

College Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation Annual Report

December 1, 2014



What a year it has been for the College Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation (CHCURC), and we are so grateful for your continued support!

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

- (1) acquire and demolish the Kroger property, and request qualifications from developers for the redevelopment site at North Bend Road and Hamilton Avenue,
- (2) acquire the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings as part of the \$200,000 Challenge Match and begin architectural designs for the renovations of those buildings,
- (3) finalize planning the redevelopment of the Mid-District Parking Lot,
- (4) continue acquiring property in the Mid-Business District with the City of Cincinnati, and market the site for redevelopment,
- (5) implement a new round of façade improvements along the business district in College Hill,
- (6) improve CHCURC's website and conduct a new strategic plan for CHCURC, and
- (7) raise funds for the ability to hire an executive director at this key time for our redevelopment and revitalization.

Hamilton Ave./North Bend Rd. Development Site

CHCURC and the City have worked for a decade on the acquisition of 7.5+ acres of land at the corner of Hamilton Ave. and North Bend Rd. 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! CHCURC has been meeting with and interviewing developers with the City of Cincinnati for this 7.5 acre development site, and we hope to announce a new developer for this site in early 2015 that embraces our vision of mixed-used buildings, with office and residential uses over first floor retail.



Former Kroger property cleared in 2014.

CHCURC Redevelopment of 5901/05 and 5917 Hamilton Ave.

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 (new sidewalks, pavers, and streetlights), \$170,000 in 2003 & 2005 for the Gateway Project (new plazas and structural elements welcoming people to College Hill), \$30,000 in 2005 for the Directional Sign Project (to install new College Hill signs), \$300,000 in 2006 for the Façade Improvement Project (revitalizing windows, doors, and facades in the business district), and \$305,000 in 2009 for the Gen Kress Parking Lot Expansion Project (acquiring and demolishing the blighted former doctor's office building at 1559 North Bend Road to enlarge the Gen Kress Parking Lot behind the College Hill Coffee Co., Bacall's, Schwartz Jewelers, Enliven, Inspire, Marty's Hops & Vines, and Silk Road Textiles).

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The North Gateway conveys "Welcome" to College Hill's business district.

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 was to purchase income-producing property will also allow CHCURC to reinvest and purchase additional property in the business district. CHCURC purchased 5917 Hamilton Ave. (the Doll House) in 2013, and purchased 5901/5905 Hamilton Ave. (Dow Corner Buildings) in May 2014. CHCURC is pleased to announce that it received a \$35,000 grant from Duke Energy's Urban Revitalization Initiative in October 2014 for architectural and engineering drawings for these buildings. CHCURC will use a

portion of the new façade improvements grants (*see below*), and its own capital to renovate these properties, with the renovations to begin in 2015.



5901/5905 Hamilton were purchased in May 2014.

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CHCURC produced renderings in 2014 for a renovated 5917 Hamilton (the Doll House), one of its properties.



Mid-Business District Redevelopment

In April 2009, CHCURC was awarded \$1.5 million to purchase blighted property in the mid-business district. The 2000 Strategic Urban Design Plan concluded that College Hill's neighborhood business district was too long, and recommended the demolition and redevelopment of the mid-business district with mixed-use in-fill housing, potentially over retail, with community green space.

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. on the northwest corner of Hamilton and Marlowe (vacant land with adjoining building on Marlowe), adding this property to other recent acquisitions south of the intersection of Marlowe and Hamilton—5943 Hamilton Ave. (former EZ Market in 2013), and 5919/5921 Hamilton Ave., which is set to close in December 2014. With these nine properties, the City/CHCURC partnership will have 2.5+ acres for redevelopment in the College Hill Mid-Business District. CHCURC is already meeting with potential developers for this land, and also hopes to announce a developer for this property in 2015!



Highlighting the mid-business acreage CHCURC is partnering to redevelop.

