

East English Village

www.eastenglishvillage.org

Celebrating 100 years as a community of choice

January 2015 • Volume 39, No. 1



Outer Dr./Whittier



Cadieux



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President's Message

Happy New Year!

Post holiday greeting to you and your family. I hope the holidays were safe and happy ones. The new year always brings high hopes for so many things, personally, professionally and spiritually to change for the better or to resolve what has not been finished for yet another year, but perhaps that's why it's called a New Year's celebration. Let's hope for the best in 2015 and make each day count a little more than the last one.

I want to thank all of our volunteers on the board and all of our residents for helping the neighborhood continue to grow. I know some days are more of a challenge than others, but as we all work together we continue to grow as a village within the city structure. We have had our share of issues this past year – some good

advancement and some setbacks, but we always rally as volunteers.

This year we have some new board members along with many returning ones to help our growth. This year we will see an additional advancement with our Community Development Corporation program being added to the village of choice. All of our 2014 board members are back in various ways and I want to thank the entire 2014-15 team for their commitment to the village, the city and the team.

Code enforcement will be the main topic for the January meeting, with special guest Captain Mark Bliss reviewing 2014. As neighbors we all deserve and expect to see neighboring properties kept in great shape like our own. We will review issues that you have brought up in

Calendar

January 14: General meeting, 7 p.m. at St. Clare Montefalco, 1406 Whittier (at Mack).

Trash pickup schedule

Garbage pick-up dates for January and February are as follows:

Garbage only: Jan. 15, Jan. 29, Feb. 12, Feb. 26

Garbage, recycling & bulk trash: Jan. 8, Jan. 23 (Friday - holiday delay), Feb. 5, Feb. 19

services (security and snow removal) this month for 2015. More information is on the back page. If you are new, welcome; if you're an established resident of EEV and live between the borders of East Outer Drive/Whittier and Cadieux, Mack and Harper, we need you as fellow residents to help do your part. Plowing can cost a minimum of \$3,500 per plow for the entire village area. Snow plowing is determined on what we have collected each year and how the weather is playing out for the next few days. The collection process goes from November to April; monies not spent on seasonal maintenance roll over to the next year. Remembering last winter's continuous snowfalls, it's scary

the last months of the year. We hope to see our new police station come together this spring.

Once again, as neighbors we ask you to come together and support our general

See PRESIDENT, page 5

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East English Village information

Officers

President: William Barlage, 884-0554, president@eastenglishvillage.org
 1st Vice President: Dana Politi-Rashid, vicepresident1@eastenglishvillage.org
 2nd Vice President: Joe Rashid, vicepresident2@eastenglishvillage.org
 Treasurer: Pat Blount, treasurer@eastenglishvillage.org
 Secretary: Ursula Adams, secretary@eastenglishvillage.org

Street representatives

Outer Drive/Whittier: Harry Davis, 882-3169; odwhittier@eastenglishvillage.org
 Chandler Park: Barbara Pitts, 926-1838, chandlerpark@eastenglishvillage.org
 Kensington: Mike Terry, kensington@eastenglishvillage.org
 Yorkshire: Kim Taylor, 575-2253; yorkshire@eastenglishvillage.org
 Bishop: Marc Tirikian, 460-1975, bishop@eastenglishvillage.org
 Grayton: Lil Cortese, grayton@eastenglishvillage.org
 Harvard: Tracy Peters, Sue Bourgeoise, harvard@eastenglishvillage.org
 Cadieux: Kenneth Johnson, 647-9573, cadieux@eastenglishvillage.org

Committees

Residential Chair: Kathy Roddie, 882-1646; residential@eastenglishvillage.org
 Vacant Property Upkeep and Code Enforcement: code@eastenglishvillage.org
 Garden Club: David Teeter 640-7627, gardenclub@eastenglishvillage.org
 Paid Security and Volunteer Safety Patrol: Gwen Wee, 310-7110, security@eastenglishvillage.org
 Senior Services: Susie Rookard, seniorservices@eastenglishvillage.org
 Commercial Chair: commercial@eastenglishvillage.org
 Recycling: Fred Vitale, recycle@eastenglishvillage.org, 580-4905

Newsletter Editor: Misty Carpus, 377-8915; newsletter@eastenglishvillage.org
 Advertising Editor: Chris and Maureen Dritsan, 882-1152, advertising@eastenglishvillage.org
 Layout: Diana McNary, layout@eastenglishvillage.org
 Lost Pets: Karlene Trump, 882-2579, pets@eastenglishvillage.org
 Bike patrol: Fred Vitale, 580-4905
 Welcoming/Hospitality: Bee Davis, welcome@eastenglishvillage.org
 Seasonal Maintenance: Walter Strong, maintenance@eastenglishvillage.org
 Webmaster: Nancy Brigham, webmaster@eastenglishvillage.org

Mailing address

P.O. Box 241009, Detroit, MI 48224

**EAST ENGLISH VILLAGE
HOTLINE:**

313-216-1729

association@eastenglishvillage.org

FOR EMERGENCIES CALL 911.

