

March 2019

Highland Park

Community Council Newsletter

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A Letter from the President

Often, when people or organizations are looking to do something that requires approval by zoning or another city department, they are encouraged to meet with the neighborhood through a community organization like the HPCC, or a general meeting if an organization is not available. Fortunately for Highland Park, the HPCC and our monthly meetings have played a key role in the process.

It is seen by the decision makers in city government as a good faith effort and if the organization's idea is accepted by the community members attending the meeting, it is seen as an approval of sorts from the overall community as everyone was given the chance to attend and voice their opinion. This is one of the reasons I send out meeting notices and reminders and encourage everyone to attend.

We have one such meeting coming up which is why I mention it. We were recently approached by Girls Hope, a non-profit organization in Pittsburgh that fosters young girls (and young boys separately) in residential homes. It's a faith based organization that creates an atmosphere where children from challenging environments can live and go to school in a safer, more educationally focused home. There is 24/7 supervision and no more than eight children in a home.

The organization is looking to open a home for boys in the city and the homes in Highland Park are large enough to easily house eight

children and two caretakers. The inclusiveness of the neighborhood and access to public transportation are also attractive. The organization will pay for the boys to attend Central Catholic and pay for all of their housing and day to day care.

The HPCC does not typically take a position in these situations, unless one is warranted. We more so want to give the community the opportunity to hear from the organization and make their own decision based on what they learned.

Using our housing stock for such a home is not unprecedented. This type of volunteer residential living set up is not qualified as a group home, and it is therefore not supervised by the state. But, there have been a number of group homes in Highland Park over the decades at various levels of success. It also falls within a gray area in the city's zoning code so a formal zoning hearing may not be required.

Girls Hope would like to introduce themselves to the neighborhood and answer any questions you may have. I have offered them time at our April meeting to do so.

In the meantime, you can learn more about their leadership here: <https://www.girlshope.org/leadership/>

And they have submitted an article on page 3 to give a little background prior to the meeting.

All the best,

Monica Watt
HPCC President

Welcome Spring!

*To find the universal elements
enough; to find the air and the water
exhilarating; to be refreshed by a morning
walk or an evening saunter... to be thrilled
by the stars at night; to be elated over a
bird's nest or a wildflower in spring -
these are some of the rewards
of the simple life.*

- John Burroughs

GIRLS HOPE

OF PITTSBURGH

*By Erin Cannon,
Marketing and
Development
Coordinator*

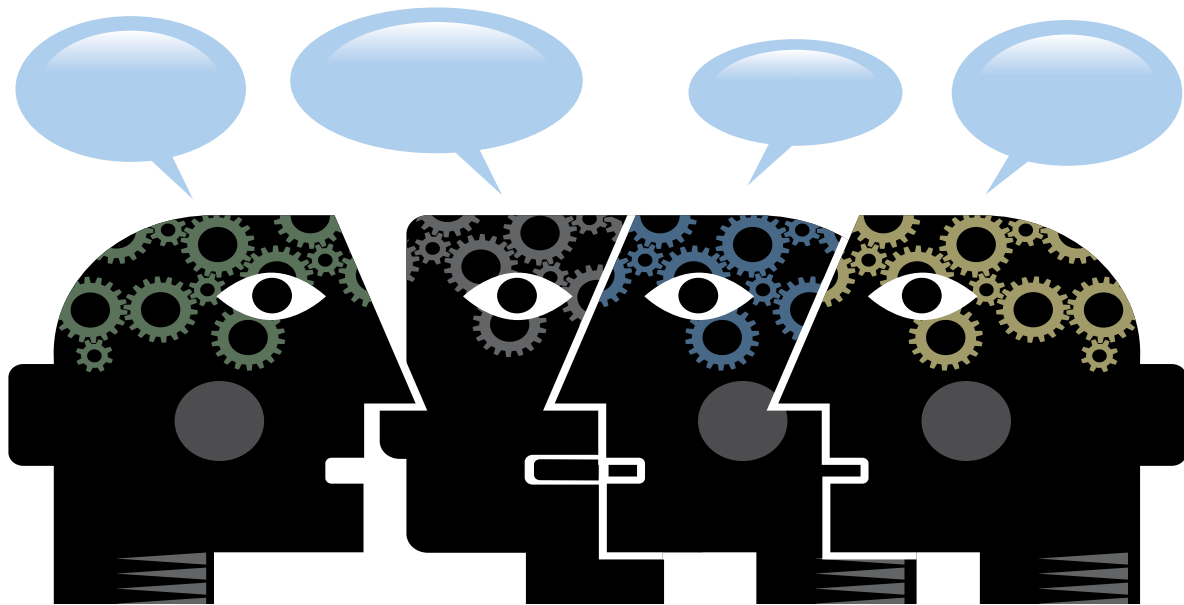
Girls Hope of Pittsburgh is a nonprofit organization that helps academically capable and motivated children-in-need to meet their full potential and become “women for others.” By providing a value-centered, nurturing, family-like home, opportunities, and a quality education through college, we break the patterns of abuse, poverty, and neglect experienced by the young women and young men we serve.



