

# College Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation Annual Report

December 1, 2015



**2015 marked a turning point for the College Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation (CHCURC)—we started moving from property acquisition and demolition to development—and we are so grateful for your continued support!**

Over the last few years, CHCURC has focused on a number of key projects to move our neighborhood forward –

- (1) finalize the development sites at Hamilton Avenue and North Bend Road, including the acquisition and demolition of the Kroger property, and selecting a developer,
- (2) finalize the acquisition and demolition of property in the Mid-Business District with the City of Cincinnati, and selecting a developer for the site at Hamilton Avenue and Marlowe Avenue,
- (3) prioritize the acquisition of key properties in the Mid-Business District as part of CHCURC's \$200,000 Challenge Match, including the acquisition of the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings and begin architectural designs for the renovations of those buildings,
- (4) finalize planning the redevelopment of the Mid-District Parking Lot,
- (5) implement a new round of façade improvements along the business district, and
- (6) increase our capacity by obtaining grants and fundraising for the ability to have professional staff at this key time for our redevelopment and revitalization.

CHCURC is pleased to announce the following updates on these key initiatives:

## College Hill Station

CHCURC and the City have worked for a decade on the acquisition of 7.5+ acres of land at the corner of Hamilton Avenue and North Bend Road. The last piece of this key development site was the acquisition of the former Kroger in May 2013, and the demolition of this blighted property in the summer of 2014. In 2015, CHCURC and the City of Cincinnati selected Saint Francis Group to create a development plan for all 7.5 acres in keeping with CHCURC's vision of mixed-use buildings with retail, office, and residential uses. This project is now called College Hill Station. Saint Francis Group is working with architect Jeff Raser of Glaserworks for the development. The development plan is due in March 2016, and CHCURC is working closely with Saint Francis Group on all elements of this development. CHCURC looks forward to sharing a project update at its Annual Dinner on February 3, 2016.

## Marlowe Court

In April 2009, CHCURC was awarded \$1.5 million to purchase blighted property in the mid-business district. As part of this grant, CHCURC negotiated the agreements to purchase 6021 Hamilton Ave. (formerly Beauty Mart) in September 2010, 6009 Hamilton Ave. (formerly Evan Ramsey Florist) in December 2010, 6031 Hamilton Ave. (residence next to Beauty Mart) in April 2011, and 6017 Hamilton Ave. (Dart and Two Brothers) in October 2011. With these four properties, and the two previous acquisitions by the City of 6013 and 6015 Hamilton Ave., CHCURC and the City created a landbank of six contiguous properties. These properties were demolished in the summer of 2013. In 2014, CHCURC and the City acquired 5951 Hamilton Ave., and the properties south of the intersection of Marlowe and Hamilton—5943 Hamilton Ave., which included EZ Market, and 5919 Hamilton Ave. With these nine properties, the City/CHCURC partnership created 2.5+ acres for redevelopment in the Mid-Business District.

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In 2015, Model Group and Episcopal Retirement Homes (ERH) jointly partnered to propose a \$11.1 million development on the seven parcels north of Marlowe. Named Marlowe Court, this mixed-used development will include 53 affordable apartments for seniors, as well as retail space on the first floor. First Financial Bank has already signed to be the anchor tenant. In June 2015, this project received \$9.8 million in tax credits over ten years, and the project is now moving forward with its design process. CHCURC has worked closely with Model Group and ERH on the architectural drawings to ensure that the new building will work well in the business district. Financing is expected to close by April 2016, construction is set to begin in April 2016, and, with construction slated to take approximately 14 months, we are hopeful that Marlowe Court will be open by June 2017.



Marlowe Court (rendering, east elevation)

### CHCURC Property Acquisitions

Over the past decade, CHCURC has been very successful in being awarded a number of highly competitive grant dollars from the City of Cincinnati, including \$1.5 million in 2002 for the Streetscape Project, \$170,000 in 2003 and 2005 for the Gateway Project, \$30,000 in 2005 for the Directional Sign Project, \$300,000 in 2006 for the Façade Improvement Project, and \$305,000 in 2009 for the Gen Kress Parking Lot Expansion Project.

While CHCURC has been very successful in being awarded these grants, CHCURC set out to gain greater financial independence, and raised \$400,000 to purchase, renovate, and lease property in the business district through its \$200,000 Challenge Match from a generous benefactor. CHCURC's goal is to purchase income-producing property which will also allow CHCURC to reinvest and purchase additional property in the business district.

