



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Thursday, October 3, 2019, Grand Opening of Neighborhood Family Practice's Ann B. Reichsman Community Health Center, 3545 Ridge Road: The fun, kid friendly grand opening celebration included raffles, giveaways, balloon creations, face painting and more. Cyrus Moreno, age 4, dons a Spiderman face.

FREE

Standard Presorted
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CLEVELAND, OHIO
PERMIT 1354

Vol. 46, No. 11 November 2019

Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

Customers voice concerns about how Cleveland Public Power treats them

Cleveland Public Power (CPP) customers brought concerns about the services and practices of the power company to a public hearing held on October 17th. The hearing was hosted by the End Poverty Now Coalition and held at St. Paul's Community Church at 4427 Franklin Boulevard.

Demonstrating the number of people with concerns about their utility bills, a volunteer at St. Paul's, said the church has an outreach program four days out of the week, from 9 a.m. till noon. "Not a day goes by that we don't have someone come in asking for help with utility bills," said the volunteer.

Concerns brought to the meeting included customers being denied the opportunity to go on a payment plan; customers whose power was shut off even though they told CPP staff that they had a person in the house for whom electricity was medically necessary; customers who testified they did not receive any notice before their power was shut off; customers complaining that the rates were too high; customers that complained about the lack of compassion that was exhibited by CPP employees when they called about a shutoff; and customers who were concerned that power outages endangered the health and safety of community members.

Customers also expressed their concern about the lack of energy assistance programs for Cleveland Public Power customers facing shutoff.

Customers said they expected more from their public utility. They expected compassionate customer service and an effort to keep rates low as possible.

Phil Althouse from Legal Aid continued on page 4



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Thursday, October 17, 2019; End Poverty Now Coalition's public hearing on Cleveland Public Power utility shutoffs, St. Paul's Community Church, 4427 Franklin Avenue: Cleveland Public Power representative Joy Perry addresses some of the concerns of residents.

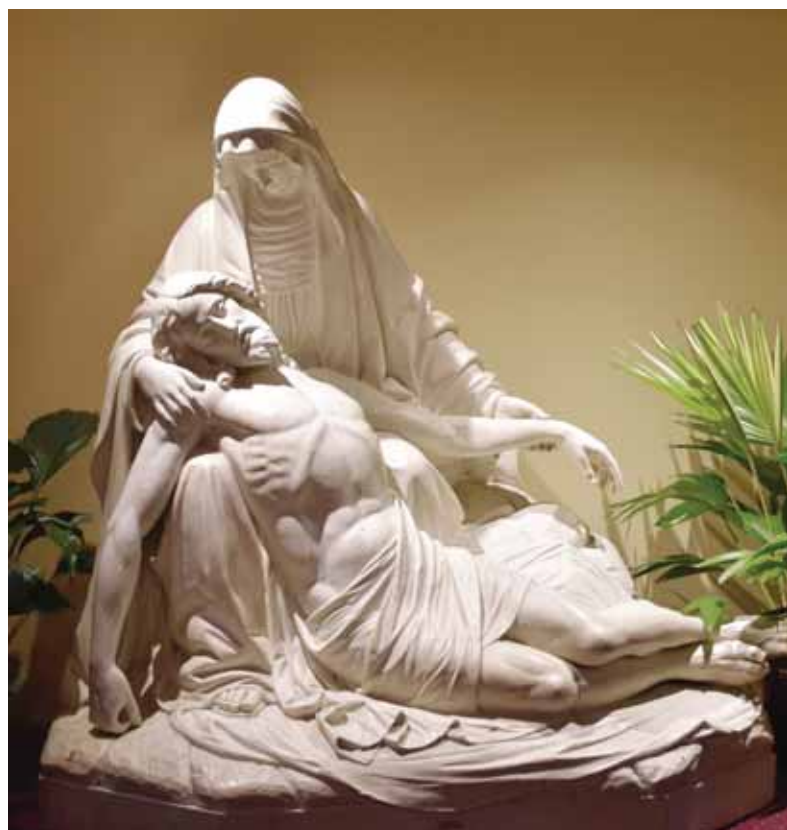


PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, September 20, 2019; St. Malachi Church, 2459 Washington Avenue: This sculpture, a Pietà – the Virgin Mary cradling the dead body of Jesus, was exhibited at the Chicago World Fair in 1893. Carved out of one block of wood, the sculpture was saved and restored after a fire destroyed the original St. Malachi Church on December 23, 1943. It now can be viewed in the Memorial St. Malachi Church.

St. Malachi Parish to celebrate tenth anniversary of merger with the Community of St. Malachi

St. Malachi Parish will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the merger of the Community of St. Malachi with St. Malachi Parish on Sunday, November 10th. There will only be one mass (liturgy) that morning at 10 a.m. followed by a brunch. All are welcome.

Both St. Malachi Parish and the Community of St. Malachi have a history of serving the poor in the neighborhood and have been instrumental in creating other nonprofit organizations that provide services to the community. Some of the associated ministries that have roots

stemming from St. Malachi include: Malachi Center which provides outreach ministry to families and children; Malachi House which serves as a home to the terminally ill; Urban Community School, and the Ursuline Sisters' St. Malachi Convent.

continued on page 8

Neighborhood Family Practice opens Ann B. Reichsman Community Health Center

by Chuck Hoven

Neighborhood Family Practice (NFP) hosted a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony on October 3rd for its newest clinic, The Ann B. Reichsman Community Health Center. Neighborhood Family Practice says the new clinic, located at 3545 Ridge Road, "will expand access and provide support to women with comprehensive care during pregnancy – and all stages of life – while also supporting the health care needs of their children and family."

Ann B. Reichsman, the namesake of the clinic, serves as a NFP Senior Advisor, and was formerly a NFP Medical Director. Reichsman was one of the founding physicians of Neighborhood Family Practice.

At the ceremony, Neighborhood Family Practice President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jean Polster said planning for the new clinic began a year ago when they noticed fewer cars in the parking lot by the converted bowling alley building (formerly Carousel Lanes) just north across the parking area from Neighborhood Family Practice's Ridge Community Health Center. One of the tenants (Ocean Dental) had left and the landlord Chin Lee of Chin

and Arnold Properties was looking for a new tenant. Polster said that Mr. Lee told her he was looking for a tenant "that would make a difference in the community."

Polster said the 7,800 square foot space allowed Neighborhood Family Practice to create a space to offer comprehensive services to pregnant women and their families. Citing the need to help young families with affordable health care and connections and services they need in Cleveland, Polster noted that over 50% of families with children in Cleveland have family income below the federal poverty line.

Neighborhood Family Practice Board Chairperson Jean Solomon noted this is the seventh Neighborhood Family Practice clinic to open. She said the Ann B. Reichsman Community Health Center demonstrates Neighborhood Family Practice's commitment to the expansion of women's health services to women of all ages in addition to offering pre and post-natal services to young mothers, and care to new moms and infants.

Katy Maistros, Neighborhood Family Practice Associate Director continued on page 7



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Thursday, October 3, 2019, Grand Opening of Neighborhood Family Practice's (NFP) Ann B. Reichsman Community Health Center, 3545 Ridge Road: Cutting the ribbon for the new community health center are (L-R): John Wise, NFP Board Member; Alan Mancuso, NFP Board Member; Jean Solomon, Chair, NFP Board; Ann B. Reichsman, MD, Senior Medical Advisor; Jean Polster, NFP President and CEO; Dennis Duck, NFP Board Member; and Randy Runyon, President and CEO, Ohio Association of Community Health Centers.

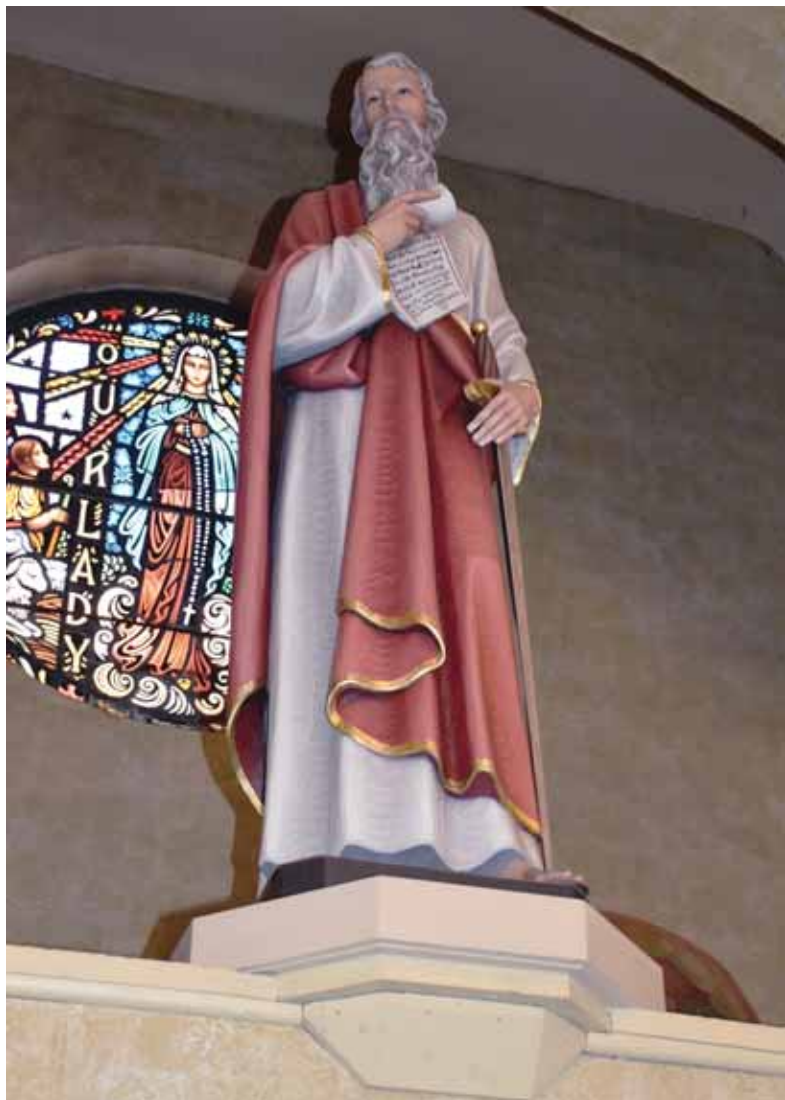


PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Friday, September 20, 2019; St. Malachi Church, 2459 Washington Avenue: This statue of St. Paul was purchased by the congregation in 2013 in celebration of the 60th jubilee anniversary of the priesthood of former pastor Reverend Paul Hritz..

