

South Plaza Neighborhood Association 2020 Fall Newsletter

South Plaza Neighborhood Association Website

SPNA Newsletter Goes Digital

We are pleased to publish our first SPNA Digital Newsletter. For years, Marthabelle's printed & Donna Kerr hand-delivered our paper newsletter to most every residence & business in South Plaza. Now we are posting on our website & on NextDoor. We are also emailing it to all e-addresses we have. Please help us distribute news of our neighborhood by forwarding this email to everyone you know in South Plaza. If you have email addresses for managers of businesses, condos, apartment buildings, please share those to help us increase distribution.

- Thanks neighbors!

President's Message:



I am so very proud to serve as your new President of the South Plaza Neighborhood Association!

I am sure everyone greatly appreciates Keith and Donna's leadership & dedication over the last twenty-five years and I am very excited for our future!

I truly believe our strength lies in the diversity and involvement of our community.

Great things are happening right here and I hope we continue to strive for a fulfilling and safe place to live, eat, work, play and love!

Your Association Board is comprised of fellow neighbors with a common purpose – to learn and

inform us of events that impact our community and encourage all of us to get involved!

“We are not defined by our circumstances. Rather we are defined by the way we react to and learn from our circumstance and the attitude we bring to life.”

And 2020 certainly has brought us numerous unforeseen challenges:

- During this pandemic, everyone please do your part to follow the safety protocols. Reach out to your neighbors and let them know they are not alone.
- The struggle for justice continues and is on full display right here in our neighborhood as marchers gather at Mill Creek Park.
- And now a Presidential election cycle is in full swing, and I pray that everyone realizes we all have so much more in common in these UNITED States – than the differences that divide.

I look forward to working with everyone and remember how much we can all accomplish if we work together. As we say in the Marine Corps, Semper Fidelis!

- *Cliff Couty* SPNA President

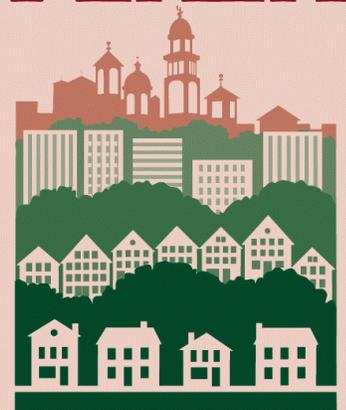
**Next SPNA
General
Meeting third
Sunday of
October
10/18/2020
6PM at eggct.**

[Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 836 7032 7956

Or dial into (312) 626-6799
83670327956#

SOUTH PLAZA



NEIGHBORHOOD

Business Spotlight: Environmental Mechanical Contractors, Inc.



We are delighted to introduce Yesenia & Tom LoScalzo of Environmental Mechanical Contractors, Inc. (EMC) as our Business Spotlight speakers at the October SPNA Membership Meeting, as well as good neighbors interested in supporting SPNA as Business Sponsors. EMC has a proud history since 1945, providing LEED-certified professionals to design & build large government HVAC systems, small single-family residential services, & everything in between.

Tom & Yesenia are donating a generous gift certificate to an area restaurant as a Door Prize; must be masked & present to win! To learn more, join our SPNA Meeting on October 18th. Can't wait? Need your furnace checked sooner? Call EMC at 913/ 829-0100. Tell them you are a South Plaza Neighbor!

SPNA Board of Directors Meeting 06/14/2020 Summary:

July 2020 General Meeting:

Concrete Stairs Project:

The PIAC approved replacement stairs project at 50th between Grand and Brookside in the boulevard easement is still currently under construction. It was funded as noted in prior meetings at \$50,000 and any costs exceeding that will be paid by the Parks Department. See update below. Future PIAC Requests include GOBonds that are meant to help replace curbs and sidewalks in a data driven method, but will likely take several years.

VanTrust Developments:

The Main Street streetscape/CID meetings were paused after 3 meetings due to the pandemic. They conducted a final a new meeting via Zoom platform in July. There are multiple SPNA representatives for the neighborhood. There was conversations about wanting to develop the parking lot area behind Planet Sub and Spin Pizza and consider more angled parking on Main. VanTrust has extended the lease for US Bank at 49th and Main to December. They also offered to have the bank rent again in the redeveloped building, but there would be no drive-through.

The repairs to the stone tile facade on the Whole Foods Grocery will be completed in the fall. The 51Brookside Apartments are 80% rented and the 49Main Apartments are close to 100% rented.

