Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation

Update

Fall 2017

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Introducing GRDC's new Executive Director, Sherita Smith

GRDC is pleased to introduce Sherita Smith as our new Executive Director. Sherita comes to GRDC with over 18 years of experience in community development, and is eager to bring her skills and enthusiasm to the Grandmont Rosedale community.

A native Detroiter, Sherita is familiar with Grandmont Rosedale's successes and challenges, and believes that GRDC has an integral role to play not just in Grandmont Rosedale, but in the city of Detroit as well. Sherita is looking forward to working with the board as well as the many residents and volunteers in Grandmont Rosedale. She believes that the level of community involvement in Grandmont Rosedale is its greatest feature.

Sherita and her husband, Marcellis "Sonny" Smith, lead pastor of Detroit Church, celebrate 20 years of marriage this month. They are the proud parents of four sons, ages 18, 17, 15, and 8.

GRDC's Board of Directors was unanimous in their confidence in Sherita's abilities and is looking forward to an effective, cooperative partnership. Under Sherita's leadership, GRDC will remain fully committed to our mission of improving the quality of life in the Grandmont Rosedale community.

We invite you to meet Sherita and welcome her to our community, stop by the GRDC office, or attend the Community Connections Breakfast in the fall. Look for the date and time in upcoming eblasts.

Together, we will make Grandmont Rosedale an even better place to live, work, and play.

GRANDcorridor Project Beautifies Grand River

The GRANDcorridor Beautification Project fuses art and the natural environment to create a more walkable, beautiful corridor along Grand River. Sponsored by GRDC, in collaboration with the student-run Project 561, artist collective The Forge, and numerous community and business volunteers, the project includes three new murals at local businesses and twenty five newly planted street trees.

Members of this community-wide partnership selected three mural designs by Detroit-based artists. The murals have been installed at Cutz Lounge at 19655 Grand River, Detroit Vegan Soul, 19614 Grand River, and Royal Fresh Market, 18551 Grand River. The trees have been planted on Grand River between Outer Drive and Evergreen.

The Detroit Vegan Soul mural was designed by Elton Duran, a Mexico-born artist who moved to Detroit three years ago. Duran also designed and painted the mural at Grand River WorkPlace completed last summer.

The mural at Cutz Lounge was partly funded by Community Development Advocates of Detroit as part of their Detroit '67 project. The theme of this project is "Looking Back to Move Forward" and commemorates the 50th anniversary of the 1967 rebellions in Detroit. Artist Rachael Walker is a Detroit Public Schools art teacher and studio assistant at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The Royal Fresh Market mural is the largest and most ambitious of the three new murals. Artist and Detroit resident Jessica Krcmarik's mural depicts a day at the farm with a produce stand overflowing with fruits and vegetables.

Truly a grass-roots effort, the GRANDcorridor Beautification Project demonstrates the power of connecting the arts with community

action to create a more beautiful neighborhood.

A special thanks to our philanthropic community for their grant support:

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GRDC is a non-profit, community-based organization working to preserve and improve the Grandmont Rosedale Neighborhoods of northwest Detroit. We take a comprehensive approach to community revitalization, with programs designed to renovate vacant homes, assist local homeowners and businesses, beautify our community and keep our neighborhoods safe and vibrant.

Thanks to Our Supporters

GRDC thanks the following families and businesses for their generous support of our programs between April 1, 2016-June 30, 2017. Your contributions make a real difference in our community! If we've forgotten your name on either the donor or volunteer list, we apologize and please let us know! Contact Tom Ridgway at tridgway@grandmontosedale.com or 313.387.5158, ext. 105.

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GRDC Renovates 125th Home

GRDC's home renovation program reached another milestone this summer with the completion of its125th renovation project. The latest home is located at 16890 Plainview. This four bedroom, 1 ½ bath house was vacant and blighted due to mortgage foreclosure before being donated to GRDC by JP Morgan Chase Bank.

GRDC replaced the roof, plumbing, heating and cooling, and the electrical systems. The kitchen and bathrooms were given a facelift and the hardwood floors throughout have been refinished. The house also features a backyard, screened gazebo that would be a lovely place to enjoy a summer evening.

Two other homes were renovated and sold earlier in the year. Beautiful brick homes at 14865 Ashton in Rosedale Park and 14321 Greenview in Grandmont #1 are already occupied by proud home owners and new Grandmont Rosedale neighbors. Project #126 is already underway, also on Plainview Street in North Rosedale Park.

"Our housing market is really bouncing back," says GRDC Project Manager Tom Ridgway. "It will only be a matter of months until this empty house will be beautifully renovated and occupied by a family who will certainly feel fortunate to have found a home in Grandmont Rosedale".