As an affiliate of Boys Hope Girls Hope International, Girls Hope gives our scholars a foundation for success by addressing their basic needs and providing them with opportunities that build confidence and self-esteem. Our program focuses on formal education, holistic learning, and service projects, preparing each girl to become an educated, responsible young woman poised to make a positive and lasting impact on the world around her.

While Girls Hope provides our scholars with a high quality education to serve as the foundation for a successful future, the impact we have on our scholars stretches much further than just education. We provide a nurturing and stable home environment guided by loving and responsible adults. Upon entering our homes, our scholars are provided with nutritious food to feed their brains, school supplies to fill their backpacks, and the assistance they need to build a successful future.

Over the last several years we have discussed ways for us to expand our program and serve boys in the area. After a lot of thought and strategic planning, we feel that it is time for us to open a home for boys. There is an opportunity for us to serve at risk-youth boys in the same way we serve at risk-youth girls in the Pittsburgh area. Our goal is to find a home in the Highland Park neighborhood because it is a safe, welcoming community where we can provide boys with everything they need. The structure of the program would be exactly the same as the Girls Hope program, and the boys would have 24-hour care thanks to our Residential Counselors, and our Director of Residential Programs. They would receive a private-Catholic education through high school, just like the girls, and we would provide them with all of the tools and resources they need to be successful in life. We are excited to have the opportunity to expand our program and open a home for boys in our community.



HPCC February Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Called to order at 7:00 p.m.
by Monica Watt**

Police Zone 5 Update – Officers Baker, Rush & Crawford

Please call 311 for complaints such as potholes and loitering. The calls go to the mayor's office and then to the appropriate agency/department. All 311 calls will be tracked; you will get a tracking number and can go on-line and check on the progress. For emergencies or suspicious activity, always use 911.

Be sure your car doors are locked. Thieves will walk down the block, checking car doors.

There was a burglary on the 1500 block of Wellesley during the day. They have video footage of the culprits and are looking for them. There are many burglaries during the day because that's when thieves expect no one to be home. If you have an alarm, be sure to turn it on when you leave home.

Someone asked how to get more traffic enforcement to address speeding. The officers recommended calling 311 and it would be routed to the traffic division. Monica has talked to

Councilwoman Gross about speeding and how and where the HPCC could put flashing speed indicators. Councilwoman Gross is helping figure out the process with the city and possibly a subsidy to help the HPCC pay for them.

June 8th will be the Zone 5 Community Day at their headquarters on Washington Boulevard. All are welcome.

Melvin from Rep. Gainey's Office

Rep. Gainey's office is going to start having a regular presence at our meetings. He is here to listen and provide materials for our welcome bags.

David Atkinson – Candidate for School Board

David introduced himself. He lives here in Highland Park and announced that he is running for school board. He is also an HPCC Board Member.

David Hance, President, Highland Park Community Development Corp (HPCDC) – 2019 Update

David provided a presentation on the HPCDC. It is an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to fight blight, increase inclusion and affordability (re: rental properties), build on our neighborhood's diversity, and continue making Highland Park welcoming and accessible to all. HPCC sets the neighborhood vision, whereas HPCDC implements development goals set by the neighborhood.

