



Dear Neighbors,

2015 has been an active year both here in the Garden District and citywide. There was so much activity in the Garden District that I decided to include a long list of “Firsts” that we celebrated. In addition, the farmers’ market, community gardens, movies in the gardens and other events all went on with the critical help of many dedicated volunteers.

These events have helped build community involvement and pride in the Garden District, and have enhanced the quality of life here. In serving as alderman, I have found many talented people willing to step forward, if given the opportunity, to help maintain this as a great place to live. The new Public Art Committee and the new Southgate Neighborhood Association are the latest examples.

I wish to salute and thank all of the volunteers throughout the district for their work! Whether that service was in a neighborhood association, business association, one of the many “Firsts” or the now regularly-scheduled Garden District events and activities, you have all helped make this area better!

This newsletter provides an update on what has been happening here, and of some of the recognition we are getting. If you like history, I invite you to attend one or both of the meetings on that theme (see schedule to the right) to get an oral history of this area. The City Channel will film them and put together a program that will air in its regular programming. I also invite you to tour the newly-remodeled Tippecanoe Library, which residents came together to keep open several years back.

It has also been an exciting time citywide, with a tremendous amount of new development planned and occurring—particularly downtown. Milwaukee is being recognized for all the great things it has to offer, and companies and developers—from both the local area and around the nation—are making significant investments in our future. Downtown represents just 3 percent of the city’s land area, but pays 18 percent of the city property taxes. Investments there help us all and bring badly-needed jobs to Milwaukee.

I hope to see you out and about in the Garden District!

Sincerely,

Terry L. Witkowski
Alderman, 13th District



MEETING DATES

History, discussion and memories of the S. 27th Street area’s development

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Wilson Park Senior Center
2601 W. Howard Avenue,
lower-level dining room

History, discussion and memories of the Town of Lake’s development

Thursday, Dec. 10, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Historic Water Tower
4001 S. 6th Street, 3rd floor; use elevator

Tippecanoe Library Grand Opening

Saturday, Dec. 12 at 10:00 AM

3900 S. Howell Avenue

Town Hall Meeting

Monday, Dec. 14, 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Tippecanoe Library
3900 S. Howell Avenue

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR

- Public Safety Committee

VICE-CHAIR

- Judiciary and Legislation Committee
- Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee

MEMBER

- Finance and Personnel Committee
- Steering and Rules Committee
- VISIT Milwaukee Board

VIEW MEETINGS ONLINE:

milwaukee.gov/citychannel

Garden District Firsts in 2015

1

Holiday Wreaths – The Gateway to Milwaukee Business Improvement District (BID) will be putting up Holiday Wreath decorations on 30 light poles in their BID area this year. In future years, they will add to that number.

4



The city's only **Solar Flower** was added to the Farmers' Market area to help provide power for the recycled rainwater stream.

7



The Garden District's first and second **rummage sales** were held at the Farmers' Market site, with nearly 60 spots filled.

9

The new Garden District Public Art Committee painted their first **art crosswalk** at S. 6th Street and W. Norwich Street.

12

The 13th Aldermanic District became the district with **the most city bioswales**—53 of them in total—with the completion of S. 27th Street, Howell Avenue and Layton Avenue.

2



The first **Urban Orchard**, with 80 fruit trees and a permeable pavement parking lot to serve the Farmers' Market, was opened at S. 6th Street and W. Norwich Street.

5

The district's first **public art committee** was formed.

8



The Garden District Neighborhood Association ran the district's first **National Night Out** event, drawing about 400 people, including the Mayor, the District Attorney and the Chief of Police.

10

The first **Art Market** was held by the public art committee at the Farmers' Market, featuring more than 20 artists selling their work.

13

The City Channel created the first ever **Garden District promotional video** to use as an introduction to my website.

3



Nine **"Choose to Re-Use"** recycling events were held on the new storm water-gathering parking lot and Urban Orchard at S. 6th Street and W. Norwich Street in the Green Corridor.

