budget Items
- Healthy Community Budget Items
- Infrastructure Improvement Budget Items
- Neighborhood Livability Budget Items
- Budget priorities: Best City Activities
- Budget Priorities Elimination of Programs or Services
- Budget Priorities: New Programs or Services
- Special Committee on Small Business

2012 VNA Events

Spring Dumpster Day	May
Summer Yard Sale	June
Dance in the Park	Sept. 8
Graffiti Clean-up	TBD
Fall Yard Sale	TBD
Fall Dumpster Day	TBD

VNA Meeting Schedule

January 12
February 9

Meetings are on 2nd Thursday of the month EXCEPT August & December.

Become a VNA Member

Join during fall 2011; get membership good through December 2012

VNA Web Site

Register on the main page (www.volkerkcmo.org) to receive reminder emails about meetings & events.

VNA on Facebook

VNA also has a Facebook page. Just search for "Volker Neighborhood Association" and become a fan!

Your Volunteer VNA Board Members

President
Pam Gilford
931-3932
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Vice-President
vacant

Treasurer
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CITY OF FOUNTAINS
HEART OF THE NATION



KANSAS CITY
MISSOURI

**Printing provided by the
Neighborhood & Community
Services Department**

VNA Membership Application				
<i>Support your neighborhood by joining today. Take part in shaping Volker's future.</i>				
Name (s)				Please Check Membership Type
Address				Individual, \$15
City		State	Zip	Business, \$25
				Senior Adult, \$10
Phone				Household, \$10 per VOT-ING member (min \$20)
E-mail				Total enclosed: \$
	I am interested in working on Volker projects			Make Check payable to: VNA
MAIL TO:	Susan Kysela 3809 Terrace St, KCMO 64111			