ARTS/MUSIC/THEATRE

BOP STOP EXHIBIT: Local artist No Numbers' Photos of Devotion A series of photographs encompassing the artist's vision of love entitled, *Zēlos 'Devotion to What You Love' By No Numbers*. The exhibit's opening night at 2920 Detroit Avenue on December 8, 2019, from 2 to 7 pm and runs for 90 days. No Numbers, is the artistic name for Arron Bound, who is a staff photographer for the 2019 Cleveland Photo Fest, Ohio City native, and is taking a non-traditional approach to unveiling art. The opening night performers and the pieces are a reflection of the artist's understanding of love.

MUSIC NEAR THE MARKET: Featuring Cleveland's world-famous Beckerath Organ. Every Wednesday, 12:15-12:45 p.m. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, W. 30th and Lorain Avenue.

SPACES, at 2900 Detroit Avenue, offers free gallery admission. Its hours are Tuesday through Friday

from Noon to 5 p.m. Wednesdays-open until 8 p.m. Free gallery tours available upon request.

WALKABOUT TREMONT is held every second Friday from 6 to 10 pm. For more information, visit walkabouttremont.com

78TH STREET STUDIOS, 1300 W. 78th Street. Art Opening for over 50 studios and galleries every 3rd Friday of every month, 5-9 p.m. 78streetstudios.com.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CLEVELAND (MOCA) at 11400 Euclid Avenue is now offering the public free daily admission. Hours are Tuesday – Thursday from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Friday 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. **MOCA Saturdays:** different activities each week to engage and explore. Family Fun provided by PNC.

CLEVELAND HISTORY

ORAL HISTORIES - FREEDOM DAY 1964: 92% of the Black students participated in a boycott of the Cleveland Public Schools on April 20, 1964. Were you one of them? Document your story! Inspire the next generation of leaders and history makers who will use video, audio and other multimedia research tools to document and share this radical Cleveland history. Contact Dr. Anne Galletta at a.galletta@csuohio.edu or 216-687-4581 if interested in sharing your story.

COMMUNITY

DIA DE MUERTOS: Saturday, November 2, 2019. From 11 am to 10 pm. Parade of Skulls & Skeletons at



The Plain Press Community Board is a listing of a variety of free activities and resources for neighborhoods served by the Plain Press. The printing of the Community Board is sponsored by Organize! Ohio through donations from readers and supporters.

3:30 pm - Parish Hall and Chapel, one block east of W. 65th St. on Detroit Ave.

WARD 3 DEMOCRATIC CLUB will meet on Nov 20th from 6 pm at 2556 West 6th Street in the Tremont Pointe Office.

CONSUMER

REPORT SCAMS: Call the Cuyahoga County Scam Squad at 216-443-SCAM (7226). Hang up if a caller threatens you with arrest or property seizure, claims to be a grandchild or loved one in trouble with the law; asks you to wire money, mail cash or pay with gift cards; if a repair person calls out of the blue and wants to "fix" your computer.

DOES YOUR HOME HAVE A SMOKE ALARM? If not, call the operation Save-A-Life 24 hour hotline at 216-361-5535 to apply for FREE smoke alarms.

DONATIONS

CIRCLE AUTOMOTIVE, 2122 W. 73rd, is collecting non-perishable items for the Food Pantry at St. Colman Church: Please join the staff of Circle Automotive in giving back to our community! Bring in a donation and receive a \$5.00 discount on your repair bill! (Limit of one discount per car.) Suggested items include: canned soups and pastas with pop top lids, tuna pouches, peanut butter & jelly, cereal, and canned veggies. In addition to food items, there is a great need for hats & gloves, socks, and toiletries.

ELECTION

GENERAL ELECTION: is on Tuesday, November 5, 2019. Remember to vote.

EDUCATION

METRO WEST COMPUTER LAB: Free clases on Mondays from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Wednesdays from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Fridays from 1-5 p.m.; and every other Saturday from 9 a.m. -11 a.m. at 3167 Fulton Road, Third Floor, Suite 303. For more information and to register call Digital Literacy Coordinator Alicia Greasby at 216-961-9073 ext. 235.

COLLEGE NOW Greater Cleveland on Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Carnegie West Branch Library, 1900 Fulton Road: College Now assists adults with student loan debt, starting a degree program, returning to college to finish a degree, finding scholarships, financial aid and much more. Contact CoLean Williams, Adult Programs Specialist, to schedule an appointment: CWilliams@collegenowgc.org 216.635.0182.

FREE COURSES: Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) Aspire offers free courses to help you improve your academic skills, prepare for the workforce, work towards High School Equivalent (HSE)/GED Test Preparation, and prepare for a job, college or training. High school graduates are welcome if they meet testing requirements. Register online on the 15th and 30th of each month at www.tri-c.edu/aspire. (If the 15th or 30th is on a weekend or holiday, registration will be on the following weekday. You must attend orientation to enroll.) For more information and a complete list of classes and resources visit: www.tri-c.edu/aspire.

WORKFORCE 360^o: Do you need your GED or High School Diploma? Are you 18 to 24 years old? Are you a resident of Cuyahoga County and eligible to work in the United States? If so, OhioGuidestone offers a program for you. The program includes: paid training; GED Assistance; help creating a resume and preparing for interviews; financial literacy training; leadership training; transportation assistance; help finding a job; help with healthcare, child care, housing, food assistance, and legal needs; help with additional education; Occupational Training in customer service, hospitality, culinary, and health care; support for one year following program completion. Orientations held every Tuesday at 10 a.m. For more information or to sign up call 440-260-6813 or email Nicole.Buongiorno@OhioGuidestone.org or visit Workforce 360^o Center, 3235 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

LEARN TO SPEAK ENGLISH FOR FREE: Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) Aspire offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) courses for free. Register online on the 15th and 30th of each month at www.tri-c.edu/aspire. (If the 15th or 30th is on a weekend or holiday, registration will be on the following weekday. You must attend orientation to enroll.) For more information and a complete list of classes and resources visit: www.tri-c.edu/aspire.

EMPLOYMENT

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU employment recruiter will be at the Carnegie West Branch Library, 1900 Fulton, on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Recruiting Assistant John

Plain Press
 2012 W. 25th STE 500
 Cleveland, OH 44113
 Phone: (216) 621-3060
 email:
plainpress@gmail.com
 Advertising email:
plainpressads@yahoo.com
 Website:
<https://plainpress.blog>
 Plain Press © Established in 1971
 Circulation: 21,000 copies.
 Published monthly.
 Distribution area: Cuyahoga River west to W. 140, Lake Erie south to the Lower Big Creek Valley. Available free at over 500 locations.
 Managing Editor: Charles E. Hoven;
 Editor: Deborah Rose Sadlon;
 Copy Editor: Craig Bobby
 Editorial Intern: Colin Murnan
 Reporters: Bruce Checefsky & Victoria Shea
 Photo Editor: Coriana Close;
 Photographer: Michael Oakar
 Advertising Sales: Ed Tishel
 Graphic Artist: David Myers
 Distribution: Ahmed Morad
 Mailing: Teresa Calvo
 Board of Trustees: Keith Brown, Peggy Davenport, David Gamble, Dr. Leo Jeffres, Joe Narkin, and Helen K. Smith.

Wagner will provide information and answer questions about current, local, part-time job opportunities with the Census Bureau. The Census Bureau offers great pay and hours to fit your schedule.

FOOD

FREE PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION: MetroHealth and Cleveland Food Bank will continue free produce distribution through the end of this year. Patients, community members or anyone in need of fresh food can stop by for a bag of produce. Just bring your ID (driver's license, state ID card, etc.) and your own bags. Distribution will occur from 10 a.m. – Noon on Tuesdays November 19 and December 17 at the Outpatient Pavilion (first floor, near pharmacy) at MetroHealth Medical Center, 2500 MetroHealth Drive

GREATER CLEVELAND FOOD BANK: Call 216-738-7239, or visit GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org for food assistance. Apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) if you are under sixty (limits are higher for persons age 60 or older or persons receiving disability assistance) and your monthly family income is \$1,316 or less for a one-person household; \$1,784 or less for a two person household; \$2,252 or less for a three person household; 2,720 or less for a four person household. Add \$453 for each additional household member. For information about Food Stamps (SNAP) applications, food pantries, free produce, and hot meals text FOOD to 63566.

HEALTH

TRI-C PREVENTIVE CARE at Metro Campus provides low-cost health care services to uninsured or underinsured adults while giving students valuable learning opportunities. Open 2-5 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays through November 21. Located in Room 105 of the Health Careers and Sciences building at Metro Campus, 2900 Community College Ave. Services include blood pressure readings; glucose and cholesterol screenings; physical therapy and occupational therapy; physical rehabilitation for daily living; pain management; bone density screenings; nutritional coaching; stress management; and exercise and education programs. No physician referral is needed for an appointment. To schedule a visit or find out about special health-related workshops, call 216-987-3555. For more information visit www.tri-c.edu/carecenter.

VOLUNTEERS

CASA of Cuyahoga County, a program of Child and Family Advocates of Cuyahoga County, needs volunteers to advocate for children who have been neglected and abused. CASAs are everyday citizens who are appointed by the Court to advocate for the safety and well-being of children and represent the children's best interests. CASAs are trained to investigate, facilitate, advocate, and monitor one or two cases at a time to help the Court make the best decision for a safe, caring, and permanent home for children involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Those interested in becoming a CASA, please visit cfadvocates.org or call 216.443.3377 for more information.