6

The **citywide rain barrel and compost bin** sale was held at the Wilson Park Senior Center, and sold out of rain barrels within the first three hours!

11

Lebowski Fest bowling activities were held at the recently remodeled JB's on 41, as part of the festivities for the cult following of the movie *The Big Lebowski*.

14

The first **LED street lights** were installed in a test area in the Green Corridor, on S. 9th Street from W. Edgerton Avenue to W. Abbott Avenue.



Tippecanoe Library Grand Opening

You are invited to tour the newly-remodeled Tippecanoe Library at its grand opening on Saturday, December 12, 2015. The ribbon cutting program is scheduled to start at 10:00 a.m.

The library will not only sport new features inside to make it more useable, including more open space and meeting rooms, but its outdoor amenities will also mesh with the themes of the Garden District and the Green Corridor. You will want to schedule your next community meeting in this great location! Call **414-286-3000** for more information. ■

Panhandling

Panhandling has become a national problem, and has recently become a more visible trend citywide, including here in the Garden District. The courts have ruled that it's a first amendment right to stand in public with a sign, making a "lock 'em up or write a citation" approach to curbing the problem more difficult.

It seems that while many panhandlers portray themselves as down-on-their-luck or homeless, some have assigned spots and give money to an organizer. Some are drug users, some have alcohol problems, and some have simply turned the pursuit into a full-time job.

How do you stop it? Stop giving to them, and instead donate your hard-earned money to agencies that provide food and shelter to those who really need it. If you give to someone on the street, you may simply be supporting their alcohol or drug problem, and not helping them at all.

I have looked at what other cities have done, and, working with city departments and the District Attorney, have launched a "Keep the Change" program to channel funds to worthy causes and discourage panhandling countywide. ■



What is the History of Our Area?

I am hosting **two history meetings** and inviting you to come and talk about your memories of our area! What was it like when you moved here or grew up here? Do you remember the Palomar Roller Skating Rink? The pole sitter at Southgate? The area's first Carvel Stand? Grebe's Bakery on Bolivar? The North Shore Line? Postwar barracks housing? Do you have pictures of things in the area from years ago?

The City Channel will be on hand to record your memories, and will produce a program that will be featured on television and my website. Please come down to reminisce, learn from others and create a history for the area. Long-time Town of Lake resident and retired TV commentator Wayne Youngquist will help lead the discussion at the Water Tower.

S. 27th Street discussion

Tuesday, December 8, 2015, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Wilson Park Senior Center

2601 W. Howard Ave., lower-level dining room

Town of Lake discussion

Thursday, December 10, 2015, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Historic Water Tower

4001 S. 6th Street, 3rd floor; use elevator ■



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United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Milwaukee County

2016 City Budget and Our District

I serve on the Finance and Personnel Committee, which each year reviews and amends the proposed city budget. I am pleased to report that the 2016 budget doesn't increase taxes.

Included in this budget is money for flood mitigation and enhancements for Copernicus Park. Final details are still being worked out with Milwaukee County, but this three-year project mitigates home sewerage backups in this area and dresses up the park.

The budget also includes one-day road resurfacing known as the "High Impact Paving Program" as a residential pilot program for several south side street segments. These include: W. Abbott Avenue from 13th to 15th Place, S. 14th Street from Abbott to Maplewood, S. 15th Place from Abbott to Maplewood, and W. Maplewood Court from 14th to 15th Place.

The High Impact Paving Program will also be responsible for resurfacing two arterial streets, W. Grange Avenue from Howell to 6th Street and S. 1st Street from W. Oklahoma Avenue to W. Windlake Avenue.

Rapid Response Vehicle Assigned to District

Last year, I sponsored a budget amendment authorizing the Milwaukee Fire Department to purchase two vehicles as a pilot program to respond to calls for service where fire or smoke have not been reported. These rapid response vehicles are much more efficient than sending a half-million-dollar fire engine that gets two miles to the gallon.

