



Longevity in North Avondale: 3843 Spring House Lane

Description

While this project has been thought of as an effort to share the stories of those of you who anchor our neighborhood by having lived in it the longest, sometimes stories come to you of neighbors who have “sampled” many parts of the neighborhood. Let me introduce **Kimberly Russell, currently at 3843 Spring House Lane!**

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Kimberly, originally from Long Island, moved to Dayton as a teen and then went to college at UC and has not left! She went to a nail salon on Fred Shuttlesworth and loved the area. She wanted a “big old house” that had huge rooms to grow her family! She did not want a starter home! From 1993 – 2004 she rented at 848 E. Mitchell (and loved the porch) and then in 2004 bought her first home at 715 S. Fred Shuttlesworth. It was everything she was looking for: lovely architecture, big rooms, but over time it became a financial burden and she could not always find people to do the work that need to be done. Some months her heat bill could be \$700 and even with that, she says her mom remembers that house being COLD! The street also started to become “sketchy” for her two young sons, so she moved on. But before she did, she worked hard to overcome the impression of “its Avondale, what do you expect?” She worked diligently with the City to intervene in drug sales and to address abandoned property. But it didn’t get better. She needed to move. She then rented for a year on Wess Park until “landing” and purchasing her current house at 3843 Spring House Lane. At this house, she says she is not afraid to turn up the heat and get to know her neighbors!

She says North Avondale continues to be a place she wants to raise her kids. She wanted her kids to go to North Avondale Montessori when they were younger and they still enjoy being part of the Clinton Hills Swim Club, but they have noticed that fewer African Americans are part of the pool or buying property in North Avondale. Yet, the neighborhood is diverse and located close to lots that the City offers. While living on Fred Shuttlesworth, she joined NANA but never felt that she had found her niche. Now on Spring House Lane, she feels she is a vital part of her street and considers that more

her neighborhood than North Avondale.

Going forward she feels that the City needs to do more to make all of North Avondale a place where people want to live – not just in the big houses on Rose Hill. Landlords need to be required to maintain their buildings. Apartment buildings would be more successful if they housed mixed income, increasing the likelihood that more people would feel invested in the neighborhood. And, she cautions that while building programs such as Habitat for Humanity are well intentioned, they need to assess people's ability to maintain and keep up their homes. She exudes energy for inclusiveness and hopes that North Avondale as a whole can someday unify people on the "periphery" with those in the center. When this begins to be a priority for the neighborhood, I can say that we, without a doubt, need to include Kimberly in on the planning!

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