GIRLTREK: a public health movement for Black women and girls, is training 3000 neighborhood captains to hold 1,000 walks in neighborhoods around the country in 2019. To sign up to participate email lead@girltrek.org.

THANKSGIVING COMMUNITY MEAL
 at St. Rocco Church Hall
 3205 Fulton Road,
 Cleveland OH 44109
 Thanksgiving Day
 Thursday, November 28th
 Serving 11am - 2pm
 More than a meal!
 For more information call:
 216-961-8331
 Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Thanksgiving Dinner

There will be a delicious Thanksgiving dinner served at St. Augustine Church, 2486 West 14 Street, on Thursday, November 28th, 2019, from 11:00 – 1:00 p.m.

If you are homebound and unable to attend, please call 216-781-5880 and we will make arrangements for a meal to be delivered right to your door. Orders will be taken up until Wednesday, November 27 at 12 noon.

Please call between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

TODAY'S SPECIAL

WHEN THE PAVEMENT BENDS, WE FIND OUR LIVES!

Big Fish

Music and Lyrics by Andrew Lippa
 Book by John August
 Based on the celebrated novel by Daniel Wallace and the acclaimed film directed by Tim Burton

NEAR WEST THEATRE

NOV 22 - DEC 15
 \$10/ADULT, \$8/CHILD
 Performances: Nov. 22, 23, 29, 30, Dec. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15

TICKETS
nearwesttheatre.org
 216.961.6391
 6702 Detroit Avenue

What impact will Opportunity Zone investments have in the Tremont neighborhood?

by Bruce Checefsky

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, with the goal of creating long-term investments in regions of low-income rural and urban communities nationwide, established Opportunity Zones. The Opportunity Zone tax break allows investors to defer for up to seven years any capital gains taxes on the money they invest in opportunity zones. After 10 years, the investor can cash out — by selling the opportunity-zone real estate, for example — and not owe any taxes on the profits.

A total of 64 census tracts in Cuyahoga County are eligible for Opportunity Zone investments. Among those, 48 are located within the City of Cleveland. Ten of the census tracts are part of the W.25th – MetroHealth Corridor Opportunity Zone, with half of those ten tracts located in the Tremont neighborhood.

In a letter to former Ohio Governor John Kasich from March 2, 2018, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson outlined his criteria for nominating some neighborhoods for the federal program and not others.

"Our tracts are grouped into development areas, mixing tracts with historically strong development profiles, active emerging development areas, and significant development potential that can be stimulated by Opportunity Zone designation," wrote Mayor Jackson.

Several of the poorest neighborhoods in Cleveland including East Cleveland and Glennville did not receive any funding. Neighborhoods generally have to show an upswing in the economy to be considered an Opportunity Zone designation. The program is meant to leverage anchor institutions in developing an economically sustainable model for the future which makes Tremont an ideal candidate given its close proximity to MetroHealth and West 25th Street.

If an investor puts capital gains in a qualified opportunity fund, they will not owe taxes until 2026 at which point they pay taxes on 85% of the original investment, and if they sell the opportunity fund in 2028, they would pay no taxes on the gain. Investors can defer and even eliminate their capital gains tax burden earning millions of tax-free dollars in exchange.

The Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP), operating under the designation Opportunity CLE, with partners including the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Greater Cleveland Partnership, Cleveland Development Advisers, and the Fund for Our Economic Future and the Cuyahoga Land Bank has created an investment prospectus, digital portal and Web site for investors and developers interested in Opportunity Zone investment and projects. (<https://www.opportunitycle.com>)

The Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) was created in March 2004 by the consolidation of Cleveland Tomorrow, the Greater Cleveland Growth Association, the Greater Cleveland Roundtable and their primary affiliates—the Northeast Ohio Technology Coalition (NorTech), COSE and the Commission on Economic Inclusion. The 81-member Board includes Rudy Bentlage, Executive Director-Market Executive, JP Morgan Chase Bank; Akram Boutros, M.D. President & CEO, The MetroHealth System; Paul J. Dolan, Chairman and CEO, Cleveland Indians Baseball Co. LP; Dee Haslam, Owner, The Cleveland Browns; R. Steven Kestner, Chairman, BakerHostetler LLP; Joe Lopez, President and CEO, Artessa Building Group LLC; Beth Mooney, Chairman and CEO, KeyCorp; John Morikis, Chairman, President and CEO, The Sherwin-Williams Company; and other elite Cleveland businesses.

In a press release issued last

March 2018, GCP announced that it had worked closely with the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and other partners to identify potential census tracts.

Cory Riordan, Executive Director of Tremont West Development Corporation, felt the selection of Tremont as an Opportunity Zone by GCP and Mayor Jackson was spot on target.

"All of Tremont is an opportunity zone. If you look at the demographics, regardless of what's happening on the ground in Tremont, it's still a low-moderate income area in comparisons to the rest of the country," said Riordan. "Although low-moderate income was part of the equation when establishing Opportunity Zones, the neighborhood also had to be investment ready. Tremont is ready."

Riordan expressed his concern that certain boundaries need to be established when it comes to Opportunity Zone funding, with the creation of affordable housing near the top of the list. A lot of new projects are coming online that will be funded through the Opportunity Zone program that have considerable affordable housing as part of the project, according to him.

Opportunity Zone funding comes through banks setting up investment funds and financiers putting together large funds to disperse in real estate projects. The goal is to invest in distressed neighborhoods with the intention of making a profit for investors. Whether those investments change the social and economic fabric of the neighborhood is too early to tell.

"Tremont hasn't necessarily changed because of Opportunity Zone funding, but it's knocking on the door," added Riordan. "It doesn't mean that any upcoming projects wouldn't have happened without Opportunity Zone funding. There are a number of additional apartments building slated on the Near West Side using those funds including the MetroHealth Neighborhood Transformation Initiative. I'm cautiously optimistic. It's good to have the ability to complete projects but challenging to control the outcomes."

More investment in struggling communities is meant to create jobs and safer streets. But critics of this program say that it will force out longtime residents and businesses. Also, there is the chance investments may fuel a bubble in commercial real estate.

"Everything has a positive and a negative side. The positives of Opportunity Zone development are going to be more quicker and, potentially, on the flip side, the negatives

continued on page 7



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Sunday, September 29, 2019; Ohio City Street Festival, W. 25th Street, north of Lorain Avenue: Volunteers Helen Smith, Jeff Urban and Ann Saraying, armed with tickets for beer, prepare to greet festival guests.

Residents and stakeholders offer feedback on plans for Lincoln Heights neighborhood

by Bruce Checefsky

David Jurca arrived twenty minutes late to the Reaching Lincoln Heights community meeting, shuffled into the conference room at the Cleveland Public Library South Branch on October 15th, and set up his computer. The darkly dressed Jurca, with close cropped hair and neatly trimmed beard, began by explaining exactly why he had been late to the 6 p.m. meeting.

"I appreciate you all waiting," he said. "We had a focus meeting this afternoon before this, and we had revisions and updates, so I ran home and did that. We'll get into initial parking and design recommendations that will make their way into the final report."

About twenty-five people from the Lincoln Heights neighborhood showed up to listen to the recommendations presented by his consulting firm Seventh Hill, an urban design company that specializes in city-wide redevelopment plans and tactical urbanism events.

Jurca is former associate director at Kent State University's Cleveland Urban Design Collective, and founder/principal at Seventh Hill, the urban design firm hired by Tremont West Development Corporation (TWDC) to conduct the Lincoln

Heights Land Use Study. Ward 3 Councilman Kerry McCormack provided TWDC with a \$10,000 grant from casino revenues for the study.

Robert Brown, an independent City Planning Consultant and former Director of the Cleveland City Planning Commission, along with Clifford B. Herring, a former economist and practicing architect, are assisting Jurca as part of the Seventh Hill design team.

Following an overview on the geographical boundaries of the Lincoln Heights study including West 25th Street on the west, Train Avenue on the northwest, Fairfield Avenue on the north, and I-71 on the east, Jurca explained that Lincoln Heights is part of Tremont. But neighborhoods have sub-parts, he suggested, that lend a distinct flavor for that area. That's what makes Lincoln Heights interesting and different, according to him.

Based on previous focus steering and community meetings, Seventh

Hill created a schematic of high-level project goals and strategies. Their plan structures inquiry paths into how to achieve goals and develop tactics, with specific executions that can be measured to chart achievements. The purpose of the process was to listen to what residents want for their neighborhood when it comes to urban development like retail and housing options, according to Jurca. Parking needs ranked high on the list given the future of real estate development in the area.

Community feedback on high level themes included proximity of the neighborhood to local attraction and the social life of the neighborhood. Identity, mobility, and demand for development sites topped the list of positive themes. Negative themes include significant visible blight, unaffordability and equity, safety, and development challenges. A desire to have more retail that cater to different price points with a call

continued on page 8

OHIO ANTIQUE PICKERS

\$\$\$ WANTED \$\$\$ 440-723-3722

Radios • Old Toys - tin windup cast iron • Fishing Items - lures reels • Sport Cards - baseball basketball football hockey any sports • Comic Books • Oil Bottles • Posters • Signs, • Telephones • Old Bottles • Early Board Games • Advertising Items • Motorcycles • Motor scooters - Vespa, Labretta, Cushman • Old Movie Posters • Boy Scout Items • Bicycles • Cap Guns • Oil Paintings

infinitylove.eventplanning@gmail.com
infinitylove4eventplanning.com

We can help you
Design and Coordinate
your event.

