

Exploring Asylum Hill - Properties Improving

Part of the emphasis on working from home and on the Internet means that there's more time and focus on research. One such area is the City of Hartford Property Assessment Data. It's a great way to find out who your neighbors are, at least in terms of owners. Several properties that have been empty for a long time, have recently been acquired by new owners, and it seems that maybe NINA and Habitat are getting some help in revitalizing Asylum Hill.

One such property is at 43 Niles St. It has been a troubled property for many years, and with the recently renovated West Middle School right across the street, it stands out all the more as an example of something needing fixing.

So back in March, it got a new owner in the person of Dr. Carrie Baker and her brother Gerald Kerr. Carrie is the third in her family to invest in the historic properties on Niles St. Her mother, Benita Toussaint has been living next door at 45 Niles for more than 20 years. On the other side, both 47 Niles and 370 Laurel St on the corner are owned by her sister Sallie Land.

All three of those properties have been improved and maintained once in the hands of Benita and her daughter, so we have only good things to expect for 43 Niles. As Carrie says, "It is a privilege to give back to the community in a positive way". We need more neighbors who feel that way.



Another long neglected historic home is at 15 Marshall St. a new owner has recently purchased it and is intent on fixing it up and putting it back into use as residential housing. He appeared before the Historic Housing Commission earlier in May requesting permission to replace the very damaged cedar shingles currently there with some form of vinyl siding, and the Commission approved it conditional upon AHNA approving it. Additional good news regarding this property is that the owner was represented at the Historic Housing Commission by Valerio Giadone, an architect and former Asylum Hill resident who has done many historic restorations and well as new

construction for NINA and others in the neighborhood.

This request will be on the June 1st AHNA meeting agenda and will be discussed at that time.