We've been reporting on the strategic planning process since early this year. As we go to press, the Polish Hill Community Plan is being finalized. This document will be the culmination of years of work.

The PHCA first started a planning process in 2007, conducting neighborhood surveys, collecting data and working with a Carnegie Mellon class to do an analysis of the neighborhood. In 2010, the PHCA received a grant from the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh (CDCP) to hire a firm to partner with us to create the plan.

In January, we selected Pfaffmann + Associates and began the process. Now, moving into the final months of the year, we have a document with concrete goals and project recommendations. This document will enable us to seek funding for projects, and demonstrates to state and local politicians that Polish Hill is in charge of its future.

It's important to note that the goals identified in the final plan came directly from the many residents who took time to fill out a survey, attend one or more of the public meetings, or contact the PHCA office to convey what they cared about and wanted for our neighborhood. This plan is not coming from the outside, but from residents who participated, and we appreciate everyone's contributions.

An article in the August issue of the Voice detailed the process by which we worked with residents to get their input about Polish Hill's future. Here, we present an outline of the values, visions and top priorities presented within the plan goals and project recommendations, as identified by Polish Hill residents.

Housing and Building Recommendations

A strong neighborhood consensus emerged in the area of housing and development. Although residents are concerned about too many vacant and ill-maintained buildings, they overwhelmingly feel that the neighborhood has a wonderful character and scale just as it is. Residents strongly dislike the idea of $250,000-300,000 townhouse developments such as those introduced in adjacent neighborhoods. They want to retain the sense of individuality the buildings currently have, and preferred to focus on rehabbing existing housing rather than new development. Many people said they want the neighborhood to remain affordable, mixed income and diverse.

Priorities for housing and development

The top three priorities from the working group are: how to address vacant buildings and small-scale development, what can be done with the declining IHM School site and how to create a more welcoming space at the intersection of Dobson and Brereton.
From Our Readers

It’s a Small World After All

I moved from Polish Hill in 1963, due to my husband’s new job in Maryland. The move turned out to be very traumatic for us, having three small children and leaving family and friends back in Pittsburgh. We had no family for support in Maryland.

Over the years I have met many people from Pittsburgh, but until three weeks ago I never met anyone from Polish Hill. No one even knew where Polish Hill was located, that is, until recently.

I got a phone call from my son's girlfriend Annie one evening. Annie drives the senior bus for a county in Maryland, and she noticed that one of her clients wasn’t there for a couple of days.

When he showed up again, she asked where he had been. He told her he was in Pittsburgh for a funeral, and she told him that (my son) Jeff’s family was from Pittsburgh. After a few more days of talking it was emerged that the client was also from Polish Hill, and Annie set up a date for us to meet for lunch.

Annie and I picked up Alexander Huminski and had lunch and took a trip down memory lane. We talked for two or three hours, reminding each other of people we knew and things that we remembered. I am interested in genealogy, so before we met up with Mr. Huminski I did some research on his family.

I was able to give him copies of the census which included his family, his father’s naturalization papers and WW1 and WW2 military registration cards, and I printed out some pictures of people he said he knew.

Those papers made him very happy. We will be getting together again, as I have more pictures for him. Until a couple of years ago he lived on Melwood Avenue. He is now living with his son Jim in Maryland.

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President’s Message

By Terry Doloughty

This has been a very busy year for the PHCA and Polish Hill. As the fall season unfolds, we are reaching our goal of creating the community’s first strategic plan. I want to extend a thank you to all residents who shared their input, and acknowledge our strategic planning committee for their hours of work and dedication throughout the process. Gathering suggestions and ideas from all of you is what will make our community plan a success. We are grateful for the time everyone put in to help craft this plan.

Now we arrive at another beginning. The next step is to assess how to transform the plan’s priorities into realities. Exploring partnerships, collaborations and new methods is next on the task list. Although hard work awaits us, it will bring more opportunities to make Polish Hill an even better place to call home. Of course, our own grassroots efforts and new volunteers will play a critical role.

The last few years have been an exciting time, witnessing the change and growth. I imagine the next few years will bring even greater chances to see this collective creativity continue. We take on this work to increase the quality of life for everyone. That one purpose is why I find my time at the PHCA worth every minute. Our volunteers and staff often sacrifice personal hours to make good works possible here. Let's all show our appreciation and a healthy respect for their efforts throughout Polish Hill.

