Burten Bell Carr to be New CDC for Shaker Square Neighborhoods

by Kristen Romito

There’s a new era of community development corporation representation on the city’s east side. At a community meeting at Our Lady of Peace on Wednesday, October 30, Ward 6 Cleveland City Councilman Blaine Griffin formally announced that Burten Bell Carr Development Inc. (BBC) has been chosen to represent the Shaker Square, Larchmere, CHALK, apartment corridor, Ludlow and Buckeye neighborhoods. BBC serves as the community development corporation for Ward 5’s Central and Kinsman neighborhoods. The City of Cleveland will no longer recognize the Shaker Square Area Development Corporation (SHAD) as the community development corporation representing these neighborhoods.

Community funders such as Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, The Cleveland Foundation and Saint Lukes Foundation also stopped funding SHAD after the failed merger between SHAD and the Buckeye-Shaker Community Development in 2012, while Buckeye continued to receive funding. By the end of the year, Buckeye will no longer service the neighborhood.

SHAD will continue as an advocacy group for the neighborhood and will try to sustain itself financially through membership dues, ad sales from The SHAD Connection, and fundraising events.

Griffin announced the new arrangement so “that there’s a mechanism in place to invest in people [of the community]” and to support current and future opportunities as well as combat challenges facing the wider community.

“I commend SHAD for working with me on this process,” said Griffin.

He also added that this change wouldn’t have an impact on the community’s identity.

After Councilman Griffin spoke, Tania Menesse, director of community funders such as Cleveland Neighborhood Progress & LAND Studio), revealed 9,400 cars average daily traffic (ADT) travel Shaker Boulevard (straight through the Square), and another 9,900 cars ADT travel North/South Moreland (circling the Square). Ending the drive through the square will add a potential 9,400 to the numbers that circle the square. How is 19,300 circling the Square a good idea, let alone an improvement?

Customers for shops on the Square will be challenged for parking and backing out from parking spots (many long-established shops’ transactions are based on quick run-in and -out). Eliminating the boulevard leaves our valuable Farmers Market without enough space.

The existing traffic flow going through the Square is working well right now. It doesn’t need to be fixed. How many of the 19,300 drivers will choose to avoid this inconvenience and cut through our side streets? Buckeye and Larchmere will surely be negatively affected. Side streets and CHALK (Cormere, Haddam, Ardoon, Larchmere, Kemper) will gain more exceeding-the-speed-limit-cut-through drivers. Completion of the Opportunity Corridor will add to Shaker Boulevard traffic. Spend money on improving/fixing what we have now.

Improving Shaker Square is important and needed. But dismantling Shaker Boulevard/State Route 87?

These Outsiders Are Not the Friends of Shaker Square

Shaker Square was built from 1927 to 1929 by the Van Sweringen Brothers. Original plans evolved from a circle to an octagon to accommodate automobile parking. It includes the intersection of the Van Aken and Green Road Rapid Lines. Shaker Square is the oldest shopping district in Ohio and second oldest in the country.

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) and LAND Studio have been attempting to invade an enemy territory. These groups received $400,000 of foundation grants for the study alone. No one asked residents if they believed that the 90-year-old historic shopping center needed to be redesigned. CNP and LAND Studio’s most controversial proposal is to close off both lanes of Shaker Boulevard at Shaker Square so that the only traffic pattern is circular.

CNP and LAND Studio want to make Shaker Square into a pedestrian mall with fewer parking spots and more green space. There is certainly significant controversy about pedestrian malls and the developers have been silent about the failures. According to an abstract written by a Fresno State professor: “Pedestrian malls in the United States have an 89 percent rate of failure.”

In 1980, with the leadership of Friends of Shaker Square (FOSS), now known as Shaker Square Area Development Corporation (SHAD), the cities of Cleveland and Shaker Heights created the first historic landmark formed by two municipalities in fixing what we have now.

Improving Shaker Square is important and needed. But...
Plymouth Church on Coventry from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Sugar Plum Workshop Church do when they present founders of the Lissauer Art Gallery. Historical Society Trustees and Earl Leiken, Mayor Movers and Shakers benefit, Shaker to get there. At its Ninth Annual who sees the potential for how the Her “Fragments” exhibit will be on the floor of Shaker Library. The Nature of $4 through December 6. Then come Library’s New Year’s Resolution Begin exercising? Come to the look to Shaker library. Look to Shaker SENSORS: Air Quality Helpful hints to protect the environment, from roadway dust, radon, soil, water, and home energy consumption.

