

# THE Volker News

Jan-Feb 2019 -- Volker Neighborhood Association—VolkerKCMO.org

## NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS/EVENTS

Jan 10-KCPD & Chili Night

Feb 14-Housing Issues

March—Candidate Forum  
(date/venue TBD)

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

*Details below. Please join us!*

## **Loretto News (p. 2)... Membership Renewals (p. 4)**

### **Neighborhood Meeting: January 10 KCPD's Holly Sticken & Chili Night**

6:30 pm Social & Chili / 7:00 pm Program

Doors open at 6:00 pm for setup.

Long in the planning, this meeting with KC's finest is always a treat. Sample a variety of chilis on what may be VNA's coldest meeting day of the year. Meet Officer Holly Sticken, newest Community Interaction Officer in the Central Patrol District. Discuss neighborhood safety and security issues.

*If you make a killer chili or just a darn good one, please consider bringing a pot of your best, or something to go with...Questions? Email or text Amy Cook:*

*abcook2002@yahoo.com or 913-306-4334.*



### **Neighborhood Meeting: February 14th Moving Forward on Housing Issues**

6:30 pm Social / 7:00 pm Program This meeting will focus on a better understanding, transparency, and processes for addressing housing issues as they arise in the future. We want to hear from you! If

you are interested in serving on a Housing Committee to help with this effort, please contact any board member. Any lawyers out there?

Yes, it's the second Thursday of the month—the regular VNA meeting day, and yes, it happens to be Valentine's Day.

We hope you'll join us!

*Contributions of Valentine treats welcome.*

### **Candidate Forum: March date TBA**

Kansas City will be electing a new mayor and city council representatives in the spring. With Mayor James being term limited out of office at the end of his term, the field for mayoral candidates is wide open. And because one of Volker's City Council Reps, Jolie Justus, is running for mayor, there will be an all new field of candidates to fill her council position. Volker residents will be voting on the at-large candidates for all other districts as well.

The West Plaza Neighborhood is organizing this forum. The date and venue have not been set.

*There will be no separate VNA meeting held in March.* We encourage you to attend this Candidate Forum.

*Check the "Volker Neighborhood Association" Facebook page regularly or sign up for email notices at www.VolkerKCMO.org to be sure you stay informed.*

## The Loretto has been sold...Again!

But *this time* it finally looks like the good news Volker residents have long hoped for. Del Properties KC, the developer of several historic midtown properties including the Norman School Lofts just across SW Trafficway, closed on the Loretto sale on November 19.

Kelly Hoefer, Events Manager, enthusiastically stated their intentions to “bring back the original splendor and revitalize [The Loretto] to make it a productive part of the community.” She pointed out the maple hardwood floors they’ve uncovered with intentions to restore. They plan to use old doors that were in storage to build the bar in one of the new event space areas.

Del Properties KC has sensible plans and the resources to take immediate action. They are already leasing existing apartments and corporate office space and working with the architect on event space renovations. A new website and marketing materials are in the works.

Renovations will update event space areas with features now in demand for weddings as well as corporate events. One of the ballrooms will have a capacity of 350! There are no plans to change the chapel with its original light fixtures and stained glass windows, but honeymoon suites will be added as well as 4-5 AirBnB rooms. There is a kitchen for catering as well.

The Loretto has approximately 50 studio, 1 and 2 bedroom apartments now at 80% occupancy. They do not have full kitchens. Apartments will eventually be renovated between leases.

Seven houses scattered around the perimeter of The Loretto were also sold as part of the deal. Plans are to renovate and retain them as rental homes. Two already have new roofs.

## Progress in Roanoke Park

Workmen took advantage of mild weather to install the electrical supply for new park lighting



going in across the street from and also north of the Westport Roanoke Community Center.

New bollards (those white poles in the street) have been installed at Karnes and Madison and along Karnes in the Coleman Highlands Neighborhood to slow traffic. It seems to be working. If you stand on the hill above the intersection, you can see and hear cars slowing down as they approach.



## 3311 Bell Street Development Proposal

This is an effort to provide background and bring you up to date.

