

Look Who's Talking: Margaret "Peg" Wyant Helping revitalize O'Bryonville

A self-described historian, preservationist and environmentalist, Margaret "Peg" Wyant specializes in converting old buildings into new digs for businesses and residents.

As president of Grandin Properties, Wyant also has played a key role in helping revitalize O'Bryonville, a neighborhood nestled between East Walnut Hills and Hyde Park where Irish and German immigrants once settled.

Since Grandin Properties started in 1988, the company has bought and renovated eight historic buildings in the O'Bryonville area. It now leases those buildings to businesses ranging from specialty shops to restaurants and individuals for apartments and corporate suites.

Wyant said O'Bryonville appeals to people who prefer doing business and living in an urban area instead of the suburbs. Her company also buys historic properties and fixes them up in Hyde Park, Mount Adams and Covington.

Wyant's latest efforts include working with the city to help revitalize Owl's Nest Park in O'Bryonville, slow down traffic, boost parking and improve housing opportunities for first-time buyers and young professionals in O'Bryonville.

But Wyant says the area still needs more revitalization.

WHY DID YOU see a need to help revitalize O'Bryonville?

It's really Grandin Properties doing the revitalizing more than me personally. When we first started buying properties in O'Bryonville 18 years ago, there were a lot of buildings that were not in good shape and lacked modern amenities. We bought some of the older buildings, upgraded them with new features and preserved their character and architecture.

WHAT DO YOU see as the latest opportunities for your company with the revitalization?

We've accelerated our efforts the past two years on renovating buildings in O'Bryonville because we see more people moving from the suburbs into urban areas like this. We've renovated the buildings to attract tenants who want to be in one-of-a-kind buildings.

WHY IS THE revitalization important to the city of Cincinnati?

It's important because O'Bryonville helps attract people from across the region to the city. Where else can you find so many enterprises that are entirely original, such as The BonBonerie bakery and tearoom, Bob Ronker's Running Spot and Margot Madison Creative Stationery? Those businesses are among the O'Bryonville enterprises that attract customers from as far away as Michigan and England and have combined annual sales of about \$100 million. They come here to buy original items they can't find in shopping malls.

Jeff McKinney



THE ENQUIRER/LEIGH PATTON

Peg Wyant is the president of Grandin Properties and has played a key role in the revitalization of O'Bryonville.

The Margaret "Peg" Wyant file

Title: President, Grandin Properties based in O'Bryonville.

Residence: Hyde Park.

Hobbies: Squash and Cincinnati Reds baseball.