#### Doll House/Dow Corner Buildings

CHCURC purchased 5917 Hamilton Ave. (the Doll House) in 2013, and purchased 5901/5905 Hamilton Ave. (Dow Corner Buildings) in 2014. CHCURC received a \$35,000 grant from Duke Energy's Urban Revitalization Initiative in October 2014 for architectural and engineering drawings for these buildings. In 2015, CHCURC worked with Champlin Architecture on a visioning process for the redevelopment of the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings. The architectural and engineering drawings were completed in the fall of 2015, and CHCURC is working to identify financing to renovate these buildings. CHCURC has received a \$4,000 grant from BB&T Bank to hire a consultant to assist in creating proposals for this renovation financing. CHCURC is pleased to announce that it has signed its first new tenant for the Dow Corner Buildings—a brewery. The yet to be named brewery is scheduled to open in the fall of 2016.

#### CHCURC Office

In 2014, Ms. Elaine Efkegenerously donated 1551 Marlowe Ave., formerly the Efkegenerous Dentist Office, to CHCURC. In 2015, CHCURC worked with Champlin Architecture and Diversified Facilities Solutions on the complete renovation of this building, so that it could be used as CHCURC's offices. This renovation was completed in August 2015. The final touch will be the new sign, which will be installed in the winter.



Dow Corner (5901/5905 Hamilton Ave.)



Doll House (5917 Hamilton Ave.)



CHCURC office (1551 Marlowe Ave.)

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### National City Bank Building

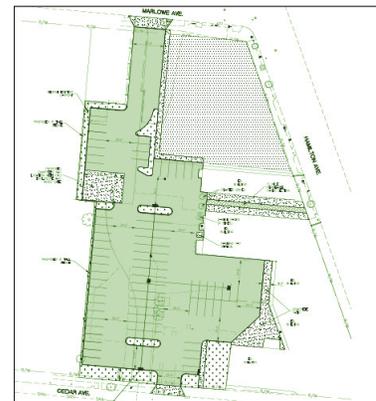
CHCURC also is pleased to announce that it received a \$100,000 grant from the City of Cincinnati's Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program to purchase 5932 Hamilton Ave., formerly a National City Bank. CHCURC closed on 5932 Hamilton Ave. in September 2015. CHCURC will be working with a retail broker, as it hopes to lease this building for a new restaurant for the neighborhood.

### Retail Marketing Strategy

CHCURC was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the City's General Fund Service Provider Grant, which will allow CHCURC to hire a marketing/communications consultant and to hire Urban Fast Forward to complete a retail marketing strategy for the College Hill Business District, to be completed early in 2016. Urban Fast Forward will also be the lead real estate broker for CHCURC's properties.

### Mid-Business District Parking Lot

CHCURC was awarded a \$250,000 grant in 2012 to redevelop the Mid-Business District Parking Lot between Cedar Ave. and Marlowe Ave. on the west side of Hamilton Ave. In 2015, CHCURC began to open up this resource by acquiring and demolishing two properties—1626 Cedar Ave. (a four-family apartment building) and 1618 Cedar Ave. (formerly Dr. Browne's dental office), allowing for clear sightlines and better physical access. In addition to repaving and restriping the lot, CHCURC will also add lighting to increase safety. CHCURC is hopeful that these improvements, in conjunction with its renovations to the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings, will help to attract new businesses to the Mid-Business District. Demolition of 1626 Cedar Ave., 5943 Hamilton Ave., and 5919/5921 Hamilton Ave. occurred in the beginning of 2015, that of 1618 Cedar Ave. in October 2015. The contract for the new parking lot was awarded to Ford Development Company, and construction will begin early in 2016.



Mid district parking lot improvement plan

### Façade Improvement Program

In 2006, CHCURC was awarded \$300,000 for a Façade Improvement Program for the business district. This money was leveraged on a 50/50 basis for property owners and 80/20 basis for business owners for improvements to windows, doors, signage, lighting, and painting to the exteriors of buildings that can be seen from Hamilton Avenue. College Hill saw approximately \$400,000 in improvements to 25 store fronts from 2007-2009. In July 2014, CHCURC was awarded a \$175,000 grant for a second round of façade improvements. After finalizing the contract details with the City of Cincinnati, façade improvements have begun. CHCURC is also grateful to PNC Bank for their \$10,000 grant to expand the scope of the Façade Improvement Program. In the fall of 2015, façade improvements were made to CHCURC's offices at 1551 Marlowe Ave. and the awning for the College Hill Coffee Co. New windows, doors, and other façade improvements will begin on Enliven, Inspire Salon, Bacall's, and Silk Road Textiles in December 2015. Other façade improvements are in development for Marty's Hops & Vines, Red Rose, Chung Ching, and CHCURC's properties at Dow Corner Buildings and the Doll House, and those will begin in 2016.

