



Trinity Park news



WINTER 2025

Autumn in Trinity Park: Costumes and Concerts



An abundance of ghouls, ghosts and happy families at the annual Halloween celebration. (Photos courtesy Janette Stokes)



Banjo master Joe Troop headlined the fall concert, joined by local legends Teddy and Friends, and two teen bands from Russell Lacy Music. (Photos courtesy Karalyn Colopy)

Join TPNA

GET INVOLVED

Our monthly meetings (first Wednesday each month) are open to all. Meeting and committee participation is encouraged!

JOIN OR RENEW

Our urban neighborhood is a diverse mix of approximately 40 percent homeowners and 60 percent renters. We encourage all residents to contribute to our vibrant community by joining TPNA.

Check your membership status or join on-line: trinitypark.org/membership

Pay on-line or via check to:
TPNA
PO Box 725
Durham NC 27702

Questions? Contact
tpnamembership@gmail.com

Thank You to Our Many Hosts



Since Covid, TPNA monthly board meetings have alternated between Zoom and in person. For in-person meetings, we have enjoyed getting to know the many diverse spaces in our neighborhood. Thank you to our hosts and neighbors for welcoming us into your facilities: Beth El, Trinity Ave Presbyterian, Grace Lutheran, Watts Baptist, Chabad House, Duke Catholic Center, Reality Center and The Trinity Park. Have a suggestion for a meeting place? Please reach out to any board member. We welcome all ideas. (Photo by Steve Unruhe)

Trinity Park Merch

You asked for it, we got it!

New swag available for purchase! T-shirts, stickers, mugs, and more, in a variety of logo options.

Check it out and buy a gift for yourself, your family, or your neighbor.

To access our shop, go to

www.cafepress.com/shop/tpna, then click on your desired logo. You will see a range of products from which to choose. (This is not a fundraiser. All proceeds go to CaféPress but all pride goes to the neighborhood!)



Meet Your Neighbors

Susan and Cheryl Harward

By Susan Jakes

If you walk in Trinity Park, you have probably seen sisters **Susan and Cheryl Harward** out walking, always with a dog, often a neighbor's. Theirs is an amazing story about growing up in Trinity Park. They were born into the house on Trinity Avenue they live in today that their grandparents built in 1926. After moving away as adults, they returned to the neighborhood to take care of their Mom who died at home at 96, having lived in the same home since being in the 3rd grade. They love Trinity Park and couldn't imagine living anywhere else.

Susan and Cheryl's grandparents chose Trinity Park because it was so walkable. Their grandfather could walk downtown for work, they walked to church, and their mother and uncle and later Susan and Cheryl walked to school at George Watts Elementary, Carr Middle School and Durham High School.

Susan, as her mother had, taught at George Watts Elementary and had the children of many families in Trinity

Park as students: **Molly and Katie Unruhe, John Harrell, Eliza Bordley, Stephanie and Heather Wilson and Leslie Gaddis.** Cheryl worked at Duke as a Surgery Nurse.

In reflecting on their family's many years in Trinity Park they are surprised by the changes that are really the story of the growth of Durham. It's gone from a constant smell of tobacco and not a lot going on downtown, to being incredibly popular. They are surprised how living in the family home that they were born into, they now find themselves in a very hot spot! They most love the people – especially dog people – and still love being able to walk everywhere.

If you see them around the neighborhood, be sure to say "Hi", and if you



have a dog, even better. When asked if they could improve one thing about Trinity Park it would be ... Trinity Park needs a dog park! (Photo by Susan Jakes)

Girl Scouts Sponsor Annual Luminaria

By Beth Emerson

When: Sunday December 21 (Rain Date Wednesday December 24).

Supplies for Delivery can be ordered through 12/14. To place your order, use the QR code below or go to: <https://forms.gle/sExe71MJ1DuuTobT8>

Throughout the northern hemisphere, around the darkest days of the winter solstice, a number of regions and cultures observe celebrations of light. Lighting of luminaria (or farolitos) originated in the American Southwest as early as 1590 when small bonfires were lit to guide scouts back to their camp. Luminarias became popular on Christmas Eve, lit to symbolically guide the Holy Family on their journey to Bethlehem. With time, these traditions have blended with others all over the world where luminaria are lit to welcome and guide travelers, or to bring communities together. Trinity Park and many Durham neighborhoods enjoy this tradition to light up the long dark night, take strolls and spend time with neighbors and



families.