David provided some history of the organization. HPCDC was founded to focus on the “Southwest Quadrant” of the neighborhood. At the time, there were many absentee landlords, a steady decline in property value, and an increase in crime. Initial projects in that area included some with private partners. After doing several projects, more private developers were willing to invest, which was the goal – to correct the market. HPCDC was also involved in developing the 2004 Community Plan (which is accessible on the HPCC website) and getting part of the neighborhood named a national historic district. HPCC and HPCDC are currently working with Preservation Pittsburgh on getting the park (Highland Park) included on the National Historic Registry.

HPCDC has been more active on Bryant Street in recent years, undertaking a 3-phase project. The private sector can’t afford to buy these properties, renovate them, and then use them, so the HPCDC partners with the URA and other organizations to acquire and renovate buildings.

- Bryant Street Phase 1: They purchased and restored the building that houses Park Bruges. The neighborhood’s National Historic designation helped them get federal tax credits for that project.
- Bryant Street Phase 2: This is the new building next to Park Bruges. The apartments are rented and the commercial space is half-filled. They had to spend more on finishing the project so they couldn’t build out the commercial space. As a result, although they’ve had interest in the other spaces, they couldn’t respond quickly enough for prospective tenants. However, they just got funding to install walls, baths, etc., to the remaining spaces so that they will be able to prepare the sites more quickly. They also want to do some landscaping there. Bryant Street has an active restaurant scene, so this building was intentionally designed not to house a restaurant. They are hoping to attract businesses that will generate traffic there during the day.

- Bryant Street Phase 3: This site is 5800 Bryant Street, across from Park Bruges. Work is currently under way there. The renovation is about 50% complete and should be completed in early summer. The space is envisioned as a ground floor commercial space facing Bryant Street (maybe a small restaurant space - a wood fired pizza restaurant has shown interest), office space on 2nd floor facing Bryant (they are looking for tenants), and an apartment in the back. They also own the lot next door and have talked to people about building that out. It has the potential for a building with first floor retail and 2nd and 3rd floor apartments.

They also own the empty lot across from Smiling Banana Leaf. They need a partner to work with them on that. When they bought that lot, there was a building on it that they had to demolish. Someone asked if the lot could be public green space with tables, which generated a lot of support from the group. HPCDC has been approached by Grounded to do some green space upgrades there and it may be possible to partner with HPCC to do something.

Some of the sites that HPCDC has redeveloped on Bryant Street and elsewhere have include apartments. For the apartments they’ve renovated, they maintain ownership and have professional management. The apartments are a mix of low income, affordable, and market rate apartments.

Other

People raised concerns about the buses idling on Mellon Terrace while they buses wait. They asked the HPCC to put pressure on Port Authority to have them turn the buses off while they wait, although this has been an issue for 20+ years. Monica agreed to discuss it with the Port Authority the next time they meet.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 21, 2019 at St. Andrews at 7:00 PM. The HPCC Board will be engaging community members in an exercise to identify the priorities the community would like the organization to focus on.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.



WALK IN THE PARK DAY WALK

Join us for a walk in the park as we celebrate National Take A Walk In the Park Day! This easy 3-4 mile walk will cover paved and wooded trails with some hills as we explore Highland Park. This outing is for Venture Outdoors members only. Interested in becoming a member? Sign up here! (<http://www.ventureoutdoors.org/membership/>) Registration for these outings opens on the first business day of the outing's month.

WHEN: March 30

TIME: 10:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

WHERE: Highland Park

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

MEMBER PRICE: \$0

www.ventureoutdoors.org/events/7520224/



MOTHER OF ALL POTTERY SALES 2019



Sunday, April 14, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A free, family-friendly event.

Come celebrate all things clay at our 6th annual Mother of All Pottery Sales - the biggest clay celebration in Pittsburgh!

This event brings talented ceramic artists and pottery lovers together under one roof.

Join us this year for hands-on activities in the studio, a live demonstration from professional ceramic artists, a clay activity in the studio, and a sale featuring locally made pottery from the region's top ceramic artists.

