



Highlights:

PAGE 8: DILWORTH HOME TOUR 2026



PAGE 15: PORCH POURS



PAGE 22: LATTI PARK'S NATIVE SHRUBS



also ...

The Dilworth Trolley
Dilworth Renovation
DŌZO Delights
Dilworth Cares

Dilworth QUARTERLY



Anyone strolling through Dilworth can easily feel the neighborhood's deep affection for its history. Towering trees and grand Victorian-era homes are a testament to the past even as the city evolves. This appreciation pulses through the local businesses that call Dilworth home, too. One such business is paying homage to the past by striking up a new beat to the rhythm of East Blvd.

Leslie and Bruce Schlernitzauer, the duo behind Porcupine Provisions, are breathing fresh life into a beloved Dilworth landmark, with a twist. In December of 2025, The Drum Dilworth opened

its doors as Charlotte's newest event space. From corporate gatherings and birthday parties to pop-ups, workshops, and rehearsal dinners, The Drum Dilworth has already hosted over 30 events this year and is just getting started.

Local Charlotteans may remember the original "drum" that previously stood in its place. When The Drum restaurant first opened its doors in 1948, its southern cooking and hospitality, coupled with a family-friendly atmosphere, helped the restaurant become a neighborhood staple. Its round drum-shaped

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Deadlines for the next issue:

ADS: July 17

If you are interested in advertising in the Quarterly, email Mary Beth Sensabaugh at msensabaugh15@gmail.com. Rates and sizes can be found on dilworthonline.org. Ads received after deadline may be held for a later issue.

ARTICLES: July 20

Articles received after deadline may be held for a later issue.

Dilworth Quarterly is written by volunteers and published under the direction of the Dilworth Community Association. It is mailed four times per year to nearly 5000 households and businesses in the Dilworth community. While we make every reasonable effort to verify the integrity of our advertisers, we do not endorse products or services unless specifically stated.



*And, you may ask yourself,
"Well, how did
I get here?"*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

My husband and I are spinning in disbelief (and pride) that we have one newly minted college grad, and one almost senior in high school—the years have picked up speed, no doubt. Congratulations to all the graduates of pre-K, kindergarten, middle school, high school, and college! And now it's summer. What a gift.

In addition to being proud on a personal level, I am very proud of the work our Dilworth Community Association Board has accomplished so far this year – hosting the Dilworth Family Egg Hunt in April, with a record turnout of 300 families having a lot of spring-themed fun, the Dilworth Jubilee celebrated in Latta Park in May, and we are well underway planning the Dilworth Home Tour—this year in early October to push us past the heat and make it easier to enjoy walking from home to home.

One of the most frequent questions I get asked is: **What does the DCA do?** One of the most frequent questions I get asked is: What does the DCA do? I'm very proud to share our objectives, all of which are grounded in keeping Dilworth the charming, inclusive, natural place we all love to live. To do this, we work on behalf of the neighborhood, centered around a few key themes:

To protect and preserve where we live. We do this by proactively working with various City of Charlotte teams (Transportation, Development, and CMPD being a few examples) to be part of the larger conversation and influence new projects in the area, address safety concerns, and balance traffic with pedestrian safety, among other priorities.

To create a sense of community through engagement events to help us gather and celebrate where we live. We host and sponsor the neighborhood's Egg Hunt, Jubilee, Home Tour, and Ladies Party each year.

To reinvest in our community. A portion of the proceeds of our events is donated to a Dilworth non-profit or community organization (this year's recipient is the Dilworth Soup Kitchen). We also support Latta Park and the Dilworth Community Garden, and we explore and invest in special projects to improve our trees, parks, and shared spaces for all.

If you have an interest in learning more and being a part of any or all of the above via volunteering, please reach out to me at president@dilworthonline.org, or speak with a fellow DCA board member. We've had some incredible people step up this year to volunteer their time and talents to help us in some important ways—lending their expertise and time to help us shape our communications and marketing strategy, or spending just a few hours to volunteer at one of our events. It all adds up, and we are very grateful!

As a reminder, the DCA meets on the first Wednesday of each month (excluding July and January). As of this August, our meeting location will be moving to Covenant Church due to the upcoming construction on Dilworth Elementary and the temporary closure of Tom Sykes Center. You can also keep up with the latest news by subscribing to our neighborhood's weekly e-newsletter, the Dilworth Express, by visiting our website dilworthonline.org.

On behalf of the DCA Board, we hope you have an awesome summer in this very cool (OK, not so cool in June) place we call home. See you on a walk outside.



