Inside District 8

Councilman Christopher Herndon | Denver City Council | May 2017

A message from Councilman Herndon

Spring is here and new planning initiatives are in the works for District 8. Several neighborhoods in the district have outdated small area plans, or none at all. These plans are important in helping guide development. Community Planning and Development (CPD) is embarking on an initiative to update these plans.

Over the next several months, CPD will begin the planning process to update the small area plans involving Montbello, South Park Hill, and East Colfax. Staff are researching existing conditions and are finalizing the structure of the steering committees that will help guide the planning process. The steering committees are responsible for developing detailed plan content and ideas and making a formal recommendation to the planning board and city council on the final plan. Members are required to attend monthly meetings and communicate with a large group of stakeholders. Please reach out to my office if you're interested in volunteering to serve on a committee.

There are so many exciting things to do this month, but one I want to highlight is the Colfax Marathon. With options ranging from a short 5k to a full-fledged marathon, there are opportunities to participate for runners at all levels. Learn more at runcolfax.org.

Councilman Chris Herndon congratulates Stapleton's newest homeowners in the affordable housing program. L - R: Garrett and Taylor Norvell and family, Gete Mekonnen, Executive Director of Northeast Denver Housing, and Tom Gleason, Vice President-Public Relations of Forest City Stapleton.

Adoptable pet of the month

Boots is a 3-year-old Terrier mix who would love a family of his own! This active guy is looking for a family who can provide him with regular exercise and walks, as he loves to explore and adventure! He is currently available for adoption at Denver Animal Shelter (1241 W. Bayaud Ave.) Boots is looking for a family who can provide him with consistent training and would be best suited for respectful, gentle children over the age of 12. Boots would prefer to be the only dog in the home and enjoys walks and hikes with his new family more than the dog park.

Contact the District 8 Office

4685 Peoria St., Suite 245
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday
720-337-8888

Find us on Facebook
facebook.com/ChrisJHerndon

Connect with us on Twitter
twitter.com/ChrisJHerndon

HOW A ZONING APPLICATION MOVES THROUGH THE CITY

1. APPLICANT MEETS WITH COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND FILES APPLICATION

***As City Council sits as a quasi-judicial body, Councilmembers cannot form an opinion prior to the Public Hearing (#6)**

CPD seeks to understand the applicant's goals and explain the zone districts the applicant may consider. Many applicants choose to withdraw their application after the initial meeting. It's the applicant's choice to progress to Planning Board or not.

2. PLANNING BOARD HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING

1. Is the rezoning consistent with completed plans?
2. Does the rezoning further public health, safety and welfare?
3. Are there circumstances that justify the rezoning?
4. Is the rezoning consistent with the neighborhood context?
5. Does the rezoning align with the zone district's purpose and and intent?
6. Will it result in consistent regulations for each property with the same zoning designation citywide?

PLANNING BOARD DENIES OR FORWARDS TO CITY COUNCIL

3. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING

Proposed zoning is discussed

COMMITTEE MOVES TO FULL COUNCIL OR REFERS BACK

4. MAYOR-COUNCIL MEETING

Bills to be filed each week are discussed

5. COUNCIL MEETING – FIRST READING

THE BILL IS ORDERED PUBLISHED

6. COUNCIL MEETING – 2ND READING

PUBLIC HEARING / COUNCIL VOTE

7. IF THE ZONING REQUEST IS APPROVED BY COUNCIL, THE MAYOR SIGNS OR VETOS THE REQUEST. COUNCIL CAN OVERRIDE A VETO WITH 9 VOTES.

Know your neighbors: Edward Korabic

What neighborhood do you live in and how long have you lived there?
I live in Conservatory Green in Stapleton. My wife and I have lived there for almost three years.

What do you like most about your neighborhood?
What I like most about my neighborhood is that everyone is extremely personable. I have more friends in Stapleton after three years than I had in Milwaukee after 35 years. Everybody in our neighborhood is new to Stapleton. A lot of people are empty nesters just like my wife and I, so we have that in common. I also love being close to the Shops at Northfield.

How are you involved in the community?
My biggest commitment is being the president of the board of directors of the Community Hub at Northfield. The Hub houses the Denver Police District 5 cop shop and Northeast Transportation Connections. My wife Tracy and I also work on crime prevention with Lt. Culverhouse from District 5 through a neighborhood watch program. Tracy and I are the points of contact for the program and work closely with neighborhood watch captains and District 5. So far it has been very successful.

What's something you've done in the community that you're proud of?
We're extremely proud of the neighborhood watch program. Lt. Culverhouse will send us a message about crime prevention, and then we get this out to all of the neighborhood watch captains, who in turn send it out to the residents of their blocks. I'm also proud of the fundraising and public safety work I've done for the Community Hub.

