



## College Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation 2017 Annual Report

December 1, 2017

The College Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation (CHCURC) is thrilled about the progress made in 2017 - and even more excited about the redevelopment initiatives lined up for 2018. We are grateful for your continued support!

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

- Finalize the plans for Hamilton Avenue and North Bend Road, notably the acquisition and demolition of Kroger, and selecting a developer
- Finalize the acquisition and demolition of property in the Mid-Business District to build Marlowe Court
- Prioritize the acquisition of key properties in the Mid-Business District, including: the Doll House, Dow Corner, Marquet, and National City Buildings
- Implement a new round of façade improvements along the business district in College Hill

### 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's property 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. Due to Saint Francis Group's inability to finalize its financing and construction drawings by a City and CHCURC imposed deadline, the City terminated its relationship with Saint Francis Group and selected CHCURC as the preferred developer for the sites in June 2017. CHCURC has issued an RFP for the sites, and hopes to select a new developer in early 2018. CHCURC is pleased that due to the positive developments in College Hill in the past couple of years, there has been significant interest in these sites by larger developers. The RFP specifically seeks proposals that incorporate urban design, mixed-used buildings with residential units over commercial spaces, and prioritizes developers with financing in place to begin construction in 2018. We hope to announce a developer by the Annual Meeting.

### Marlowe Court

Between 2010 and 2015, CHCURC and the City acquired nine properties (2.5+ acres) on Hamilton Avenue and began the planning stages for the new development. In 2015, Model Group and Episcopal Retirement Services jointly partnered to propose a new \$11.1 million development north of Marlowe. Named Marlowe Court, this new mixed-used site will include 53 affordable apartments for seniors, as well as retail space on the first floor. In June 2015, this project received \$9.8 million in tax credits.

CHCURC has worked closely with Model Group and ERS on the architectural drawings to ensure that the new building will incorporate elements of other buildings in the business district. The groundbreaking for Marlowe Court occurred on July 11, 2016, and the building is set to be completed by January 2018.

In addition to First Financial Bank signing a lease to be the anchor tenant, YEP! Fitness has signed an LOI to be the second tenant at Marlowe Court. CHCURC hopes to bring a new restaurant for the final commercial space.



Marlowe Court Final Rendering

## CHCURC Property Acquisitions

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CHCURC has been successful in receiving grants to improve our business district, including façade improvements, streetscape improvements, new gateways, and parking lot improvements to the Gen Kress and Mid-Business District West Parking Lot. With your support, CHCURC set out to gain greater financial independence, and raised \$400,000 to purchase, renovate, and lease property in the business in 2012. CHCURC's goal was to purchase property with income-producing potential to allow CHCURC to reinvest the income back into our business district.

### Doll House/Dow Corner Buildings/National City Building

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CHCURC purchased 5917 Hamilton Avenue (the Doll House) in 2013, and purchased 5901/5905 Hamilton Avenue (Dow Corner Buildings) in 2014. 5932 Hamilton Avenue, formerly a National City Bank was purchased through a \$100,000 grant from the City of Cincinnati's Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program.

To transform these buildings to include 7 new residential apartments and 5-6 new commercial spaces, the expected renovation costs exceed \$3 million. CHCURC has identified the financing and partnerships to begin renovations. In 2016, CHCURC formed a partnership with South Block Properties, the development team behind The Littlefield Bourbon Bar, the Sleepy Bee, and other mixed-use buildings in Northside, Walnut Hills, and OTR. South Block Properties has had great success identifying the correct financing layers needed for these projects, including historic and new market tax credits, and we are confident that this new partnership will successfully renovate for all of our buildings. CHCURC is pleased to announce that CHCURC and South Block Properties were successful in applying for \$700,000 in NOFA gap funding from the City of Cincinnati in 2017. CHCURC also received a \$14,000 grant in November 2016 for architectural and engineering drawings for the National City Building.

### New Tenants

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CHCURC welcomed its first new tenant, Brink Brewing Co., to the Mid-Business District earlier this year. Brink Brewing Co. opened in February 2017 after an extensive renovation, and has already become a staple in our neighborhood. Brink's successful first year has included winning a gold medal at the Great American Beer Festival for its Hold the Reins English Mild. Following in the footsteps of Brink, CHCURC is excited to announce that two new restaurants will be opening up in the Business District in 2018.

Moving into the Doll House will be Tortilleria Garcia, a Mexican restaurant that makes homemade authentic masa tortillas. They are co-owned by a local College Hill resident, Omar Garcia. Tortilleria Garcia was rated the top Mexican restaurant in Ohio 2016 by Yelp users.

Moving into the National City Bank building will be Hideki and Yuko Harada as they open Kiki, a Japanese izakaya. Hideki Harada is the former co-founder and owner of Kaze in Over-the-Rhine. He spent five years in Japan honing his skills as a chef. Kiki will bring ramen, gyoza, Japanese fried chicken, and seafood in a concept that will focus on shareable, casual food made from scratch by two chefs.



### Mergard Bowling Alley Building

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CHCURC is pleased to announce that it was awarded a \$375,000 grant from the City of Cincinnati's NBDIP program in 2017 to purchase 6060 Hamilton Avenue, the former Mergard Bowling Alley Building (most recently the \$29.95 Shoe Warehouse). CHCURC hopes to close on its purchase of the building in early 2018, and release an RFP for the redevelopment of the property in 2018.