Luminaria (paper lanterns) are placed 6-10' apart on the edge along the sidewalks and roads the Sunday evening closest to the winter solstice. The lanterns are lit in the early evening and continue to glow into the night. Again this year, the Emerson family is sponsoring the distribution of supplies to fundraise for their daughters' Girl Scout troops.

Trinity Park and many downtown neighborhoods will celebrate Luminaria this year on Sunday, December 21 (December 24 is the rain date). Order on or before 12/14 - the Emersons will deliver your supplies to you.

Each luminaria kit will include a candle, a bag and sand to hold the lantern in place. At the link, there are also instructions for setting up your luminaria.

Consider partnering with your neighbors to ensure a continuous stream of warm light up and down your street! It really is a stunning and special event in Trinity Park and throughout Durham!

This year, the troops will use the funds for enrichment opportunities for all the girls in their troop and help fund their next major community project,

their Gold Award. Last year, Hazel and her troop-mates used funds for volunteering and raising awareness around catch neuter and release cat programs and cat colonies in Durham County, and also to support an end to taxes on period supplies, provide access to and education around period supplies. They did a six month long period supply drive collecting thousands of supplies for distribution through the NC Diaper Bank. This year, they're stepping back from cookie sales to pass the torch to younger girls, while they focus their efforts and limited time as high schoolers on their Gold Awards and volunteering and spending time together with their troops.

Thank you for the opportunity to support the Girl Scouts and Trinity Park in this event, again this year. (Original Artwork by **Iris Emerson.**)



LUMINARIA
Sunday, December 21

Urban Development

Coming Soon to the Lot Next to Yours: New UDO will Rezone All Neighborhoods

By Mimi Kessler and Tom Miller

Unlike many Durham neighborhoods, Trinity Park was developed to have every kind of housing: single family, duplex, townhome, and apartments. In many ways it is a model for what is desired all over the city.

Trinity Park, Old West Durham, Watts Hospital-Hillandale, Walldown, and Durham's other city neighborhoods will soon be rezoned if the city council adopts the proposed new zoning code being drafted right now.

Since 2024, city planners and consultants have been working on an entirely new zoning code – Unified Development Ordinance or “UDO.” While the drafting project is not finished, what has been revealed to the public portends big changes for Durham neighborhoods. Some of them are worrying.

There are several considerations beyond the specific standards.

First, Relaxed Standards - *The proposed UDO significantly relaxes current development standards in most instances.* Under the provisions of a law adopted by the North Carolina General Assembly at the end of 2024, local governments are forbidden to make development rules stricter without developer consent. This new statute hamstring local planning and makes code revisions like Durham's doubtful enterprises. *Once adopted, changes would be final. Mistakes cannot be fixed.*

Second, Public Say in Development Decision Making – *By relaxing the rules in the UDO, developers will be able to build more “by right.”* They will not have to apply for public approval through rezoning requests. *Neighbors will have no say in how their neighborhoods grow*

and change. The city will give away the leverage it now enjoys to obtain developer commitments for affordable housing and other public benefits.

For more detailed information on R-D and Commercial Neighborhoods, Broad St or Hillsborough Rd that back up to residential, read more online at TrinityPark.org under News. (Full link - trinitypark.org/coming-soon-to-the-lot-next-to-yours-new-udo-will-rezone-all-neighborhoods/)

In addition to changes in residential zoning, the proposal would also modify commercial zoning for such areas as Broad Street near Main Street, near Ninth Street, in the area between Main Street and Hillsborough Road west of Ninth, and at Northgate. The new zones would allow even more intense and much taller development.

(Graphic courtesy of City of Durham)

Summary of Proposed UDO Residential Changes

The new UDO draft is complex, but here are some the salient changes proposed for existing Durham neighborhoods:

- Nearly all city neighborhoods, regardless of which residential zoning now applies to them, will be rezoned to one main residential zone called R-D or Residential District.