Stay warm, and enjoy the change of seasons.

Are you online? Please check out BLOGSKI

Polish Hill’s online bulletin board

With new postings and pictures each week, Blogski is the most up-to-date source of news and information for residents and friends of Polish Hill.

Just type in this address: http://blogski.phcapgh.org/
Renew your PHCA membership for 2012!

PHCA membership goes by calendar year -- which means that all memberships expire on December 31. A few members have taken advantage of the special partial-year offer in the last newsletter, and paid $7 for the rest of 2011 and 2012. But most PHCA members have not yet renewed for 2012.

If you haven’t already renewed your membership for next year, please do so now! By renewing early, you’ll get the most out of membership benefits such as a subscription to this newsletter and free admission to Heinz History Center. And you get the satisfaction of knowing that you’re helping to support the PHCA.

If you are not sure if you renewed, you may check with us by calling 412.681.1950, emailing us at phcapgh@gmail.com, or writing to us at 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

Dobson Street water line construction

In late September, we were informed that the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority was about to commence water line replacement construction on Dobson Street. At the community meeting on October 4, PWSA and Chester Engineering were on hand to talk about construction plans and answer questions from residents. The work will be done in two phases: Phase 1 will be the stretch of Dobson Street from Herron Avenue to Hancock Street, started on Oct. 6. In Phase 2, work will move to Dobson Street from Hancock Street to Brereton; no start date was provided.

The entire project will take about 90 days.

During the project, there will be no parking and no vehicle access during work hours (7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) on the section of Dobson under construction. At other times, the street will be accessible and residents can park -- but it will be necessary to move vehicles before 7:00 a.m. PWSA and Chester Engineering are aware that there are some residents with special needs. For special access, please make arrangements ahead of time by speaking to the inspector on-site or calling Melissa Rubin at PWSA Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., at 412.255.0787. For emergencies, residents should call PWSA Dispatch 24/7 at 412.255.2429 or 412.255.2409.

PWSA said they would keep us informed about the work, so we’ll get the word out with any new information.

The water line replacement work is now moving into its second phase.

For the most part, there won’t be water shut-offs until the end of each phase, when the new lines are connected. PWSA said that residents will receive advance notice of water shut-offs via door hang tags. This does not include shut-offs due to water main breaks; PWSA cannot predict those.

This work is a disruption for the neighborhood; the bus has been rerouted and it wasn’t immediately clear what the new stops were. Parking is more problematic and businesses are affected. But the work needs to be done. Based on the number of repairs to water lines in this area, PWSA identified Dobson Street as the next priority in our neighborhood.

Council-to-Go
Every other month at the PHCA office
3060 Brereton St.

Come share your concerns with District 7 Councilman Patrick Dowd and his staff.

Next meeting:
Wednesday, January 11
7:00 p.m.

More news and announcements on page 4
More News and Announcements

Lili Coffee* Shop announces new hours

With the fall comes new hours for Lili Coffee* Shop, which will now be open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day. Owner Rob Levkulich says that part of the reason for the later opening is that he needs to take his daughter Lili, for whom the shop is named, to school in the mornings.

Sometime in the future, Rob plans to institute later hours, perhaps until 8 p.m. We hope that means more music, dinners and other events over the cold months ahead.

Pitt student volunteers clean up Polish Hill

Almost ninety Pitt student volunteers were out and about in Polish Hill on October 22, picking up trash from the streets, and pruning, weeding and clearing our green spaces. The volunteers collected dozens of bags of waste and the neighborhood looked a lot better after they had left.

Many thanks to all the students who gave up part of their Saturday to make our neighborhood look better. We also owe a lot to the Polish Hill residents and green team members who supervised groups of students at work sites around the neighborhood. Special thanks to: Terry Dologhtry, Josie Ramsey, Doug Ramsey, Paul Von Arx, Gina Favano, Valerie Testa, Dave Lyle, Brian Seklecki and Paul Bowden.

