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ReStore(ing) GR

NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS



December 2009

Shaken not stirred.

You have heard the old adage. But instead of a quick pick me up, worthy of a man named James - I'd like to think this is more of a feeling that we in the neighborhood business districts of Grand Rapids experienced this year. Neighborhood Ventures is no exception.

We were shaken in 2009 with the resignation and moving on of our founding Executive Director, Kimberly VanDyk. A series of staffing shifts created a new face of the economic development organization that strives for continuity in our neighborhoods.

Challenges in the economy also meant a higher demand for services from the neighborhood businesses that we serve. From technical assistance to building improvement grants, marketing, access to capital, or training opportunities - owners pulled out all of the stops in an attempt to maintain steady activity in their businesses. Limited staff and resources require revised thinking on how to fulfill the need.

Up for the challenges we face as an organization; the factors above stirred us to action!

I am happy to have been offered the opportunity to join Neighborhood Ventures in this period of transition. Creating a viable neighborhood in which to live, work, and play is not just a job for me. It has been my lifestyle for the past decade and a half in Grand Rapids' urban core.

Aware of the concerns about the future, I am also excited to have a front row view of the opportunities that lay ahead for our neighborhood business districts. Corporate layoffs mean new entrepreneurs on the street, with the smarts to back them up. Vacant space in our neighborhood commercial corridors offers an open canvas for painting the next great business idea. Hot-off-the-press market data from a recent LISC study gives us the opportunity to recruit the right business for the right neighborhood. And two new Corridor Improvement Districts (CIDs) in Uptown and Madison Square hold the possibility for sustainable funding for

WHO WE ARE



Neighborhood Ventures is 501(c)3 community and economic development organization that works to revitalize Grand Rapids neighborhood business districts.

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GR NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Heartside

Division South
Grandville Ave.

Easttown

Boston Square
Franklin/Eastern

marketing and economic development projects.

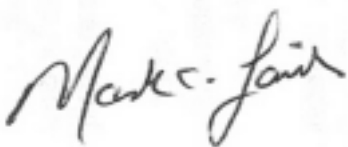
Our goal is twofold: recruiting/retaining businesses to our neighborhood business districts, and working with the business districts to assist them as they organize around marketing, branding, and sustaining their community.

Working closely with organizations that compliment our mission, we can be sure to see that services and trainings which our neighborhood business owners ask for are being provided. An enhanced relationship with the Neighborhood Business Alliance brings us back on track to work for growth in all 20 neighborhood business districts in Grand Rapids. Knowing where we came from helps us move forward together.

Certainly our challenges as a community will not go away at the turn of the calendar. We as an organization still need your support. I invite you to get involved. Participate in your own business district organizing. Consider one of our open seats on the Neighborhood Ventures Board of Directors. Show your support with a financial contribution.

I look forward to 2010 at Neighborhood Ventures and in Grand Rapids' neighborhood business districts. In the meantime, I'll take mine with a twist.

Have a wonderful holiday season!



Mark C. Lewis
Executive Director



January 2010

Trainings & Events

GROW (Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women)

"Accounting Basics"

January 18, 6:00 - 9:00pm

Lunch with a Punch - "Taxes and Legal Issues"

January 20, 12:00 - 1:00pm

www.growbusiness.org

Michigan Mainstreet Training - Economic Restructuring/Design 101

Friday, January 15 & Thursday, January 21

Grand Haven & Portland, MI

lewism@neighborhoodventures.org

Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC)

East Hills

Madison Square

Cheshire Village

Burton Heights

East Fulton

Michigan Street

Stockbridge

Monroe North

Creston

Seymour Square

West Leonard

Wealthy Street

Alger Heights

"Government Contracting - Dana Pinkava, Procurement Specialist, MEDC Procurement Center"

January 26, 6-8:30 PM

GRCC Tassell M-TEC Center

622 Godfrey SW - Second Floor

NO COST!

www.misbtcdc.org

United Growth for Kent County - Kent County Land Bank by Ken Parrish, County Treasurer

Tuesday, January 19

Kent/MSU Extension Office - 775 Ball Ave. NE

8:30 - 9:30am

www.unitedgrowth.org

Business Association Meetings

Neighborhood Business Alliance

Wednesday, January 20

City of GR Parking Services - 50 Ottawa Avenue NW

7:30 - 8:30 am

Alger Heights

Monday, January 24

JB's Pizza Parlor - 2433 Eastern Ave SE

12:00 - 1:00pm

Burton Heights

Wednesday, January 13

Garibaldi - 1627 S Division.

12:00 - 1:00pm

Creston

Tuesday, January 26

Culver, Wood & Culver - 1419 Coit Ave. NE

12:00 - 1:00pm

Eastown

EBA Board Only

Wednesday, January 27

Spirit Dreams - 1430 Lake SE

8:00 - 9:00 am

East Hills

Tuesday, January 26

Cherie Inn - 969 Cherry St. SE

9:00 - 10:00 am

East Fulton

Thursday, January 28

Mercury Head

8:30 - 9:30 am

Grandville Ave.

Thursday, January 14

Cook Library - 1100 Grandville Ave. SW

3:00 - 4:00pm

Heartside

Thursday, January 28

Bethlehem Lutheran Church - 250 Commerce Ave. SW

8:30 - 9:30am

Monroe North

Friday, January 8
Boardwalk Building - 940 Monroe Ave. NW
8:00 - 9:00am

Wealthy Street

Thursday, January 13
Wealthy Theatre - 1130 Wealthy SE
8:00 - 9:30am

West Fulton

Wednesday, January 13
Boys & Girls Club - 235 Straight Ave NW
12:00 - 1:00 pm

West Leonard

Tuesday, January 19
Mercantile Bank - 310 Leonard St. NW
8:30 - 9:30am

ReStore(ing) GR is published monthly by Neighborhood Ventures to inform the Grand Rapids neighborhood business community about economic development updates, program highlights, trainings/events, & other relevant information. See more at www.neighborhoodventures.org.



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