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The magazine's Rock the Ruins: 52 Blocks Friday, Sunday, and Monday, February 8 and 10.

Bulletin Board

NEW! Shaker Park East

One Community Road/All Cayuga County residents are invited to read and discuss the book, “Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Save Our Cities” by Eric Klinenberg. The author will speak at Playhouse Square in mid-March. Watch for exciting programs at Shaker and throughout Cayuga County. Looking for some used play? Go to merriam-webster.com/noun tape/2012 to find out when a word was first used in print? You may be surprised! Just scan a word to see the words first recorded on that year. Billed as the word lover’s guide to new words, another favorite site is wordspy.com. Learn fun new words like procrastokicking, the practice of hacking something completely unnecessarily, with the intention of avoiding “real” work, or my favorite—hopium, the irrational belief that, despite all evidence to the contrary, things will turn out for the better. Have a tasty Thanksgiving and joyous holiday season full of hopium. Be sure to lace up your shoes or boots and stroll the Square— and keep your ears open for me. burtenbellcarr@gmail.com

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A community development corporation for the City of Cleveland, SVCL is an overview of the changing landscape of CDCs and how they’re funded. Menosie stated that 20 years ago, Cleveland received around $40 million in federal block grant money for all the CDCs in Cleveland. Now, it receives only $20 million, and the city faces more dire issues than before.

Over the past year, a committee comprised of representatives and stakeholders convened to work with Neighborhood Connections to survey the community about what it wanted in a CDC. Tom O’Brien, executive director of Neighborhood Connections, a community networking and small grants program, shared the committee’s research findings, and the top three areas of focus the CDC would be building that with the community, involving residents in decision making, and offering small business development, especially on Backyes Road.

Burton Bell Carr is now charged with tackling these goals. Tim Tramble, executive director of BBC, assured the meeting attendees that BBC would do right by the community and meet and exceed the set goals, while preserving each neighborhood’s identity. To help everyone’s mind, Tramble recounted the overwhelming task of diggin BBC out of financial troubles and transforming the organization into one of the City’s most successful CDCs.
New Owners of Ohio Savings Bank Building
Reviving Community Landmark

by Kristen Romito

The former Ohio Savings Bank building on the corner of North Moreland and Larchmere Boulevard is once again occupied, and the community is enthusiastically welcoming the new owners of this neighborhood landmark.

Lawyer Christian Carson chose the building to relocate Carson Law Firm LLC and his other business, Fairmount Title, and said “Once I saw the building, I knew right away it was the right fit. I’m a lover of fine architecture and the grandeur of this building is absolutely stunning. The original builders clearly spared no expense, and I am elated to have the opportunity to polish these rails and really make a community gem shine.”

Cleveland Treatment Center

The Treatment Center, the prior tenant, was not as well received by the community. The drug addiction service organization, owned by Horizon HealthCare, was writing prescriptions for and administering suboxone treatments for heroin-addicted patients, and had not obtained the proper zoning approval to do so.

Once the community learned about this, residents and business owners raised their concerns to Cleveland City Councilperson Blaine Griffin and Ken Johnson, who worked to remove Cleveland Treatment Center.

“When I found out that they were dispensing drugs in that location without permits, I thought we were going to have an epidemic in that location without permits, I thought we were going to have an epidemic. We didn’t, but we had an epidemic in that building. We were dispensing drugs in that building. It was terrible.”

Griffin and the Larchmere community, along with helpful guidance of Griffin and Johnson, came together to fight for what was right for their neighborhood.

Carson, too, is learning to appreciate the spirit of the Larchmere community.

“Every day when I look out the window, I see signs of urban life coming together. It’s exciting to be part of a district on the upswing.

“We’re in the process of cleaning out the old and rusty fixtures and bringing it back to top condition. We’ve already got a few big names interested in renting the space and building it out as a food service spot, and I hope we’ll be able to announce our new tenant soon,” said Carson.

To help attract the business owners, the City of Cleveland offered a financial aid package for the premise that their business would create employment opportunities, said Griffin. It’s expected 20 to 25 new jobs will be created as a result of the new owners’ endeavors.

The revitalization of the Ohio Savings Bank building is yet another example of how the Larchmere community, along with helpful guidance of Griffin and Johnson, came together to fight for what was right for their neighborhood.

Carson, too, is learning to appreciate the spirit of the Larchmere community.

“Overall, the building is in great shape, but any fifty-year old building needs a thousand small fixes here and there. We’ve already restored the parking lot and plan to replace the front porch soon, weather permitting. We’re also building a complete building automation system from scratch that we expect will reduce our utility bills by up to 50 percent,” stated Carson.