Note: If you have questions or wish to volunteer for one of the committees, please use the appropriate email address listed here or call the EEV message line, 313-216-1729.

Crime reporting: dpded.betf@yahoo.com



Bethany Christian Church

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Pet corner

A blessing and a responsibility

A most Joyous and Blessed New Year to all the pet lovers, pet owners, and all the potential and future pet owners who will love their new pets!!

To own a living being is an exciting and awesome privilege and responsibility. Our pets look to us for protection, guidance, training, sustenance, and an over-all happy and emotionally fulfilled life. We need to keep them warm in winter, and cool in summer. We need to exercise them and give them mental stimulation as well. We need to teach them acceptable behavior and



feed them a healthy diet. Neither too little or too much as obesity in animals is too easy to develop due to "snacks". Have a great New Year!

— Karlene Trump



EEV PET REGISTRATION FORM
Please register your pet with the EEV Association!
If lost pets are found in the neighborhood, registration will help us to identify the animal and contact the owner.

Resident Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone#: _____
Email: _____

Pet Information

Type/Breed: _____
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Age/Sex/Color: _____
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Vet Telephone#: _____

Mail form to Pet Registration, PO Box 21009, Detroit MI 48224
or email this information to pets@eastenglishvillage.org
If you find a stray animal or lose your pet,
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Guest article

Fighting tax foreclosure

By Steve Babson

A tidal wave of tax foreclosures threatens Detroit in 2015. Wayne County has already opened the floodgates with a petition to foreclose on 62,000 properties by April 1.

Though East English Village is in better shape than most neighborhoods, 253 EEV homes are marked for tax foreclosure this spring, and all but 8 are occupied according to the web site Why Don't We Own This? (Web address at end of article.) Even if your home wasn't posted with a recent notice of foreclosure, one or more of your neighbors were. If they are forced from their homes, the resulting fire sale of their property will further depress the value of your house, especially when empty homes are downward spiral. Global outsourcing and the Great Recession have forced thousands of jobless Detroiters into default on their taxes or mortgages, setting off a downward spiral of foreclosure and eviction that feeds on itself. Empty homes are often vandalized and stripped, driving property values in the poorest neighborhoods down to less than one-tenth of their tax assessment. Property taxes on over-assessed homes are far higher than warranted by the property's depressed market value, contributing to tax bills that are well above suburban taxes on comparable homes.

Banks accelerate this downward spiral when they refuse to modify mortgages and foreclose on struggling families, leaving abandoned homes to tax foreclosure and blight. Adding insult to injury, homeowners heading towards foreclosure in 2015 for taxes they couldn't pay in 2012 are liable for interest on the unpaid balance that can rise to a punishing 18% a year.



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Families can take the steps outlined below to defend the home they live in, but fixing the broken tax system will also require collective action. Pay back taxes ONLY to Wayne County. DO NOT pay them to the city, which will only credit your payment to current taxes. The county treasurer has sole responsibility for back taxes and will not retrieve money mistakenly paid to the city.

Step Forward Michigan: This state program is supposed to loan money to distressed homeowners to cover back taxes or delinquent mortgages, with the loans forgiven over five years if they stay in the house. It's worth applying for this help online at stepforwardmichigan.org, but be aware that the program suffers from bureaucratic delay, a narrow criteria for eligibility, and diversion of funds to pay for demolition. In the last four years, the program has assisted only 6,700 families in all of Wayne County.

We need to push for more funding and expanded eligibility to keep people in their homes. Banks and other financial institutions that trashed the housing market with their fraudulent foreclosure practices should pay for blight removal, not Step Forward.

Taxpayer assistance from the County: There are several programs that homeowners can access online at waynecounty.com/treasurer/761.htm. The most favorable among them is the Distressed Owner/Occupant Extension: homeowners in financial hardship can get a one-year extension on paying back taxes if the unpaid taxes go back no further than 2012. Upwards of 27,000 households that will otherwise go to foreclosure may qualify for the "DOOE" program. The Michigan legislature has just amended state law to allow the county treasurer to lower annual interest on unpaid taxes and to cut accumulated back taxes on some owner-occupied homes to no more than one-quarter of the

home's market value. Homeowners only qualify for these reductions, however, if they enter a payment plan that can still exclude many struggling families.

United Community Housing Coalition: UCHC is a non-profit organization that advocates for homeowners fighting foreclosure. Its dedicated and over-worked staff will help people negotiate payment plans with the county and apply for state emergency relief and poverty exemptions. Intake for homeowners seeking assistance is every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9am to noon, on the 9th floor of 220 Bagley in downtown Detroit, corner of Grand River. Their phone is usually busy, so just go in Show Cause Hearing. The Wayne County Treasurer's office has notified hom-

eowners facing tax foreclosure of the Show Cause hearing in late January and early February where you can pay back taxes or commit to a payment plan. Staff from the United Community Housing Coalition will be on hand to Tax Re-Assessment. Bureaucratic inertia and state law have driven thousands of Detroiters to foreclosure in recent years on the basis of wildly inflated assessments. If there is no system-wide re-assessment, efforts to force re-evaluation will come to a head in the first two weeks of February, when the city assessor's office normally considers appeals. Homeowners seeking an individual re-assessment of their property should go to the excellent six-page guide available on the web site of the Historic Boston-Edison

Association at: historicbostonedison.org/appeal.shtml.