UMKC Neighborhoods Advisory Council (NAC):

SPNA Board of Directors regularly participates in the UMKC Neighborhood Advisory Council. UMKC enrollment for fall is up 22%. They will have both online and in-person classes. The university had to have Oak Place dormitory buildings demolished before school started. Those buildings would not be replaced until 2024. SPNA brought up the vacant rental houses between 53rd and 55th that the university owns. There are 37 unoccupied houses all under a new management company. They had no explanation for why they remain vacant other than implying that no one wants to rent them. Councilman Eric Bunch attended the meeting and believed the streetcar extension will get federal funding in the next cycle of transportation projects. Jason Pryor, who owns Pizza 51 again voiced concerns about parking at Colonial Shops being taken over by streetcar joy riders or commuters.

New Businesses in South Plaza:

The 4800 Main building has three new restaurant venues: Duck and Roll, Banksia Bake House, and Nekter Juice Bar. The former Ellie's Brunch spot remains empty.

SPNA Board Terms:

The two-year board member positions for Keith, Cliff, Martha and Francie expired in July. Keith retired from his multidecade tenure as SPNA President. We celebrated that tenure with a presentation of a gift from the board. Cliff, Martha and Francie were elected to an additional term. Kate Marshall was elected to member of the board and Jeannie Moore filled a vacated seat.

Misc. Issues:

The Parks Department is held community meetings on the proposal to rename the JC Nichols Fountain and JC Nichols Parkway at the East end of the Plaza Shops.

A concern was raised about the future August and November general elections because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The state will allow absentee ballots for any reason, but they still require that they be notarized. They do not need to be notarized if the person has a health condition vouched for by another person.

VOTE Tuesday November 3

Triangle Park Update

SPNA Past President Keith Spare & past board members of SPNA worked long & hard to bring about a transformation of the "Triangle Park" between Grand & Brookside Blvd at 49th – 50th Streets. First there was the neighborhood marker. You may or may not recall the old, flimsy wrought-iron trellis that said South Plaza in small letters & had been hit by a vehicle at least once. Today, because of SPNA efforts, a solid & attractive brick & stone marker proudly announces to passersby that they are in the South Plaza



Neighborhood.

Our next effort, which took years including the writing & submission of several grant requests to PIAC (Public Improvement Advisory Committee), was to replace the crumbling, overgrown concrete steps between Grand & Brookside at 50th Street. At last, PIAC funds were allocated to SPNA for this project & the hard work of planning & negotiating with the Parks Dept & contractor began. Finally, the project was slated to begin in April 2020; like so much else, this schedule was derailed by Covid-19. You may have noticed that construction began in August. Check it out now; a lovely, safe & convenient way to negotiate this steep hillside, and even benches to pause & enjoy the view of the Nelson Atkins to the north. (Or to sit & catch your breath if you are traversing UP the hill.) Soon we will have the benches and railings installed along the steps.

We look forward to additional landscaping of this park area to further beautify the neighborhood. Do you have ideas for improvements? Join our efforts & be part of the solutions in SPNA.

Brush Collection

Saturday 11/15 the city will pick up Leaf & Brush collection (normal trash day pushed back due to Veterans Day holiday 11/12) in South Plaza. Here are some tips from the city:

- Leave bags at curb by 7 am the day of collection (not before 3 pm previous day)
- No more than 20 sacks & bundles per household
- No more than 40 lbs each per bag or bundle
- Paper lawn sacks only (no plastic bags) using masking tape only
- Branches must be bundled/tied with rope/twine & less than 2 in diameter & 4 ft long.



Cyber Safe

The National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) led the development of a web site, www.stopthinkconnect.org. The web site has tips and advice for using the internet safely. Their basic tips fact sheet encourages protecting all devices that connect to the internet from viruses and malware. Having the latest security software, web browser and operating system is the best defense against viruses and malware. Having separate passwords for every online account helps to thwart cybercriminals. When banking and shopping, check to be sure the site is security enabled. Web addresses with "https://" or "shttp://" means the site takes extra measures to secure your information. "Http://" is not secure. Links in emails are often how cybercriminals try to steal personal information. If it looks suspicious, delete it. For smartphones, laptops and tablets, public wi-fi and hotspots are not secure, so limiting what one does when connected is important. Avoid logging into email and financial services on these networks. Consider using a virtual private network (VPN) or a personal/mobile hotspot for a secure connection when out and about. -Article from stuff gleaned from Federal Trade Commission:

Email and Phone Scams

Even the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has seen scammers sending emails to people pretending to be from the chairman of the FTC. The scammers try to trick people into revealing personal information like birth dates and home addresses, etc. Scammers use official-sounding language and images to impersonate federal agencies to trick people into responding.