- In R-D, the minimum lot size will be relatively small - 5,000 sq. ft.

- The maximum height in R-D will be three stories or 40 feet.

- A lot in R-D could contain a single-family house or a duplex. ADUs will be allowed.

- In R-D, under new rules similar to the current “small lot option,” any number of houses containing no more than 1,200 sq. ft. of living area will be allowed at the rate one house for each 1,250 sq. ft. segment of lot area.

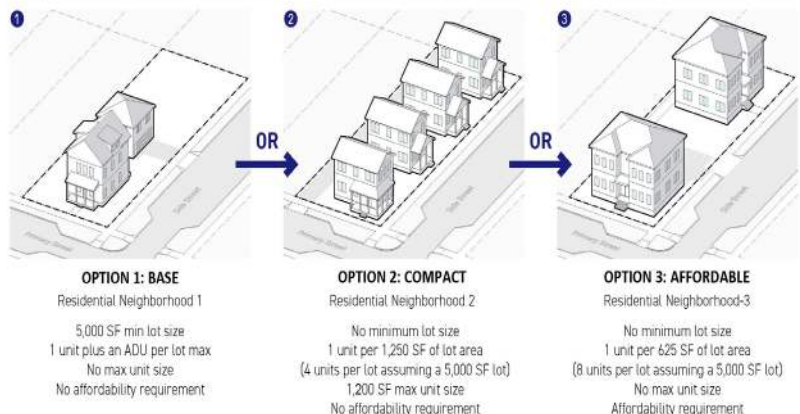
- R-D will also allow apartment buildings containing up to one dwelling unit for each 625 sq. ft. of lot area. On a typical 50'x150' neighborhood lot, then, as many as eleven apartments could be built in buildings up to three stories tall.

- Houses and buildings in RD will be allowed very close to the street (10ft) and neighboring properties (5ft).

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD (R-D)

One Base District. Two Bonus Options.

Residential Neighborhood (R-D) allows 3 development options. **Option 1** allows a single-family house with an ADU on a single lot. **Option 2** allows for a variety of smaller units on the same lot—including single-family, duplexes, and multiplexes. **Option 3** allows even more units on the lot, provided those units meet a certain level of deed-restricted affordability.



- Townhouses are not currently contemplated for R-D, but city planners have announced that they are considering changing the draft rules to allow townhouses in R-D.

**Learn More About
Durham's Zoning Proposals on the TPNA website:
TrinityPark.org**

TPNA Board Urges School Board to Begin Planning Process

By Marcie Porter

As Durham School of the Arts prepares to move to a new campus within the next couple of years, the future of the existing site remains uncertain.

The TPNA board recently adopted a "Request for Action" addressed to the Durham Public Schools Board of Education on planning the future of the existing DSA campus. The document outlines our request for a transparent, inclusive planning process that ensures responsible stewardship, maintenance, and long-term vision for this property.

The request for action was presented at the school board meeting on September 25. It requests that the school board initiate a formal planning process, establish a timeline and framework for decision making, create a community advisory group, ensure transparency and public engagement throughout the planning process, and ensure maintenance and protection of the campus property during the planning period.

School board member Natalie Beyer (District 4) responded via email, saying "staff will be in touch as we plan towards educational and community needs with an eye towards preservation." As of the



date of publication, staff had not contacted TPNA.

As a next step, the TPNA and other groups are planning to submit a request and speak in public comments to the Board of County Commissioners, since they will likely be involved in any planning that diverges from educational use.

The decision-making process needs

to balance DPS resource limitations with community input and a long-term vision for the property. Action needs to start now to avoid a long period of vacancy. Trinity Park residents who want to express interest or concern about this issue can reach out to a member of the Board of Education, Board of County Commissioners, or City Council.

Text of Resolution Presented to DPS

Request for Action: Planning the Future of the Existing Durham School of the Arts Campus

Submitted to the Durham Public Schools Board of Education by the Trinity Park Neighborhood Association.