In the past, the city has rejected most of these appeals because the assessor uses a very small sample of comparative prices that excludes sales of foreclosed properties. Mayor Duggan has called for an alternative reassessment process that some critics still regard as too slow and too small to stem the immediate crisis. Housing activists are calling for a halt on foreclosures of occupied homes until a city-wide re-assessment sets their taxable value at realistic levels and cancels back taxes based on inflated assessments.

STOP BLIGHT BEFORE IT HAPPENS

To save our neighborhoods, we need to keep

people in their homes and stop the cycle of foreclosure and eviction that causes blight. Demolishing empty homes only addresses the symptoms, not the cause. Until the system is fixed, we need an emergency halt to all foreclosures of occupied homes. Here in EEV, we can support families threatened with the loss of their home, talk to our neighbors in need, and seek a city-wide coalition with neighborhood associations, block clubs, and other allies committed to solutions that keep people in their homes.

For more information, go to: <http://www.eastenglishvillage.org/> and <http://detroitevictiondefense.org/> and <https://whydontweownthis.com/2015/mi/wayne/detroit/east-english-village#15/42.4047/-82.9328>

President

Continued from Page 1

to think of the outcome if we don't plow. Please remember to shovel for the postman and your neighbor. We have been lucky so far this year.

Our security team is continuing and is deterring crime opportunities the best way possible. We continue to work with the 5th Precinct. The private patrol is entering into the 12th year with your continued financial help. The patrol is there as a visual deterrent. The volunteer security payment is \$100, with a discount for seniors (see coupon on the back page). If someone told you that the well-known services

are free, they are wrong — it takes all of us to help keep the services we depend on moving forward each year. Please send in your donation by mail or PayPal. We have payment programs and we take credit cards — please help in some way! If dollars are tight, then please try to help in other ways — porch lights, put your car in your garage or behind the fence to help deter possible crimes. So many of you watch out for your neighbor... it's a big thing and it's appreciated by so many in the village.

We will be holding our postponed holiday party in February or March. Please keep reading the newsletters for updates.

Thanks to all who par-

ticipated in so many events this past year, including village cleanups, registered volunteer drivers and event volunteers.

We have many hot topics and positive issues we need to address this year to keep our neighborhood one of choice. The foreclosure issues are still present but we

are working hard as ever to keep the homes on track. We will cover the housing issues including Metro Properties and a few others as well as reviewing our options on upkeep and EEV events for 2015.

Happy New Year,
— Bill Barlage, President
East English Village





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In the Community, Working with the Community, to Build the Community

Come and visit with your Commissioner at his monthly Chats

2nd Monday – 9-10:00 a.m. – Grosse Pointe Woods Community Center – in the jury room around back. 20025 Mack
3rd Monday – 9-10:00 a.m. – Grosse Pointe Park City Hall – 2nd level – 15115 Jefferson at Maryland
3rd Monday – 6-7:00 p.m. – Tim Horton's – 19353 Vernier across from Eastland
Last Monday – Noon -1:00 p.m. - Montclair Library – 14100 Kercheval at Eastlawn

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Security update

Happy New Year fellow residents!

The holidays have probably run everyone ragged. Hopefully, with many good memories. Even so, we all hold true to the belief that personal (positive) support can spread throughout EEV when we share constant community action. Look to your neighbors in person, via media such as NextDoor.com, Facebook, etc. There is a lot of useful information out there that can be shared for free. Remember that the only stupid question is the one you don't bother to ask.

As always – DUSK TO DAWN, PORCH LIGHTS ON!

Gwen Wee
security@eastenglishvillage.org
313.310.7110

Security and snow

Thanks to all the neighbors that continually support our fabulous services. Please feel free to make your payments at the monthly town meeting. The Treasurer is always at the back table. Please include your email address to receive your receipt. Email any questions to treasurer@eastenglishvillage.org.

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Paige, Percy
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Wee, Gwendolyn & Shopinksi, Tony
Yee, Victoria & Doo K
Yntema, Janet

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Snow Plowing Snow removal of EEV is not a free service and is not done by the City of Detroit. Everyone who uses the roads in EEV is needed to help keep them clear during heavy snow fall. The charge is **\$35 per address per year.**



General Fund Donations to the general fund support free community events like light supper before meetings, Home Tour and Garage Sale. Any amount contribution is welcomed!



Security contributions can be made in quarterly installments!

Checks: East English Village | P.O. Box 241009 | Detroit, MI 48224

Credit Cards: Visa, MC, AmEx, Discover at www.eastenglishvillage.org