Renovated and quickly sold GRDC home in North Rosedale Park

Innovative Project Targets Grandmont Rosedale for Home Renovation

Develop Detroit

GRDC is teaming up with Develop Detroit to implement an innovative new approach to renovating homes in Grandmont Rosedale. The program will utilize New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) to help finance the cost of renovations. The NMTC program has been used to finance commercial and mixed-use projects in Detroit, but its use for home renovations is novel.

Housing Partnership Network (HPN) has provided Develop Detroit with a $5 million dollar tax credit allocation for this project, which will include renovation projects in Detroit's North End neighborhood as well as Grandmont Rosedale. Develop Detroit is a city-wide non-profit housing organization created by HPN in 2015. This project will mark GRDC's first collaboration with Develop Detroit

Homes have not yet been selected for renovation but will be concentrated in the Minock Park and Grandmont #1 neighborhoods, as well as select areas just west of Evergreen Road. Target areas were selected based on NMTC eligibility requirements. The renovation of cost of vacant and blighted homes in these areas is expected to exceed current market values. The NMTC helps raise funds to fill the development gap through the sale of tax credits to social-minded investors.

With grant funds to support housing renovation becoming harder and harder to come by, this innovative partnership will help GRDC to continue its work of providing quality homes for families who want to call Grandmont Rosedale home.

Once Blighted Lots Become a Neighborhood Garden

Minock Park residents take pride in their homes and understand that neighborhood stability necessitates resident participation. When one group of dedicated residents that the vacant lots on the corner of Plainview and Midland were looking pretty bad, they decided do something about it.

After a blighted house was demolished, the now vacant lots became an illegal dumping site. The grass became so overgrown that driving through the intersection was becoming dangerous. "It was a real nuisance," says long-time resident Richard George who, along with a few other neighbors, did what they could to keep the growth under control. "We only had hand tools, though, and we realized we really needed something much bigger."

VOLUNTEERS AND DETROIT FUTURE CITY WORK TOGETHER

As members of the Minock Park Block Association, several residents applied to and received Detroit Future City's lot renovation grant. GRDC offered to act as the fiduciary and project manager to transform the lots. Toward the end of May, this "Ring Around the Garden" project led to the removal of garbage, volunteer trees and bushes, and a badly damaged chain link fence that ran the perimeter of the lots.

The once blighted, dangerous lots are now a point of beauty and pride for Minock Park. Volunteers from Minock Park and surrounding Grandmont Rosedale neighborhoods have planted 90 naturalizing bulbs, 150 ground covers, and a rain garden featuring native grasses and flowers. Flowers will bloom in a wide, circular garden at the base of a mature maple that is now the focal point of the lot.

Richard George, who has lived in Minock Park as long as he can remember, "and I was born in 1944," readily admits that "it's a lot better than it was." He does have one hesitation though. "There were roses along the front fence. They were pink and they bloomed every year." This fall, once the heat of summer is over, more bulbs will be planted, as well as roses. Richard and a few other neighbors have been watering the new plants, and are looking forward to years of a safer, more beautiful Minock Park.

If you'd like to help with the "Ring around the Garden" fall planting, contact Chelsea Neblett at cneblett@grandmontrosedale.com or 313.387.4732, ext. 103.

Volunteers gather to transform vacant lots in Minock Park

Detroit Planning and Development Department Focuses on Grand River

CITY OF Detroit PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Earlier this year, the Detroit Planning and Development Department (PDD) hired a consultant to develop "framework plan" for a large area of Northwest Detroit including Grandmont Rosedale, Old Redford and other nearby neighborhoods. The consultants examined a variety of issues such as streetscape design, green storm water infrastructure and mobility. The draft plan envisions a new park on the site of the old Rogell Golf Course, a greenway along the Rouge River and improvements to the Grand River commercial corridor. Two primary areas along Grand River will be the focus of this strategy -- one at the intersection with Lahser and the other in Grandmont Rosedale.

A series of public meetings were held as part of the planning process to gather input from residents. Advocacy by GRDC and Grandmont Rosedale residents ensured that our community would be included as a target area for streetscape improvements. Additional meetings with residents and business owners this summer will provide more opportunities for community input.

"We are still waiting to see the details of what will be proposed," said Economic Development Program Manager Larissa Carr. "However, we believe that public investment in streetscape improvements are critical to spurring new private development along Grand River."

If you missed the community meetings, you can read more about what is being planned at www.detroitmi.gov/Northwest.

