

Grove Place Association
Monthly Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President Kimberly Russell at 4:06pm.

We went around the room to introduce ourselves to our newest neighbor, Dan Tanghe, who has purchased Jim Martin's house and is presently doing some remodeling prior to moving in. Kim also thanked the YMCA for their generous hospitality letting us use one of their community rooms each month, and Megan DeFranco for coordinating our use of the facility. Kim also defined GPA's expanded footprint to include adjacent areas to include such building as The Sagamore on East Ave. and Charlotte Square.

Kim reviewed our Association's goals:

- Provide opportunities to connect with each other to strengthen our community.
- Constructively address issues impacting our residents and businesses.
- Be the "go-to" neighborhood organization for the City, businesses, and developers doing anything in our area.
- Preserve the rich history of the Grove Place Association.
- Support Center City Community Coalition's (C-4) programming and initiatives.
- Expand membership – if you haven't renewed, see Megan.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Carlos Mercado for Treasurer, Rick McGrath who was personally leading the Buffalo Bills to victory over the Cincinnati Bengals. We have \$6,485.93 on hand as of August 31, the largest portion of which - \$5,928.35 – is in the General Fund.

Secretary Carlos Mercado gave the Secretary's Report, reading the Minutes for the April 14th monthly meeting and noting that the March and April minutes are to be posted to our web site. There were no monthly meetings in May, June, July, or August, but there was a special meeting in late May for those interested in reviewing and discussing the issues with 58 University Ave. and Downstairs Cabaret. The April minutes were approved.

Blue Cease, Executive Director of the Rochester Contemporary Art Center – ROCO – gave a presentation on Current Seen, which runs from October 4th through November 17th. "Big Ideas, Small Venues" is the theme of this ambitious effort. Its intention is to support the region's growing contemporary art community by bringing new curatorial voices and new artworks together in Downtown Rochester. It will have works by both regional and national artists. The theme for these projects is "Our Current Moment/Our Changing City." East Avenue and Main Street would be both the dividing line and connecting thread to move audiences along these streets from project to project.

Bob Keck and Kim Russell presented the Grove Place Design Standards and how they are applied to current situations with PowerPoint slides, and were joined by Ed Saphar. At the end

of World War II, there was a housing shortage especially for single individuals working in the center city. The need for housing evolved into what we know as Urban renewal. In contrast with projects today, Urban Renewal was a top-down, government drive, big project, car-centric approach that focused on tearing down many of the older city buildings. Our neighborhood was a fairly run-down area of apartments, gas stations and auto repair shops and small businesses. Mel and Ann McQuay recognized what needed to be done and got architect Bob Macon involved, joined in the early 70's by Ed and Audrey Saphar. Our Association was founded in 1969, and became a model for other in the city. Ed's townhouse at Gibbs and University which opened in 1974 was the first new single family residential structure built within the Inner Loop in over 100 years. It created a market for owner-occupied residences. Bob Freeman, Dean of Eastman School and the YMCA both announced that they were considering leaving downtown for the River Campus and a suburban location respectively. This galvanized civic leaders of downtown to action focusing on both new construction and historic rehabilitation. An Historic Preservation district was formed along with an urban Design district to its immediate north, as a collaborative effort of the City and the Neighborhood. One important concept is that no one building should dominate the neighborhood and its sky and none shall depreciate its neighbors. Imagine if the proposed apartment building at 58 University had been built 45 years ago. As the oldest continually occupied neighborhood in downtown Rochester, we have created an urban mixed community of owners, small businesses, responsible landlords, and the Eastman school of Music. We seek to participate in the creation of identifiable and recognizable Center City neighborhoods that retain their history, design characteristics, and are linked to each other. The design code seeks to preserve the pedestrian character and heritage quality of the neighborhood of the neighborhood.

The proposal for 58 University Avenue (the Tavern 58 at Gibbs site) by Dan Dwyer has two major and a number of minor design code flaws and violations. It's height is four stories and 45 feet and its depth is 129 feet vs. codes of 3 stories 36 feet and an 85 foot depth. Its footprint is 96% above guidelines and 26% above height restrictions. There are environmental issues which appear to have been glossed over. The site was a battery charging station and a series of gas stations from the 1920's to the 1990's with indications of below-grade chemical pollution. In contrast, the Liberty Landing project is comparable in height to School 28 across Scio Street and does not dominate its land parcel. The date for the appeal is still uncertain, perhaps due to the environmental issues being uncovered.

Kim updated the group on a number of recent developments. Orange Glory and Peppa Pot are both doing well, and we should continue to patronize both places. Opp Shop, a consignment boutique has opened at the corner of Pitkin and Charlotte Sts. Bar Mecca on Richmond St. will be having a Mocktail reception next Wednesday from 6-9pm. REDD has opened in the former 2Vine space on Winthrop St. Meliora Weekend is October 4th. Next weekend's Landmark Society Downtown tour will include Kim's house, a preview of upgrade to the Little theater, the Fonzi's condo at Sagamore on East, and two units at Charlotte Square. The Book club continues and meets monthly.

Our next meeting will be Sunday October 20th at 4pm with a reception to follow. Our annual Holiday Party is scheduled for Sunday December 15th. Details to come. Get your dues to Rick McGrath ASAP!

Respectfully submitted,

Carlos Mercado,
Secretary