One of these new vehicles will be assigned to the firehouse at S. 13th Street and W. Boden Street and will respond to medical calls, which account for 85 percent of the department's emergency runs.

My budget amendment to create this program was in response to resident complaints of fire trucks being sent for emergency medical service. A city comptroller report indicates that the new equipment should be paid for in 11 months based on savings in fuel and the capital cost of sending fire trucks.

10-Year Smoke Detectors

The single most effective tool for surviving a fire is early warning from a smoke detector. Effective October 1, 2017, all smoke detectors must be the kind with a 10-year non-removable battery, or else they must be hardwired into a house's electric system. The law also requires that they be tested annually and have a silencing switch if they are within 20 feet of a primary cooking appliance.

Southgate Neighborhood Association is Back

Thanks to its new president, Alycson Michalowski, and neighbors, the Southgate Neighborhood Association is up and running again. Mark your calendar for the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the lower level of St. Luke's Hospital. There is a vision to change Southlawn playground and make other improvements in the area. Come to the meetings and help reshape your neighborhood.

Milwaukee in the Top Four

In August of last year, *homeownersinsurance.com* published a ranking of the Midwest region's safest metropolitan areas for fire safety. The rankings were based on residential fire risk, preparedness and response time to fires. **The City of Milwaukee was ranked fourth safest overall.** One of the contributing factors supporting Milwaukee's ranking is the city's high rate of homes with working smoke detectors.

Community Service Officer Class to Begin Work

Many times, the Chief of Police has stated that not all calls for service require a response from an armed officer with the power to arrest lawbreakers. A proposal that I brought forward more than eight years ago to create a Community Service Officer (CSO) program has finally been given a chance. The inaugural class of 10 CSOs will begin work after the first of the year.

This type of position is used in major cities around the nation, including Chicago. Many communities around the state, including our neighbor Greenfield, use CSOs for duties like writing reports, taking photographs, directing traffic and responding to non-emergency calls for service. The goal is better service, and freeing up highly-trained officers for higher-level calls.





Green Corridor Wins Award ➤

The UWM School of Architecture & Urban Planning recognized the Green Corridor with a Mayor’s Design Award at a ceremony in May. We must be doing something right, as this is the fourth award for our efforts. The Garden District has won two awards, one from the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce and one from Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful. Historic Route US 41 was recognized by the Public Policy Forum for its inter-governmental cooperation. ■

An Example for Others ➤

During the department budget hearings, I realized that our district had done things that are now being copied throughout the city. The city’s vacant lot program uses elements from the former vacant lot at S. 6th Street and W. Howard Avenue. Some city-owned vacant lots are being beautified, and some are being set up as community gardens.

Our storm water management, brick pavers, bioswales and green alley were test projects for the city, and are also being mimicked elsewhere. The 6th Aldermanic District’s garden awards are based on ours, its representative told me. The alderman in District 10 wants to know how to get people to plant flowers in front of their homes. And at a hearing on a first-time agreement with the county to put bioswales on E. Layton Avenue, the Alderman from the 5th District asked for the same on his county roads.

After the Garden District Neighborhood Association’s National Night Out, a post on the New Orleans Garden District site commented on it, saying, “We could learn something from them!” The state’s neighborhood component of the Rebuild Milwaukee Plan is based on the Garden District Neighborhood Association arrangement.

I guess it’s true: imitation is the highest form of flattery. ■

This IS the Garden District ➤

After passing a resolution to have this district declared the Garden District in 2008, the work of making it look like a Garden District had just begun. The concept was promoted with business associations and neighborhood groups, and it has been incorporated into any private or government project that has come up since then.

