

# SPRING GROVE VILLAGE

## JANUARY COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

**Tuesday, January 14**

Taft's Brewpourium

4831 Spring Grove Avenue

**6:30 p.m.** | Pizza

**7:00 p.m.** | Council Meeting  
(adjourn by 9:00 PM)

## INVITATION TO COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

You are invited to the next SGV Community Council meeting featuring:



### JEFF PASTOR, CITY COUNCIL

Jeff is a first-term member of City Council and chairs the Neighborhoods Committee, which focuses on Community Councils, neighborhood corridors, business districts, and enhancement as well as public services. Come out to welcome Jeff and bring a few good questions.

**Contact Jeff:** 513-352-5243 or <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/pastor/>



### JASON COOPER, SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

Jason Cooper is a member of the City Managers Advisory Group, overseeing Cincinnati's policing efforts as part of the recent Collaborative Agreement Refresh. Learn what's new with the Refresh Agreement and what we citizens can expect to see.

**Contact Jason:** 513-352-5367 or <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/police/collaborative-agreement-refresh/>



### LOCATION: TAFT'S BREWPOURIUM

If you've yet to visit our local pub, don't miss this opportunity to come out for our January Community Council meeting. Taft's is a great business neighbor and a fun place to hang out with friends. Come early at 6:30pm for pizza. Our monthly council meeting will follow, beginning at 7:00pm.

**More info:** <http://taftsbeer.com/location/tafts-brewpourium-cincinnati/>

Each monthly Community Council meeting is a great opportunity to learn about what's happening around the city and the neighborhood. From reports by police and fire officials to presentations from guest speakers to community conversations, you will have a chance to hear input and ask questions. More importantly, it's a great place to meet new people and catch up with those you already know.

**Your presence and participation make this a stronger, friendlier community.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**ALL DECEMBER**  
**Winton Place**  
**Youth Center**  
**End of Year**  
**Campaign**  
[wp youthcenter.org](http://wp youthcenter.org)

**1/1**  
**HAPPY**  
**NEW**  
**YEAR!**



**1/14**  
**SGV Comm**  
**Council Meeting**  
Taft's  
Brewpourium  
4831 Spring Grove

**1/18**  
**SGV 2.0 Land**  
**Use & Visioning**  
**Workshop**  
St. Bernard's  
Annex

**1/20**  
**Martin Luther**  
**King**  
**Jr.**  
**Day**



# COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING REPORT: DECEMBER

BY LIZ VIRGO, COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBER

On Tuesday, December 10, SGV residents gathered at Frisch's restaurant on Spring Grove Avenue for our monthly community council meeting. CPD provided November's crime statistics from the neighborhood and shared that there will be increased patrolling of the neighborhood during the holiday season, advising residents to keep their speed down.

Samantha McLean, Cincinnati City Planner who is usually here with SGV 2.0, came to this meeting to talk about Greater Cincinnati Counts and discuss the importance of 2020 census participation. Greater Cincinnati Counts is an awareness and education campaign around getting everyone counted in the 2020 census.



The census numbers determine the dollar amounts needed for federal programs. Each person counted allows for nearly \$2,000 federal funding, which is one of the reasons it is so important to participate. Congressional districts are also divided along the lines of these counts. This is the first census in which you can apply online. The online application is secure and encrypted. Rec centers, libraries, and Greater Cincinnati Count locations have computers with internet available for people to fill out the census if you do not have those amenities. Phone and paper options are also still available. April 1st is census day! Our neighborhood has had an especially low response rate to the census, but we can change that this year! We as community members can talk to our neighbors to encourage them to participate. Greater Cincinnati Counts also needs volunteers to spread the word about the census and applications can be found on their website.