(216) 307-3036

Jandra Mayron

**InfinityLove 4
EventPlanning**

**KRISTINA'S
Family Restaurant**
9912 Lorain Ave.
216-961-4455
216-961-4182

Hours!
Mon. thru Sat. 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Sundays 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Breakfast Special:
2 eggs, 2 bacon or 2 sausage,
homefries and toast.
\$3.50

**SMALL
TO
MEDIUM
TREES
TRIMMED
OR
REMOVED**

(216) 326-4377

Franklin Plaza
Skilled Rehabilitation Services

Part of the Legacy Health Services Family

Proudly serving the Ohio City community
featuring:

- Private Rehabilitation Suites
- Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapies
- Short-Term Rehabilitation Services
- Complex Wound Care
- Hospice Care
- Respite Stays

3600 Franklin Boulevard
Cleveland, OH 44113
216-651-1600

www.lhshealth.com



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, October 5, 2019; Convención Hispana 2019 presented by the Hispanic Roundtable, Max Hayes High School, 2011 W. 65th Street: legendary Puerto Rican singer, musician and composer José Feliciano is welcomed to Cleveland by Cleveland attorney and Hispanic Roundtable Chairman José Feliciano. The two José Felicianos dialogued on stage before a crowd at the Convención Hispana.

Lorraine Surgical closes W. 65th & Lorain storefront

Lorraine Surgical Supply is closing its longtime location at W. 65th and Lorain Avenue (Northwest corner) and move to Middleburg Heights, says spokesperson David Zake. The company has sold medical equipment and supplies in the neighborhood since 1975.

Zake says Lorraine Surgical will be changing some of the products and services it offers and will no longer offer the lift chairs it advertised in the Plain Press for many years.

**Our Neighborhood Churches
Welcome you!**

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
2928 Scranton Rd. • 216-781-9511

SUNDAY SERVICES:
German service..... 9:00 am
English service.....10:30 am
Serving God's People Since 1880

REV. JERRY WITT-JABLONSKI, PASTOR
REV. HORST HOYER, PASTOR EMERITUS

Saint Ignatius Of Antioch Church
10205 Lorain Avenue (at West Boulevard)
216-251-0300 • SIOA.WECONNECT.COM
Rev. Kevin Estabrook, M.Div., M.A. - Pastor

Mass Times:
WEEKDAYS: MTWF 8:00AM
SATURDAY EVENING VIGIL: 5PM
SUNDAY: 9AM AND 11AM

Confession:
SATURDAY: 3:30PM-4:45PM;
SUNDAY 9:45AM-10:45AM,
AND BY APPOINTMENT

ANOINTING OF THE SICK AND
LAST RITES: AVAILABLE UPON
REQUEST

INQUIRIES INTO BECOMING
CATHOLIC:
CALL CHURCH OFFICE

**ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH
CATHOLIC SCHOOL (K-8)**
ADMITS STUDENTS WITHOUT
DISCRIMINATION ON THE
BASIS OF RACE, COLOR,
RELIGION, ETHNIC OR
NATIONAL ORIGIN.
CLEVELAND SCHOOL
VOUCHERS ACCEPTED.
SCHOOL PHONE:
216-671-0535

Franklin Circle Christian Church
1688 Fulton Road
216-781-8232
www.FranklinCircleChurch.org

**Sunday Service
10:30 AM**

**A fully inclusive
faith community**

**South Brooklyn Branch Cleveland Public Library
Community Meeting addresses neighborhood safety**

by Bruce Checefsky

On July 23rd, 19-year-old Brandon Cutnoe was fatally shot by Paul Sender inside the bathroom of the South Brooklyn Branch of the Cleveland Public Library. Mr. Sender was arrested and faces aggravated murder charges, which could result in the death penalty or life in prison if convicted.

In response to the deadly shooting, Cleveland Public Library organized a task force to address safety issues. A Safety Community Meeting was scheduled to meet in late September at the South Brooklyn Branch, which included Executive Director of the Cleveland Public Library (CPL) Felton Thomas, Jr.; Ward 13 Councilman and Cleveland City Council President Kevin Kelly; Director of Community Health at Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation Heather McMann; and representatives from the Cleveland Division of Police.

Hours before the meeting, a 16-year-old boy was stabbed in the chest a few blocks from the library in Cleveland's Old Brooklyn neighborhood. The victim was taken to MetroHealth, where he was pronounced dead.

The two murders sent chills

throughout the South Brooklyn neighborhood leading many to question whether enough is being done to provide safe places for children and the rest of the community. A group of visibly upset and emotionally charged residents attending the meeting expressed their fears that rising crime, gangs, and drug use will continue to unravel this once safe neighborhood.

CPL Executive Director Felton Thomas, Jr. shared his concerns that the community find a way to work together towards a solution.

"We want to have a conversation to tell you what we're doing to examine our safety procedures," he said. "Then we're going to look at the community assets available to us as we move towards safety. We also plan to examine how South Brooklyn Branch can be part of helping to make South Brooklyn a safer neighborhood."

Mr. Thomas stressed to residents that the answer is not entirely up to the library. He cited short and long-term solutions that include encouraging library staff to recognize when a situation might turn more dangerous and 'see something and say something'. The task force is also looking at whether the

libraries should hire more guards or add professional social workers to the staff as well as examine the library's expulsion policy to ensure that safe practices are upheld throughout the library system, according to him.

The Department of Homeland Security has been asked to examine each library for safety and security procedures, report on any areas of weakness and vulnerabilities, and offer suggestions to strengthen overall process of providing a safe environment for the community.

Adding armed guards to the library security force was suggested but Mr. Thomas was quick to point out that libraries need to be a gun free zone.

"Our library guards are not armed," he said. "Our staff does not feel comfortable around armed guards. For some people, it seems like an easy answer but there are only a few libraries in the country with armed guards. Ohio is an open carry state," he added. "Folks come to the library armed just to challenge our policy of restricting weapons of any kind, but people feel like they can carry anywhere they like."

continued on page 7

CLEVELAND PUBLIC POWER

continued from page one

explained the City of Cleveland Ordinance 523.11 which governs how Cleveland Public Power delinquent accounts are terminated. (The ordinance can be found online by googling Cleveland Codified Ordinances and searching for 523.11). Organize Ohio staff present at the meeting also passed out a summary of the City of Cleveland rules governing termination.

According to the testimony, many of the rules set to govern Cleveland Public Power shutoffs were not being followed by Cleveland Public Power staff before initiating a shutoff. Residents reported not receiving the required mailed and in person or by phone notice prior to shutoff.

Customers say when they called Cleveland Public Power to inform them that they or a member of their household had a medical condition requiring use of electrical power, they were not given information about the requirement to notify Cleveland Division of Light and Power in order to avoid shutoff.

Joyce Manz, a customer of Cleveland Public Power, offers an example of her interaction with CPP. Joyce Manz says, "We had a disconnection notice and I was working on trying to get that paid, when without warning we were shutoff, no red tag, no notice, no knock at the door. So, in a panic, because my sister-

in-law needed her oxygen, I called and asked why we were turned off without a warning, and explained that we had a medical person in the house. I was told that even if there is someone that medically needs electric, it does not stop you from being disconnected".

Cleveland Public Power Representative Joy Perry responded to some of the concerns of residents. Concerning the interactions of residents with Cleveland Public Power employees, Perry said, "We need to get better."

Contrary to what residents were saying about heating assistance, Perry said, Cleveland Public Power does have Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) funds for customers. She said customers can receive up to \$550 per person. She said currently 4,316 CPP customers use HEAP.

Perry said CPP customers looking for help to sign up for HEAP, Winter Crisis, Summer HEAP can call CHN Housing Partners, or the Council of Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland. Senior citizens can receive help from the Cleveland Department of Aging.

Perry also noted that the Department of Veterans Affairs covers 100% of utility costs for qualified veterans.

Perry suggested the Ohio Devel-

opment Services Agency is another source of information about energy assistance. Residents can go to their website to find out about energy assistance programs (www.development.ohio.gov). She said the only program Cleveland Public Power does not participate in is the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) which is paid for by utility rate payers and is not included in CPP's rates.

Responding to complaints by customers that Energy Adjustment charges were doubling their utility bills, Perry explained the charges reflected the cost of transporting energy from sources that generate electricity to Cleveland Public Power stations.

A resident asked if Cleveland Public Power could seek less costly and more local sources of power, perhaps placing solar panels on customers' homes. A check of the Energy Adjustment Cost charges by a resident who saved their billing statements indicates that the cost per kilowatt hour has increased from .040855 in 2009 to .0780620 in 2019 – nearly doubling in ten years.

Three Cleveland City Council members were present at the public meeting: Ward 14 City Council Representative Jasmin Santana; Ward 16 Council Representative Brian Kazy, and Ward 17 Council Representative Martin Keane.

Keane, who chairs Cleveland City Council's Utilities Committee, spoke briefly. He noted that Cleveland Public Power was a small power company with only 75,000 customers whose goal was to provide reliable power for its customers.

In wrapping up the meeting, St. Paul Community Church volunteer Tim Walters noted that there were resources out there to assist people with utility bills such as HEAP and the program for Veterans. It was suggested that End Poverty Now or Organize Ohio place such information on one of their Facebook pages. It was also suggested that if people have problems with Cleveland Public Power staff not following the rules set by Cleveland's Codified Ordinances that they call their City Council Representative to file a complaint.

HISTORIC ST. ROCCO CHURCH
The oldest Italian parish on Cleveland's Westside
3205 Fulton Road, Cleveland OH 44109
Ph: 216-961-8331

Come worship with us!
Mass schedule:
Weekdays Mon-Fri: 6:45am, 8:45am & 6:30pm
Saturdays: 6:45am, 8:45am & 4:00pm
Sundays: 7:30am, 9:30am & 12:00pm
High Latin Mass every first Sunday of the month at 12:00pm
Bi-lingual Mass: Italian/English, every third Sunday of the month at 12:00pm
Confessions: Saturday 3:00-4:00PM & Sundays before the 9:30am & 12:00pm
Eucharistic Adoration, Tuesdays 9:00am-6:30pm
Hall Rental available – call parish office 216-961-8331

ST. ROCCO SCHOOL
Serving the Fulton Clark area since 1927 • Pre-K 4 to Grade 8
Accepts: Cleveland Scholarship, Ed Choice Expansion & Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship.
Free daily breakfast and lunch. Offering Catholic liberal arts education; a very warm and integrated school family; caring faculty & staff; welcome to all faith's, races and ethnic heritages; after-school programs, clubs and more.
For more information call: 216-961-8557. Tours are offered upon request.

