

THE Volker News

Mar-Apr 2019 -- Volker Neighborhood Association—VolkerKCMO.org

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS/EVENTS

March-No Volker Meeting
Please attend Candidate Forums

April 11-Neighborhood Meeting

*Meetings are at
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Bell & Westport Road
(Enter from Bell Street.)*

Details below. Please join us!

Zoning (p. 2) Linister Smith (p. 3)... Board Elections (p. 3)

Primary Election Candidate Forums

Be ready on April 2nd for Kansas City's primary election of mayoral and city council candidates! Primary winners will appear on the June ballot. On the April primary ballot: 11 mayoral candidates, 6 candidates for 4th District City Council (where Volker is located), as well as at-large city council positions for the other districts all of which Volker residents vote on, School District Director, and a Ballot Initiative for Universal Pre-K. See <http://kcmayor.org/pre-k> for more info.

Where do candidates stand on issues that matter to you? We encourage you to attend these or other Candidate Forums to sort through the candidates and issues.

There will be no separate Volker meeting held in March.

4th District City Council Candidate Forum:

March 19th 6:30 pm/7:00 pm forum. Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Organized by West Plaza Neighborhood Association with area neighborhoods & League of Women Voters. Presentation on the Pre-K Ballot Issue before the forum

Mayoral Candidate Forum:

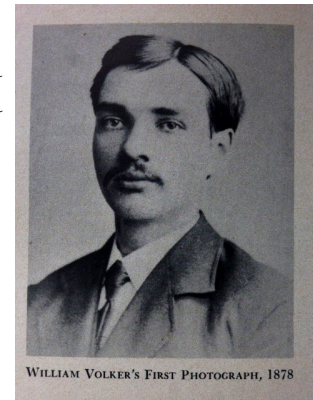
March 20th 6:00pm/6:30 pm forum. Plaza Library. Sponsored by KCPT & KCMO Public Library. To be aired on March 22nd and subsequent times.

Neighborhood Meeting: April 11th

Celebrate William Volker's 160th Birthday; Discuss response process to development proposals and New Proposal for Neighborhood Serving Retail

6:30 pm Social / 7:00 pm Program

Help celebrate Volker's namesake and learn more about his remarkable life (see p. 4). An ad hoc committee will provide suggestions for discussion on how best to assure transparent and timely notification of residents about development projects. Discussion will include information about the City's process for approval. Please join the conversation! See article on p. 2 for more info or to volunteer for this committee.



We will also discuss ideas for a possible "Neighborhood Serving Retail" business (see p. 2) at 1129 W. 41st Street in SE Volker. The new owner plans to renovate for use as an artist studio with additional space for a retail business.

Improving Development Awareness The VNA Board is creating an ad hoc Development Awareness Committee. The Committee will initially be tasked with recommending a process for notifying the Neighborhood of potential development. The process should be transparent and timely. Quite often, development approvals are on a quick timeline; many times City notifications are sent only a week or two before a public hearing. Thus, it is important that Volker has a mechanism that spreads the word quickly. The VNA Board hopes that if we can create a track record of organizing and responding quickly, developers will need to bring us to the table if they wish to propose any development. This may become a standing committee that implements the notification process and educates the neighborhood about the development process in general.

Several people already volunteered for this committee at the general meeting in February. We welcome anyone else who wants to volunteer. The committee plans on meeting at least once in March and recommending ideas to the board in early April.

Please contact Nathan Jurey (rep2-se@volkerna.org) if you have any ideas or are interested in volunteering.

Hearing Outcome: 3311 Bell Street

The Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) approved the property owner's application on Jan. 8th for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to build a townhouse with 3 dwelling units. If the Special Use Permit had not been approved, the owner could still have built three units by splitting one unit off the townhouse to make a single family house plus a 2-unit townhouse (duplex). There would have been no difference in density, parking, traffic, noise, or design style. The builder will include a sidewalk, drainage mitigation, differentiation of the units, and expanded front porches.

Volker Zoning History

Much of Volker was built in the early 20th century before modern zoning was established, and many houses, duplexes, and apartment buildings were built on smaller lots than later required under R-2.5 or R-5 zoning. In the early 1990's all residential Volker both north and south with few exceptions was zoned R-2.5, meaning that a minimum of

2,500 sq ft was required per dwelling unit. Exceptions included existing apartment complexes/buildings and commercial areas.

South Volker Downzoned - In the early 1990's developers began tearing down homes and building contemporary duplexes on small lots in South Volker. To protect itself from such development, South Volker and a small part of North Volker downzoned from R-2.5 to R-5. By increasing the amount of property required per dwelling unit to 5,000 sq ft, the unwanted development was stopped.

North Volker Downzoned - In 2012, a developer accumulated sufficient property under R-2.5 zoning to propose an 8-plex at 3616 Bell Street on a block of spacious single-family homes in North Volker that was still zoned R-2.5. The property owner eventually agreed to down-size and redesign that project into two triplexes. To protect North Volker from similar projects in the future, the effort was undertaken to downzone the rest of North Volker.

R-5 Zoning Basics

- 5,000 square feet is required per dwelling unit.
- Only single-family houses and duplexes can be built without a public hearing process and approval of a Special Use Permit.
- The building type originally proposed at 3616 Bell Street, a multi-plex house, is not allowed under R-5 zoning. The only building type with more than 2 units allowed under R-5 is a townhouse. It is allowed only after public hearings and approval of a Special Use Permit.