WHEREAS, Durham School of the Arts (DSA) is relocating to a new campus, and the existing campus located adjacent to the Trinity Park neighborhood will no longer serve its current educational function; The existing DSA campus holds historical, architectural, and community significance, and its future use and stewardship are of great interest to residents of the Trinity Park neighborhood and the broader Durham community; There has been no formal communication from the Board regarding the planning

process to determine the future of the existing DSA campus, nor the disposition, maintenance, or protection of the property during the transition period; The community expects the Durham School Board to recognize the importance of collaborative decision-making and to affirm its commitment to responsible stewardship of public assets in a manner that reflects the values and priorities of the Durham community. NOW, THEREFORE, the Trinity Park Neighborhood Association formally requests that the Durham Public Schools Board of Education commit to do the following:

1. Initiate a formal planning process for the future use, preservation, and stewardship of the existing Durham School of the Arts campus.

2. Establish a community advisory group, including representatives from the Trinity Park Neighborhood Association, local stakeholders, preservation experts, and other relevant parties, to guide and inform the planning process.

3. Ensure transparency and public engagement throughout the planning process, including regular updates, public meetings, and opportunities for community input.

4. Take appropriate interim measures to maintain and protect the existing campus property during the planning period, including security, upkeep, and preservation of historically significant structures.

5. Provide a timeline and framework for the planning process within 90 days of agreeing to this request.

Trick and Treat: Streets Closed for Halloween



By Lauren Shor

You might have noticed something different on Halloween...no cars!

For the first time, Trinity Park restricted car traffic on Halloween to permit children to trick-or-treat freely. It was a joyful sight to see children chasing each other up and down the streets to grab their next piece of candy. Watts Street was closed from Markham Avenue at the north end down to Gloria Avenue at the south end. Cross streets in between were closed between Watts Street and Gregson Street.

The streets were closed at 4:00 pm to align with the celebration in Trinity Park. Streets reopened at 8:30 pm once the largest surges of trick-or-treaters had passed.

Overall, the closures were very successful. While a few cars maneuvered around the barricades at certain points, all tried to exit quickly and carefully.

There are some improvements to make for next year. Based on discussions with some of the "street captains" a closure starting at 4:30 pm would both

achieve the goals of safe streets for trick or treating and reduce the hassle of neighbors getting home.

There's also room for improvement on the initial cadence of the closure and managing the parking on all of the side streets.

I'd like to particularly thank the following "street captains" who took time out of their busy days to make this happen: **Linda Wilson, Greg Stinson & Clay Bordley** (Watts & Gloria), **Steve Unruhe & Jennifer McGovern** (Minerva & Gregson), **Heery Family** (Minerva & Watts), **Cotter Family** (Trinity & Gregson), **Kirby Family** (Trinity & Buchanan), **Porter, Baron & Rutherford Families** (Dacian & Gregson), **Russell Family** (Dacian & Watts) **Cat Bury & Melissa Skolfield** (Monmouth & Gregson), **Bev Carr & Larry Loeser** (Urban & Gregson), **Lois Wright, Pam & Oscar Calzada, Victoria Beasley & Chris Acton-Maher** (Watts & Markham).

In addition, I'd like to shout out Kirtin Perez & Casha Palmer at Durham's Department of Parks and Recreation who were both incredibly helpful in this effort, as was **Carl Rist** who helped make the initial introductions.

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Repaving of (Some) Trinity Park Streets Set for 2026

By Steve Unruhe

Long awaited repaving of many streets in Trinity Park is scheduled to begin in 2026. According to a map supplied by the city, because of on-going water management work on West Club Blvd, repaving is likely to be limited to Watts Street south of Markham, and associated side streets.

In a letter from Clint Blackburn, a senior engineering manager for the City, he explained: *We have been waiting for Water Management to complete the work associated with the West Club Blvd utility project before starting paving. This project is still projected to*

be complete by late 2026.

Unfortunately, the paving needs are not limited to Trinity Park in this area and include Old West Durham, Walltown, and Watts Hillandale. We have not determined the exact order that we will repave this area of the city. It is difficult to forecast exactly how long to complete these neighborhoods, especially with the amount of damaged curb & gutter.

Based on the updated paving models we are looking to start paving this next year in areas furthest away from the ongoing Water Management project, and that do not need curb and gutter repair. We are also requesting funds in the FY27 Budget to begin repairing curb & gutter, and to do some preliminary work on streets in these neighborhoods that need to be repaired prior to repaving.