Celebrating Our Local Businesses

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Neighbors,

The arrival of summer's longer days and warmer weather are a wonderful reminder of all the unique experiences available right here in Dilworth. At the heart of this vibrancy are our local businesses—shops, restaurants, and services that not only provide what we need, but also help shape the character and spirit of our neighborhood.

The Dilworth Quarterly has long featured the popular “Merchant News” segment, dedicated to shining a spotlight on these important local establishments. We share updates and insights from neighborhood businesses, helping you discover new favorites and stay connected to the people who make our area special. This segment has long been a reader favorite, and it's easy to see why: supporting our local shops

strengthens the fabric of our neighborhood, encourages entrepreneurship, and keeps our community thriving.

You'll probably have noted that we've not been able to include this section in the last two editions. To continue bringing you the latest merchant news, we need a community member or two to get involved in an easy and enjoyable way. If you enjoy visiting local businesses and connecting with the people behind the

counters, consider helping us by chatting with shop owners and gathering a short piece about their current offerings or upcoming events. You don't need to be a professional writer—just someone with a bit of curiosity and a willingness to help tell our neighborhood's story.

Even a small effort can have a big impact. Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, your participation is welcome and valued. Sharing these stories not only benefits our businesses but also fosters a greater sense of connection throughout our neighborhood.

If you'd like to help highlight our local merchants, please reach out to us. Your contribution will help ensure that “Merchant News” continues to inform and inspire, celebrating the businesses that are the backbone of our community.

Thank you for reading and for your ongoing support of our magazine and our local businesses. Together, let's continue to champion the places and people that shape our vibrant neighborhood.

In Search Of ...

DQ Contributors & Writers

Email John Woodcock: halcyonma@gmail.com. for more information.

Features Writer

Do you have an eye for what makes a good neighborhood story? Have the skills and time to pen a 500-750-word feature article (and take some photos) one to four times a year? We'd love to talk!

Committee Connections

If you're a member of a DCA committee, we'd love to have you share some brief updates about your activities. Let's talk!



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BOARD MEETINGS

Stay tuned via the Dilworth Express, our weekly e-newsletter. DCA Board Meetings are open to the public. Join us at 6pm the first Wednesday of the month at the Tom Sykes Recreation Center.

Time will be allotted for Q&A.

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The Neighborhood the Streetcar Built

By Thomas Bennett

Walk down East Boulevard or South Boulevard today, and you may not realize that steel tracks once ran beneath your feet. Those tracks carried electric trolleys that helped create Dilworth.

In 1890, Charlotte businessman Edward Dilworth Latta hosted a dinner guest whose name, even then, was synonymous with American innovation. Thomas Edison himself is said to have suggested the idea of an electric streetcar line that evening. Within a year, Latta financed Charlotte's first electric streetcar system, and in 1891, the trolleys began rolling directly into the new neighborhood that would carry his name.

With the streetcar in place, Dilworth became Charlotte's first true streetcar suburb. For the first time, families could buy homes on tree-lined streets beyond the city center, confident that a reliable trolley could carry them to jobs and shops. The plan worked. Dilworth flourished, and the model spread across the city.

By the early 1900s, the network stretched widely, with routes along South Boulevard, East Boulevard, and Dilworth

Road. Trolley bells rang across what had once been farmland, setting a pattern for growth that shaped many of Charlotte's early neighborhoods.

The last streetcar ran in 1938 as Charlotte shifted to buses and automobiles. Tracks were paved over and wires came down, marking the end of the trolley era.

Still, pieces of that story remain visible. Construction crews

occasionally uncover rails during roadwork, proof of what lies beneath. In Dilworth, the public artwork Time Line was created using rails discovered in 2009. The sculpture sits at the edge of Latta Park and serves as a reminder of how transit once shaped the neighborhood.

As Charlotte considers its future growth, Dilworth offers perspective. It would not exist as it does today without Latta's vision and the streetcar

system that anchored its beginnings. The neighborhood prospered long after the last trolley, yet its story reminds us that mobility decisions can shape communities for generations.



The Dilworth trolley

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building, complete with playful details, further cemented the restaurant as a Charlotte icon. Over the years, the building expanded, giving way to the traditional square building we see today, but The Drum's heart remained and served Dilworth residents until 1995.



Leslie and Bruce Schlernitzauer opened The Porcupine Cafe in 1996, providing Dilworth residents with a new, fresh, and exciting eatery. Bruce is a trained chef and has been cooking since he was 14. Leslie has joined him in the kitchen, cooking together to help serve a little bit of everything at the Greek diner. The Porcupine Cafe fed families at the

storefront in Dilworth until 1999, when the diner transitioned to the catering company affectionately named Porcupine Provisions, a nod to the original endeavor.