The good news is we are looking more and more like “The Garden District!” Recently, about one out of four homes in the district received an award from the Garden District Neighborhood Association for their front yard flower display. Congratulations to all the award winners, and thank you for increasing the beauty of our neighborhoods! ■

Want Your Block to be the Best in the Neighborhood? ➤

If you have a group of five or so homeowners that would like to install front yard flower beds, you could do it for half-price or less! The Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation gives grants for projects that bring neighbors together. The matching grants can total as much as \$4,000 if you want to do a larger area. If you talk to your neighbors and find an interest, give my office a call at 286-8537 for more information. ■

Gateway to Milwaukee Celebrates 10 Years ➤

The Gateway to Milwaukee business association, and the related Business Improvement District, have been working to improve our area for ten years! In that time, what has it accomplished? Through their programs for business, they reduced crime in the airport area by 40 percent, while the city as a whole saw a decline of 25 percent. They paid for the beautification of Layton Avenue, from S. 13th Street to the east. They assisted in funding projects in the Green Corridor. They promoted business in the area and have testified at committee meetings to improve our area. And these businesses even placed an additional tax on themselves to improve our area. Congratulations, Gateway to Milwaukee, and thank you for ten years of extraordinary service. ■

1900 W. Morgan Ave. ➤

This brick building, which was boarded up and privately owned for years, will finally be improved. Recently taken by the city for back taxes, the city marketed the building and a neighbor bought it, with plans to live in it and open a design studio in the space. The plan drawings they have submitted show the building transforming from one that reflected poorly on the neighborhood to one that will be an asset for everyone! ■

Howell Avenue Businesses Consider Joining Together

The Gateway to Milwaukee, Department of City Development and I hosted a meeting to speak to Howell Avenue business owners about the value of joining together in an association or Business Improvement District this summer. Business owners also received information on façade and sign grants as well as white box grants, used to prepare a site for business. One follow up meeting was held with possible steering committee members. ■

Speaking of Howell Avenue Businesses

The former Rodeo Bar is opening as Hawthorne Coffee, and also a second business, Iron Grate BBQ. The former Airport Pantry building is now city-owned, and a neighboring business is interested in it. And Dino's is four years tax delinquent, but also in bankruptcy, which prevents the city from taking ownership of the property. ■

Painting and Wine to Locate on 6th Street

4507 S. 6th St., one door south of Custom Grown Green House, will open in January as *The Farm House*. This venue will include a painting and wine studio, offering art classes, and it will house a café, selling coffee, pastries and light sandwiches. Feel free to contact the owner, J. Nanez, at 982-9378, as he is looking for potential artists and employees, or stop by as he continues work to prepare the building. Look for an outdoor patio with a great flower display to appear this spring. ■

The Arena

A \$500 million construction project to build a new arena for the Milwaukee Bucks will have long-term benefits for the city and its citizens.

In September, the Common Council voted 12-3 to approve a development agreement with the Bucks that will enable the team to begin construction of a state-of-the-art arena to replace the Bradley Center just north of its current site in downtown Milwaukee. Team officials had said they would consider moving the team to a different city if a deal couldn't be reached.

No money will be diverted from the city's current property tax collections to help the Bucks finance the arena. Instead, the city will float bonds using the taxes from the construction of new buildings on the 10-block site, as well as taxes on any increase in value in nearby existing buildings. This is known as Tax Incremental Financing, or TIF.



Making Milwaukee More Business Friendly

The goal of the Local Business Action Team I set up was to make Milwaukee more business-friendly. The group consisted of city department heads, business group representatives and elected officials. It held three hearings and made recommendations to streamline the approval process for new businesses. These included improving service delivery and educational outreach, creating a customer assistance team, improving inspection procedures and reducing regulations.

The report went to the Common Council, and the accompanying resolution directing departments to implement the recommendations I sponsored was passed.

Changes have already been made, and the Department of City Development applied for and received a grant to create a website to lay out an individual step-by-step road map for opening a business in the city, based on a highly-successful New York City program for small business. I will hold committee hearings at six-month intervals to track department progress on making Milwaukee a better place to start a business and create jobs. ■

Most of those 10 blocks are empty now. The county sold this land in the former Park East corridor to the developer for a dollar, bringing in taxes where no one had paid taxes since it was purchased for use as a freeway decades ago. The developer has incentive to build rather than pay taxes on empty land.