**The Downzoning Effort** – Several years ago, the VNA led a successful effort to down-zone much of north Volker from the R-2.5 Zoning District to the R-5 Zoning District. R-5 Zoning only allows one dwelling unit per 5,000 sq. ft. of property, whereas R-2.5 zoning allows 1 dwelling unit per 2,500 sq. ft. of property. Additionally, R-5 Zoning only allows single-family and two-family homes by right. However, *unknown to the VNA until recently, a developer is allowed to construct townhomes if the property is larger than 15,000 sq. ft. (i.e. 5,000 sq. ft. per unit) and they obtain a Special Use Permit.*

**Background**—Bringing us to present day, an 18,000-sq. ft. property at 3311 Bell Street was sold to a developer. If the VNA had not successfully downzoned Volker, a 7-unit apartment could have been built on this property. Because of the down-zoning, a maximum of 3 units may be built on this property. The developer, Ben VinZant, may build a single-family house and a duplex with only a Building Permit or a 3-unit townhome with a Special Use Permit and a Building Permit. The developer decided to move forward with the tri-plex proposal.

The developer asked the VNA Board for feedback earlier in 2018. The Board supported a setback variance but did not comment on the building type; the Board requested items addressing tangible concerns such as stormwater run-off and the inclusion of sidewalks. The developer eventually agreed to all items.

## ~ ~ ~ Vintage Volker ~ ~ ~



This is the image that started it all—thanks to an auction of the property in 2011! From 1982-2011 a guttering business was operated out of this building at the southwest corner of 35th Terrace and Genessee. This 1940 tax-photo was featured in the auction advertising and it piqued my interest. At the auction, I talked with *really* longtime residents Terry Trost and Susan Bell who had lived in the immediate area since 1946—most of their lives! They could remember going into the little neighborhood grocery store in this building to buy candy as kids. They said the store

was in existence well into the 1950's! Sadly, Terry passed away in 2014, just shy of her 68th birthday. She had been active on the VNA board for many years.

*The Vintage Volker column has featured the 1940 tax photos ever since that auction, but that material is almost exhausted. Ideas for future Vintage Volker articles would be appreciated! Please contact me at the email on p. 4.* -Diane Capps

**Hearings** – The City Plan Commission (CPC) and the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) have both heard the Special Use Permit proposal for a 3-unit townhome (tri-plex) at 3311 Bell Street. On November 20, 2018, the CPC had a tie vote on the Special Use Permit with a 2 to 2 vote. The BZA heard the proposal on November 27, and scheduled it, again, for a continuation to January 8, 2019.

At the most recent hearing on December 11th, a petition signed by 60 residents was submitted stating they did not want a triplex built. Most live within 3 blocks of the site. It was not clear what information they were provided before signing.

The public hearing process is intended to hear and consider all concerns including whether a tri-plex or a single-family house and duplex can be built.

We continue to encourage all neighbors to attend hearings including the BZA hearing on January 8. We understand there is concern over the tri-plex development and we want the BZA to hear and consider those concerns and any others. *Please keep in mind that R-5 zoning legally allows 3 dwelling units on this property. Thus, a reduction in the density or traffic generated by the development is not something that we can impact.*

You may voice your opinion in person at the hearing or submit your notarized statement emailed to [Justin.Peterson@kcmo.org](mailto:Justin.Peterson@kcmo.org) no later than 12 noon on the day of the hearing.

*January 8th, 2019, 1:00 pm, KCMO City Hall, 414 E. 12th Street, 26th Floor, City Council Chambers*



**Please turn the page for more news!**

## **Are you a Member?**



**Did you know?** Membership in the Volker Neighborhood Association (VNA) is based on the calendar year. Whether you are renewing or joining for the first time, we appreciate your support.

VNA provides services for residents whether they are members or not. These include our annual Thanksgiving Potluck, Dumpster Day twice a year, informative monthly meetings and fun events, a newsletter, projects to improve quality of life in Volker, and opportunities for you to get involved.

Dues are still amazingly reasonable! Please mail the application below, join at a meeting, or join online: [www.VolkerKCMO.org](http://www.VolkerKCMO.org). -Diane Capps

## **Community Center Director Retires**

Alan Schmelzle, director of the Westport Roanoke Community Center for the past 4 years, is retiring. After managing Kemper Arena then transferring over to Conventions, Schmelzle went to work for KCMO Parks and Recreation. He's been a friendly, helpful, and effective manager. We wish him well!

*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 govt, call:  
**Scott Burnett**  
1st District Jackson County Legislator  
**816-365-6664 (cell)**  
**[burnett.scott@gmail.com](mailto: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 PAYA-  
BLE TO V. N. A.

## **VNA Board**

### **We're All Volunteers!**

**President**

Susan Kysela  
816 809-2557  
[president@volkerna.org](mailto:president@volkerna.org)

**Vice President**

Patrick Faltico  
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**Secretary**

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