Highland Park Orthophosphate Project

A PROJECT OF
PGH₂O

Project Information and Construction Update

About

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority is constructing two small buildings in Highland Park to house the equipment needed to add orthophosphate to our drinking water system.

The Highland Park facilities are located within the Sycamore Grove picnic area and near Reservoir I.

Orthophosphate will also be added at the Aspinwall Water Treatment Plant and the Bruecken Pump Station.

Why Orthophosphate

Orthophosphate is a food-grade additive used by water utilities across the country to reduce lead levels in tap water. When water with orthophosphate runs through the system, it creates a coating on the inside of lead service lines and establishes a barrier between the lead pipes and the water. This is called corrosion control. It's an effective method, recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to reduce lead.

Traffic Impacts

Reservoir Drive will remain partially closed to traffic at the two orthophosphate buildings, leaving one lane open to maintain one-way traffic. Flaggers are on site to direct traffic. *After construction hours, please use caution when traveling through this area.*

Construction Schedule

End of March: Begin feeding orthophosphate into the water distribution system.

Spring 2019: Complete exterior and remaining sitework at the Sycamore Grove facility.



Last week the 1,000 gallon orthophosphate storage tank was delivered to the Sycamore Grove facility. As more equipment is delivered, this location will become more active with delivery trucks. Please be aware of this increased activity.

Construction Update: March 4 - March 15, 2019

- Contractors have completed the majority of the brick work at both the Sycamore Grove facility and the smaller building near Reservoir I. They will begin installing the ceiling and are starting the interior work at each location.
- Next week the contractor will begin constructing the roof structure at the Sycamore Grove facility. This will extend over the orthophosphate building as well as the portion of the facility that makes up the picnic shelter.
- Trenching work across and along Reservoir Drive will also take place next week, and contractors will begin installing the electrical, communication, and water lines needed for both orthophosphate facilities.
- To safely excavate the trench, the contractor will likely close Reservoir Drive in the construction area for several hours on approximately two to three days next week. Please be aware of changing traffic patterns and use extreme caution near the construction area.

Project Questions

Brad McShane
Construction Project Manager
(412) 255-8800
bmcshane@pgh2o.com

Project Information

www.pgh2o.com/highlandpark

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HIGHLAND PARK

Nature Watch

By
Richard
Krepki

Our neighborhood is blessed with a great deal of natural beauty. Send your observations regarding unusual birds and other aspects of the "wild side" of Highland Park to richard@vision-and-values.com—I'll edit and compile them for the monthly Newsletter. Your photos would be most welcome. No names or yard locations will be given without your approval. More timely bits of information will be posted on the Highland Park ListServ.

FANFARE FOR THE COMMON BIRD—MOURNING DOVES



Mourning Dove

I have never felt any fondness for the common Pigeon, a transplant from Europe. It is too closely associated in my mind with urban decay. However, I do take delight in its domestic cousin, the Mourning Dove. Mourning Doves have a subtle coloration of muted gray/

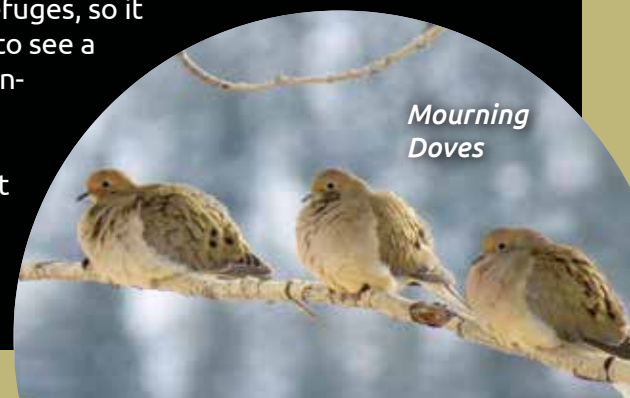
brown with a hint of peach or pink in the breast area. Their shape is elegantly slender, compared to the more bulky pigeon.