Support Trinity Park - Join Trinity Park Neighborhood Association Today

Foundation Report

Working to Keep the Park Beautiful



Intrepid mulch moving crew on Nov. 17 left to right Karalyn Colopy, Jenny French, James Dobbins, Laura Benedict, Mollie Flowe and Shelley Dekker, plus Charlie Dobbins and Steve Unruhe not pictured.

By Karalyn Colopy

The Foundation's Park Committee—Shelley Dekker, Julia Borbely-Brown, Chris Jewell, Jenny French, and Sue Conannon—continues to work on a variety of maintenance and improvement projects to keep the Park welcoming and beautiful.

Projects for this fall include 1) spreading mulch around the flowers, shrubs, and trees in the gardens around the park edges, to help insulate the roots and retain soil moisture; 2) refreshing the plantings in the garden beds, adding new/different plants in the areas where previous plantings have not thrived; 3) repairing the History Grove plaque honoring William Kenneth Boyd (an historian and one of Trinity Park's first residents), which had been badly scratched; 4) spreading wood chips on the Trinity Ave. right of way to reduce soil erosion, and 5) scheduling contractors to repair the rotting roof rafter tails of the gazebo and seal the structure to prevent future rot.

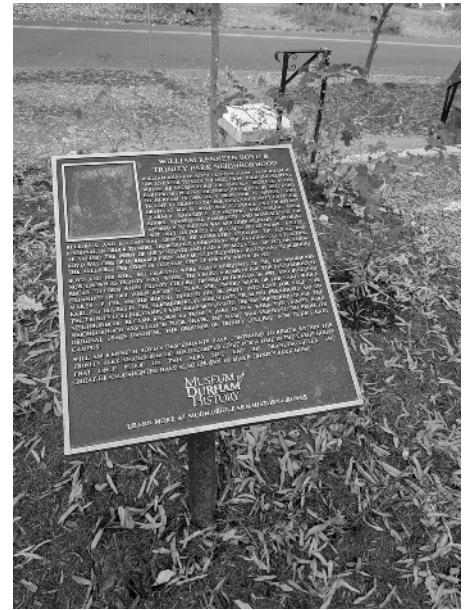
Looking forward to the spring, a big goal is to restore the badly eroded lawn. In February we plan to re-seed and will need to rope off the lawn while the seed is starting to grow. Thanks for your patience and cooperation in staying off the lawn when it is roped off so that the grass can get established. We hope that before too long we will once again have grass to play on!

Comments? Questions? Contact the Foundation Board at trinityparkfoundation@gmail.com

The Trinity Park Foundation, Inc. is the neighborhood's 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable foundation. It was formed in 1980 to purchase the land at the southeast corner of W. Trinity Ave. and Watts St., which became The Trinity Park. Now, in agreement with the TPNA, the Foundation oversees maintenance of the Park, coordinates care of neighborhood medians and traffic circles, and installs and maintains public art. The Foundation's Board of Directors meets three times a year, while several neighbors do hands-on work behind the scenes all year long.

2025 TP Foundation Board of Directors

Karalyn Colopy, President
Nick Kirby, Vice President
Sarah Hodder, Secretary
Shelley Dekker, Treasurer
Buster Black, at large
Chris Jewell, at large
Scott Doron, ex officio, TPNA President
Mollie Flowe, ex officio, TPNA Past President
Annie Ambrose, ex officio, TPNA



The foundation will be repairing the History Grove plaque honoring William Kenneth Boyd (an historian and one of Trinity Park's first residents). (Photo by Steve Unruhe)

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AI in Personal Finance: the Promise and the Limits

By Anna Lewis, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

(Sustaining sponsors are invited to write an article. Thank you Edward Jones for becoming a sustaining sponsor)

Here on the fourth floor of the Mutual Tower, with its panoramic view of downtown Durham, your phone buzzes with an alert: a budgeting app has spotted an unusual spending pattern and suggested transferring \$50 from your savings account to your checking account. Welcome to the age of artificial intelligence (AI) in personal finance, where technology is reshaping how we manage money.

