

## **Greater Park Hill News**

### **It's New But It's Not Stapleton**

**By Arthur Rosenblum**

A reader recently called the *GPH News* editorial office to discuss residential development in Park Hill. He had lived south of 23rd Ave. for more than 30 years and recently moved into new homes adjacent to the Park Hill Golf Course at 35th Ave. and Dahlia Street. He commented that he didn't live in Park Hill any longer, that Park Hill went as far north as 26th Ave. He was quite surprised to learn that the Park Hill officially extends as far north as the city line, up to Commerce City.

What a surprise it must be to many to learn that all that construction over the past couple of years at 40th Ave. and Colorado Blvd. is Park Hill's newest development. Park Hill Village, has been open for over a year and has 128 condominium units occupied and 24 town homes. A sixth building with 24 condos is now under construction, and another 24 are planned that will bring the total to 170.

According to Joe Minnis, the enthusiastic sales manager of Park Hill Village, there is room for additional construction between the existing units extending south to the golf course, and another large parcel between the existing units and the retail buildings now under construction along Colorado Blvd. The housing market has slowed the pace of construction and Minnis was not sure what type of housing will eventually be built, but he does anticipate more multi-family buildings that can add several hundred residents to the development.

Listening to Minnis talk about the benefits of living in Park Hill Village is like listening to the most passionate Park Hill neighbors. The location is no more than ten minutes from downtown Denver; right off I-70 which will someday be widened and improved; near a future light-rail station at Colorado and Smith Rd. that will go through downtown or to DIA; minutes from City Park, the Denver Zoo and Denver Museum of Nature & Science; adjacent to the golf course; only a short drive to Stapleton and Northfield; and perhaps most important, in the shadow of a Starbuck's in the new retail strip. Wait, isn't every community within the shadow of Starbuck's?

Not unique to Denver but certainly unique to Park Hill is a housing option that does not demand devotion or enslavement to weekend landscaping or home repairs. Minnis describes the Park Hill Village as being occupied mostly young professionals and empty nesters seeking city conveniences and less costly alternatives to downtown housing costs. As if by design, two couples came in to inquire about a condo purchase while we were talking with Minnis. A couple in their 30s and a couple in their late 50s.

Construction of the retail strip is underway and contracts have been signed by Starbuck's KT's Barbeque and Carl's Jr. Hamburgers. Minnis says these businesses will open this summer and there are five more retail sites available.

### **Development Alternatives**

For the past year, Park Hill neighbors, led by Lynn Smith of Kate's at 35th Ave. and Elaine Borton of Park Hill Thriving Communities, have been working to locate a full-service grocery store at the 40th and Colorado location. Smith, who worked with neighbors more than 30 years ago to block a K-Mart from being built there, crystallized her latest vision when she ran for city council last year.

Smith's dream is to have a grocer like Sunflower that features organic and healthier fare at somewhat affordable prices at that location. She's met with officials from the retail developer, Landon Enterprises, only to learn that the strip cannot accommodate a 20,000 square foot grocery. She's also met with Sunflower officials who appear afraid to take a risk at a location doesn't have their "ideal demographic. "

Smith is persistent and prepared to discuss the two open Park Hill Village lots and is enlisting the help of Borton, whose organization's mission is to improve access to healthier foods in the northern-most parts of Park Hill. Smith is also talking with Councilwoman Carla Madison who recognizes the need and has promised to seek the city's programmatic and financing support if a grocery store expresses interest. Minnis has not yet heard from Smith but is looking forward to that conversation. The one convenience that was missing from Minnis's long list of benefits of living at Park Hill Village is the proximity to a supermarket.

Smith would like to see if she can make the impossible become a reality at Park Hill Village, and if you like this idea, wait until you hear the idea Lynn Smith has for the unbuilt portion of the Dahlia Center.

For information about Park Hill Village contact Joe Minnis at 303-434-1773 or [jmminnis@5280capitalgroup.com](mailto:jminnis@5280capitalgroup.com), or visit <http://parkhillvillagedenver.com>.

To get involved with Lynn Smith's effort to bring a quality grocery to what she calls Northwest Park Hill, call 303-333-4816.