

McKownville Improvement Association
Special Meeting—Concerning the University and McKownville
Thursday July 21, 2011—7 pm-9 pm
Holiday Inn Express, 1442 Western Avenue

The University is looking to buy and redevelop the Holt-Harris property in McKownville. The property is nearly 9.0 acres and borders Norwood Street, the University ring road and Waverly Place. The asking price is \$1.6 million. Its assessed value is \$597,900, it includes two houses (one of which is occupied), is nearly fully treed and has several sizable hills. These features help to buffer numerous McKownville homes from the University. One of the houses on the property is of historic value and should be preserved.

Members of the Board of the McKownville Association met with **University President George Philip** on Wednesday, June 29, 2011 to discuss the University plans for the Holt-Harris property. President Philip informed the group that the University was interested in purchasing the property, but only at a more reasonable price than what it is now listed for. He did not indicate what the University planned to do with the property. Several other sources, however, indicate that the University could use the 9 acres to construct a University gymnasium and or a baseball field.

During the meeting, Association Board members emphasized that when the University was constructed it promised that it would not convert residential property in McKownville to University use. Since the 1960's McKownville residents have banked their home owning futures on this promise, it is essential that this promise be kept. Less than a decade ago the University pulled away from buying the home at 1257 Western Avenue (the now vacant lot across the street from the fire house) due in large part to the Association's reminder of this promise, and some other concerns about its development.

In addition to the major concern, violation of a long-standing promise, University use of this property will bring issues of parking, noise, traffic, light pollution and other intrusions into our neighborhood. Additionally, the loss of property tax revenue would be meaningful to the McKownville Fire District, which relies on property taxes.

The Association Board members informed President Philip that their preference is that the property continue to be of residential usage. If more intensive development is to occur, additional private housing is the neighborhood's preference. The Holt-Harris site is zoned R-15 which would allow residential structures on 15,000 square foot lots.

As a community we need to be mindful of the fact that the University, as part of the state government, is not subject to zoning and other Guilderland land use regulations. When it comes to development of this land by the University we will have to rely on public appeals, letters, petitions and other actions. This **Special Meeting** of the neighborhood is to explore what we should do. **We need ideas and we need neighbors to join together to stop this institutional incursion into the residential area of McKownville.**

Our Association believes that keeping McKownville a wonderful residential neighborhood should be our goal. Conversion of the Holt-Harris propter to University use does not further this goal.

Officers

Don Reeb, President, 5 Norwood Street, 489-3909
Doug Smith, Vice President, 5 McKown Road 482-6081
Martha Haraus, Secretary, 1445 Western, 489-3855
Paul Haldeman, Treasurer, 5 Country Road, 456-9557

Members of the Board

Sue Brown 6 Westlyn Place 482-2355	Janet Reilly 18 Norwood 446-1766	Marian Hoyle 22 Glenwood 438-6544
Bill Meehan 7 Country Rd. 456-4564	Jim White 8 Brookwood 459-9176	Angie Parsons 136 Arcadia 489-3616
Alice Torda 2 Knowles Terrace 489-3613	Ellen Manning 3 Norwood 482-3779	David Shub 3 Parkwood 438-1547