GRDC Awarded Kresge Innovative Projects: Detroit Grant for The Annex

GRDC has been awarded a Kresge Innovative Projects: Detroit grant to open a collaborative space dedicated specifically to supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs. This versatile cultural arts space, known as The Annex, will be located at 19556 Grand River and will be available to small business owners who need a space to host events such as food pop ups, art installations or even musical performances. This location will be of particular advantage to small businesses on Grand River and serve as another important addition to the Grand River business community. Having such a flexible space as part of the Grand River business community will serve as yet another asset to the Grandmont Rosedale neighborhoods as well. Just as stable neighborhoods need community-minded involved residents, so too does a strong community need community-minded, involved business owners.

According to Larissa Carr, Grand River WorkPlace manager, "This project was inspired by the success of both Pages Bookshop and Everything Detroit," two independent small businesses that will be close neighbors to this new space. Both of these businesses have expressed a need for event space, so it is a welcome addition that would in turn encourage even more programming for all businesses on Grand River.

RENOVATIONS TO BEGIN SOON

Renovations will soon get underway for this space, such as a more open floor plan, new flooring, an additional bathroom, and signage. The 18 month grant covers a portion of the mortgage, the renovations, and marketing for the programming. GRDC will coordinate the programming, working with small business owners and entrepreneurs who are looking for a space to try out a new idea, hold a community meeting, or even host an evening of music and food. This is GRDC's second Kresge Innovative Project: Detroit grant. The first award enabled GRDC to install the green parking lot adjacent to the Grand River WorkPlace last summer. The lot not only provides much needed parking for customers, it also improved Grandmont Rosedale's environment with storm water abatement and plantings. In addition, It is one of if not the most attractive parking lots on Grand River. As our business community grows in strength, so too do our neighborhoods. A heartfelt thank you to the Kresge Foundation, and to the many small business owners on Grand River whose hard work has made this new facility a necessary addition to the Grand River business community.

Everything Detroit Joins the Grandmont Rosedale Business Community

About ten years ago Katrina Brown came up with the idea for her store, Everything Detroit. Katrina knew that Detroit had no lack of talented designers, artists, and entrepreneurs, but she also noticed that these small businesspeople "shied away from marketing their businesses because of the expense." Everything Detroit offers Detroit based entrepreneurs, artists, and designers a place to sell their products without incurring the high costs of marketing.

Katrina attended TechTown and ProsperUs programs at Grand River WorkPlace. Katrina then contacted GRDC looking for a place in the Grandmont Rosedale business community. The GRDC renovated commercial space at 19566 Grand River is the ideal spot for Katrina to feature an array of Detroit based products such as bags that feature Detroit artists' work, Detroit skyline t-shirts, and sunglasses and jewelry by Detroit designers.

A UNIQUE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

Online sales are available at www.everythingdetroitmi.com, but Everything Detroit offers customers the opportunity to check out the merchandise before they purchase and to find something unexpected. Entrepreneurs pay a rent fee for displaying their wares, and when Katrina markets the store, she markets the individual entrepreneurs. She also coaches the entrepreneurs on how to market their goods, and provides an e card featuring the logo of the store as well as the entrepreneurs' logo. Everything Detroit is a true business cooperative, and Katrina has expanded that spirit of cooperation beyond the walls of her store.

BUILDING A BUSINESS COMMUNITY

With support from GRDC, Katrina renovated the patio just west of her store. She approached Tina Castleberry, owner of The Garden Bug at 18901 Grand River, to see if she'd be willing to donate pallets for benches. Tina is happy that the pallets no longer crowd her store, and Katrina has some new, definitely locally sourced benches for her patio.

Katrina looks forward to working with Detroit Vegan Soul, hoping customers might browse Everything Detroit. Small business owners, artists, community development organizations, and residents all have a stake in the Grandmont Rosedale business community. As Katrina says: "Neighborhoods are the backbone of Detroit, and strong, small businesses are necessary in order for neighborhoods to grow and stay strong."

A Pop Up Pairing

Nicole Bien-Aime and Chanel Coleman met while they were taking ProsperUs training at the Grand River WorkPlace. Nicole had been selling women's clothing out of an office building ill-suited to her needs. Chanel's custom shoes and accessories business had been an online only endeavor and she was looking to expand.

During their training the women realized that not only did they share a passion for fashion, but they also agreed that their businesses would make a terrific pairing, and the Grand River WorkPlace Pop Up space offered the perfect opportunity.

SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS COMBINE THEIR TALENTS AND INTERESTS

Voluptuous Bien'Aime Boutique is Nicole's business and features formal and casual women's clothing. Minock Park resident Nicole has clothing in all sizes, but there is an emphasis on plus sizes. Nicole regularly carries Detroit designers and offers tailoring services to "be sure the clothes fit your size, your shape."

Chanel's Bling offers customized accessories such as shoes, clothing, hats, even phone cases and wine glasses. Chanel uses high quality crystal stones to add a little or a lot of pizzazz to just about anything. Chanel's accessories are a perfect match for Nicole's clothing. The pop up is Chanel's first store front experience and, paired with Nicole's boutique, it's turning out to be a great business decision.

SHOP THE POP UP!

The women will remain in the pop up space until early fall, so stop by! Nicole and Chanel would love to help you add some original pieces to your wardrobe. Nicole says, "If you walk in with nothing but a pair of shoes, we can help you put the rest of a beautiful outfit together!" Several people have told Nicole that they keep an eye on the mannequins in the window. "I know they're watching," Nicole says, "so I change the mannequins often." Nicole has been so pleased with her experience at the pop up, she is looking for a permanent space for her boutique in the Grandmont Rosedale business community.

Nicole Bien-Aime and Chanel Coleman at their shared pop-up space at the WorkPlace

For more information about Nicole and Chanel's store, stop by at 19120 Grand River or visit vbienaimeboutique.com or chanelsbling.com. For more information about ProsperUs training or applications for the Grand River WorkPlace pop up space, contact Larissa Carr at lcarr@grandmontrosedale.com

Plans are Underway for Grandmont Rosedale Food Hall

A Food Hall is a community space where 4-7 restaurants or other food-related businesses share a building with a communal eating area. GRDC hopes to bring this innovative idea to Grandmont Rosedale.

GRDC is partnering with FoodLab Detroit, a non-profit that supports food entrepreneurs, to study whether this concept can work in our community. The goal is to place FoodLab member businesses in the proposed Food Hall.

Residents from all five neighborhoods and business owners were interviewed about how far they drive to their favorite restaurants, and what kinds of restaurants they'd like to see in Grandmont Rosedale. This data collection will show how much of our food spending power is leaving Grandmont Rosedale and how we can keep more food dollars in our community.

KEEPING OUR FOOD DOLLARS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

"Having a Food Hall in Grandmont Rosedale also answer the frequent request by residents for a sit down, casual restaurant for the whole family," says Chelsea Neblett, GRDC's Program Manager.

The next step is to examine sites along Grand River to determine the optimal location for a Food Hall, and to begin recruiting businesses to locate there. "Through our partnership with FoodLab Detroit," added Neblett, "we want to support the growth of locally-owned small businesses and revitalize our commercial corridor at the same time."

The feasibility study is being supported by a grant from the Michigan Good Food Fund, a public-private partnership that supports access to healthy food across the state of Michigan.

Help Keep GRDC Going Strong!

There are many examples in this issue of Update that illustrate the hard work that goes into making Grandmont Rosedale a great place to live, work, shop, and play. The home renovations, clean-ups, beautification projects, investment in our commercial community, and security initiatives take a lot of volunteer effort and donations! GRDC could not accomplish nearly as much without our reliable team of volunteers and regular donations from supporters both near and far. If you haven't had a chance to volunteer for a GRDC project, keep in touch. Surely there will be an initiative that fits your schedule and your passion. If you haven't yet donated to help us fund these many projects, it's never too late. There are many options that will fit your budget. **To learn about the giving options, visit grandmontrosedale.com. You can also mail a check made out to "GRDC" to 19800 Grand River Detroit, MI 48223.** Thanks so much for your support! Working together, we can keep Grandmont Rosedale one of Detroit's most stable and vibrant neighborhoods.

Detroit Vegan Soul Opens!

The much anticipated Detroit Vegan Soul has opened in Grandmont Rosedale! After the success of their West Village location, owners Erika Boyd and Kirsten Ussery looked specifically in Northwest Detroit to open their second location. Erika grew up in Northwest Detroit and has fond memories of the area. This time though, the owners wanted to own the building, and, according to Kirsten, "GRDC was instrumental in helping our dream become reality."

GRDC purchased the long vacant building at 19614 Grand River in 2016 and soon began working with Detroit Vegan Soul, enabling the owners to purchase the building from GRDC on a land contract. This arrangement gave Erika and Kirsten the flexibility to focus on renovating the interior of the building. Detroit Vegan Soul was also a recipient of one of the five new murals along Grand River that was part of the GRANDcorridor Beautification Project.