## Dixon and Marquet Buildings

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Thanks to the success of our 2017 capital campaign, CHCURC purchased two gateway properties in the College Hill Business District. In March 2017, CHCURC closed on the Marquet Building located at 5854 Hamilton Avenue, the intersection of Cedar and Hamilton. In May 2017, CHCURC closed on the Dixon Building located at 6120 Hamilton Avenue, which has 17 apartments and is the home of College Hill Coffee Company, Enliven, and Inspire. The Marquet Building is currently home to five commercial tenants on the first floor and a vacant second floor. CHCURC will spent 2018 evaluating what is the appropriate future use of the building. The Dixon Building will continue to operate as a mixed-use space. CHCURC is putting a plan together to substantially renovate the building.

## College Hill Park

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CHCURC will be building a new community park in the heart of the College Hill Business District. The City of Cincinnati awarded CHCURC \$380,000 in 2017 for design and construction of the new park. The park will be located at the intersection of Marlowe and Hamilton just north of the Doll House. CHCURC has been soliciting feedback from community groups that will participate in the park, as well as from our community as a whole through an online survey. This feedback is being used to develop the conceptual design for the park CHCURC hopes to begin construction on the park in 2018.



## Mid-Business Parking Lot (West)

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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 hidden parking lot by acquiring and demolishing two properties allowing for clear sightlines and better physical access to the parking lot. Ford Development Company began construction of the parking lot in October 2016 and completed construction in early 2017. Safety is always at the forefront of our minds, which is why we took steps to add lighting and fencing to the 80 space lot. An attractive, well-lit pedestrian alley way and patio were included for outdoor dining use.

## Façade Improvement Program

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CHCURC has received over \$350,000 in grants from the City of Cincinnati, PNC Bank, and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation to conduct our second round of façade improvements for the business district. The first façade improvement program leveraged over \$400,000 in improvements between 2006 and 2010. In 2017 alone, façade improvements included new signs for Marty's Hops & Vines, Red Rose, ePrintworks, and Chung Ching, a new awning, windows and exterior painting for Silk Road Textiles, and a new garage door for Fern. In 2018, the façade improvement program will conclude with the masonry and windows for the Dow Corner and Doll House, a new awning for Bacalls, and a new door for Shakers.

## Historic District Recognition

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With the help of our partners at South Block Properties, the City of Cincinnati deemed the College Hill Business District to be a historic district. This designation showcases the strong historic ties our business district has to the Greater Cincinnati community. The new designation goes a long way toward protecting our buildings and recognizing their historic significance to the growth of our city. Additionally, it allows CHCURC and other developers to apply for state and federal historic tax credits for the redevelopment of our historic buildings.

## Community Engagement

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2017 saw a new wave of engagement in College Hill. As always, we hosted our annual Derby Day Party and the Blues and Brews 5K. This year's Derby Day added a live auction and set a new fundraising record. The Blues & Brews 5K saw record attendance for the after party - we are glad to see more College Hill residents enjoying and coming together for our community events! This summer, CHCURC hosted our first summer beer garden series in the Fern Parking Lot. Each event was held on the first Saturday of the month during the summer and had a unique sound and vibe. We kicked the fall off with a Pig Roast following the College Hill Pumpkin Patch and we ended the year partnering with Fern for the first Holiday Market.

Stay tuned to see what events CHCURC has planned for 2018!



## CHCURC's 2018 Goals

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As CHCURC looks forward to 2018, we look to build upon the successes of the past year. CHCURC intends to continue its redevelopment efforts in a number of ways. These efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Select a developer for College Hill Station, announce a groundbreaking, and begin identifying potential retail tenants;
- Work with ERS and Model Group on finalizing the commercial tenants for Marlowe Court;
- Work with South Block Properties to finalize financing, begin redevelopment, and identifying retail tenants for the Mid-Business District;
- Finalize designs of the College Hill Community Park with the City of Cincinnati and construct the park in 2018;
- Select a developer for the redevelopment of the Mergard Bowling Alley;
- Obtain grant funding for the architectural drawings to renovate the Dixon and Marquet Buildings, and apply for historic tax credits for the renovations;
- Finalize the latest round of facade improvements

We realize that these are daunting tasks. But to continue the redevelopment of College Hill into one of Cincinnati's finest neighborhoods, we need your help. If you want CHCURC to continue to purchase and redevelop property in College Hill, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to CHCURC. Every dollar goes back into our neighborhood and will leverage more from countless sources. All that we have accomplished would not be possible without your support. To continue building a bright future for College Hill, please consider making a contribution today.

CHCURC will continue to work to develop and strengthen our business district. There are always more announcements around the corner for the next exciting development in our neighborhood. I hope you will join us for our Annual Meeting on February 7, 2018 at Twin Towers Senior Living Community to hear about what more we have in store for 2018. The CHCURC and CHBA Business Meeting will begin at 7:00pm. Beforehand, CHCURC will host a Social Hour and dinner. To attend the social hour and dinner, please RSVP at [www.chcurc.com/AnnualMeeting](http://www.chcurc.com/AnnualMeeting).

### Save The Dates:

Wednesday, February 7th - Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 5th - Derby Day Party

Saturday, September 15th - Brews & Blues 5K

Saturday, October 13th - Pig Roast

Respectfully submitted,



Michael T. Cappel, CHCURC President