

THE VILLAGE VOICE



By: Historic Old Hickory Village (HOHV)
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Public or Private?

Debate Rages Over 80 Year Old Sidewalk

By Allison Baird

Recent action taken by homeowners has sparked an ongoing debate in Historic Old Hickory Village.

The issue is whether a sidewalk that connects Dodson Street to Bryan Street where 11th Street ends is public or private property. The sidewalk does not run along a street and therefore creates an alley between the homes.

In an effort to curtail teenagers roaming late at night, theft and drug dealing the homeowners removed the sidewalk and closed off the end with a gate preventing traffic coming through. Now, although the late night crime may have slowed many in the immediate vicinity of the sidewalk are angry because children who use the sidewalk to get to school in the morning may now be put in harm's way by having to walk along the street.

The debate amongst neighbors prompted Councilman Feller Brown to hold a meeting at the Community Center on Thursday, October 19th. Also in attendance to discuss the issue was Jim Snyder from the Metro Public Works Department, members of the Historic Old Hickory Board and about 50 Old Hickory residents.

No one disputes that the safety of children should come first, however a hard line was drawn by those in favor of removing the sidewalk and those that want it to remain open.

The side that wants it closed has done extensive research with DuPont records and the Metro Register of Deeds and concluded that the land where the sidewalk lies is private. However a letter from Mark Macy Assistant Director of Metro Public works states, "We have discussed this matter with our legal counsel and come to the conclusion that the sidewalk due to longevity of being open for public use should remain open."

At the meeting, a roughly 3 to 1 vote was taken to keep the sidewalk open, but the fact remains that the sidewalk has been removed.

Councilman Brown suggested that if the homeowners insist on keeping it closed that they follow procedures with Metro Nashville Government. That procedure includes filing a petition with Metro Traffic and Parking, which will go to Planning and Zoning then to the Council. Pending the outcome the issue would likely wind up in Chancery Court for a judge to decide.

In the meantime, if the homeowners are forced to keep the sidewalk open the question remains who will foot the bill for replacing the concrete that was removed. Towards the end of the meeting, Mr. Snyder agreed to re-view Public Works' sidewalk budget to determine if they could cover it. Until an official decision is made the sidewalk will remain closed.

Shopping Center Sold!

By Allison Baird



The site of the Old Hickory Village Shopping Center has been sold to the highest bidder. That bidder is Old Hickory resident and HOHV board member Bob Yates and his wife Carolyn.

Yates purchased the property during an auction last month in an effort to protect it from urban sprawl and preserve the integrity of the village.

The shopping center which was home to 11 Old Hickory businesses was destroyed by fire in the summer of 2004 by two juvenile arsonists.

Although there are no official plans as of yet, condominiums and retail shops friendly to foot traffic are being considered. Bob may send surveys out to village residents to see what we would like to see at the site.

Bob leads the Village Planning Committee on the HOHV board. We look forward to him using previous revitalization project experience on his new property.

Landlord Council

By Rick McClintock

Within Old Hickory stand silent reminders of the gradual drain of vitality from the village. Abandoned and improperly maintained buildings are prevalent throughout the village. Tenants often live in properties suffering from terminal neglect.

The majorities of these properties are rentals and have landlords attempting to maximize cash flow and financially exploit their property. They will accept any tenants (especially Section 8 and/or financially stressed clients), regardless of rental history and/or level of responsibility, without adequate (or any) preliminary screening. Despite tenant's previous misconduct, such landlords do not evict them for any reason other than non-payment of rent.

One of the purposes of the Landlord Council is to change this trend by identifying these properties and working with local officials to enforce laws and regulations that will hopefully bring change. The neighborhood association (HOHV) has appointed Shelly Cargill to head up the Codes Notice Program and Neighborhood Watch Program. Anyone wanting information regarding these programs can contact Shelly at 847-8079.

The Landlord Council is also designed to provide landlords with a form to discuss rental issues and to provide educational training to better manage their rental properties. Our meeting times are the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 at the Community Center. These monthly meetings and times are posted on the reader board located at Hayes Field.

The following are planned topics for upcoming Landlord Council Meetings.

- The Financial Implications of Slum Lording vs. Property Management
- Keeping Illegal Activity out of Rental Property (US Department of Justice) Metro Police Department
- Dealing with Bankruptcy (Screening, Tenants, Collection Judgments)
- Rental Applications and Tenant Screening
- Fire Marshall and Fire Codes as it applies to rental properties
- Insurance and Risk Management for Rental Property
- Detainer Warrants and Evictions
- Rental Maintenance Programs
- Cash Flows, Taxes, and Financing Rental Units
- Development of Certification for Landlords
- Collections
- Section 8 Pros and Cons

If you have an interest, please attend the meeting and encourage Landlords that you know to attend. If you have any questions regarding the Landlord Council, you can contact Rick McClintock at 305-9103.