The entrepreneurs also bought the adjacent building to open an upscale restaurant.

Top: The Ohio Savings Bank was once home to Parkview Federal and now serves as the home to Carson’s three businesses: Carson Law Firm, Fairmount Title and WireBids.

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and we hope to contribute what we can by bringing the restaurant back online and keeping the bank up as a gateway landmark building.”

City Offers Free Paint Program for Residents

Through the Department of Community Development, the City of Cleveland is offering a voucher paint program that offers up to $1,500 in free paint and supplies for exterior paint projects.

Labor is not included. “The goal is to improve the housing stock of Cleveland neighborhoods and overall quality of life,” said Maryann Tecson.

To qualify, applicants must have low to moderate income, must reside in the house that is being painted and attend a Lead Safe Work Practice Class. If the owner lives at the property, he or she must be the applicant.

Interested Cleveland residents can obtain applications by visiting Room 410 of City Hall, 601 Lakeside Ave. or by calling 216.664.2041.

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Dance Studio Coming to Larchmere

by Ronald Kisner

A new dance and wellness studio headed to bustling Larchmere Boulevard is guaranteed to shake up your heart and get you moving. The studio, named after local artist Nolita Green, will feature classes to improve your endurance, to build lasting friendships beyond the studio, and to improve the lives of others.

The studio will be located at 12809 Larchmere Boulevard and is planning to open in the fall of 2021. Nolita Green, the co-founder of the studio, says, “We want to create a space where people can come together and feel supported in their fitness goals.”

Classes will include yoga, dance, and meditation, as well as workshops on self-care and wellness. Nolita Green says, “Our goal is to create a community where everyone feels welcome and supported.”

The studio is currently accepting interested parties to become members and will announce their opening date soon. For more information, visit nolamovements.com.
With Biggby, Coffee Returns to the Square

by Jason Novak

When Dewey’s Coffee closed on May 31, 2019, a lot of people were wondering how it would affect Shaker Square. Sure, there were plenty of great restaurants, shops and other businesses, but none of those bring what a café has to offer: a gathering place where people could come and go, play chess and curl up by a fireplace to read.

Many of the former Dewey’s regulars have been watching the space at 13201 Shaker Square, eagerly awaiting what will replace the coffee house. In January, the wait will be over. Biggby Coffee, the quickly-growing chain of coffee shops, is coming to the Square.

Michael Ren, the owner of the forthcoming Biggby franchised store, is a fan of the neighborhood. “Our first apartment in Cleveland was right next to Shaker Square and right across the street from Dewey’s,” he says. “We lived there for five years, so Shaker Square still feels very much like home.”

Ren had wanted to open a coffee shop, and the available space at Shaker Square was the perfect opportunity. “My wife grew up drinking Biggby Coffee and was enthusiastic about the brand and the mission,” he says. “We both passionately about good coffee and providing a welcoming atmosphere... We always loved the neighborhood, and when we heard Dewey’s was closing, we knew that Shaker Square would be the perfect location for our Biggby Coffee shop.”

Ren hopes that his store can fill the hole that the loss of Dewey’s created. “We want Biggby to be a favorite gathering spot,” he explains. “A place where you can grab a cup of coffee to go, or just hang out with friends and enjoy your favorite hot, iced, or frozen treat.”

Biggby will offer traditional coffee shop staples such as hand-crafted espresso drinks, coffee, and frozen drinks, as well as bakery and breakfast foods, including bagel sandwiches, called “Bragels.” The store is slated to open in January, and will be open 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week.

Biggby Coffee is a privately owned coffee shop franchise based in East Lansing, Michigan. There are about 250 locations across right states.

EDWINS Run for Re-Entry

Box Spot Opens for Business and Serves as Gathering Place

Barton Bell Carr Development Inc. held the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Box Spot Open Air Market on October 17. The economic development project features several small businesses including Larchmere’s own One Favorite Things Boutique, owned by Lisa McGuthry, and A Touch of Rain Nail Xpress owned by Rain Burnside.

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center’s President & CEO Blaine A. Griffin, who serves as co-chair of the Shaker Square Crisis Center’s services, and welcomed the Center to the neighborhood.

Sondra Miller shared brief remarks, and Cleveland City Councilman and Cleveland City Councilman Michael Anne Johnson expressed support and encouragement for the Center.

The new location offers counseling and client meeting spaces, child and family counseling spaces, and a hotline call center. The Cleveland Rape Crisis Center’s opening reception event took place on September 19.

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