Visit the Plain Press website at:
<https://plainpress.blog>

Residents express concern over impact of development on their neighborhoods and the city of Cleveland

by Chuck Hoven

At two recent community meetings in the Ohio City and Clark Fulton neighborhoods, discussion addressed the lack of affordable housing and the prospects of current residents being able to afford to remain in their neighborhoods as property values and rents continue to rise due to new development.

Ohio City

At the Talk of the Town 2019 Ohio City Community Conversations Community Building meeting on October 3 at St. Paul Community Church, attendees were asked how they felt about their community.

While residents said they loved the Ohio City neighborhood, the sense of community they felt and the friendliness of their neighbors, a number of people in the group feared they would no longer be able to afford to stay in the neighborhood. Others expressed concern about the increased pace of development.

A member of the Franklin Clinton block club talked about developers and their proposals dominating most of the time at block club meetings, yet not seeing new residents from the developments coming to join the meetings.

A resident, living on W. 38th South of Lorain Avenue, called new subsidized development in his neighborhood "Gentrification on steroids." He said that within a stone's throw of his house, there were 54 apartments going up at the former Vista Color Lab on Fulton and another 34 apartments at W. 41st and Lorain Avenue. He expressed concern that the new residents would be changing the culture of the neighborhood.

One person said that the advent of new residents has caused homeless people in the neighborhood to receive more harassment, with newcomers calling the police on them with greater frequency.

Several people noted that an article in *Crain's* magazine said the most expensive zip code for renters was now 44113 with average rents at \$1,800 per month.

A member of Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislative Equality not-

ed that one of the group's longtime members who lived in the neighborhood was forced to move to the East Side of Cleveland because of gentrification.

A young college-educated mother who lives in Lakeview Public Housing said she is looking for a house or apartment in the neighborhood. She said she would love to raise her child in the neighborhood, but says she is having a hard time finding a place she can afford on the income from her job. The woman said she asked to see one of the Snavely Group's new so-called affordable apartments on W. 25th and Detroit, and they wouldn't even show her an apartment because her income was too low. "I love it here," she said, "but I am seriously thinking of moving to Lakewood. I want to be with my kids. I don't want to work two or three jobs so I can live where I want to live."

One person called it an "economic war," resulting in their "neighborhood being taken away."

Residents called for housing that a person making minimum wage could afford to live in. Referring to the high cost of so-called affordable housing, one resident asked, "Af-

continued on page 6

Council approves "Right to Counsel Legislation" for tenants with children facing eviction

Cleveland City Council, at its September 30th meeting, unanimously approved legislation to provide access to free legal representation to low-income tenants with children who are facing evictions.

The legislation notes that 60 percent of the approximately 9,000 eviction cases filed each year in the city include households with children.

The ordinance reads in part: ". . . due to a lack of resources and an inability to obtain legal representation, Cleveland's most vulnerable residents are frequently evicted by landlords represented by competent counsel."

In sponsoring the legislation, Council President Kevin Kelley said, "Without knowing their legal rights as tenants and without knowing how

to navigate the legal system, many low-income families are forced out of their homes. This leads to family turmoil and disruption of the children's education."

Supporters hope the effort will help mitigate housing instability and homelessness.

The United Way of Greater Cleveland will work with Cleveland City Council to lead the program, and United Way will contract with The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland to provide the legal services, which will come from their own organization as well as other attorneys.

This Cleveland-specific legislative effort dovetails with United Way's new Impact Institute's Housing Stability Solution Center. The Impact Institute is a think tank with an action plan that gathers the brightest minds

throughout private and public sectors to create solutions addressing the root causes of poverty.

A study by Case Western Reserve University shows that an average of just \$1,200 in rental support would have prevented a family's eviction, a fraction of the cost of a family's stay in an emergency shelter.

The initiative is a proven model that has saved millions of dollars in U.S. cities, including New York City. Cleveland's legislation, known as "The Right to Counsel," is backed by a number of public and private entities outside of United Way and Legal Aid, including the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association and the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law's Solo Practice Incubator.

With this effort, Cleveland is the

first city in Ohio and the Midwest, and the fourth in the United States to enact such protections for low-income tenants.

The Right to Counsel program begins July 2020. Tenants can always seek more information by contacting United Way's 2-1-1 HelpLink, a free and confidential 24-hour lifeline with referral specialists or the Legal Aid's tenant hotline at 216-861-5955.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, October 5, 2019; Convención Hispana 2019 presented by the Hispanic Roundtable, Max Hayes High School, 2011 W. 65th Street: Members of the Latin Dance Rebels prepare to exit the stage following their performance.

ENJOYABLES by JR
 Women's & Men's Lingerie • Small to 4X
 Catalogue Orders
 216-254-0256
 10933 Lorain Ave.
\$10.00 off a \$50.00 In Store Purchase
 Order Online:
www.enjoyablesbyjr.com

OHIO ANTIQUE PICKERS
\$\$\$\$ WANTED \$\$\$\$ 440-723-3722
 Radios • Old Toys - tin windup cast iron • Fishing Items - lures reels • Sport Cards - baseball basketball football hockey any sports • Comic Books • Oil Bottles • Posters • Signs, • Telephones • Old Bottles • Early Board Games • Advertising Items • Motorcycles • Motor scooters - Vespa, Labretta, Cushman • Old Movie Posters • Boy Scout Items • Bicycles • Cap Guns • Oil Paintings

HILLSON'S
 NUTS OF QUALITY SINCE 1935
 Visit our Factory Outlet Store
 3225 W. 71st St. (South of Clark)
 961-4477
 Toll Free: 800-333-2818
 8:00-5:00 Mon. - Fri.
 Best in the West!

La Borincana Foods
 2127 Fulton Road • 216-651-2351
 The home of Imported Foods from all over the Caribbean, Central and South America, and Africa
 Hours: Mon - Sat: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
 Sun: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 EBT • VISA • MC • DISC • AE

FABIO'S PIZZA
 Freshly made, Authentic, Homemade Italian Ingredients
 4203 Clark Ave., Cleveland
 We dare you to find a better pizza!
216-939-7777
www.FabiosPizza.com
 Monday-Saturday 6pm-4am • Closed Sunday and Holidays

GRAND OPENING MATTRESS SALE
 Home of the \$89 Any Size
 Hurry In For Best Selection
SCRATCH & DENT
 Reg \$3,500
Now \$300
 Same Day Delivery
ALL BRANDS ALL SIZES
100's of Queen and Kings in Stock
MATTRESS KING
 Home of the \$89 Any Size
 2966 W. 25th St.
 (One block North Of Clark Ave.)
 216-400-6301
 11504 Lorain Ave.
 Corner of W.115



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, October 12, 2019; Miriam Ortiz-Rush Park Ribbon Cutting & Celebration, Madison Avenue & W. 75th Street: The newly renovated park (formerly Lawn-Madison Park) was named in honor of the memory of Miriam Ortiz-Rush, a longtime resident of the neighborhood, founder of El Nueva Dia newspaper, a CMHA employee and bailiff at Cleveland Housing Court. Members of Miriam Ortiz-Rush's family including her mother, Juanita Ortiz (age 98) and her daughter Leticia Maldonado cut the ribbon to dedicate the first park in the city of Cleveland dedicated to a Latina.

IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

continued from page 5

fordability, what does that mean?"

Ward 14 Planning 101 Meeting

Residents from throughout Ward 14 filled the Family Ministry Center meeting room at 3389 Fulton Road for a meeting titled Planning 101. Explaining the components of the process of creating a neighborhood plan for the Clark Fulton neighborhood were: Metro West Community Development Organization Executive Director Ricardo León, Metro West Director of Economic Development and Marketing Kristyn Zollos, MetroHealth Medical Center Director of Economic Development and Community Engagement Greg Zucca, City of Cleveland Director of City Planning Freddie Collier, City of Cleveland Neighborhood Planner Matt Moss, and Cleveland Foundation Program Officer for Neighborhood Revitalization and Engagement Keisha Gonzalez.

The planners talked about improving the quality of life in the neighborhood by creating places for people to

live, shop, learn and earn and play.

During the presentation, Cleveland Planning Director Freddie Collier talked about the human capital side of neighborhood development—people learning skills so they can get jobs. He noted the recent recommendation by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District that a new school be built for Lincoln West. Speaking of creating human capital in the neighborhood, Collier said, "Education is critical."

Metro West Executive Director Ricardo León spoke of the importance of listening to residents and keeping what the community wants and needs at the forefront of the planning process.

As part of the discussion that followed, residents expressed concerns about Real Estate speculators in their neighborhood. One woman said that she was ready to punch out two realtors in her neighborhood on Poe Avenue near the freeway who wanted to buy her house for \$40,000. She said some of her neighbors in the area from W. 35 and

Trowbridge came to her for advice because they were being pressured by realtors saying they were buying houses for MetroHealth. MetroHealth's Greg Zucca warned those present that those realtors were trying to take advantage of people and that MetroHealth was not buying any houses in the neighborhood. Ricardo León of Metro West asked folks to ignore those people or to bring information about them to the Metro West office. He said they were trying to create a data base of individuals and businesses trying to scam people.

There was some discussion also about rising property prices making it difficult for long term residents to pay property taxes while newer residents were being given tax abatements. Housing Court Judge Ron O'Leary said a Tax Policy Working Group was looking into strategies to address that issue. He said it would probably take a law change on the state level to help rectify some of the current issues.

Planning Director Collier said he thought incentives were necessary to get people to move into the city. Responding to a comment about the loss of revenue to the school system due to tax abatement, Collier said, we need to find another way to fund our schools other than property taxes.

One woman talked about the rents going up in the neighborhood, while wages were not increasing. She wondered about all the development in the neighborhood. "How is this going to affect my children?" she asked. "A lot of us are being priced out of the neighborhood we grew up in," she added.

Speaking of the definition of Affordable Housing, a resident said it seems like there will be housing for someone who works at MetroHealth, but not for someone that works at Burger King. "My son has a disability. Will he be able to live here?" the woman asked.