What AI can do for your wallet.

From tracking every latte to forecasting next month's bills, AI-powered tools are making financial management more accessible than ever. Some apps categorize transactions automatically, while other platforms offer conversational financial advice through text messages. These tools can monitor your credit score, suggest budget adjustments, and even negotiate lower bills on services like cable and internet.

The investing landscape has transformed as well. Robo-advisors use algorithms to build diversified portfolios, automatically rebalance holdings, and apply strategies to minimize tax bills. Educational tools powered by AI can explain complex concepts through interactive games and simple question-and-answer formats, making financial literacy more accessible.

Where AI falls short. Here's what the algorithms can't do: understand what truly matters to you. AI doesn't know whether you value sustainable investing over maximum returns. It can't weigh the emotional complexity of saving for a child's education versus retiring early. When sudden illness strikes or a job change upends your plans, AI lacks the context and empathy to guide you through those human moments.

In other words, AI can't offer wisdom. It can't replace human judgment, experience, or ethical reasoning. This is where human financial advisors remain indispensable. They provide what technology can't—the human touch, in the form of:

- Long-term perspective: Help you maintain focus when markets get volatile and emotions run high
- Goal coordination: Balance competing priorities, help life partners merge their financial visions and remind you of

goals you've tucked away and didn't know still mattered

- Accountability: Keep you on track with your financial strategy through life's inevitable changes

- Emotional support: Offer reassurance and wisdom during major financial decisions

Find the right balance. The future likely lies in a hybrid approach: combining data-driven AI insights with the human wisdom of a financial advisor who understands your values, priorities and life's inevitable curveballs. The key is to treat AI as a tool, not a guide.

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The Sighting

Already having opened twenty-three and holding that the world saves best for last, I vowed above all not to go too fast this Christmas Eve and fixed instead to be

restraint itself, applying thumbnail first into its perforations on the front and sending, next, my other hand to hunt and press the cardboard from behind, well-versed

in how to let the shutters split, despite their firmly glittered seam, a bit, then more, until—behold!—a picture to adore and, on this night, it proved the rarest sight:

a peace dove poised upon the break of day. You know what happened next. It flew away.

Anna Lewis is a Financial Advisor at Edward Jones. She and her team work in the Mutual Tower in downtown Durham. Anna is also a poet and author of poetry collection Memory's Abacus. She lives on "the sledding hill" (aka Demerius) with her husband, Nicole Hablenko, and their (almost!) thirteen-year-old son, Kolya.

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Murals Stream Onto Ellerbe Creek Trail

By Steve Unruhe

Anyone walking the northern section of the Ellerbe Creek trail would have been greeted recently by a set of murals enhancing the sewer rises that line the walkway.

The murals were sponsored by the City of Durham's Water Management Department teaming up with the Cultural and Public Art Program as part of "Imagine a Day Without Water," a nationwide day of education and advocacy about the value of water.

Artists Thomas Begley, Zac Bender and Davis Davis won the contract for the mural project. Working for several weeks along the trail, they met many Trinity Park residents out walking. "Everyone was nice to talk to and I always enjoyed getting a chance to chat," said Begley.

Begley, unfortunately, also met up with some North Carolina home-grown poison ivy. "Let it be known that I have suffered for my art!" he said.

For the City, according to the City website, the goal of the "Imagine a Day Without Water" art projects is to "bring beauty and meaning to the often-overlooked components of our water systems, [inviting] trail-goers to pause, reflect, and engage with the invisible network that keeps our communities flowing."



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Know Your Real Estate

What is a Condo? A Townhome? Multifamily? Real Estate Tidbits with Matt Lawing

In the real estate industry, I often see people throw around terms, and although most people use them correctly, I wanted to be sure that everyone was on the same page, because there are some interesting differences!

Single Family Home. This is any structure owned by a single person or family where the entire structure is used by the family and it is freestanding (not attached to a structure owned by another family). In short, a house.

Condominium (Condo). This is not a type of building specifically but an ownership type. Although what most people envision when they think of a condo is something like The Bullington on Duke Street or Pearl Mill Flats on the corner of Duke and Trinity, almost any structure can be designated as a condo. A condo means that each owner has a specific right to a specific space within a larger structure without owning any of the location's land (think a single "apartment" or unit at Pearl Mill Flats, but also could be a room of a house).