Holiday Happenings

Light Up the Street and Around the Block on December 2

The first Friday in December is Polish Hill’s light up the street night. We’ll light the monument tree, the church choir will sing carols, the PHCA office will have refreshments and kids can get their picture taken with Santa. This will also be an Around the Block event. The businesses in the Brereton/Dobson/Hancock triangle will be invited to join in the festivities and stay open later. Residents can walk around visiting, perhaps do some holiday shopping, and enjoy some Christmas cheer. We did this last year and it was a very nice evening, although very cold. We’ll be posting updates on this and other holiday events on Blogski, so keep an eye out for them!

PHCA community meeting and neighborhood holiday potluck on December 6

It’s a PHCA tradition to keep the business part of the December community meeting short. The main event is the community holiday potluck dinner. Everyone brings their specialty -- and with the variety of residents Polish Hill now has, this ranges from traditional Polish dishes and American comfort food to tasty vegetarian and vegan options -- and a huge array of desserts.

All are invited -- you do not have to be a PHCA member to attend. Just let us know what you plan to bring — people often ask so they don’t duplicate — although we believe that there’s no such thing as too many nut rolls.

Call or email the PHCA to let us know what you’ll be bringing, and come prepared to meet your neighbors and share the holiday spirit.

The Monument Committee

For years, Ruth Rizner, Sylvia Tully, Jaime Tully, Bonnie Tengowski and Colleen Helwich formed the Monument Committee. This group of dedicated residents would redecorate the fir tree at the war monument three times a year: Easter, the Fourth of July and Christmas. They also put up flags on the medallions surrounding the tree for Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day, and helped to keep the monument area clear of trash.
Polish Hill Voice

Greeting cards by Polish Hill artist to benefit the Polish Hill Civic Association

Polish Hill artist Myra Falisz has created three holiday illustrations for the Polish Hill Civic Association, featuring her pierogi characters, known as P-Rogues™. One design features an antique red sleigh with a pierogi couple in old-timey clothing moving through a snowy landscape; another centers on tradition, with paper ornaments and a pierogi girl wearing a colorful Polish costume. The third design is more contemporary, with a festive P-Rogue couple coasting downhill on a red tandem bike. All cards include the phrase of celebration, Sto Lat, wishing you 100 years of great joy and good cheer.

Pricing: six cards for $15 (plus $2.50 shipping); payable by cash or check. Choose whether you prefer all six of one design, or a mixed set with two of each. For more information, email phcapgh@gmail.com, or call 412-681-1950. Cards also can be purchased at the PHCA office, 3060 Brereton St., Pittsburgh, PA 15219, Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. until 6 p.m. Proceeds from selling the cards will help support community projects.

About the artist and the P-Rogues™ characters

P-Rogues are ambassadors of good cheer whose warm-hearted greeting is Sto Lat, which means 100 years. Inspired by the delightful pierogi shape and Polish phrase of celebration, these characters wish you 100 years of amazing adventures.

P-Rogues are created by Myra Falisz, a Polish Hill resident who boomeranged back to Pittsburgh in mid-2009 after living in Southern California for 15 years. Her inspiration comes from the variety of traditional and newer residents, and the pulse and energy they create throughout the neighborhood she now calls home.

Polish Hill artist Myra Falisz became a Polish Hill resident in 2009. She is now a board member of the PHCA and volunteers for neighborhood events and the PHCA green team.

URA home improvement loan products help low and moderate income homeowners rehabilitate or renovate their property.

(You must live in the home to qualify)

Pittsburgh Home Rehabilitation Loan Program (0% interest)

Keystone Renovation and Repair program
(6.375% to 8.875% interest)

Home Improvement Loan Program
(5.99% interest)

Check the URA website
www.ura.org
for loan programs and income guidelines
or visit the PHCA office

Citiparks
West Penn Community Recreation Center
450 30th Street

Martial Arts
Instructor: DeWayne Adams
For kids: Mondays 5:00 — 6:00 p.m.
For adults: Fridays 6:00 — 7:30 p.m.
(adult class has a $10 monthly fee)

Hatha Yoga
Instructor: Ilona Auth
Thursdays 6:30 — 7:30 p.m.
(for adults, $7 donation per class)

Ceramics
Instructor: Patti Dobies
Tuesdays 5:00 — 8:00 p.m.

Weight training is available upon request, and check out the newly renovated workout room.