STRENGTHENING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The owners of Detroit Vegan Soul are excited to be a part of the Grandmont Rosedale business community. According to Kirsten, "The business community has been so welcoming! They all want to work together." When customers look for something to do after they enjoy a meal at Detroit Vegan Soul, Kirsten looks forward to telling them to "check out Everything Detroit and Pages Bookshop and Always Brewing Detroit!" Kirsten and Erika held two job fairs at the WorkPlace, putting out a call out for Grandmont Rosedale residents in particular. About 20 people were hired, and the GRDC offices were used for their training.

The owners see their new location in Grandmont Rosedale as fulfilling their mission: to promote healthier living, and Kirsten believes that their location in Grandmont Rosedale has allowed them to "have an immediate impact" on people's lives. Detroit Vegan Soul offers delicious, plant-based, organic vegan soul food. From barbequed tofu to smothered tempeh, from black-eyed pea hummus to okra stew, there is certainly something for everyone. Check out detroitvegansoul.com for more information.

Kirsten Ussery and Erika Boyd at their newly opened restaurant in Grandmont Rosedale

The Northwest Detroit Farmers' Market Celebrates its 13th Year

For the 13th year in a row, local farmers, entrepreneurs, and small business owners gather at the Northwest Detroit Farmer's Market to offer Grandmont Rosedale residents and residents beyond our borders local, fresh produce, locally made products, and a healthy dose of community spirit.

This year's Farmers' Market features several returning vendors as well as many new vendors. New this year are Oakland Avenue Urban Farm from Detroit's North End offering locally grown fresh produce, Mo Jams and Sweets has local jams for sale, Sweet Potato Delights has a variety of vegetarian and vegan sweet potato treats, Simply Irresistible Popcorn specializes in all things popcorn, Scott-Tish Bee Honey has several honeys and bee pollen for sale, and The Urban Country Tea House offers something cool and delicious to drink while you shop.

2017 MARKET PROGRAMMING

The "Healthy Living Initiatives" program returns with food preservation workshops and healthy recipes. There will also be weekly programming for both kids and adults, and, for the third year, the Farmers' Market will be a Meet Up and Eat Up location for all Detroit students 18 and younger, (to find more Meet Up and Eat Up locations, that are available seven days a week, simply dial 211). Your Farmer's Market accepts cash, credit, and food assistance program payments such as EBT/ Bridge Cards, Double Up Food Bucks and Project/Market FRESH coupons.

"The start of a new Market season is a sure sign of summer!" says Chelsea Neblett, manager of the Northwest Detroit Farmers' Market, "And with favorite vendors returning and some truly exciting new venders, this year's Market is better than ever!"

Get your fresh produce, support a local business or two, and spend some time with your neighbors at the Northwest Detroit Farmers' Market located at 18445 Scarsdale St. near Bretton and Glastonbury any Thursday from 4 – 8 pm until mid-October. For more information about the 2017 Northwest Detroit Farmers' Market, contact Market Manager Chelsea Neblett at cneblett@grandmontrosedale.com or 313.387.4732 ext. 103.

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News Around the Neighborhood

The Grand River WorkPlace, located at 19120 Grand River, has co-working space available for small businesses. The WorkPlace hosts ongoing programming that helps small businesses connect with marketing consultants, financial advisors, small business mentors, and, of course, other small businesses. Four programs run regularly at the WorkPlace. Detroit SCORE offers one-on-one mentoring for entrepreneurs, ProsperUs offers start-up business courses in the spring and fall, TechTown offers consulting services every third Wednesday, and CEED Lending offers micro-loans to small businesses eager to grow.

The WorkPlace is an affordable, flexible, and professional work space where entrepreneurs share Wi-fi, conference rooms, and copy/printing services. To learn more about the Grand River WorkPlace, contact Larissa Carr at lcarr@grandmontrosedale.com.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY MEETING

Neighborhood Safety Meetings will resume after summer break on Thursday, October 26 at 6:30 pm at the North Rosedale Park Community House, 18445 Scarsdale. A representative from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Homeland Security will be our guest speaker. The final Neighborhood Safety Meeting for 2017 will take place on Thursday, December 21 at 6:30 pm. Sign up for the GRDC eblast to learn about Neighborhood Safety Meeting information as well as other neighborhood activities!

SIGN UP FOR THE GRDC EBLAST

Grandmont Rosedale is a busy place! If you'd like to stay up to date on what's happening in Grandmont Rosedale each week, sign up for the GRDC eblast. This electronic newsletter will arrive in your email inbox every Wednesday. In it you will find information regarding upcoming events and links to relevant websites, emails, and flyers. Just send an email to info@grandmontrosedale.com and ask to be added to the list.