Brian Ogawa with the Department of Community and Economic Development came to discuss the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District program, which is being voted on by City Council the week of December 16. TIF is a program designed to impact poverty in low-income neighborhoods. There are particular criterion; if an area of the city meets it and they are interested, they can be designated as a TIF district. There are 20 TIF Districts in the city already, some of which have already profited from the localized benefits the program provides. Some examples of TIF projects that have been completed in this city include Washington Park, Zeigler Park, new infrastructure at Central Parkway, current upgrades happening in Madisonville, Oakley Square, and Walnut Hills improvements in their residential districts and stabilized historic assets. TIF has been proposed for our neighborhood, though our ability to access the funds will be determined by a City Council vote. If the vote allows the program to operate, the earliest funding will be available is 2021. Residents at our Community Council meeting discussed reasons why they did or did not support the program. Brian Ogawa noted that there have been some problems with the program in Chicago, but that city and state operate very differently and there has been success with the program in our city.

Our meeting wrapped up early, with a reminder that participation in Community Council meetings is a great way to impact the programs and progress seen in our neighborhood.



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY GARY ROBBINS, COMMUNITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

In November, we had some serious gun violence incidents in the neighborhood. It's important that we not let that go by unnoticed or with no response. It's important that we, as a community, look at what we can do to keep this neighborhood safe. Doing nothing is not an acceptable response! The Community Council will host a safety meeting and we hope all who share our concerns will show up and participate.

I attended one of a series of listening sessions hosted by Jason Cooper with the Police Collaborative. I heard other neighborhoods speak of their safety plans (could we include this in our SGV 2.0 Plan?). I was inspired by peers who showed up to tell stories of what actions they have taken in their neighborhoods to curb violence and create safe communities. As much as we want more help from our police, there are things we can do ourselves to make our neighborhood safer.

With Jason present at our January Community Council meeting, we will devote time for a Safety Meeting – a time for listening and dialog among ourselves about actions we can take to improve safety in SGV. So, plan now to attend, make note of how our neighborhood is now safe and where we could use improvement, and talk with your neighbors. Then, please join us for an action-oriented discussion about the safety of SGV. If you cannot be present, please send in your thoughts and ideas for others to hear (springgrovevillage@gmail.com).

We have so many good people in this neighborhood. And so many of you already contribute a lot towards making this a safe, clean, and welcoming community. With gratitude to all of you, we say thank you. And we wish you all a happy, safe, and prosperous New Year!

## PROPERTY TAX UPDATES

BY JERRY CARRICO, COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOARD MEMBER

The Property Tax Working Group held its monthly meeting November 21. At this meeting, representatives from the Council on Aging presented their proposal for property tax relief for seniors. They had considered several approaches being used in other states, including:

1. Freezing tax value as California did. This creates minimal changes in property taxes so unaffordable taxes are still unaffordable.
2. Exemption or deduction, which shields some of the market value by decreasing the tax value. However, other taxpayers must pick up the burden.
3. Property tax discounts based on income. Once again, other taxpayers pick up the burden.
4. Property tax credit based on income. Same problem as above.
5. Deferral which postpones the tax but places a lien on the property. The government receives the taxes eventually but the interest may be excessive. Their proposal was a deferral for eligible participants with a 3% interest accrual until repaid, which would occur when the house is sold, the participant dies, or it is no longer used as the primary residence. In order to be eligible, you must own and occupy the property, it must be your primary residence for the past 10 years, you must meet the state's requirements for the Homestead Exemption, and the maximum household income is \$32,800.

The second presentation was from Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), which is working on a Community-wide Housing Strategy. They presented recommendations regarding emergency housing support, preservation of affordable rental housing, access to home ownership, new production guidelines, and zoning policy. They noted that in Cincinnati and Hamilton County for families with a household income of less than \$40,000, there is a shortage of over 78,000 housing units. For example, a household making minimum wage would need two full time jobs to afford a two bedroom apartment and 42% of homes under HUD contract (which keeps them affordable) will expire before 2030. Their recommendations are far too extensive for this article. Both group presentations are available at [www.cincinnati-oh.gov/propertytaxproject](http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/propertytaxproject).