Metro West Executive Director León said that the Clark Fulton neighborhood is the last affordable neighborhood on the Near West Side. He talked about the use of low-income tax credits to build affordable housing in the neighborhood. Keisha Gonzalez of the Cleveland Foundation talked about innovative financing tools that could be used as an alternative way to finance housing for families not able to obtain a bank loan.

Collier noted that a number of those making the planning presentation, including himself, lived in the neighborhood. He pleaded with the crowd "Help us to help our community while we still have an opportunity to do it."

Opportunity Zone increases interest of developers and realtors in neighborhood

by Chuck Hoven

What wasn't emphasized at the Ohio City Community Conversations Community Building Meeting or the Ward 14 Planning 101 meeting covered elsewhere in this issue of the *Plain Press* is that a good deal of the increased interest of developers and realtors to invest in Near West Side neighborhoods involves the placement of ten census tracts in the Ohio City, Clark Fulton, Brooklyn Centre and Tremont neighborhoods into the W. 25th MetroHealth Corridor Opportunity Zone.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The Opportunity Zones were created as part of the 2017 Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in December of 2017. Those investing profits from capital gains in the Opportunity Zones are allowed to defer paying taxes on the capital gains. The law provides incentives to keep the investment in the Opportunity Zone over a ten-year period. The reductions in the amount of capital gains taxes owed on value of the investment are reduced to zero if the investor waits at least 10 years before selling.

The MetroHealth Corridor Opportunity Zone is the only Opportunity Zone on the West Side of Cleveland. A collaborative group calling itself OpportunityCLE is in charge of marketing the Opportunity Zones in Cuyahoga County. According to a March 21, 2019 press release titled "Opportunity is knocking" OpportunityCLE has launched an "investment prospectus, digital portal and website aimed at attracting local and national investment into Greater Cleveland's Opportunity Zones."

The partners in the collaborative are: The City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Greater Cleveland Partnership, Cleveland Development Advisors, the Fund for Our Economic Future and the Cuyahoga Land Bank.

Census Tract information

According to OpportunityCLE, there are eleven Opportunity Zones in Cuyahoga County with a total of 64 census tracts. 48 of the census tracts are in the City of Cleveland. Of those tracts, 10 are on the Near West Side located in the MetroHealth Corridor Opportunity Zone. 0. In order to qualify, a census tract must have at least a 20% poverty rate or be adjacent to a census tract with at least a 20% poverty rate.

...OpportunityCLE offered some data on the ten census tracts in the MetroHealth Corridor Opportunity Zone. Below is the data they offered with some added descriptions of census tract boundaries:

Census tract 1036 lies in the Ohio City neighborhood in the area between Franklin Blvd on the North, Lorain Avenue on the South, Randall Avenue on the West and W. 25th on the East. The tract is .1 of a square mile. It has 3,324 residents. The median age of residents is 43.8 years. The median household income is \$41,694. The poverty rate is 31.1%. The median home value is \$206,900.

Census Tract 1039 lies in both the area served by Ohio City Inc and Metro West Community Development Organization. It stretches from Lorain Avenue on the North to a Southern Boundary that jags from Seymour to W. 32nd and down W. 32nd to Clark Avenue. Fulton Road is the Western Boundary and W. 25th is the Eastern Boundary. The census tract is roughly .4 of a square mile. The population of the census tract is 2,148 people. The median age of the population is 31.3 years. The median household income in the census tract is \$24,464. The poverty rate is 41.7%. The median home value is \$66,300.

Census Tract 1041 is served by Tremont West Development Corporation (TWDC). The area covered by the census tract stretches from Lorain and Abbey Avenues on the North to Clark Avenue on the South. With W. 25th as the Western boundary and Scranton forming most of the Eastern boundary. The tract covers .3 of a square mile. The population is listed as 1,007 people. The median age is 35.7 years. The median household income is \$14,089. The poverty rate is 45.3%. The median home value is \$83,800.

Census Tract 1042 is in the Tremont neighborhood. The tract is .6 of a square mile and contains 1,094 people. The median age of those living in the census tract is listed as 29.8 years. The median household income is \$36,111. The poverty rate is 28.4% and the Median Home Value is \$189,100.

Census Tract 1043 is also in the Tremont neighborhood. It is .2 of a square mile and has a population of 1,180 people. The median age is 30.8 years and the median household income is \$77,500. The poverty rate is 15.5%, and the Median Home Value is \$312,700.

Census Tract 1044 is in the Tremont neighborhood. It is .4 of a square mile. Has a population of 1,195 people. The median age is 36.8 years. The median household income is \$40,625. The poverty rate is 32.7%. The median home value is \$112,700.

Census Tract 1046 is in both the Clark Fulton neighborhood served by Metro West and

in an area east of W. 25th served by TWDC. The tract is bounded by Clark Avenue on the North and Scranton Avenue on the East. The western boundary goes from W. 32nd to Meyer, Meyer to W. 25th, W. 25th to Trowbridge and Trowbridge to Scranton. The size of the tract is .1 of a mile. The population living there is listed as 1,100 people with a median age of 35.5 years. The median household income is \$17,232. The poverty rate is 40.1% and the median home value is \$66,500.

Census Tract 1048 is located in the Tremont neighborhood. It includes parts of the industrial flats and Steepleyard Commons as well as a neighborhood south of Clark and East of Scranton. The area is 1.3 square miles. The population is 1,918. The median age is 29.9 years. The median household income is \$30,284. The poverty rate is 39.1%. and the median home value is \$56,200.

Census Tract 1049 lies largely in the Clark Fulton and Brooklyn Centre neighborhoods with Meyer Avenue serving as the northern boundary and I-71 serving as the Southern boundary. On the west it is bounded by Fulton to Daisy to W. 32nd. On the east the boundary is W. 25th to Trowbridge, Trowbridge to Scranton and Scranton to I-71. It is .2 of a square mile, and has a population of 2,409 people. The median age is 30.2 years. The median household income is \$25,255 and the poverty rate is 45.6%. The median home value is \$61,400.

Census Tract 1055 lies in the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood. The tract is west of W. 25th Street and has portions of the neighborhood both north and south of I-71 included in its boundaries. The census tract is .2 of a square mile. It has a population of 2,116 people. The median age is 29.2 years. The median household income is \$24,818. The poverty rate is 36.9%. The median home value is \$59,000.

Impact on Schools

While there is much talk from planners about equity in development. The greatest equalizing factor is education. If the City of Cleveland continues its policy of 15 year tax abatements in the neighborhoods along the MetroHealth Opportunity Zone, a whole generation of Cleveland children will go from Kindergarten to 12th Grade without a dime from Opportunity Zone investments going toward more teachers to reduce class sizes, more special education teachers to provide proper educational assistance to students with Individual Education Plans, and more support staff and extracurricular programs in the schools.

While Cleveland Planning Director Freddie Collier says the schools need to find another source of income other than local property taxes, as of now there is no other source that is likely to grow. The State of Ohio funding is remaining flat and the City of Cleveland is unlikely to forgo any of its payroll tax revenue to reimburse the school system for the loss of property tax revenue due to the tax abatements.

How much property tax revenue does the Cleveland Metropolitan School District forego because of the City of Cleveland's tax abatement? At its October 22nd School Board meeting at John Marshall High School, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) released its five-year budget projections. Included in the report was CMSD's Property Tax Abatement Tracking, which measures property tax abatement's impact on the school district.

...In the 2019 calendar year, the value of the school district's portion of commercial property tax abatements was \$20,165,400. The value of the school district's portion of the residential tax abatements was \$67,178,100. The total impact on the school district from abatements for 2019 was \$87,343,500.

CMSD says that it projects that local property taxes will account for 30.3% of its general fund revenue in the 2019-2020 school year. Local property tax revenue in the 2019-2020 school year is projected to be \$225.4 million.

Are longtime homeowners paying more in property taxes due to the tax abatements given to new homeowners or homeowners who substantially rehab their houses? The answer is yes. The costs manifest themselves in two ways.

First, when home values are assessed, the county has been increasing costs to existing homeowners in part due to the increased value of new and rehabbed homes in the same neighborhood. Residents report the valuation of their homes going up substantially due to the county's reappraisal. Indeed, the school system's report says, "Our assessed valuation increased to \$5.3 billion from \$4.8 billion, a 10% increase, as a result of last year's reappraisal."

The second way that residents are paying more is through increased amounts asked for in tax levies due to the

continued on page 8

Someone owe you Money?



**Cleveland Small Claims Court
Accepts cases up to \$6,000.
You Don't Need a Lawyer
Details at**

www.clevelandmunicipalcourt.org

Click on Civil Division > Small claims

**Earle B. Turner
Cleveland Clerk of Courts
(216) 664-4860**

SOUTH BROOKLYN LIBRARY BRANCH SAFETY

continued from page 4

Cleveland City Council President Kevin Kelly stood up, adding, "Unfortunately, the City of Cleveland is situated in the State of Ohio. Any gun laws that we had on the books were obliterated by the Ohio General Assembly and affirmed by the Ohio Supreme Court."

Ohio is an open-carry state, which means anyone who legally possesses a firearm can openly carry it in the state, either with or without a concealed handgun license. The federal government prohibits firearms in schools, courthouses, police stations, post offices and other government property. This applies to both open and concealed carrying. No permit is required to buy a handgun in Ohio, and there is no waiting period between when you pay for the handgun. There is no permit, background check or firearms registration required when buying a handgun from a private individual.

Installing metal detectors at the library entrance was suggested as a determinant but the Cleveland Public Library does not use metal detectors at any of its branch, according to Mr. Thomas.

Police substations, a satellite police facility used to establish community relations and solicit information, were closed many years ago leaving the community without a place to report crime, according to residents. Reopening the Pearl Road substation was suggested but rather than address the issue, representatives from the Cleveland Division of Police deferred the conversation back to Cleveland City Council President Kelly.

"I don't have an answer for that," said Kelly. "Those substations were gone by the time I got here."