The value of that land increases as the Phase One development starts. Taxable property in this phase includes Bucks offices, a practice facility, an entertainment block and a parking structure with taxable commercial development.

For me, approving the deal was not about the Bucks or the arena, but the development it will promote, the property tax relief it will provide and the jobs it will create. ■

New Construction in the Garden District ▶



Home2Suites extended-stay hotel just north of the Hilton Gardens at 5890 S. Howell Avenue.



Ross Dress for Less in the Point Loomis Shopping Center at 27th and Loomis.



St. Joseph Academy, 1600 W. Oklahoma Avenue; addition completed with classrooms and a library.

Convention Center Completion ▶

In 2014, tourism and conventions spurred approximately \$4.9 billion in total business sales in our region, according to figures from VISIT Milwaukee, Milwaukee's convention and visitors bureau. Tourism also generates \$330 million every year in tax revenue, directly supports 49,000 full-time jobs in the tourism industry and indirectly contributes to thousands more. These are all dollars that pour into the greater Milwaukee area from elsewhere.

The Garden District has the second largest hospitality grouping in the Milwaukee region, so that makes this topic relevant to our area as well. Milwaukee never completed its convention center plans, and because of its size, competes for conventions with smaller cities like Grand Rapids instead of cities in our own class.

The convention center is run by a state-created board that will also oversee the new arena. Within the next couple of years, completion of the convention center will need to be on the civic agenda. ■

New State Law Requires Photo ID to Vote ▶

Starting with the 2016 Spring Primary Election, all Wisconsin voters must show an acceptable photo ID before voting. This includes voters at polling places and many absentee voters.

- The address on your photo ID does NOT have to be your current address, and the name on your ID does NOT need to be an exact match to your name in the poll book.
- You will need to show one of the photo ID types listed below. Please note that there is no such thing as a "Voter ID Card."

VOTING AND ACCEPTABLE PHOTO IDs

The following photo IDs are acceptable, even if they are expired (only if the ID did not expire before November 4, 2014).

City Now Hiring Election Workers ▶

Do you support fair, transparent and accurate elections? If so, the City of Milwaukee Election Commission needs your help.

The Election Commission is hiring election workers for the 2016 elections (February 16th, April 5th, August 9th, and November 8th). Earn some extra money, work at a voting site close to home, and serve as a role model of civic responsibility to your friends, family and neighbors.

For more information visit milwaukee.gov/election and click on the Election Workers tab, where you will also find the application (either an application to print and mail or one to complete and submit online). You may also pick up an application at our office at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St., Room 501 or call the Election Worker Coordinator **Dan Puhek** at **414-286-3491** and request an application by mail. ■

- A Wisconsin Driver's License, even if driving privileges are revoked or suspended
- A Wisconsin Identification Card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (available for free)
- A Military ID card issued by a U.S. uniformed service
- A U.S. Passport

NOTE: The Election Commission has additional facts about voter identification requirements that can be found at milwaukee.gov/election. ■

The Garden District

13th District Alderman

Terry L.
Witkowski



200 E. Wells St. | Milwaukee, WI 53202 | 286-8537 | www.milwaukee.gov/district13 | twitko@milwaukee.gov

AUTUMN 15

UPCOMING 2016 ELECTIONS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

Spring Primary

TUESDAY, APRIL 5TH

Spring General

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9TH

Fall Primary

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH

Fall Presidential Election



If you have any questions, please contact the Election Commission at 414-286-3491 or milwaukee.gov/election.



Terry L. Witkowski

Alderman, 13th District
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

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Check out this informative 3½ minute promotional video about our area, the Garden District!

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then this 3½ minute video represents hours of conversations trying to describe what we have here to be proud of!



It can be viewed online now at
milwaukee.gov/District13