Male mourning doves make a delightful sound of "coah, cooo, cooo, coo" to attract a mate. The couples are very "lovey-dovey" during breeding

season (enough said.) All birds have a loud wing whistle when they burst into flight. (It reminds me of "who, who, who" sound that was made by Curly of the Three Stooges.) The wing whistle acts as a danger signal to others, and I think it may also serve to startle predators when the birds are flushed from the brush.

The Mourning Dove is actually the most popular game bird in the U.S., with more than twenty million birds taken each year. In spite of this, the Dove is not threatened or endangered, as it can have up to six two-egg broods a year. The Mourning Dove is the official "Symbol of Peace" in Wisconsin and "State Bird of Peace" in Michigan. Ironically, Wisconsin now allows dove hunting. Voters in Michigan voted down hunting in 2004, but the State's hunters are pushing for a legal season once again. Given the extensive hunting of doves, it is understandable that they like to hang out inside the city limits.

Mourning Doves are very susceptible to lead poisoning from spent shotgun pellets. They use the shot like pebbles in their gizzards to grind up seeds. The Trump Interior Department recently moved to overturn the ban on lead ammunition in wildlife refuges, so it you start to see a lot of brain-damaged doves, that might be the reason.



Mourning Doves

SHIBUSA

There is a precise term for the venerable quality in a landscape that mosses and lichens help instill, the word shibusa, invented by the Japanese to save dithering with descriptive language.

– George Schenk
Moss Gardening
Timber Press, Portland, OR 1997

Do you have a shady, moist area in your yard with poor soil quality where nothing much will grow? Why not introduce some “shibusa” to your garden and plant a carpet of moss there? Moss is unusual in that it does not have a root system but derives its nutrients from the air. Most mosses are fond of acidified soil that discourages growth of other plants.

My moss garden is an area where a drain pipe was dug up and repaired a few years ago, leaving barren subsoil exposed. I loosened the soil surface and then put down a thin layer of peat moss mixed with good garden soil and soil acidifier, got it nice and soggy, and then stomped in bits of moss harvested from other areas of the yard and from friends and neighbors (thanks Janet, Judy and Conrad.) The stomping is important to ensure that there isn't an air gap between moss and substrate. The area was kept moist until the moss was well-established. Now I have a garden pathway I call the “emerald aisle.”



*Bryum
Argentum*



*Hypnum
Imponens*

Most of the moss we find around here appears to be the velvety *Bryum Argentum* (“sidewalk” or “crack” moss) or the fern-like *Hypnum Imponens* (“sheet,” “carpet,” or “log” moss.) Other varieties can be feathery, flower-like, or bushy, with interesting names like “windswept,” “pincushion,” “medusa” and “seductive.”

Several varieties are available on-line, though many of these appear to be more for indoor use, in terrariums, for example.



In hunting for moss to transplant, I noticed some great moss colonies established on concrete next to rotting wood. I suspect that the wood releases airborne nutrients that help the moss to thrive. Compost positioned adjacent to the moss is probably also beneficial.





Mason Bee emerging from mud-sealed hole



Home-made Mason Bee house

A RECOLLECTION:

On a sunny spring day, mason bees emerged from their mud-sealed nurseries, in perfect synchronization with the opening of the first blossoms of our cherry tree. Mason bees are pleasant little bees, often metallic blue or green in color. The males cannot sting, and the females rarely do. With the decrease in the honeybee population, mason bees are even more important as pollinators. Three mason bee females can pollinate an entire apple tree, and they continue to work on cool and rainy days when honeybees have taken the day off.



Mason Bee

You can make one yourself by simply drilling 3" deep holes, ranging from 1/4" to 3/8" in diameter, in a 2x4 (don't use treated lumber!) The holes shouldn't go all the way through the wood. Position your bee motel with a southern or eastern exposure on a building, fence post, or tree trunk. It should be about a meter off the ground and shouldn't sway.

Female mason bees will start using the holes soon after emerging and mating in the spring. They fill the hole with a food supply of pollen and nectar, then deposit an egg and build a partition of mud so they can work on the next egg chamber, repeating the process until the hole is filled. Female eggs are deposited first, with male eggs deposited closer to the opening. Eggs soon hatch, and the larvae spend the next ten days consuming their food supply, then spin a cocoon and transform into adults over the fall and winter. In spring, the males emerge first and hang out near the nest, sometimes even helping the females to emerge. After mating, the males soon die, and the females get to work.