Porcupine Provisions has continued to operate out of the back of the location, catering to Charlotte residents and helping to make any celebration special. They cater milestone events, corporate gatherings, and any occasion in between, while serving a little bit of everything. Around the holidays, Porcupine Provisions offers a seasonal menu featuring take-away options to help take the stress off of holiday meal prep and planning.

With The Drum Dilworth now beating a new tune, the modern event space is ready and willing to meet the

needs of any occasion worth celebrating. Take in a view of the original restaurant's round structure from the rooftop, or step outside and enjoy the summer air on the patio. If you're interested in hosting your next event at The Drum Dilworth or want more information, contact info@thedrumdilworth.com.





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52 Years and Still Our Favorite Tradition

If you've lived in Dilworth for any amount of time, you already know—this isn't just another neighborhood event. The Dilworth Home Tour is part of the fabric of this community.

Now in its 52nd year, the Home Tour remains one of Dilworth's most beloved traditions—a chance to step inside the homes we pass every day and be reminded just how special this neighborhood truly is.

Mark your calendars now:

Friday, October 2 | 6–9 PM • Saturday, October 3 | 10 AM–4 PM

Why We Do It

At its core, the Home Tour is about connection. It's neighbors opening their doors. It's conversations on front porches. It's that shared appreciation for architecture, design, and the stories behind the homes that make Dilworth... Dilworth.

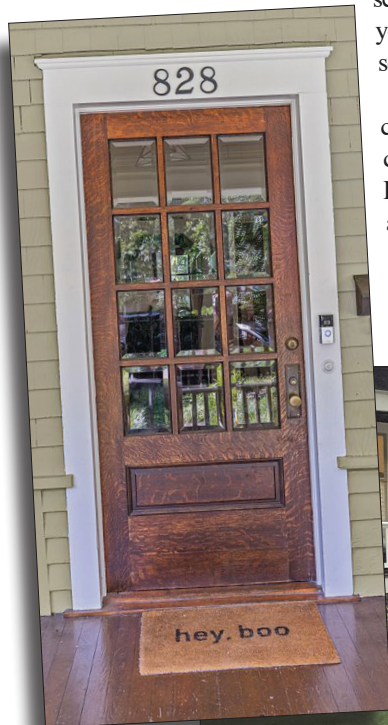
Each year, we curate a collection of homes that reflects the character and evolution of the neighborhood—historic, renovated, and sometimes newly built—all thoughtfully selected to showcase the very best of Dilworth living. We are currently in the process of selecting seven exceptional homes for this year's tour, and if you'd like to be considered (or know someone whose home should be), we would genuinely love to hear from you.

The Heart Behind the Tour

The Home Tour doesn't happen by accident. It's the result of a dedicated group of neighbors who care deeply about this community.

This year's tour is led by Chairperson Jessica Revels, who brings a fresh perspective, great energy, and a deep appreciation for what makes this event so meaningful. Jessica has been involved with the Home Tour for several years, and her leadership this year is already setting the tone for something truly special.

She is joined by an incredible committee—Fran Miller (prior chair), Courtenay Buchan, Carrie Frye, Katie Rhodes, Jeff Turner, and Keely Edwards—who work behind the scenes all year long to thoughtfully plan, organize, and execute every detail of the tour.



More Than Just Beautiful Homes

While the homes are the highlight, the impact goes far beyond the front doors.

Proceeds from the Home Tour support Dilworth Cares, the charitable arm of the Dilworth Community Association, which funds organizations doing meaningful work both within our neighborhood and across the greater Charlotte community. It's one of the most tangible ways we come together as a neighborhood to give back.

Come Be Part of It

Whether you're a longtime resident, new to Dilworth, or just want to be a part of the event, the Home Tour is one of the best ways to experience the spirit of this community.

Volunteers play a huge role in making the event run smoothly—and yes, as a thank-you, volunteers receive a complimentary ticket to the tour (a \$40 value). More importantly, it's a fun, easy way to meet neighbors and be part of something that truly feels like Dilworth.

See You This Fall

We'll be sharing more details in the coming months, including this year's featured homes and ticket information. Until then, consider this your official reminder: the Dilworth Home Tour is coming—and it's going to be a good one.



You'll Love Calling Dilworth *Home*

Dilworth puts the 'neighbor' in neighborhood. It's a tight-knit community where people wave to you from their front porch as you walk by. Where you're likely to get invited to a neighborhood party. And where you and your family will always feel at home.