Within a condo structure, the HOA (which can be extremely rigid and defined or informal, although it must always be recorded along with the deeds for clarity) owns the land and structure and is responsible for maintenance.

Generally, the HOA also covers the primary insurance for the building in place of a homeowner insurance policy. Because of this, condo HOA fees tend to be more expensive than other HOA fees. Within or near Trinity Park, there are three primary types of condos:

Homes that have been converted to condos - there are several homes that from the outside still look like homes and have either been converted into several units with separate entrances or into individual rooms with a shared common space.

Condo developments. This is Pearl Mill Flats and the Bullington. Each unit of the building is owned separately (even if someone owns multiple units).

Duplexes, Triplexes, or Quadraplexes that have been converted - From the outside these buildings may look like any other building owned by one person and rented out to multiple people, but they are actually individually owned units with a condo association (HOA) shared between them.

Townhome. Most people have a distinct image in their head when they think of townhomes. But this can mean two things depending on context.

First, townhome is a structure type. It's what you think about when you hear the word townhome. It's "row houses" that are generally multistory to build more densely. This means that you share a wall with your neighbor in a similar way to a condo.

Also, like condos, townhome is an ownership type. A townhome ownership type means that the owner actually does own the land under and surrounding their unit. Homeowner's insurance is the responsibility of the individual homeowner.

Confusingly, as is the case with some communities, a neighborhood may have homes with a townhome style structure but still have a condo ownership type.

Multifamily. Generally what multifamily means is that one person (or LLC, or partnership) owns a structure that was designed to house multiple families. This is a duplex, triplex, or quadraplex and also includes big apartment buildings. Although one of these buildings that has been converted to condos could still be called multifamily, generally the single owner is part of the multifamily designation when that phrase is used.

ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit). This one has come up a lot lately because Trinity Park has a lot of them. An ADU is a separate structure, usually detached from the main structure, on the same lot as a primary structure and generally owned by the same owner as the primary house. This can be used to give some privacy and separation to a family member or it can be rented out for some extra income as long as the neighborhood's HOA allows it.

Holiday Advice From Durham Police

Given the economic pressures across the country and locally, Captain Friedrich of District 2 DPD spoke at the recent PAC2 meeting and recommended we follow these instructions to keep us and our packages safe:

- Be aware of your surroundings and call 911 if you feel uncomfortable. They would rather you called and it was "nothing" than for you to regret not calling.
- When at a shopping center or mall, if you go to put purchases in your car before seeking others, put them in the trunk and move your car to another location in the lot. If someone is watching you and you don't move your car, you are setting up for your car to be vandalized.
- If you have packages that will be delivered and you will be gone during the day, have them delivered to a neighbor or at a pickup location.

HappyHolidays from our folks in blue!



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Happy Holidays from TPNA

Neighborhood Tales

The Great Guinea Pig Migration of Trinity Park

By Ashley Banes

A True Tale! (Adoptions Available!)

Every neighborhood has its local legend - a haunted house, a celebrity encounter, a dramatic HOA showdown.

Ours?

A slow-burn guinea pig uprising that started with a joke and turned into a defining feature of Duke Street.

How It All Began (Phillip, this will forever be your legacy)

About a decade ago, neighbor Phillip casually mentioned that his brother once released a bunch of albino rabbits in South Carolina and that it was “hilarious.”

I joked, “Well, I’m not a magician, but I do know a lot of homeless guinea pigs.”

Phillip replied, “Great - send them over.”

And that’s when everything went wrong... or right, depending on your feelings about small rodents with big personalities.

How a Few Pigs Became... Not a Few

It started with one or two guinea pigs needing homes. Then PetSmart managers discovered that I was a vet who wouldn’t say no.

Suddenly:

- Stores were calling with guinea pigs they couldn’t sell
- Customers were told, “Oh, just give her a call — she’ll take it”
- People abandoned them in pet store parking lots
- My number spread like I had accidentally founded a small, squeaking nonprofit

And here’s the kicker: Any time a female guinea pig arrived — ANY time — she was pregnant.