Peggy Scanio, a resident of the South Brooklyn community, suggested neighbors get more involved with the day-to-day activities. "Communities are not as involved as they used to be and we need to be," she said. "We don't talk to our neighbors. We communicate more on social media and that's anti-social."

Several complaints came forward about the role of the Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation, in particular with the Crime Watch Program meetings, which some residents felt were used for public relations purposes on the part of the CDC rather than to promote crime watch.

"A lot of us are really upset. We want a crime watch program," issued one resident. "We get ten minutes for crime watch. The meetings are nothing more than an infomercial for the Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation."

Heather McMann, Director of Community Health at Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation, was quick to reply. "Our role as a CDC is to build networks for people so we don't have to rely on the police," she said. "It's a little bit

of an infomercial but we want people to come to the library and farmers market to network."

Laura McShane, Youth Service Librarian at the Cleveland Public Library Brooklyn Branch, wasn't convinced library administrators were doing enough to support their staff.

"We do the best that we can to provide a safe and welcoming environment for kids," said McShane. "Adding social work services to our workload is causing burnout. We're not social workers."

"I understand that," Thompson replied. "We know that compassion fatigue is an issue that we're all facing but in the same sense, where do we go? What do we do? The system isn't working."

McShane couldn't disagree more. "The libraries are a place where people feel comfortable. We know how to mobilize in the event of a threat and responded to protect our people. We know how to strategize if there's a riot. These are the things we can do but I am not a social

worker." When finished taking questions, CPL Executive Director Thomas suggested attendees at the meeting break out into smaller discussion groups and provide input to the task force; half the crowd headed for the exit door including Cleveland City Council President Kelly. The remaining few raised safety concern issues, offering suggestions to curbing the deadly violence.

With the meeting coming to a close for the night, Tana K. Peckham, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer at the Cleveland Public Library, offered an overview on the library task force process moving forward.

"We're looking at the library infrastructure for ways to use equipment, technology, and the design of our buildings to improve safety and security," said Peckham. "We're the Cleveland Public Library. We're in 27 branches across the city so people that come to our branches reflect the people that live in the city. We're an open institution, no different than any neighborhood that's dealing with rising crime."

TREMONT OPPORTUNITY ZONE

continued from page 3

that we're trying to address will become more glaring," said Riordan.

The New York Times recently called opportunity-zone funding an investment plan with little economic and social benefits to the neighborhood.

"The provision created a tax break for investment in so-called 'opportunity zones,' which would supposedly help create jobs in low-income areas," wrote Paul Krugman, NYT Opinion columnist and 2008 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences. "In reality, the tax break have been used to support high-end hotels and apartment buildings, warehouses that employ hardly any people and so on."

A few smaller real estate development firms in the region don't feel a need to use Opportunity Zone funding to develop real estate. They prefer to use their own network of private individual investors over government-initiated programs

with too much political oversight. Primo Management on Professor Avenue in Tremont is among them.

"If the carrot to get real estate investment to invest in the neighborhood is Opportunity Zones, and they help the people by helping themselves, maybe that's the incentive you have to have," said Adam Waldbuam, Owner, Primo Management.

But, he also cautions that the process can be a slippery slope, with local Community Development Corporations driving the conversation with real estate developers and deciding what's best for the neighborhood.

"Long term homeowners or new homeowners, together with the local block club members need to get involved and take control of their block clubs. They can and do a lot of good work. Lincoln Heights is a good example of a neighborhood that wants to be in control of their block club. Why shouldn't they?" he asked.

NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY PRACTICE

continued from page one

of Midwifery Services, who will serve as medical director for the new clinic, has been with Neighborhood Family Practice for 15 years and involved with midwifery services for the past six years. In her remarks, Maistros stressed the importance offering mental health services to women.

A Neighborhood Family Practice patient that described herself as a first-time mom, spoke next. She called the doula that worked with her amazing saying "she walked me through step by step." The young mother said she was happy to see the new center would be there to answer the questions of "people going through the same thing as me."

Dr. Ann Reichsman, for whom the new center is named, spoke next. Reichsman talked about the opening of the first Neighborhood Family Practice Clinic thirty-eight years ago in a former biker bar on Storer Avenue. Reichsman talked about the early staff and volunteers involved with the clinic – the physicians, executive director, nurses, social workers and a few nuns. Reichsman said Neighborhood Family Practice's first executive director Sally Tatnall wanted to build a clinic that would be a "model of how care should be."

CLASSIFIED

PLAIN PRESS CLASSIFIED: \$10 for 12 words and 30¢ for each additional word. To advertise count the words and mail a check or money order with your ad to the Plain Press, 2012 W. 25th #500 Cleveland, OH 44113.

FLEA MARKETS/THRIFTS

ST. PAUL'S THRIFT STORE: W. 45th and Franklin, Clothing, bric-a-brac, household items and more. **Open Wednesdays** 1 to 5pm (regular prices) **First Saturday** of Month 10 to noon store and Gym, Bargain Prices, Clothes **\$1.00 a bag.** **Third Saturday** of Month 10 to Noon Store only, All unmarked racked clothes **\$1.00 a bag.**

FOR RENT

PROPERTY OWNERS NEEDED: If you are a property owner with nice, clean, reasonably priced apartments, and are looking for tenants, please call Care Alliance at (216) 372-2348 and ask for Jim Schlecht.

SUBSCRIPTION TV

STREETS MOS SUBSCRIBE: STREETSMOSTV: YOUTUBE. COM/STREETSMOSTV ¥ Interviews • HoodNews • Music • Lifestyle • 216-633-1078.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, September 20, 2019; St. Malachi Church, 2459 Washington Avenue: The baptismal font is the same font used in the original church. It was saved from the December 23, 1943 fire.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

PLAIN PRESS TO ADVERTISE CONTACT ED TISHEL AT: plainpressads@yahoo.com

Accountant

QUICK FIX TAX SERVICES
WE STRAIGHTEN OUT MESSSES
RECORDS IN A MESS? IS IRS ON YOUR BACK?
MAKE CHANGES TO HELP LOWER TAXES AND SAVE ON TAX PREPARATION.
KNOW PERSON WHO DOES? REFER THEM, EARN CASH
CALL (216) 631-8858

Attorneys

Val Schurowliw
Abogado/Attorney at Law
216-314-6194
Serving Cleveland and surrounding suburbs
Real Estate, Evictions, DUI, Divorce, Foreclosures
Reasonable Rates

MARIE T. SMYTHE
Attorney at Law
(216) 533-4225
Probate
Personal Injury
– Including dog bites, slip and falls
Free Initial Consultation

Auto Body

KAP AUTO BODY
216-251-6234
Expert Auto Painting
Fender & Body Repairs
Collision, Frame & Insurance Work
Ostoja "Sandy" Kutlesic & Sam Kutlesic
10512 St. Mark Street
(corner of W. 105th and St. Mark)

Insurance

A AAA ALL AMERICAN AUTO AGENCY
"NO ONE REFUSED"
Lowest Price On:
Auto • Home • Cycles
SR-22 • Liability
SAME DAY COVERAGE
10 Companies to Choose From
Low Down Payments
Call 440-888-8884

Rooms For Rent

ROOMS FOR RENT
• Clean, furnished rooms located in Tremont
• Weekly or Monthly rentals available
• Utilities included
• Cable available
• Washer / Dryer on-site
For more information:
Call Jeff at 216-215-7132

Real Estate

★ WILL BUY ★
Your Home, Double, Small Apartment, Vacant Lot...
regardless of Condition for CASH or Terms
Call ART KNIGHT
Red's Reality LLC
(440) 835-2292
(216) 570-2742
email: artfla@msn.com

Plain Press: To Advertise contact Ed Tishel at plainpressads@yahoo.com



Walter Martens & Sons Funeral Home

9811 Denison Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44102

216-281-7111 • 216-651-9415 (fax)

businessmartens@aol.com

www.martensfuneralhome.com

We Buy Homes
ANY CONDITION
We Pay Cash for It!
Don't list it! Don't fix it!
Don't clean it!
Don't show it! Don't worry!
Call Sean for more information:
216-906-4282
gogettaproperties06@yahoo.com

MALACHI MERGER

continued from page one

The *St. Malachi Church Guide* and the *St. Malachi Parish 150th Anniversary* booklet provide some insight into the history of the parish.

Originally founded in November of 1865 to serve Irish immigrants in the "Old Angle," the parish originally celebrated at St. Mary-of-the-Flats on Columbus Road. From its earliest days the parish had a history of serving the poor. The 150th Anniversary booklet speaks of the first pastor of the parish, the Irish born Father James Molony, who served the parish from 1865 to 1903, and his service to the poor. "On cold nights, Father went to the river and invited men sleeping outside to come into the church hall." Today, on cold nights the Metanoia Project, also uses the church hall to provide hospitality, and a warm place for the homeless to sleep.

The parish laid the cornerstone of their church on Washington Avenue in 1867 and celebrated the first mass in the new church on Christmas of 1868.

The oldest building on parish property is the rectory built in 1834, which was originally a sea captain's house.

The school building was built in 1885. It was originally a girl's school under the direction of the Ursuline Sisters. The boy's school no longer exists. In 1916 the boys' and girls' schools were merged and St. Malachi School continued as a parochial school until 1968. In 1968, St. Malachi School merged with St. Patrick School to form Urban Community School.

The industrialization of the flats took many of the houses in the parish and left the parish with just 50 families at one point. In the 1930 the creation of public housing just north of St. Malachi Church brought new families to the neighborhood. Lakeview Terrace public housing

opened in 1937, and the *St. Malachi Parish 150th Anniversary* booklet notes "the new housing created by Lakeview Terrace probably saved the parish and St. Malachi grew to 400 families."

Tragedy struck the parish on December 23, 1943 when the original church caught fire. While the church building could not be saved, some of the statues and the baptismal font were rescued. When the new church was built, the parish put in stained glass windows and art that honored those who had contributed to the parish over the years. This included a window with St. Joseph to honor the men of the parish and one dedicated to St. Anne to honor the women of the parish. Windows were also dedicated to former pastors of the parish as well as a St. Ursula window dedicated to the Ursuline Nuns who taught in the parish school.