Be a Good Neighbor

By Rick McClintock

What makes a bad neighbor? Loud music, blaring television sets, keeping odd hours, driving too fast, and not keeping a respectable lawn are some of the biggest things that bother other neighbors. But those are obvious faults. What else is cause for concern? Leaving trash cans at the curb for days after garbage pickup, not bringing in your paper, leaving on your outside lights all day long, and letting your dog go to the bathroom on your front lawn and not cleaning it up. Those points are all self explanatory and easy to stay away from doing.

What makes a good neighbor? A nice lawn, quiet music, no loud parties, and driving at the speed limit or below if there are children in the neighborhood. Those are obviously things that other neighbors appreciate.

What else makes neighbors smile in your direction? Being helpful is probably the biggest thing that neighbors appreciate. When you see that your neighbor's lawn is overfull of leaves and one of your neighbors is outside trying to single handedly rake them up, offer to lend a hand. When a new neighbor moves in, offer to help unload the truck or unpack the boxes. A neighbor just had a baby? Offer to make a meal one night so the new parents aren't so stressed out. Those are also somewhat obvious tips. What else would make a good neighbor? If your neighbor hasn't brought in his garbage cans yet, roll them back into his yard. When you're outside make sure to smile and wave at your other neighbors. Start a conversation if you like. These are things that other neighbors love.

What can you do to make new neighbors feel at home? Besides helping with moving in, be sure to introduce yourselves to the new neighbors. Also, find out if they have kids and if they do, tell them where all the children in the neighborhood live. Tell them where the good places to eat are and where the good places to shop are. If possible, take a dessert or a plate of cookies to make them feel welcome. If you're feeling really ambitious, you could have a barbecue or a dinner party to introduce the new neighbors to everyone else in the neighborhood.

It is not too hard to be a good neighbor or a better neighbor. It also isn't very hard to welcome a new neighbor. After all, don't you want your neighbors to be good neighbors?

If you share walls with your neighbors—and in some cases, your floor is their ceiling—be mindful that your actions affect them. Here are four tips to being a better next-door neighbor:

- 1. Keep the noise down, especially at night.**
Day to day noises, such as running water, the clatter of feet, or conversations, are to be expected. And some noise, like hammering, clearly is unavoidable. But blasting music of any genre at the highest volume interrupts the peace of your next-door neighbors. Making loud disturbances in the middle of the night is inconsiderate. So, before making a ruckus, think of your neighbors and judge whether it's the appropriate time.
- 2. Watch your neighbor's back.**
If you see suspicious activity around your neighbor's door, alert the appropriate authorities. Keep your eyes and ears open. Think of it as the golden rule: you'd want your neighbors watching out for your place.
- 3. Keep the common areas clean.**
This is another code of conduct from the golden rule camp. Litter is unsightly. Just as you wouldn't want to pick up after others or see trash everywhere, don't leave newspapers, junk mail, or litter for others to endure. It's courteous to your neighbors and to your super to clean up after yourself.
- 4. Be friendly with your neighbors.**
As soon as you move in, begin developing relations with your neighbors. Greet them when you see them in the lobby. If you have time, ask how their day was. If you haven't started this, it's never too late. You don't have to knock on their door, but if you see them, give them a friendly greeting. Not only will you feel a stronger tie to this mini-community, but you may have a friend who can help you out in a jam—such as pet-sitting or lending you their vacuum.

Home and Yard of the Month

Congratulations to our two Home and Yard of the Month Winners for September and October!

September— 1800 Turner and 1100 Dodson
October—1409 Turner and 1200 Elliston

If you'd like to nominate a home contact us through the website or call Terry Torre at 847-4410.

Making the Grade

By Jill Ziegler

What are your kids doing after school? Many Old Hickory children are learning through a tutoring program provided by the Old Hickory United Methodist Church. The program is an arm of Kids Café which is part of Second Harvest Food Bank.

The children whom are referred to the program by their school are tutored by volunteers. The volunteers are retired teachers who are provided by the church. They meet every Wednesday afternoon.

The Old Hickory United Methodist congregation donated new books for the children in the tutoring program. They also donated 75 filled backpacks this school year. At Christmas the children in the program are presented with two books courtesy of the church.

As a footnote, Principal Stephanie Hoskins at Dupont Elementary School is asking for donations of Boxtops for Education. The school also has smart cards for sale and is having a spaghetti supper on November 9th. Contact Dupont Elementary for more information.



Mama's Cooking

By Susan Lamb

Popcorn Balls

1 cup sugar
1 cup molasses
1 teaspoon salt
4 quarts popped popcorn
1 cup peanuts (optional)

In a saucepan cook sugar and molasses to 250 degrees. Stir in salt. Drizzle over popcorn and shape into balls. Butter or spray hands with cooking spray first.

Growing up far from convenience stores the Lamb family would pop corn as an all purpose snack. My sister Joyce has kept all the recipes and this one is perfect for fall treats.

Come sample a popcorn ball and other treats at Maisie's on Halloween from 4:30-7:30pm.

Got a story idea or event you'd like us to post?

Contact us through our website at oldhickory.org. You may also view all fun fall village events on our calendar!