# TRAFFIC + SAFETY COMMITTEE

BY KATE STAIGER, TRAFFIC + SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Traffic + Safety committee members Gary Robbins and Kate Staiger met with our City's Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOT) Director John Brazina at City Hall in late November. Mr. Brazina is new to his position. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce our neighborhood's Traffic + Safety concerns to Mr. Brazina and follow-up with some projects put in place by the former team in the department, but never began though promised.

Specifically, SGV has a current project, slated to begin anytime now, where Derby Avenue meets Winton Road. Our history of cut-through motorists on this street has caused concerns with high-volume traffic, speeding, and suspicious activities involving people who are not residents, nor have concern for our safety. The plan is to narrow Derby at Winton, scaling it down to a traditional T-intersection, and closing the right-hand slip lane onto Winton Road, which encourages cut-through from Mitchell/Este Avenue to Winton Road.

The Este Avenue curve is also a traffic safety concern. Speeding motorists often lose control of their vehicles at the curve, at times ending in crashes into yards/homes situated there or accidents between vehicles. The current idea under consideration is to install rumble strips, which has Mr. Brazina's support, though the sound pollution they cause warrant a Council discussion and/or specific support from our residential and commercial neighbors that live or work near that spot.

Overall, the meeting was a success. Mr. Brazina took action immediately on some of our requests. Mainly, to brief us on the timeline for the Derby/Winton project to begin and to join us at a Council meeting soon to hear our concerns and meet our neighbors. He seems eager to begin a productive relationship with SGV. If you have specific Traffic + Safety concerns, please pay attention to the agendas for upcoming Council Meetings in our newsletter. Mr. Brazina has agreed to attend one as soon as he can.

## SGV 2.0 UPDATE

BY GARY ROBBINS & SARAH MAGUIRE, SGV 2.0 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We have many new ideas included in our SGV 2.0 draft of the neighborhood plan. Have you seen them? Check out the list of ideas here: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/SGVFeedback](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SGVFeedback). Then, let us know your feedback and where and when you are willing to help.

The SGV 2.0 Steering Committee is currently working to pare down the goals and strategies and decide on projects that can be implemented by community members. This will require identifying neighbors and organizations that can pledge to follow through. As you look at the New Year, consider what you do for the neighborhood now and what you might be willing to offer in 2020. SGV 2.0 is about the future of SGV and you are part of that future.

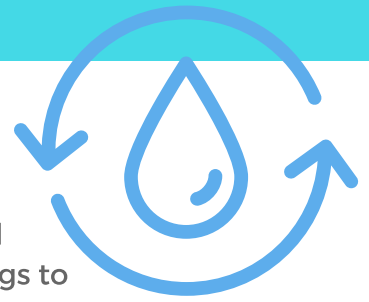
On Saturday, January 18 from 10 am-1 pm there will be a workshop to focus on very specific elements of the plan: LAND USE and VISIONING. **We know there are many SGV residents who are concerned about and interested in land use of the neighborhood** so, if you are, please plan to attend this workshop to determine future development (or not) of SGV. Additionally, **if you are a high-level, big-picture thinker, we need you to help create the SGV neighborhood plan visioning statement!** This statement will set the tone for the whole plan so please share your talents. More information will be sent out about this workshop via email soon. Or please email [springgrovevillage2.0@gmail.com](mailto:springgrovevillage2.0@gmail.com) with questions!



# COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL UPDATE

BY JERRY CARRICO, COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOARD MEMBER

The Community Advisory Panel met on December 4 at the BASF Technical Center. BASF stated that their new wastewater treatment facility passed its latest inspection and is scheduled to begin operation at the end of the year. After it comes online, they will bypass MSD completely and dump the treated wastewater directly into the Mill Creek. This will result in long-term cost savings to the company because they will no longer pay a sewer charge to MSD. BASF received a re-certification in Quality Practices and Guidelines for their systems and laboratories and Product Integrity Management Systems for their manufacturing and packaging. They also stated that they have gone 645 days without a release or spill and have set a new record for days worked without a lost time accident. Business is good but they have no job openings at this time.