West Penn Fall hours:
10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday — Friday
10 a.m. — 3 p.m. on Saturday
Closed on Sundays

For more information about West Penn, call the center at 412-622-7353.

Artist Myra Falisz became a Polish Hill resident in 2009.
She is now a board member of the PHCA and volunteers for neighborhood events and the PHCA green team.

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Fall and Winter Scenes from the PHCA’s Polish Hill Archive

Above: Ray Goralski and daughter Eileen, at the intersection of Herron Avenue and Brereton Street, February 1958.

Right: Eileen and Evelyn Goralski on upper Brereton Street, 1958. (photos courtesy of Eileen Goralski)

Above right: Ellen Mitchell (lower right) and family members in West Penn Park.

Left: Ellen on her tricycle at home on Paulowna Street.

(Photos courtesy of Ellen’s grandson Terry Doloughty)

Above: Doris Kwasniewski with her mother, grandmother and brother on Phelan Way.

(Photos courtesy of Doris Kwasniewski McNorgan)
The PHCA's Polish Hill Photo Archive

By Leslie Clague

Two years ago, looking through some old photos of former Polish Hill residents, it occurred to me that it would be great to start an archive for the neighborhood, and begin collecting photos, articles and other items relating to Polish Hill and its people.

Polish Hill is part of the industrial history of Pittsburgh, at one time probably the largest enclave of Polish immigrants and their descendents in the region. It seemed surprising that there was not any repository for an everyday history of the neighborhood.

So we started putting out the word, asking people to share their family photos and images of the neighborhood. Since starting the archive, the PHCA has accumulated dozens of images from current and former residents. We have slowly gained a better picture of what Polish Hill was like during its most populous years. It’s fascinating to recognize familiar streets, so much unchanged, or see what buildings stood on now-empty lots. We notice there were far fewer trees in years past, and many more people on the streets and sidewalks.

When you compare our collection to the number of folks who once lived here, it’s still a small number of images. We hope to find more pictures of the shops, the streets, the details of daily life. For a practical, working-class people, perhaps these things weren’t deemed as important as the milestones, the graduations, the marriages, the processions.

But we are just happy to see new images, to keep adding to the collection, and to know that the archive is slowly growing. We hope that your family’s photos can become part of this piece of Polish Hill history.

How to share your photos with the PHCA archive

Some people have given us original photos, but for the most part, our archive is a bit unusual because it’s mostly digital. Instead of asking people to give us their photos, we just ask to borrow them. We scan the photos, creating a high-resolution file from which copies are printed. Then the original photo can be returned to its owner, to remain in the family.

To share your photos, you can scan them yourself or have someone else do it, and either put them on a disk or email them to us. Scans should be at least 300, and preferably 600 dpi, for good picture quality when the images are printed.

Or you can lend us your photos, and we’ll scan and return them. To find out more, you can call us at 412.681.1950, email phcapgh@gmail.com, or write to us at 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh PA, 15219.

Left: the Wojciak family sledding on the hill at West Penn Park.
From the top: Raymond, Irene, Teresa, Rita, mother Laura, baby Antoinette and father Joseph.

(Photo courtesy of Toni Wojciak Gizzi)

Right: A delivery truck in the snow outside a truck garage on Phelan Way.

(Photos courtesy of Loretta Simeone Burek)
Vacant buildings and small-scale development

The number of vacant buildings is a primary concern to residents. Most of our vacant buildings are not actually abandoned. The owners are paying the taxes and choosing to let their buildings sit empty and unused. Yet ownership of many parcels is hard to determine, creating issues with maintenance and vacant properties that are difficult to resolve. There are more vacant and distressed properties in the areas west of Herron Avenue; foreclosures are also clustered in this area. By contrast, the areas east of Herron Avenue, in the Melwood Avenue corridor, are fairly stable.

One item in the plan is to develop strategies to encourage renovation or sales of these empty buildings, with the goal of getting new owner-occupants into the neighborhood. There is also interest in small-scale development, such as putting individual homes in vacant lots, or doing groups of just a few houses. Residents agreed that any new development should echo the existing historical style of Polish Hill, rather than suburban-style houses. Some examples might be eco-friendly micro-homes, small row houses or mixed-use buildings.