“Neighborhood Serving Retail”

R-5 zoning allows “neighborhood serving retail” commercial or restaurant use of buildings within residential areas that were originally the Mom-and-Pop stores scattered throughout neighborhoods such as Volker. A public hearing and Special Use Permit are required. (Section 88-360-01 in KCMO Municode.)

Mikal Shapiro, the new owner of Linister Smith's old studio at 1129 W. 41st Street is asking for your input and ideas. What would you like to see at that location (in addition to her studio)? Contact Mikal directly (mikalshapiro@gmail.com) or join the discussion at the April 11th Volker Meeting.



This 1940 tax photo is of a building located at 1127-1129 West 41st Street between Holly and Roanoke. It was the longtime studio of local artist Linister Smith. This property has been purchased by another artist, Mikal Shapiro, who also plans to use it as a studio.

According to the 1940 city directory, the building was Hankins Cabinet Shop, owned by Carl Hankins. Furniture repair, general carpentry, general repair and built-in fixtures were services offered. Look for information on the barbershop next door in a future Vintage Volker article!

Ideas for future Vintage Volker articles would be appreciated! Please contact me at the email on p. 4. -Diane Capps

In Memory: Linister Smith

Linister Smith was the artist, neighborhood fixture, and longtime resident/owner at 1129 West 41st Street in SE Volker. He moved to Kansas City after his exhibit at the Plaza Art Fair nearly sold out in 1969. Thomas Hart Benton and his wife Rita took him under their wing as they did many young artists. He died in November 2018. Will Leathem, co-owner of Prospero's Books, offered this memory of him:

Linister Smith was famously circumspect about his true age, going so far even to carve an incorrect date on the back of his paintings. One afternoon Linister was having a glass of wine with fellow Volker resident Michael Bechtel. As they sat on the porch sipping, the subject of Linister's age again came up. He snickered and noted that it was no one's business. With a sudden flash of inspiration, Mike called up Google on his cell-phone. Upon searching Linister's name, a biography popped up. Mike turned the phone to Linister and said, "Is this you? Is the date correct?" Linister sat back, took a long sip of his wine and offered up his trademark, "That's just buggy weird..."

Please Report Potholes!

Get in line for repairs by calling the City's 311 Call Center. Online, phone, Twitter and more...there are 10 different ways to make a 311 report. Be sure to give a good description of the location! <http://kcmo.gov/311/>

VNA Board Elections

If you are interested in getting involved in your neighborhood association, now's the time to consider running for the board or otherwise getting involved as a volunteer. Learn more about how the City works and be a part of solving problems and making things happen in Volker! A Nominating Committee of 3 members will be nominated and voted in at the May 9th Volker meeting, with the election of board members at the June meeting. All board positions are up for election or re-election and some may be open with no one running. The current president is not running. **Your VNA membership dues must be paid for 2019 at least two months in advance for eligibility to vote.** Attend Volker meetings in April and May to learn more.

Please Update your VNA Membership!

Join VNA by paying your dues in person at a meeting, online at www.volkerkcmo.org, or by mail using the application on the back of this newsletter.

Thank you!

Social Media Help Needed

Help get the word out about Volker news and events! Facebook, email notices, website updates (Wix) VNA's social media reflects a slightly different mix of news than other neighborhood sources. If you love communicating and want to work with your neighborhood association, please get in touch! info@volkerna.org Thanks!

William Volker - aka Mr. Anonymous

1859—Born on April 1st, Esperke, Germany

1871—Immigrated to America, landing in Chicago 3 days after the fire that left 1/3 of the population homeless. The outpouring of charity that aided the victims made a strong impression on 12 year old Volker.

1882—Founded Wm Volker & Company in Kansas City at age 23.

1885—Purchased his home at 3717 Bell Street.

1906—Became a millionaire.

His business eventually had offices and warehouses to the Pacific Ocean!

Throughout his life Volker wanted no one to know about his generosity, but he supported many individuals on an ongoing basis, donated to many Kansas City institutions including hospitals, property for the UMKC campus, and more. He organized and led the first municipal welfare department in the U.S., providing jobs for many in quarries around the city.

We can be proud of the Volker name! His spirit still lives in Volker Neighborhood.

New Destination for Volker Residents

Jersey Shore Pizza, 1607 W. 39th Street. Pizza by the slice or whole, calzones, brownies. Open 7 days a week, lunch, dinner, and late night.

Get out and enjoy your Neighborhood!

Volker Neighborhood Association meets the SECOND THURSDAY of the month—except in July, August and December, when we don't meet.

If you have questions about real estate or personal property taxes, or an issue related to Jackson County gov't, call:

Scott Burnett

1st District Jackson County Legislator

816-365-6664 (cell)

burnett.scott@gmail.com

VNA Membership Application

⇒ Membership is based on the calendar year ⇐

We encourage residents and businesses in Volker to join in shaping Volker's future.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

I AM INTERESTED IN WORKING ON VOLKER PROJECTS

**MAIL TO: DIANE CAPPS, 3535 GENESSEE ST,
KANSAS CITY, MO 64111**

PLEASE SELECT MEMBERSHIP TYPE

- INDIVIDUAL \$15
 SENIOR 60+ \$10
 HOUSEHOLD \$20
 BUSINESS \$25

AMOUNT ENCLOSED:

\$ _____

**PLEASE MAKE
CHECKS PAYABLE TO V. N. A.**

VNA Board

We're All Volunteers!

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