



Longevity in North Avondale: 3953 Rose Hill Avenue

Description

Mel and Lois Nizny moved into their home at 3953 Rose Hill Avenue April 1, 1971. But their story goes back a bit further... Mel actually lived in North Avondale **in 1962** at 775 Clinton Springs Ave. while a medical student at UC. Lois would come to visit Mel and, while he was in class, she walked the neighborhood and fell in love with North Avondale. Lois says she came from a large, older home in Lexington and this area felt much the same. Mel and Lois married 12/23/62. Between internship, residency and Vietnam, Mel says they lived in 7 different places before buying on Rose Hill.



When they were looking for a house, there were only 2 available. The other one, also on Rose Hill, did not have the yard that theirs did, so it was an easy choice! They were attracted to the large corner lot

and the porch, which Lois calls “the best room of the house”. In addition, they love their stained glass and the fact that none of the wood had been painted or bleached. (I had never heard of “bleaching” your mantle, but Lois says that was popular in the 1960’s.) Early on they were told that their central staircase would cost \$150,000 to replicate. If that was “then”, I wonder what it would cost “now”? The home also had enough bedrooms for themselves and their two children. Mel recalls that their 2nd floor ceilings were so high that he was able to put a trapeze in his daughter’s room and a climbing ladder in his son’s room! They paid \$43,500 for their home. Mel recalls that he paid \$237.10 / month for 30 years, with an interest rate of 7 ¼%.

Over the years, the Nizny’s have felt a responsibility to their neighbors. They were told by a landscaper that theirs is the first property that people see when they come home. As a “welcome home to all of our neighbors” they have continuously planted the corner of their property.

In 1999 Mel was elected President with the goal to “reactivate” NANA. His accomplishments in that role included: getting NANA’s base moved to the Rec Center, where people naturally congregated; starting the first recycling program in the City at the North Avondale School; and starting the NANA Newsletter. He later received an award from the “Neighborhood Coalition” for his efforts. Lois started a block party for the Rose Hill area, she thinks in the mid to late 1970’s, with the purpose of helping new families get acclimated. This block party continues today and is a treasured event for both kids and adults! Later, in the 1990’s when the Rose Hill/Beechwood circle was considering applying for a historic preservation overlay, Lois researched all of the properties in the area, documenting their provenances. We talked that this information may be something to share more broadly in the future! And Mel has an early map (May 1893) of the Rose Hill Park Subdivision, showing when lots were just beginning to be sold. He tells me the final lots were auctioned in 1907. North Avondale History Museum anyone?

Lois and Mel enjoy that younger families with children are moving in/back to North Avondale. They also love that the people they call neighbors are forward thinking, cooperative, multi-racial and very involved in the City (Government, ballet, symphony, medical)—all in all, just “outstanding people”! When I asked the Nizny’s if they would ever consider leaving North Avondale and their home, Mel said, “Never! And go where?” Sounds like there will be a few more block parties!

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