

Demolition of apartment building re-ignites talk of gentrification

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

While traveling on East Fifth Street on Wednesday, June 5, longtime Winston-Salem resident Queen Fulton stopped when she saw an excavator scrapping up the remains of what used to be her home.

"I lived here for almost 13 years," said Fulton while taking out her phone to get video footage of the demolition. "This was my home, I know it was damaged beyond repair, but it's kind of sad to see it torn down like this."

The demolition of the apartment building, which is located at 1030 East Fifth Street, is owned by National Investors of the Triad LLC and managed and leased by First West End LLC, a corporation formed by United Metropolitan Church, comes less than a year after flames ripped through the building last fall. Emergency personnel were dispatched to the building around 10:00 p.m. on September 24, 2018. While only one person was taken to the hospital with injuries, all eight apartments in the building sustained smoke and water damage.

Not much has been said about the future of the property, but many in the community believe the demolition of the apartment building is just the beginning of gentrification in the area. Gentrification is defined as the process of

renovating a house or district so that it conforms to middle-class taste.

While property managers have went on record saying the demolition is not part of a bigger plan to gentrify the area, with most of the apartment buildings along Fifth and Highland Streets vacant or boarded up, it's hard to believe overpriced luxury apartments aren't coming to the East Winston community.

The neighborhood in question is expected to play a major role in the East End Master Plan, which was adopted by the Winston-Salem City Council last year and designed to give direction for future development in the area. The plan was developed through a partnership with Ayers Saint Gross, a Baltimore-based design firm, the City-County Planning Department, and S.G. Atkins Community Development Corporation (S.G. Atkins CDC).

According to the president of the S.G. Atkins CDC, Carol Davis, Fifth Street will serve as a "main street" that will connect residents and visitors to anchor points throughout the community, such as Wake Forest Innovation Quarter, the Career Center, Winston-Salem State University, Forsyth County's Human Services campus, and Union Station which is expected to open later this year. Renderings of the redeveloped area



Photo by Tevin Stinson

Last week contractors demolished an apartment building located at the corner of Fifth Street and Highland Avenue. The building sustained severe smoke and water damage from a fire last year.

shows widened sidewalks, restaurants, retail opportunities, and residential spaces.

When discussing the project with The Chronicle in November, Davis said, "Having Fifth Street be sort of a Main Street corridor, that would be highly walkable and an exciting space with retail level at the street with offices and residential above it, this area becomes an attraction."

Although it looks good on paper, what does this development mean for people like Fulton who will be displaced? While S.G. Atkins CDC and city officials have vowed not to push current residents from their neighborhood, Fulton said that after the fire, that's exactly what happened to her.

"They (American Red Cross) put us in a hotel for a week or so, then they told

us we had to find somewhere to stay," continued Fulton. "When we came back, the Fire Marshall told us we could get our stuff out, but that was it. They didn't help us find a place to move or anything, just told us we had to get out. ... I lost all my stuff and they treated us like it was our fault that we got burned out."

Luckily for Fulton, she was able to find affordable housing just a few miles away in Chestnut Plains Court. But will the other residents who live in the path of the East End Master Plan be as lucky? Only time will tell.

Multiple calls and messages left with First West End LLC project manager Lyvonne Bovell-Harris were not returned at the time of publication.

Edward Jones

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Authoring Action celebrates its 17th birthday

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Last weekend student writers and supporters of Authoring Action came together to celebrate the non-profit's 17th birthday.

Founded in 2002 by Lynn Rhoades and Nathan Ross Freeman, the mission of Authoring Action is to transform the lives of youth and the world through the power of creative writing, spoken word, visual and media arts, filmmaking and leadership education that promotes positive systemic change. Today the 501(c)(3) offers year-round youth programs and community workshops created to engage youth and to train staff that work with youth. Over the past 17 years, hundreds of children and teens have benefited from the programs and initiatives offered by Authoring Action.

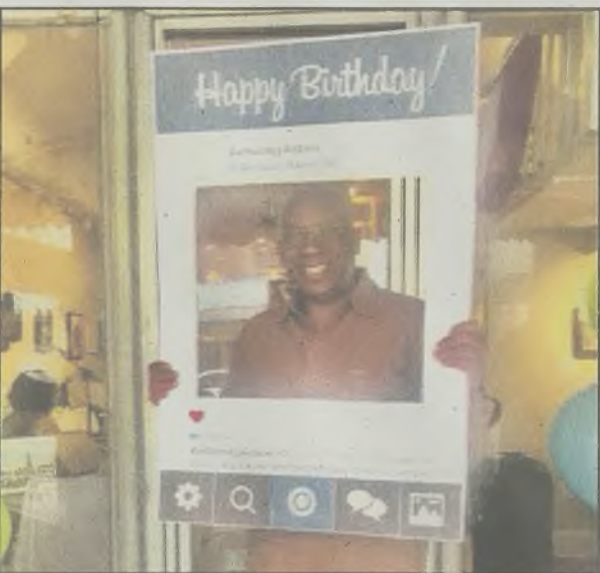
During the birthday



Submitted photos

Last weekend supporters of Authoring Action came together to celebrate the non-profit's 17th birthday at the Liberty Arts Coffee House.

celebration on Sunday, June 9, at the Liberty Arts Coffee House, attendees enjoyed music by Dan Dockery, a silent auction, food, and spoken word performed by some of the teen authors who partici-



Authoring Action co-founder Nathan Ross Freeman poses for a photo during the 17th birthday celebration on Sunday, June 9.



Libby Lubin (left) and Lynn Rhoades (right), the co-founder and executive director of Authoring Action, take a photo during the birthday celebration last weekend at the Liberty Arts Coffee House.

pate in the program. Admission to the event was \$40 and all proceeds will be used to support Authoring Action's five-week Summer Intensive and After-School Programs that

are offered to teens ages 13-17.

For more information on Authoring Action, visit <https://www.authoringaction.org/> or the Authoring Action page on Facebook.

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