IHM School site

The Immaculate Heart of Mary School closed in 1991 and the buildings (the school and attached convent) have stood empty since, slowly accumulating graffiti and broken windows from the incursions of urban explorers. The buildings, solid brick structures that were dedicated in 1896 and some of the first fireproof buildings in Pittsburgh, still create a striking presence in the neighborhood. The structures still evoke strong memories for many residents who were schooled there.

Brereton-Dobson intersection

The intersection of Brereton and Dobson is the center of our neighbor-

Traffic, Transportation and Gateways Recommendations

The Transportation and Gateways Working Group explored ways to improve biking, walking and gateway connections throughout Polish Hill.

Residents communicate some clear values in this area. They tell us that that transportation planning should put people first rather than cars, and they feel that quality of life for residents is more important than efficiency or speed for vehicles passing through. Pedestrian and bike safety are big concerns as well.

This group studied the entrances to our neighborhood, and the roads and byways throughout. Gateways are important because they provide the opportunity to signal to drivers passing through that they are entering a residential neighborhood. Polish Hill has fewer entry points than most neighborhoods, so it’s doubly important that these locations clearly communicate that you are now coming into our community, and encourage drivers to slow down and drive safely.

Priorities

The value clearly established by our residents that will help drive all potential projects is the strong desire to preserve the walkable character of our neighborhood. Traffic calming is the top priority, which impacts our main streets and gateways that run through Polish Hill. There is also the linear and historic gateway, Bigelow Boulevard, that defines our northern edge and connects downtown with destinations east of the City.

Traffic Calming

Polish Hill residents are united in their frustration with cars speeding through the neighborhood. Our community has become increasingly known as a convenient cut-through for vehicles traveling between Oakland, Bigelow Boulevard and the Strip District. Many parked vehicles, particularly on Melwood Avenue, have been damaged by cars speeding through Polish Hill's narrow streets. Residents want the City and state to help calm traffic passing through our neighborhood. Discouraging cut-through traffic can be achieved by changing some streets to one-way, lowering the speed limit, installing speed bumps or defining pedestrian crosswalks with textured surfaces that cause cars to slow down.

Residents also want improvements that make the neighborhood more pedestrian-friendly, such as upgrading the City steps (including lighting and maintenance); fixing broken sidewalks and putting in new sidewalks at locations such as
lower Herron Avenue; restoring the historic yellow brick sidewalks; and creating more defined crossings for pedestrians.

At the gateways, residents want better signage to mark the entrances to our neighborhood. Currently, the small "Witamy do Polish Hill" signs are the only official markers. There is also an artist-created mural under the Bloomfield Bridge.

**Bigelow Boulevard**

Aside from traffic calming, which affects streets running through our neighborhood, there is one road causing major concern for residents: Bigelow Boulevard. Not only does traffic on this road travel at speeds much higher than the posted limit, the sidewalks also are overgrown and ill-maintained, making walking or crossing the boulevard dangerous. The burgeoning number of billboards creates an ugly and highly negative impression of the neighborhood. Bigelow is a state road, and some aspects, such as the old stone retaining walls and sidewalks, are owned by the City. Because of the shared responsibilities, any projects pertaining to Bigelow Boulevard will involve coordination across multiple state and local agencies.

**Open Space and Art Recommendations**

Residents tell us they want public spaces that are welcoming and inspiring, where people can congregate in a safe, positive, supportive, friendly environment. The values shared during the planning process include creating a more sustainable, livable community by preserving and strengthening the natural green spaces surrounding Polish Hill, and respecting and enhancing our green infrastructure and open spaces.

Polish Hill residents are aware of how unusual it is to have so much green space surrounding our community.

When the Greenway bill, currently in City Council, is passed, the parkland and City-owned green space in and around Polish Hill will be legislated as green space in perpetuity, which means that it cannot be developed. Protected green spaces help increase our quality of life on many levels, from improving air quality and managing storm run-off to reducing urban heat.

The Open Space and Art working group focused on green spaces, parks and vacant lots. They also studied our public infrastructure -- sidewalks, stairs and public spaces -- and where art might be used throughout all these places. In this context, art includes both sanctioned public artwork and things that traditionally might not be considered such as creative solutions for bus stops, public seating and amenities. Residents agreed that community art is not only about creating visually inspiring projects; it is also about engaging participation across a diverse range of residents. It then becomes a vehicle for community building, transformation and growth.