A RECOMMENDATION:

Now is the time to consider erecting a "mason bee motel"—before the fruit trees start blooming. The bee houses available on-line and at nature stores like the one at Beechwood Farms are generally collections of different diameter tubes.



Store-bought Mason Bee house

Spring migration time is almost upon us. Please let me know of any unusual bird sightings, so I can post them here or on the ListServ. Jill Weiss reported six Cedar Waxwings in her pin oak tree (right next to her third floor window!) after the snow of February 20th. Perhaps these were driven into our area by heavier weather down south.



Cedar Waxwing

March and April, as we sail from Winter to Spring and in the Church Year from Lent to Easter—and through it all we would wish all our neighbors a season of warm sunshine, blessing and renewal, healing and mercy, hope and joy.

One musical highlight of the season will come on Thursday evening, April 4, at 8 p.m., when the St. Andrew's Parish Choir will be singing Evensong for Lent. The service is followed by a musical recital, this month featuring three fabulous singers, Andrew and Kathryn Parsley and Nathan Thorp. All welcome!

Families will also want to mark calendars for seasonal activities. On Saturday, April 13, from 10:30 until noon we have an "Easter Crafts Morning" that will include Easter Egg coloring. Families are invited to bring hard-boiled eggs for the project—to take home some, and to contribute some to the annual Parish and Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt in the St. Andrew's Churchyard also at 10:30 a.m. on Holy Saturday, April 20. All are welcome!

Worship in Holy Week at St. Andrew's begins on Palm Sunday, April 14, with a service that (weather permitting) will begin with a reading of the story of Christ's Entry into Jerusalem at 11 a.m. in the Churchyard and then include a Procession of Congregation and Choir into the Church, followed by an ensemble reading of the Passion of St. Luke. On Thursday of Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, April 18, we are invited to a less formal gathering "around the table" in the Parish Hall where we begin at 6 p.m. with a simple service of Holy Communion remembering the Last Supper and then to continue with a Lenten Potluck Supper. If possible, please bring something to share for the meal.

On Good Friday, April 19, the Great Three Hours are observed with a service of the Stations of the Cross at 12 Noon, the Prayer Book Order for Good Friday at 1 p.m., with traditional hymns, the reading of the St. John Passion, and a Good



By Bruce Robison, Rector

Friday Meditation, and at 2 p.m. an hour of music and quiet contemplation led by the St. Andrew's Choir. Among the choral works featured will be The Seven Last Words, by Heinrich Schutz, and the Chorales from the J.S. Bach St. Matthew Passion. At 3 p.m. the Great Bell of St. Andrew's is tolled 33 times, to commemorate the traditional number of years of our Lord's earthly life.

Easter morning, April 21, is a festival day of celebration, with a 9 a.m. service of Holy Communion, including organ and hymns, and an 11 a.m.

service with Choir and special music. A Champagne Reception and fun Easter activities for the kids will follow the later service—in the Churchyard, weather permitting, or in the Parish House.

St. Andrew's, in the 5800 block of Hampton Street, has been in ministry in the heart of this neighborhood of Highland Park for over a century. If you have a pastoral concern we can help with—a baby to be baptized, a marriage to celebrate, a sick or shut-in family member or neighbor who would appreciate a visit and a blessing, a family to comfort at the time of the death of a loved one—or if you simply would like to borrow a table or find some space for a family gathering too large for your living room, please feel free, whatever your religious background or heritage may be, to give our Church Office a call at 412 661-1245—or to check us out on the web, www.standrewspgh.org. We're always glad to hear from you, and to help if we can.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
5801 Hampton Street
Highland Park, Pittsburgh

The Rev. Dr. Bruce Monroe Robison, Rector
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SHORT FILM ABOUT HIGHLAND PARK

Google Highland Park Nevena to view it
or go to bit.ly/2BFavDq



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