Southside residents form group to preserve, improve neighborhood

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HUNTINGTON — A group of residents from Huntington’s Southside have formed a group with goals to preserve and improve the neighborhood.

The Southside Preservation and Enhancement Alliance Inc. will hold its second public meeting at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 5 at St. Paul Lutheran Church, located at 721 12th Ave.

The group will hear from two city officials in an effort to strengthen relationships with the city and accomplish some of its goals.

“Going forward, The Alliance can help with policy and enforcement around preserving the things that make the Southside and Ritter Park Historic District among the most attractive features of our great city,” said Alliance Board President Dan Gooding. “We are a coalition of passionate and concerned citizens dedicated to advocating for all of our wonderful amenities and adding to them.”

Among the group’s goals are to highlight the Southside neighborhood to visitors; preserve single-family residents and end apartment conversions; prevent neglect and deterioration of existing structures; provide a forum to address concerns; help police keep the neighborhood safe; provide homeowners and landlords ways to keep properties clean; and secure grants to better the community.

“An active and engaged Southside community can build upon the renaissance we already see in our downtown, keeping the Southside an attractive, vibrant neighborhood and making it even better,” said Chuck Chambers, board vice president.

During its second meeting, board members will hear from Jim Insco, director of the Huntington Public Works Department, and Scott Lemley, director of Huntington’s Office of Planning and Development.

Insco’s department is responsible for the enforcement of city code, including exterior property violations. Lemley’s office is responsible for identifying and demolishing unsafe and abandoned structures within the city.

Anyone with concerns or ideas on how to better the neighborhood is encouraged to attend the meeting.

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