**Priorities**

Two main priorities came forward in this section. One focuses on our public and green infrastructures. The other is also featured in the Housing and Buildings segment: the monument area at Brereton and Dobson streets.

**Brereton and Dobson Intersection**

This intersection is important because it is the site of overlapping plan goals, including small development, increasing commercial space and creating a public gathering place. The monument site is one of the only public outdoor gathering spaces in Polish Hill and is also the most central. Yet many residents feel that the current design is unwelcoming and does not accommodate gatherings or events because the concrete structure breaks up the space. Ideas for redesigning the space include a structure for shade and shelter, seating, a water fountain, a place for bikes and a community bulletin board or posting place. Another suggestion is to increase the monument area, extending it into the intersection. This would enhance its function as a neighborhood center and gathering place, and have the extra advantage of slowing traffic through the intersection.

**Public infrastructure and green infrastructure**

Public infrastructure encompasses things like the maintaining and improving sidewalks and City steps, and adding benches at bus stops and other locations around the neighborhood. Residents said that the streets of Polish Hill, with their odd angles, houses and unexpected views, were one of the neighborhood's biggest assets. They want to cherish and enhance these distinct features of Polish Hill.

Green infrastructure is a newer term, one that refers to the management of natural lands, including parks and green spaces. The PHCA has been working on a range of green projects over the last few years, and residents indicate that they'd like to see this continue. Preserving, protecting and expanding our green infrastructure adds to the quality of life and raises property values. Creating new parks and open spaces, combined with the pending Greenway, will help us achieve these goals.

**Discovering Third Spaces**

*By Terry Doloughty*

The Polish Hill Community Plan will include a section that most other plans do not typically address. This makes perfect sense, since we pride ourselves on being a distinct community. Part of our planning processes involved examining the Polish Hill infrastructure and what required our attention. We heard from people in every corner of our community, and despite different ages, backgrounds and other factors, similar responses came forward. Concern for our City steps, sidewalks, roads, and vacant properties were standouts. We anticipated that our residents would
request improvements to these areas.

In addition to the physical property development and infrastructure requirements, there were other needs. Our community building working group also examined ways our residents wanted to address their quality of life in Polish Hill. Simply stated, this is how we interact throughout our neighborhood as both individuals and as groups. This was no small task. We began to refer to it as planning for the unplanned. Or providing an opportunity for something to spontaneously occur, and the spaces that would be most welcoming.

Third spaces or places became a topic of interest in our planning process. To explain how we got to this point, we actually should define the terms first, second, and third places. First places are homes and apartments -- think of it as your primary residence. Second places are work environments, where we most likely spend a significant amount of time.

Third spaces are the places that stitch together the fabric of our social lives. We have interactive opportunities within a third space -- a place where regular visitors and newcomers can share and enjoy the same location. There are any number of variations on the definition of a third space, but simply put, it is a safe place that's easily accessible to the entire community.

As we work on the steps to implement our strategic plan for the community, we will need to find new and creative ways to provide third spaces for our residents. Marc Rettig, a member of our working group, phrased it quite well.

“The quality of life is determined by how people interact as much as it is by improvements to the physical environment. Neighborhood community building includes working together to develop places of subtle discovery, while creating opportunity and openings for engaged and involved residents,” he explained.

So friends and neighbors, I'm looking forward to seeing you all in the third spaces!

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**Prepping your home and garden for winter**

*By Terry Doloughty*

**This is the** time to get our homes and apartments ready for colder weather. Start with looking at the outside and ask the question, "Where can cold air get in?" Before the temperature falls, put weather stripping in place and caulk any gaps that create drafts. Your heating bill will be the first improvement.

Not having to deal with as many drafts will be the second. Make sure that your boilers and furnaces are in good working order. Turn them on now, even as a test. It's better to find out now that a repair is needed than when the temperature plummeted to 20 degrees.

For everyone that has a forced-air furnace, what filter size do you need? Pick up a few filters at a time -- they should be changed monthly while the furnace is in use. The more dust, pollen or pet dander that is removed from the air the better. We are indoors during the majority of the winter and decent air quality helps us stay healthy.

