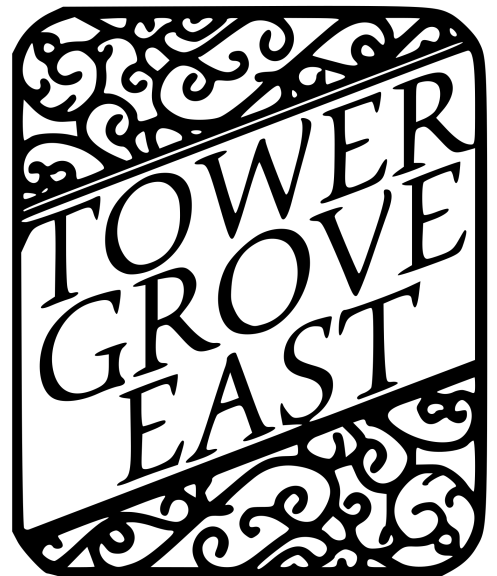


OCTOBER 22, 2024

# TOWER GROVE EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

# OCTOBER MEETING RECAP



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### TGENA ELECTS NEW OFFICERS, HEARS FROM ALDERWOMAN ALISHA SONNIER

Three officers of the Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association were elected by acclamation at the group's general membership meeting Tuesday, Oct. 22, at Stray Dog Theatre. They are:

- **President:** Tristan Mackenzie, co-owner of Heritage Properties at Shenandoah and Tennessee. He is new to the TGENA board and replaces Chris Naffziger, who will become past-president as of Nov. 1.
- **Treasurer:** Norah Ryan, currently serving as treasurer.
- **Secretary:** Mary Anne Pikrone, currently serving as secretary.

Still to be filled is the position of president-elect. Are you interested in running for the position? If so, please contact Mackenzie at [tge.president@gmail.com](mailto:tge.president@gmail.com)

Guest Speaker was Seventh Ward Alderwoman Alisha Sonnier, who among other things discussed a bill she's working on to increase oversight of special local taxing districts and community improvement districts (CID) such as those for South Grand and Cherokee.

Sonnier said she would like to see more residential representatives on these district boards rather than people from outside our area who own property here.

During discussion, outgoing President Chris Naffziger asked, "Isn't there a CID that basically consists of a Starbucks?" Sonnier said that Starbucks can indeed collect an additional one percent tax on their sales to give back to the community. Naffziger wondered what kind of accountability there is for Starbucks using the money.

Sonnier told TGENA members she is also working on [Board Bill 114](#), which would allow non-traditional housing on a conditional basis, but not more than two such structures on one city block.

"I think housing is a human right. We should try to provide space for people to go," she said, adding that "I'm a big fan of giving people what they need but in a controlled manner." The mayor's office, president of the board of aldermen, the building commissioner and others have been working on the proposal for six months, she said.

Tristan Mackenzie asked about people who might be operating boarding houses / communal living arrangements that may not be in compliance with the law at present. He wanted to know if there was a path to getting in compliance without getting shut down.

Sonnier answered that the time between ordinance passage and becoming effective would be the grace period to apply and get in compliance with the new rules.

Mackenzie later added that he would hate to see low income / vulnerable people put on the street because legislation meaning to help them was used to punish people previously running a boarding house under the radar.

At one point, Sonnier was asked how block captains could access a list of short-term rentals (such as Airbnb) on a block. She responded that the city is beginning its short-term rental procedures from scratch and it will be a while before the city imposes penalties for not registering a facility. So it will probably be a year before you can look up whether a short-term rental is on your block, she said.

She also gave a rundown of some major state and city proposals on the Nov. 5 ballot.

She emphasized she was not endorsing any propositions or telling people how to vote; however, she did say where she stood on the issues. The proposals are:

- City Charter Amendment B: At present, aldermen can only amend a budget by making cuts. The amendment would allow aldermen to make additions to a budget. She approves.

- City Proposition T: At present, residents have to have a relationship with their aldermen in order to get something done on a city street. The amendment would rename the Streets Department the Department of Transportation, which would be proactive, not reactive, in dealing with city streets. It would conduct a citywide assessment of streets and would help to coordinate work, for instance, with utilities. She supports.
- City Proposition S: It would establish a tax of 3% on short-term rental housing such as Airbnbs, of which 50 percent would go to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. She supports.
- City Proposition V: It would lift the cap of \$500 leveled on decrepit properties. At present, owners of vacant properties can get away with paying the \$500 to avoid paying more to improve them. The proposition would allow the city to set up a fine system making it harder for slumlords to avoid improving their properties. She supports. Naffziger added that a substantial number of these decrepit buildings are owned by multi-billion dollar investors.
- State Proposition A would raise the minimum wage in Missouri to \$13.75 an hour in 2025 and \$15 an hour in 2026. It would also require businesses with 15 or more employees to provide one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked. She supports.
- State Constitutional Amendment 3, which would legalize abortion in the state. She said she is opposed to state Republican legislators telling you what you can do with your body. She supports the amendment.
- State Constitutional Amendment 2, which would legalize online sports betting. She said she has heard legislators say the income from this betting will not necessarily go to education. Naffziger added that in the past, when money from such proposals went to education, other funding for education was lowered. She opposes.

Asked where she stands on state Amendment 7, which prohibits ranked-choice voting in Missouri and changes the language describing who can vote in state election, she said she opposes it.

## IN OTHER BUSINESS AT THE MEETING:

- **Past President Danielle Langeneckert** said she will be putting out TGENA's quarterly newsletter online.
- **Orchard representative Susan Herzberg** said the Halloween event hayride Saturday night was a great success.
- **Beautification chair Anne Moore** said her group is assessing trees in the neighborhood and trying to get the dying ones replaced. Starting in November, they will begin trimming trees the second Sunday of the month, into March. Contact her if you want to learn more about trimming trees.
- **Tower Grove Park liaison Larry McCarthy** said volunteers planted bulbs at the park this week.
- **Naffziger** thanked the TGE Community Garden for putting on a successful Halloween event last weekend. He also recognized Laura Wolf for her service as social chair.

## NEXT MEETING

**Tuesday, November 26th, 2024 @ 7PM — Stray Dog Theater + Zoom**