Emery stated there had been no safety or environmental incidents since the last meeting and they have now worked over one million hours without a lost time accident. They are currently undergoing an Ethical Trades Audit, which insures they obey safety guidelines, do not force excessive overtime, or use child labor or outsource to companies that do. They are slowing production due to end of year but do have job openings. One is for a chemical analyst and some entry level openings (all are listed on Monster.com). They stated that their polyurethane foam reclamation process (which turns the foam scrap back into its components for reuse) is working in its trial run and they hope it will be operational next year.

Kerri Castlen of Southwest Ohio Air Quality Agency (SOAQA) stated that the air quality testing in Winton Hills has been completed and no toxins above the safe level (determined by both OEPA and Ohio Board of Health) had been detected. Both the final report and individual tests are available at their website ([southwestohioair.org](http://southwestohioair.org)). The canisters at Winton Preparatory Academy, Winton Hills Recreation Center, and Cincinnati Fire Department Engine Company 38 had not been used. They were to be used if anyone detected an odor and would capture a sample to be analyzed. Kerri also said they had three noxious odor complaints. Two were coming from the sewers and the other was not present when they arrived to test.

Both companies presented their Toxic Release Inventory reports which are too involved for the newsletter. In short, Emery had almost the same amount as the year before. BASF had a tremendous decrease in both point and fugitive emissions due to their closure of the Fatty Alcohol Plant.

## INTRODUCING 2020 SGV COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOARD

BY GARY ROBBINS, COMMUNITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

**President:** Gary Robbins

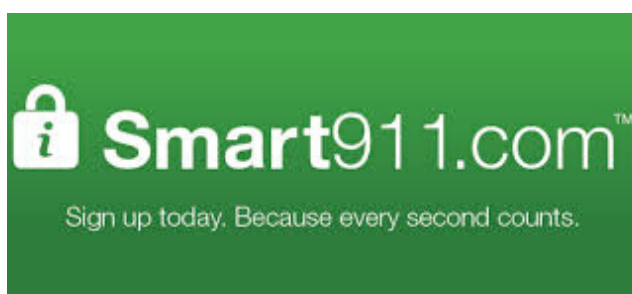
**Vice President:** Jerry Carrico

**Treasurer:** Annie Hilson

**Secretary:** Liz Virgo

**Trustee:** Farah Sagin

**Trustee:** Phil Murphy



### Share Your Stories

If you have an interest in sharing your stories about the SGV community and learning more about your neighbors, **we need you as a feature writer for the newsletter!**

**Contact the newsletter editor:**  
Sarah Maguire 513-808-6066,  
[sgvnewseditor@gmail.com](mailto:sgvnewseditor@gmail.com)



# VDC: REORIENT LANDSCAPING PROJECT

BY SARAH MAGUIRE, VDC BOARD MEMBER

If you haven't recently walked or driven past the intersection of Este and Chickering Avenues, please do so! In early November, the Village Development Corporation (VDC) completed a project to transform the landscaping at the cul-de-sac at the end of Orient Avenue with grant funds received from Homebase Cincinnati (formerly Community Development Corporations Association). The morning started out cold but many community members stopped by to enjoy pastries and coffee then lend a hand in beautifying this neglected area. SGV resident and professional landscaper with Creative Scapes, Chris Grande, not only provided the design for the space and selected the plants, but also led a planting and cultivation lesson for all in attendance! Work continued from late morning into early afternoon and ended with a lunch of hot soup and chili. Many thanks to all who helped with this project! The space is beautiful and will only become prettier as the plants bloom and grow in years to come.

**Special thanks to:** Chris Grande and Creative Scapes Lawn & Landscaping; Spring Grove Cemetery; Butch and Maria Brown; Dusty Rater; Orlando; Andrea Farmer & SGV Community Garden; 80 Acres Farms; Larry Falkin; Shawn Clark; VDC Board members Dave Evans, Brian McLaughlin, Brennan McNulty, and Betty Ventura; and the several neighbors who just stopped to help out after walking by!



Before landscaping project (June)



Thanks to our early volunteer crew who came bright & early!



Thanks to our volunteer crew later in the day!



Final transformation! (November)