What's something about your community that you wish more people knew?
Stapleton is very friendly and DPD is very involved in the community. My wife and I moved to the neighborhood to be closer to our daughter's family. When my wife came out to Stapleton to visit, she called me and told me we were going to retire here. The third time we came to visit our daughter, we bought a house. We're very happy here, we love our neighborhood.

How do you like to spend your free time?
Enjoying retirement and exploring Denver and Colorado. Our to-do list of places to visit across the state is very long; we are slowly chipping away at it. The state park system is fabulous.

What is one of your favorite businesses/restaurants in the community? I really like Salati and La Sandia.

Roots Elementary School celebrates academic success in year two

Roots Elementary School opened at the Holly Square campus in 2016, with a new building and a focus on personalized learning for all students.

Assessment results show Roots scholars are exceeding the national average for growth in both reading and math. Kindergartners are making more than 140 percent of expected growth— nearly a year and a half worth of learning in just one year.

Roots is looking ahead to the coming school year and enrolling now for fall 2017. If you're interested in learning more about the school:

Visit - To request a tour, visit rootselementary.org or call 720-593-1338.

Volunteer - Do you have an hour a week to read one-on-one with a Roots scholar? The school is collaborating with a Park Hill nonprofit called Partners in Literacy to launch "Roots Readers." No experience is necessary. If interested, email Julie@partnersinliteracy.org.

Donate - Donations are accepted online at rootselementary.org/support-roots. For larger gifts, email jon@rootselementary.org.

New crosswalks activated near Eastbridge Town Center

Two new High-intensity Activated crossWalks (known as HAWK signals) are now operating along M.L.K Jr. Blvd., just west of Havana Street. People crossing M.L.K. to access the new Eastbridge Town Center can push a button to activate the HAWK signals. Drivers are required to stop when the lights are red.

DENVER POLICE DISTRICT 5 COMMUNITY RESOURCE OFFICER

Meet Jay Casillas

What does your job entail?
My job as a community resource officer is to provide residents with resources that would otherwise not involve a "police response." It can entail anything from providing mediation services for neighbor disputes, to attending community meetings, and any other tasks where we can meet community members just to get to know them.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
I really enjoy being able to talk to people in the community. I also like to interact with youth. I grew up in the Swansea neighborhood and from time to time I would see officers drive by. Sometimes they would give us baseball cards and it made a positive impact on me. I enjoy seeing the smiles on kids' faces when they receive a sticker or ask me for a high five.

What kind of impact do you hope to have in the community?
Growing up in a predominantly Hispanic community in Denver and being Hispanic myself, I noticed we tend to keep quiet about what goes on in our neighborhoods because we don't want to get involved. I think there is also a lot of fear about police officers in these communities. I would like to try to bridge that gap and show that the Denver Police Department wants to help. We want to help make every community in Denver a safer and better place to live. Being bilingual (Spanish and English) will be a great tool for me to be able to communicate that message with everyone in District 5.

What do you do for fun outside of work?
I am passionate about music. I learned to play the guitar when I was 14. I've also learned to play alto saxophone, piano, bass guitar, and drums. I like to sing and write music. I'm also fortunate enough to play in a church choir with my wife.

What is something the community might not know about you?
I have been working for the city since 2006 when I started as a public safety cadet.

Is there anything else you want to share?
I look forward to meeting many people out here in District 5. If you see me or any of my partners out in the streets, wave hi to us: it means a lot.

DENVER THE MILE HIGH CITY Start by Believing

#KnowAction
denvergov.org/noshame

Denver Police District 5 Honors Top Cop

District 5

Corporal Alex St. Peter

Corporal Alex St. Peter was dispatched on a report of an individual who was threatening suicide. Upon making contact with the subject over the phone, St. Peter established a positive rapport, kept the man engaged, and worked on negotiating a peaceful resolution. After a lengthy conversation, during which the man acknowledged suffering from PTSD and other issues related to his military experience, the man agreed to be taken into custody and delivered to a medical facility, but only if St. Peter accompanied him. Shortly after negotiating the resolution, it was discovered that the man was staying at an address in Greenwood Village, out of Denver's jurisdiction. The man insisted he would not surrender peacefully unless St. Peter was present. Once St. Peter arrived, the man allowed himself to be taken to the hospital.

THE LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Bridging the language divide in Northeast Denver

The Language School in Montbello offers courses in English and Spanish, ranging from beginner to advanced. Montbello resident David Stevens opened the school in 2011 with a handful of students and has grown to be at almost full capacity in six years.

Stevens initially started a language school in Boulder, but a move brought him to Montbello. He quickly saw a need for comprehensive and affordable language classes in Northeast Denver.

Stevens and his team are focused on integrating the English and Spanish speaking communities in Northeast Denver through structured classes and informal meetups. The Language School focuses first on the conversational aspect of learning a language, then builds on this by teaching the grammar and rules associated with English and Spanish.