### CHCURC Executive Director

With College Hill Station in the pre-development stage, Marlowe Court in development and final design phase, CHCURC's planned renovation of the Dow Corner Buildings and Doll House, new façade improvements, and the Mid-Business District Parking Lot renovation, CHCURC is embarking on a large-scale redevelopment and revitalization of this great neighborhood. Accordingly, CHCURC sought and received a \$20,000 operational support grant in November 2014 for a part-time executive director and, in March 2015, hired Michael Kintner to this position. CHCURC is extremely fortunate to be served by a person as highly qualified and richly skilled as Mike Kinter. He has worked tirelessly along side the CHCURC board to move all of these projects forward. CHCURC will receive another operational grant for 2015, but to continue and increase our momentum, CHCURC would greatly appreciate any and all contributions towards expanding our available operational support.

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## CiTIRAMA 2014 and 2016

With CHCURC's progress on so many fronts in the business district, CHCURC was pleased that TJ Ackerman and the Meierjohan Building Group jointly purchased 8 acres of land off of Connecticut Ave. to bring the newest CiTiRAMA to College Hill. Five model homes were constructed for the CiTiRAMA event in September 2014, and the new cul-de-sac streets included 24 new homes. All 24 lots have been purchased, and 23 homes have been constructed. Because of the success of CiTiRAMA 2014, Mr. Ackermann and Meierjohan Building Group have purchased 12 acres off of Collegevue Place, and the City of Cincinnati awarded this development CiTiRAMA 2016. CHCURC is thankful for new private residential development in the neighborhood, and looks forward to more in the coming years.

**As CHCURC looks ahead to 2016**, we seek to build upon the successes of the past year, continuing our redevelopment efforts in a number of ways. These efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Work with Saint Francis Group on finalizing the development plans for College Hill Station;
- Work with ERH and Model Group on finalizing the architectural plans for Marlowe Court, with construction slated to begin in April 2016;
- Work with Ford Development Company on the improvement of the Mid-Business District Parking Lot and attracting new businesses to that portion of the neighborhood;
- Finalize fundraising and financing to begin redevelopment of the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings; and
- Implement the new round of Façade Improvements.

CHCURC stands at a crossroads. While our vision for College Hill is as clear and strong as ever, with much progress being realized—thanks to the many funders and volunteers who have already stepped forward—we need increased financial support from our community to maintain and amplify our work. Here's how your contribution of \$50, \$100 or more could make a difference:

- match the bank financing for the Doll House and Dow Corner buildings renovations
- fund materials, both traditional and digital, to help CHCURC share and promote College Hill successes throughout the region and beyond
- support continuing oversight of the developers and types of projects attracted to the business district
- boost existing public events and create new ones, both to add value for our residents and to draw others in to discover and experience our neighborhood.

This is an exciting time for College Hill. Please join in, strengthen your involvement and make a contribution to CHCURC as we build College Hill's future.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael T. Cappel, CHCURC President

**CHCURC is a not-for-profit, 501(c)3 corporation.** Your fully tax-deductible donation supports ongoing coordination of project proposals with city departments and neighborhood civic organizations, as well as grant writing and project management costs, toward the goal of economic and physical revitalization.

Your financial support as well as in-kind professional services and voluntary positions of leadership within the organization improve life for all in College Hill and those in surrounding communities by making our neighborhood a better, more attractive and desirable place to live, raise a family, work, retire, shop and do business.

**Please see the enclosure for membership and contributions.** Yearly membership dues are \$20 per individual and donations of cash can be made by check or charge. Shares of stock are always welcomed. Thank you! Forms are also available online through our website [www.chcurc.com](http://www.chcurc.com).

**Meetings are open to the public** and take place on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the Campus Center of the Llanfair Retirement Community. Stay informed and engaged with CHCURC by visiting our website, [www.chcurc.com](http://www.chcurc.com).

## PLEASE SAVE THE DATE AND JOIN US!

**Wednesday, February 3, 2016, 7 p.m.**

### **CHCURC Annual Dinner and Meeting at Llanfair Retirement Community**

Look for these and other events to enjoy in support of CHCURC (details will be posted on our website and Facebook page):

- Derby Day Celebration at Laurel Court Saturday, May 7
- Rhythm and Brews Festival (5K and Home Brew Competition) Saturday, September 17