Some of our homes and buildings have heater cables in the downspouts and gutters. If they have been unplugged all summer and fall, then now is the time to be sure they are plugged in and working. Outdoor hose valves need to be turned off, and garden hoses put away. Having those freeze can cause significant water damage, and result in a sizable invoice from your plumber.

We want to make sure all of our cherished plants survive another winter season. To remain healthy and strong when spring arrives, the plants in our yards, flower beds, and planters need additional help. Adding a layer of mulch is a simple thing to do, and it will help your plants on multiple levels. Its primary function is to serve as a layer of insulation. Keeping your plants and even bulbs a few degrees warmer allows them to reserve energy for growth in the spring.

Depending your garden’s soil composition, the layer will either slowly decompose adding nutrients to the soil, or begin to compost and actually create heat during the process. The heat and extra nutrients not only support the plants, but also allow additional microbial activity to occur in the soil. The nutrients and trace elements released during this process allow plants to absorb these materials in the natural way intended. No additional harsh fertilizers will be needed.

Mulching an area will also save you time and money. The soil will be able to retain moisture for longer periods of time, cutting down on the amount of water needed and your time supplying it. During periods of drought, the plants will have a more consistent moisture level reserved in the soil. This reduces their heat stress and allows their energy to be spent on good quality growth and not just survival.

Say goodnight to your plants for the long winter by giving them a good blanket of mulch to sleep under.

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**Seeking submissions for the February issue of the Polish Hill Voice!**

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<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Publication Date</th>
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<td>January 15</td>
<td>Early February</td>
<td>Feb/Mar/Apr</td>
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Submissions of news items, articles, or photos relating to the interests and concerns of Polish Hill residents may be emailed to phcapgh@gmail.com, or by mail to the Polish Hill Civic Association, 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Images may be JPEGs (200 dpi or higher) or camera-ready art.

Due to space and content constraints, we may not be able to accept every submission. If you have any questions, please call us at 412.681.1950.
Polish Hill Civic Association of Pittsburgh

Dues are $5.00. Membership term is by calendar year.
Join now and enjoy the advantages of membership through December 2012!

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

NAME: ___________________________________________________________

(Street Address)

PHONE: ___________________________________________________________

EMAIL: ___________________________________________________________

☐ Yes, I would like to receive the PHCA email newsblast every other Thursday

REGULAR MEMBER ~ Or ~ SUBSCRIPTION MEMBER

_____ (Polish Hill residents)  ~ Or ~  _____ (Non-residents)

_____ New Member ~ Or ~  _____ Renewal

For office use only:

REC’D BY: ________  DATE: ________  GOT CARD _______  LOGGED _______

Make checks payable to the Polish Hill Civic Association and mail with this application to:
Polish Hill Civic Association, Membership Chair, 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh PA 15219

Polish Hill items benefit the PHCA—order here!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red t-shirt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth S M L XL XXL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults S M L XL XXL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short sleeve 15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long sleeve 20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black t-shirt</td>
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<td>Youth S M L XL XXL</td>
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<td>Short sleeve 15.00</td>
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<td>Adults S M L XL XXL</td>
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<td>Long sleeve 20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polish Hill button</td>
<td>.50 ea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pierogi pin</td>
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<td>Pierogi ornament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postcard</td>
<td>.50 ea.</td>
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<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL

Make your check out to the Polish Hill Civic Association.

Ship to:

Name

Address

Phone, email

A free subscription to the Voice (4 issues a year)

Free admission to the Heinz History Center for yourself and up to three others (Must show PHCA membership card)

Members who are also Polish Hill residents get an invitation to the monthly community meeting and a vote on neighborhood issues!
The PHCA’s mission is to respect and preserve the sense of community in Polish Hill while promoting economic and housing development opportunities, and improving the quality of life for our community.

**Upcoming Community Meetings:**

**December 6 (Meeting and Holiday Potluck)**  
**January 3**  
**February 7**

*PHCA community meetings are open to all residents of Polish Hill — you do not have to be a PHCA member to attend!*

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Senior Center on the lower level of the West Penn Recreation Center, 450 30th Street at Paulowna Street.