Guaranteed.

Like an unbreakable cosmic rule.

I am finally, at long last, beginning to catch up on the spaying and neutering, but there were years when I’d hear a squeak at 2 a.m. and think, “Oh God, who gave birth now?”

Rudy: The Christmas Baby Who Became King of the Yard

One escaped - a Christmas litter baby named Rudy (short for Rudolph).

Instead of panicking, Rudy walked outside, surveyed the yard, and declared himself monarch.

For years he:

- Kept order
- Organized the herd
- Led patrols
- Maintained peace like a tiny, benevolent warlord

He was a legend.

Mr. Dr. Leo Spaceman Biscuits: Guardian of the Realm

Supporting him: my three-legged cat Mr. Dr. Leo Spaceman Biscuits, formerly a lion of the savannah (in his mind).

These days he mostly lies on his belly like an aging sheriff on porch duty, but he still:

- Watches over the herd
- Plays hide-and-seek
- Maintains law and order

• They feel the sun, the breeze, and the freedom of being tiny cattle

I’ve built miniature fences in an ongoing, partially successful attempt to protect my garden.

The Great Mums Incident (Public Confession)

One autumn, a neighbor mourned that someone had “cleanly cut” her gorgeous mums.

I looked. I knew instantly. The guinea pigs had eaten them like a Michelin-starred salad bar.

Did I admit it?

Absolutely not.

I nodded solemnly and said, “Wow... how strange...”

Carol, I’m sorry. Truly.

Pumpkins, Joy, and Non-Pharmaceutical Therapy

Now people bring their Halloween pumpkins every year.

Kids and adults stop on walks to see the herd. The pigs eat parsley like it’s a romantic dinner scene from *Lady and the Tramp*.

They are tiny, fuzzy antidepressants. And they remind me — daily — why I worked my butt off to become a veterinarian.

ADOPT A GUINEA PIG!

Every single guinea pig is available for adoption, along with:

- Cages
- Water bottles
- Bedding
- Food
- All the starter supplies

If you want a pet that is:

- Round
 - Helpless
 - Sweet
 - Personality-packed
 - And occasionally pregnant (but less often now, I promise)
- ...let me know. I’ve got you covered.

The Dream

One day, I want Wikipedia to say: “Guinea pigs are native to Peru... and one very enthusiastic neighborhood in Durham, North Carolina.”

Honestly? I think we’re earning it. Ashley Banes is a veterinarian at St. Francis Animal Hospital. Want to adopt? Reach Ashley at Ashleybanes@gmail.com, or info@stfrancis.net



A security team of one.

Why They Live Outside

The pigs genuinely thrive outside:

- They graze all day
- They have space, so the boys don’t fight like they’re in a soap opera

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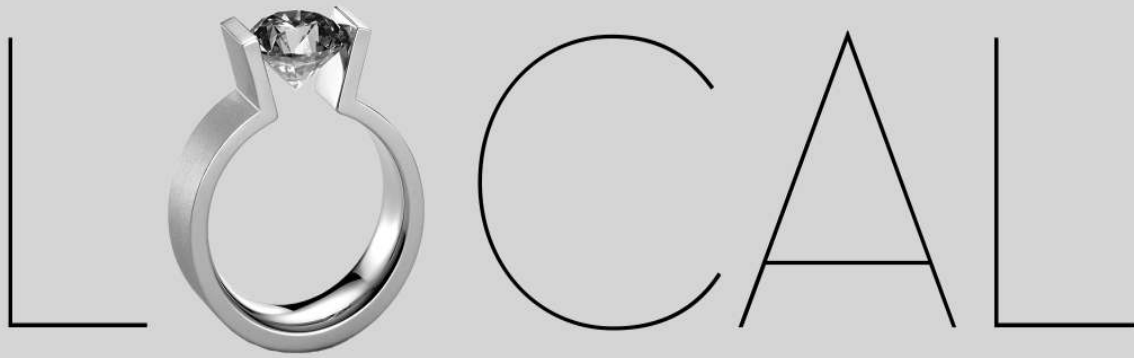
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