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A Room with a View

By Kanku Michelsen

For someone who plans travel for a living, I think about “the view” more than most do. It’s often where a trip begins—not with the itinerary or the logistics, but with a feeling. What will it look like when you wake up? What sits just beyond the window, the terrace, the edge of the pool? The view from the suite, the villa, the boat just before sunset. A room with a view has always meant something more to me than what you see. It shapes how you experience a place. It determines whether you pause, reflect, and connect, or simply move through.

And yet, my favorite view is not somewhere far away. It’s right here in Dilworth.

The view from my office window holds stillness and movement, past and present, all at once. It reflects a neighborhood where life unfolds outward on sidewalks and in the quiet familiarity of seeing the same faces pass by each day.

For all the extraordinary places I have had the privilege of experiencing for myself and for others, this remains one of my favorite views.

I live directly across from a lower school, and the view outside my office window shifts throughout the day. In the early morning, it is quiet and contemplative. The trees frame everything, and the light filters through them in a way that feels both grounding and expansive. It’s a gentle beginning, and it is one that invites you to settle in and notice.

Then the rhythm changes. Cars line up. Parents gather. Children spill onto the sidewalks with backpacks, energy, and a sense of urgency that belongs only to that stage of life. The stillness gives way to movement, and the view becomes something entirely different. It becomes lively, full, and constantly in motion. I find myself watching it all unfold, often for longer than I intended.

Sometimes it’s simply entertaining. The way kids move through the world so freely, and the snippets of silliness you see without trying. Other times, it’s the small, unscripted moments between the kids that feel both ordinary and entirely unique.

There are times when the view catches me off guard emotionally, because it takes me back. I remember when my own children were that age—the rhythm of those mornings, the pace, the presence, the fullness of it all that you don’t fully recognize as fleeting while you are in it.

In those moments, I feel an almost instinctive pull to walk across the street and say to a parent I have never met: cherish this view. Not because it is perfect, but because it’s temporary, and that is what makes it so meaningful.

In my work, I often talk about a “room with a view” as something to prioritize. Because the right view changes how you engage with a place. It slows you down. It draws you in. It gives you a place to return. But what I have come to understand is that the most meaningful views are not always the most expansive or the most photographed.

They are the ones that feel familiar...grounding...your own.

My view, here in Dilworth, does exactly that. It is a quiet reminder of why I love this neighborhood so deeply, not just for its beauty or history, but for how it lives.

And for me, that has become the view that matters most.

Kanku Michelsen is a long-time resident of Dilworth and is the owner of Dilworth Travel, a travel agency dedicated to the place that she calls home. She can be reached at kanku.michelsen@dilworthtravel.com.



Sound Advice

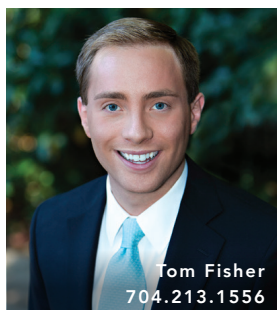
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Why Every House on Your Block Is Getting a Facelift

The macroeconomic drivers of the Dilworth renovation boom

By Pierce Kreider

It's a good time to be a contractor in Dilworth. Walk down any street around Latta Park on a Saturday morning and the soundtrack is the same: nail guns, circular saws, a truck idling in someone's driveway. Porches being rebuilt. Kitchens getting gutted. Foundations being shored up. It might look like the neighborhood collectively caught the renovation bug at the same time—and FOMO is a very real phenomenon in housing and financial markets—but it's actually economics.

Stuck in place, by choice

The first thing to understand is the mortgage lock-in effect, which is exactly what it sounds like. In 2020 and 2021, millions of Americans locked in low mortgage rates that hovered between 2% and 3%.

Kitchens getting gutted. Foundations being shored up. It might look like the neighborhood collectively caught the renovation bug at the same time.

Today, the average 30-year fixed sits above 6%. One Realtor.com analysis found that homeowners looking to sell and move could face up to a 73% jump in their monthly payment. So most of them aren't moving.

The median expected tenure in a purchased home has climbed to 15 years. In the early 2000s, it was six. That's

not sentiment, that's arithmetic. When you know you're not going anywhere, you start thinking about the kitchen.

Home equity is a giant slice of aggregate wealth

The other piece of this is that homeowners are sitting on an enormous amount of wealth. Rising property values pushed collective homeowner equity to \$17.8 trillion entering the second quarter of 2025, about \$302,000 per mortgage-holding homeowner on average. A lot of that is accessible. Home equity lines of credit (HELOC) originations jumped nearly 16% year-over-year in Q3 2025, the sixth straight quarter of growth. The logic isn't complicated. If trading a 3% mortgage for a 6.5% one is off the table, but you've got \$200,000 in equity and a HELOC rate that's been coming down, a new bathroom, perhaps with a fancy Japanese toilet, starts looking like a reasonable move.