From left to right: David Stevens, Care Bear, Christine George and Frances Holder.

"My mission is to really break down that cultural and language wall," said Stevens. "Let's get people together, talking."

Stevens double majored in Spanish and International Business in college and spent time travelling to Spanish-speaking countries, including Spain, Ecuador, Chile and Argentina to master the language. "I was taught the value of learning the language and learning the culture so I could fit in, talk to people and become part of the community," said Stevens.

Students and teachers talk during a weekly 'Coffee with Conversation.'

Classes range from foundational to advanced, all focusing on conversation. The school offers group classes, private lessons and corporate services for companies looking to help employees with language and cross-cultural training. Stevens has three full-time teachers and two part-time teachers on his staff, with 120 students currently enrolled.

Group classes are popular and are limited to eight students. Group class pricing ranges from $149 - $299 per month for the school's Intensive Immersion Program. Pricing varies depending on whether it's an English or Spanish class. Private lessons are $50 per hour and require a minimum of five hours. Stevens offers discounts for group classes and private lessons when they are purchased in multiple months or multiple hours.

In addition to the formal classes, The Language School holds 'Coffee with Conversation' every Thursday morning, 10 a.m. – noon, and every Sunday afternoon, 4 – 6 p.m. Thirty minutes is dedicated to practicing English and 30 minutes to practicing Spanish. These meetups are free and open to the public and encourage students to practice their language skills with community members.

For more information on The Language School, including classes, pricing and schedules, visit www.thelanguageschool.us or call 303-997-9207.

Resources

Denver Human Services
Montbello Office
720-944-3666

District 2 Police Department
720-913-1000
Michael.Calo@denvergov.org

District 5 Police Department
720-913-1400
dist5@denvergov.org

Department of Motor Vehicles
720-865-4600

Denver Public Schools
720-423-3200

Denver Workforce Center at Montbello
720-865-4600

City of Denver Services
311

District 8 Council Aides

Amanda Schoultz
amanda.schoultz@denvergov.org

Bonnie Guillen
bonnie.guillen@denvergov.org

Charley Oldaker
charles.oldaker@denvergov.org

Council District 8 website
denvergov.org/councildistrict8

Councilman Chris Herndon at Isabella Bird Community School for the Denver Police Department horse introduction.

What's Happening in May

Registered Neighborhood Organization Meetings

Greater Park Hill Community
May 4, 6:30 p.m.
2823 Fairfax St.

Northeast Park Hill Coalition
May 11, 6 p.m.
3921 Holly St.

East Montclair Neighborhood Association
May 16, 6:30 p.m.
Counterpath Press
7935 E. 14th Ave.

Stapleton United Neighbors
May 16, 6:30 p.m.
Central Park Recreation Center
9651 M.L.K. Jr. Blvd.

Community Events

Greater Park Hill Community Yard Sale
May 6, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
greaterparkhill.org/yard-sale

Compost Sale
May 6, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
denvergov.org/denverrecycles

Roots Elementary School Cultural Fest
May 13, noon - 2 p.m.
3350 Hudson St.
RSVP: carla@rootselementary.org
http://rootselementary.org/

The Great Denver Cleanup
May 20, 9 a.m. - noon
denvergov.org/KDB

Stapleton Community Garage Sale
May 20-21, 8 a.m. - noon
www.stapletondenver.com

Denver Arts Festival
May 27-28, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Stapleton Conservatory Green

Memorial Day
May 29
City offices closed

Home improvement scams

Thinking about building a deck, a patio or cleaning out gutters? It might make sense to hire someone rather than take on the job yourself. Finding a good contractor is important, as a home improvement project gone wrong can cost you big time. But, choosing the wrong contractor can cost you more than money; it can lead to delays, sub-par work, and even legal problems.

Before you hire a contractor, get several estimates and ask plenty of questions, including:

- How many projects like mine have you completed in the last year?
- Will my project require a permit? (Don't fall for a contractor saying they can get the job done without a permit. Again, the cost on the back-end will be far greater than the cost of a permit.)
- What type of insurance do you carry?
- What is the payment plan? (Reminder: do not pay 100 percent upfront.)

Also be sure to get a written contract. It should be clear and concise and include who is going to do the work, the specifics of the project, projected timing and cost of your project.

Some of the early warning signs indicating you may not be dealing with the right contractor can be someone who: knocks on your door for business; just "happens to have materials left over" from a previous job; pressures you for an immediate decision; only accepts cash; asks you to pay everything up-front, or asks you to get the required building permits.

And don't forget this last warning, if someone comes door-to-door, don't let them in your house. And if they ask you to step out to the backyard to look at the project, lock your door. Your new contractor may have a friend waiting for the "all clear sign" to get into your house.

For more information, visit www.denverda.org/.