The Community of St Malachi began forming in the late 1960's as a result of Fr Paul Hritz (then a theology professor at the Old St John College in downtown Cleveland) asking some friends who worked there to join him on Sunday mornings for Liturgy (Mass) at St Malachi where he had begun to serve on weekends. By the time 1970 rolled in, his inspiring Sunday homilies had attracted many more people who were also interested in following both Fr. Paul's interests in serving the poor in the neighborhood as well as creating a renewed parish according to the results of the Second Vatican Council held in Rome in the 1960's.

From that time until 1975, many worked to establish a parish with greater lay leadership, more vibrant liturgical practice, and a greater presence in the area surrounding the church with the establishment of a Monday Night Meal (still offering a hot meal on Monday evening to this day) and other ecumenical and social justice programs. In 1975 that group was given the official name of



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Friday, September 20, 2019; St. Malachi Church, 2459 Washington Avenue: The sanctuary of St. Malachi Church.

the Community of St. Malachi and designated as a personal parish of the Cleveland Catholic Diocese. Fr. Hritz was named pastor of both the original St Malachi Parish and the Community. That status lasted until after major moves in the Diocese to consolidate, partner, and close some parishes as we moved into the 21st century.

In 2009 the two Malachi parishes were merged as one and were partnered with St Patrick on Bridge Ave and St Wendelin on Columbus Road. Fr. Tony Schuerger, who had replaced Fr. Paul Hritz after his retirement, continued as pastor.

As partnered parishes, St. Malachi, St Patrick, and St Wendelin, work to continue their own missions as well as joint efforts with children

and youth religious education programs, welcoming new residents (over 7,100 welcome letters have been mailed in the past four years), shared scripture study and prayer. The three parishes also rotate the celebration of Mass on the Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving holidays.

Today the ministries of St. Malachi Parish include: Backdoor Ministry which serves food daily and offers personal care items and clothing; Monday night meal; Saturday Breakfast; Metanoia Project; 20s and 30s Group; email Alerts and Rediscovering Sunday Morning at St. Malachi which features speakers, discussions, and other special programs.

Going forward, St Malachi Church

is committed to continuing as part of the neighborhood community. It will participate in shared efforts at serving the area through its Mission, Creation Care for the physical world, and the people who live here. If you as an individual or a group would like to learn more about this parish which has been in the community since 1865, we would be happy to meet you for a tour of the church as well as information about its many programs. In 2020, the 40th anniversary of the Malachi Run will occur on March 14. This raises funds for the food ministries at St Malachi. Detailed info (and early registration) can be found at runstmalachi.com.

For more information about the parish simply contact the Church Office at 216-563-1993 or connect on the Web www.StMalachi.org.

REACHING LINCOLN HEIGHTS

continued from page 3

for 'greasy spoon' diners over higher end bars and restaurants. Property taxes and developer challenges were the most often repeated concerns.

Dog parks, increased city services, parking and green spaces were also listed. Lack of affordability, vacancy and traffic are constant challenges to overcome, according to the Seventh Hill consultants.

"Can we reduce the needs for cars and get people to walk or ride their bikes?" asked Jurca.

An interactive, anonymous response, website browser was provided so that community participants could add their comments and questions to the survey. Their responses appeared on a large screen in front of the meeting room.

Land use and vacant land topographical maps were shown. With 40% of roads in Lincoln Heights terminated in a dead end, highways and valleys have cut off the neighborhood from Tremont, Duck Island, and Ohio City. What to do with that information is both a challenge and opportunity, according to Seventh Hill.

Jurca asked the community to envision what might happen along the Scranton/Willey intersection, a 'jump start to imagination', and what could contribute to the well-being of the neighborhood. He admitted that he didn't know what developers had in mind for the intersection, that he didn't know their plans, but during the steering committee meeting that afternoon, several developers present apparently expressed interest in building apartments and/or condominiums.

This caused a heated spark in the room. Jurca had admittedly removed the footprint of a large residential building at Willey Ave and Scranton Rd from his earlier presentation to the steering committee. When asked why the building was removed from the drawing, he indicated that the steering committee had requested the change be made before the presentation at the community meeting.

"It's not like I have information that I don't want to give to you," said Jurca in

defense of altering his presentation and referring to changes which made him late for the meeting.

"There is a developer who has bought that site and has put plans together, but they are all schematic," said Herring.

"But wasn't there a box on that site there earlier during the steering committee meeting?" asked Adam Waldbaum. "Why was that taken away?"

"The steering committee specifically asked us to show that as a blank slate," added Herring, further explaining that changes in the presentation were requested to gather ideas from the community on how the site might be used to enhance the community experience. Sustainability Community Associates currently owns the land and plans to build a multilevel apartment complex on the site, which may require additional parking variances, according to sources present at the meeting.

Waldbaum pressed the question further, suggesting that Seventh Hill should show the site with the building footprint, much as it was presented to the steering committee.

"I don't remember asking to remove that from the drawings," he said. "And I'm on the steering committee and was at that meeting this afternoon."

With potentially four projects slated for the Willey/Scranton intersection including the Sustainability Community Associates plan, developers for the remaining three sites have not been public on their intentions. Dave Ferrante, owner of Visible Voice and Crust Pizza, and the newly acquired property at the site of the former Lolita restaurant in Tremont, recently purchased property on the NE corner of Scranton Rd and Kenilworth Ave.

Cory Riordan, Executive Director of Tremont West Development Corporation, explained. "Dave Ferrante is the developer. If he has future plans for those sites, he hasn't told us at TWDC."

Speculation on the size of the apartment buildings, number of rental units, construction of an underground parking garage, a land swap deal with the Animal Protective League for more parking op-

tions and other issues appear to some community residents that the deal was already done.

"You guys are blowing smoke about what you know," said Jane Knoublock. "I'm nobody and I know all this stuff about it. People come to this meeting, talking about these sites and what's going on, and you feel like you're getting lied to. That's ridiculous. Please don't insult our intelligence."

"When we get real plans that need

variances, they go the community," said Riordan, visibly upset. "Once we have the presentation from developers, I'll throw the whole damn thing up for everyone to see."

To further complicate matters, Tremont West Development Corporation won't recognize the Lincoln Heights Block Club as a TWDC block club. Riordan expressed his confidence that their disagreement wouldn't alter any variance outcomes, stating that the City

of Cleveland will listen to any individual seeking approval or dissent. The City of Cleveland is the decision-making authority, according to him. "We at TWDC write a letter of opinion."

Robert Brown addressed the Lincoln Heights Block Club issue from his 30-year career perspective as a City Planning specialist including as former Director of the Cleveland City Planning Commission. "We listened to people that come to our meetings," he said. "We didn't really care about Block Clubs."

OPPORTUNITY ZONE

continued from page 6

tax abatements. The CMSD four-year 15 mill levy is set to expire on December 31, 2020. CMSD estimates that if the levy is not renewed by voters the district will lose \$67 million a year in revenue. The amount of revenue the district is currently losing due to tax abatements is \$87,343,500 – over \$20 million more than it projects to receive from the 15 -mill levy. While the school district can use all the resources it can muster, these figures indicate that longtime taxpayers are being asked to pay a substantial amount while generally wealthier new residents are not contributing in a way that could make a substantial difference for Cleveland's children.

Impact on City

CMSD is not the only entity that benefits from property taxes. The City of Cleveland, the Cleveland Public Library System, and Cuyahoga Community College are among the additional beneficiaries of the tax.

With more development projected from the Opportunity Zones, all these entities and the CMSD should be reaping additional revenue from property taxes.

In the press release from Opportunity-CLE, Joe Roman, President of Greater Cleveland Partnership said in March of 2019, "The floodgates are about to open regarding investment in Opportunity Zones and we are gearing up to aggressively compete for investments in Cuyahoga County projects. This program has the potential to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for catalytic urban de-

velopment opportunities here, stimulating growth and job creation in Cleveland and surrounding communities."

It would be a shame if all that development occurred and Cleveland's children were still being shortchanged in the classroom, and the City of Cleveland still had shortages of police officers to respond to resident calls.

...How long will the city go on with its failed development policy that shortchanges school children on education, and shortchanges residents on services in the name of offering incentives to developers and new residents? Are we to believe that property tax abatement is so important to new residents that they would not want to live in the city without it? What happens when it runs out? Despite years of abatements, we are still losing population – largely due to lack of educational opportunities and safety concerns of residents. It will take increased revenue to remedy these issues and collecting property tax from all residents and businesses will help to make that happen.

Protections for Residents

The OpportunityCLE team has a theme printed in its press release "Doing well by doing good." It says, "At its core, the team's intention is to bring attention to projects that are not only attractive financial investments, but also provide positive social impacts, including jobs, training, education, quality affordable housing, increased access to broadband, public transportation and healthy living environments."

While these goals are noble, residents fear they may not be around to enjoy the neighborhoods where these improve-

ments occur. Some protections need to be put in place to protect low-and-moderate income renters and longtime homeowners from overnight doubling or tripling of their rents or property taxes.

OpportunityCLE is promoting Cleveland as a place where investors will get 11.5% return on their investments – higher than projected in almost every major city in the country. At the same time, the President of Cleveland Development Advisors, the real estate financing affiliate of the Greater Cleveland Partnership Yvette Ittu says, "We believe there is a large segment of socially-committed investors who would be attracted to successful projects that yield significant social improvements."

Let's hope those socially conscience investors are willing to pay property taxes on the properties they invest in so Cleveland's children and residents can benefit. The press release from OpportunityCLE says, "There is an estimated \$6 trillion in unrealized capital gains in the U.S. – a huge pot of equity that would benefit from the tax breaks offered to investors in Opportunity Zones." Surely among the owners of those \$6 trillion dollars in capital gains are individuals willing to spare a few dollars in profit to assure Cleveland's children get a better education and its residents get a timely response when they call the police.