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. There is a large parking lot behind the buildings on the west side of Hamilton Ave. between Cedar and Marlowe Avenues. CHCURC will open up this hidden parking lot by acquiring and demolishing a property (1626 Cedar Ave.), allowing for a clear sightline and better physical access to the parking lot. CHCURC will also increase the safety of the parking lot by adding lighting, in addition to repaving and restriping the parking lot. CHCURC is hopeful that these improvements will help to attract new businesses to the Mid-Business District, as it renovates the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings. Demolition of 1626 Cedar, 5943 Hamilton Ave., and 5919/5921 Hamilton Ave. will occur in the beginning of 2015, and the new parking lot will begin in the Spring of 2015.

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Above, a current view from Cedar Ave. into the mid-business district parking lot illustrates some of its drawbacks. CHCURC will use existing grant funding to increase the visibility, functionality and safety of this business district resource with work scheduled to begin in early 2015. At right, a rendering of the improvement plan overlays an aerial photograph of the area.



Façade Improvement Program

In 2006, CHCURC was awarded \$300,000 for a Façade Improvement Program for the neighborhood 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 in the neighborhood business district from 2007-2009. CHCURC is pleased to announce that in July 2014, CHCURC was awarded a new \$175,000 grant for a second round of façade improvements. In 2015, façade improvements will be made to the Dow Corner Buildings, the Doll House, and many businesses up and down Hamilton Ave., including Silk Road Textiles, Inspire, Enliven, and many more!



In July 2014, CHCURC received a Façade Improvement Program (FIP) grant of \$175,000; shown here are some outcomes from CHCURC's first FIP grant, 2007–2009.

CHCURC Strategic Planning/Website/Office

In addition to all of these redevelopment projects, CHCURC worked to update its mission and underwent a strategic planning process in the fall of 2014. CHCURC's new mission is to "Revitalize the Hamilton Avenue business district to strengthen the surrounding College Hill community." CHCURC will release the full strategic planning document on its new website, which will be unveiled in January 2015! Finally, CHCURC is also grateful to Elaine Efkeman, who donated 1551 Marlowe Ave. to CHCURC in May 2014! CHCURC is working to renovate this building so that CHCURC will have office space in the business district. 1551 Marlowe (left), donated to CHCURC in 2014, is slated for renovation into CHCURC office space.



CHCURC Executive Director

With the Hamilton Ave. and North Bend Rd. development site, the Mid-Business District development site, 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 close to 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 to hire a part-time executive director to help move all of these projects forward. CHCURC hopes to announce its new part-time executive director by its February 4, 2015 Annual Meeting.

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CiTIRAMA 2014

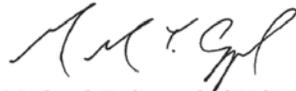
With CHCURC's progress on so many fronts in the business district, CHCURC was pleased that TJ Ackerman and the Meierjohan Building Group jointly purchased 8 acres of land off of Connecticut Ave. to bring the newest CiTiRAMA to College Hill! Five model homes were constructed for the CiTiRAMA event in September 2014, and the new cul-de-sac street will include 24 new homes. So far, 13 of the homes have been completed or are under construction. CHCURC is thankful for new private resident development in the neighborhood, and looks forward to additional new residential development in the coming years.

As CHCURC looks forward to 2015, 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:

- Work with the City of Cincinnati to select and announce a developer for the development site at Hamilton Ave. and North Bend Rd.;
- Work with the City of Cincinnati to select and announce a developer for the development site at Hamilton Ave. and Marlowe Ave.;
- Work to redevelop the Mid-Business District Parking Lot with new pavement and lighting to increase safety and attract new businesses to the Mid-Business District;
- Finalize architectural drawings and selecting a construction company to help renovate the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings;
- Implement the new round of Façade Improvements; and
- Hire a part-time executive director to help assist all of these redevelopment efforts.

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 today. Specifically, we are seeking donations to help with the renovations of the Doll House and Dow Corner Buildings, as well as funds to match the \$20,000 operational support grant for CHCURC to hire an executive director.

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 of projects CHCURC directs, as well as in-kind professional services and voluntary positions of leadership within the organization, combine to improve life for all in College Hill, its neighbors 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.

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, now undergoing revision to bring you more news, more often.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE AND JOIN US!

Wednesday, February 4, 2015, 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*):

- Guest Bartender Night at Clovernook Country Club (date TBD)
- Derby Day Celebration Saturday, May 2
- Rhythm Race and Taste of College Hill Saturday, September 19