There is also a scam involving fake and abusive debt collectors calling and threatening people. It might be about a debt you already paid or has nothing to do with you. Go to ftc.gov/debtcollection for 5 steps to deal with this and learn more.

If someone claiming to be from the IRS calls, emails, or texts about helping you get your stimulus payment, that person is running a government imposter scam on you. You only have until 10/15/20 to register to claim an economic impact payment. Go to the real IRS website, IRS.gov/EIP for more information. Contact the FTC to report a scam.

Also, the US Department of Education has stopped making collection calls and sending billing statements through December 31, 2020 for federal student loans that are in default. This is due to the updated CARES Act. This program only applies to federal student loans. To confirm if your student loan is federal, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center.

Not a SPNA Member?

SPNA annual membership runs from July through June of each year, with most members paying at the July quarterly meeting. If you'd like to join SPNA or renew your membership, feel free to mail your check to our SPNA Treasurer: Martha Hogarty, 311 West 51st Terrace, KCMO 64112. Thanks!

Successful SPNA Dumpster Day

On Saturday, September 26th, South Plaza arranged its semiannual Dumpster Day to assist neighbors in disposing of unwieldy & unwanted items. This year we also arranged for a donation truck from Cornerstones of Care to collect used clothing, toys, shoes, & household goods. Pam at Cornerstones of Care provided excellent coordination, & the two men with the truck could not have been nicer or more helpful. As one of them told us, "These toys will be given to abused or neglected children. These women's clothes will go to those who have fled domestic abuse with the clothes on their backs." Neighbors were delighted, several making more than one trip to clean out closets & basements. Even Mother Nature cooperated with a sparkling clear day! Thanks to our SPNA volunteers, to KCMO for the dumpster, to Cornerstones of Care & to all our neighbors who participated. Special thanks to our neighbors at SW corner of 51st Terrace at Brookside for allowing us to block access & to the nearby neighbors.



SPNA Board Director Highlight: Francie Hall

I got involved with SPNA shortly after moving to South Plaza in 2012. I joined Norma Boyer & Bev Parson on the Good Neighbor Committee, attempting to increase communication & participation of area businesses. Now in my third term on the SPNA Board, I accepted the role of Vice President when both Keith Spare & Donna Kerr stepped down, as I have just a bit more experience on the board than most others & want to assist Cliff during this transition to new Spare-less leadership. This is not, for me, a step toward the presidency since I am legally blind & literally unable to "keep an eye on" the neighborhood. I simply love South Plaza & want to keep making it a better place to work, live, eat, play & love!

SPNA Board Director Highlight: Martha Hogerty

I am a 3rd generation Kansas Citian. I grew up in this general neighborhood and lived in Brookside when my children were young. I spent 22 years in Mid Mo. acting as the Public Counsel for the State of Mo. representing public utility consumers, but Kansas City has always been my home. When I retired I was delighted to return. I am committed to this wonderful neighborhood and am looking forward to working with our neighbors and preserving this great community.

SPNA Board Director Highlight: Kelly Hollowell

Fostering a great community has always been a high priority for me. I believe our neighborhood is so wonderful and vibrant thanks to the diverse neighbors and businesses who call South Plaza home. As a board member, I'm happy to provide the website administration for www.southplazakc.org. I hope to help our community thrive through information sharing and advocacy. If you have additional information that would be helpful to see on the website, please let me know. We're always working to improve the site. Hope to see you around the neighborhood!

SPNA Board Director Highlight: Kate Marshall

I'm so pleased to be a newly elected member of the SPNA. I have been living in the neighborhood for 4 years now after a 30 year stint in Johnson County. I was born and raised in New York City and actually relocated to KC from Europe back in 1985. When I first moved here I lived on the Plaza and I couldn't wait to get back to this beautiful area. I was drawn to this opportunity because I am passionate about community. I feel that by getting to know each other, and staying informed about what is happening locally, we can create effective partnerships, build bridges and keep growing and changing in positive ways. I look forward to getting to know you all!

New Mural at 51st and Main



Save the Date: 01/10/21 thru 01/19/21 is KC Restaurant Week!

Complete document and mail with payment