A half-trillion-dollar national trend

None of this is unique to Dilworth. Total homeowner remodeling spending is on track to hit a new record of \$522 billion by the end of 2026. The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, which publishes a quarterly remodeling activity index, has noted that aging housing stock and constrained for-sale inventory are keeping renovation demand steady even as broader economic growth moderates. The money has to go somewhere, so right now it's going into existing homes and the stock market.

What people are actually spending on

Worth noting: this isn't mostly cosmetic. In 2024, the most common renovation categories were plumbing (27%), electrical (25%), and HVAC upgrades (22%). People are fixing and modernizing what they have, not just refreshing it for resale photos. Spending per project is also up even as the number of projects has come down, which suggests homeowners are being selective and going deeper when they do commit.

The tariff wildcard

One thing complicating the picture is tariffs. Material costs have been rising, and contractors are increasingly passing those costs through to clients. For anyone with a project in the pipeline, that's created a real incentive to lock in bids sooner rather than later, adding some urgency to activity that might otherwise have been deferred.

What it means for Dilworth

Dilworth checks every box here: established neighborhood, older housing stock, a homeowner base that bought before rates went up, and enough accumulated equity to fund serious work. The contractors working on Mt. Vernon aren't busy because renovation is trendy on Instagram. They're busy because a frozen transaction market, record home equity, and falling HELOC rates have made improving your current home the most financially sensible thing to do.

"The house," as an institution, isn't just home right now. For many Americans, and many neighbors, it's the best investment available.



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Maureen's rooftop

By Abbey Boggs

For me, porches have always felt sacred—places to slow down, connect, and notice the beauty of everyday life. Wandering the streets of Dilworth, I often paused at porches, imagining the conversations and stories unfolding over a shared glass. *Porch Pours* grew out of that love, a way to turn imagined moments into real ones, one conversation at a time. It's an invitation to connect with the people and stories that make our neighborhood feel like home.

Spring has arrived with a warmth that feels more like early summer than anything else. This quarter's porch pour comes from a rooftop perched above one of the neighborhood's many new apartment buildings. It seems Charlotte is growing by the day, with apartments and townhomes popping up like spring flowers in bloom. These buildings are helping house the city's rapid growth while offering residents a range of modern amenities.

I visited Maureen Corcoran to enjoy her building's rooftop on a perfect 70-degree evening. For those without traditional porches, rooftops and patios offer the chance to bask in the outdoor spaces so many of us love, and this one was no exception. Despite the after-work crowd making their way home below, it felt quiet up on the rooftop. We watched the sun dip behind the buildings, casting a warm, glowing light across the skyline.

If Maureen's rooftop had a signature pour, she says, "it would be a very light and crisp rosé. I love enjoying the sunsets and coming up here in the early evening. Rosé is perfect for that warm-weather feeling as the sun goes down." So, we sipped on just that: Victorine de Chastenay Crémant de Bourgogne Brut Rosé, hand-selected by Mere's Concierge. It was the perfect happy hour treat: bubbly, bright, lightly creamy, and still incredibly refreshing.

Maureen moved to Dilworth in 2022 and into her current apartment in September 2025. She shared that what she loves most about the rooftop is how it feels like an escape (almost like a vacation), while still offering an incredible view of the place she calls home. The view is truly unparalleled, showcasing an uninterrupted look at Charlotte's expanding skyline.

"Dilworth is growing really fast. There are so many new apartments and restaurants popping up. It makes the neighborhood feel

very vibrant. It doesn't feel too crowded, in my opinion. There is still a neighborhood feel, but it's exciting to see the growth happening around me."

We talked about what makes a great porch, or gathering space, and agreed that comfortable seating and a cozy, inviting atmosphere are essential. It should be a place where people want to linger. One of Maureen's favorite memories on the rooftop is hosting family and friends and talking for hours. "It feels like the night flies by while we're up here enjoying the view and each other's company."

Some of Maureen's favorite neighborhood spots include Latta Park and Foxcroft Wine. "When I moved, it was important for me to find a place that was walkable to the places I love in Charlotte, while still feeling like a neighborhood. I've been in Dilworth for three years, and I didn't want to leave!"

One of my favorite questions to ask during a porch pour is: If you could enjoy a porch pour with anyone, living or gone, who would it be? I loved Maureen's answer. "I would choose my eleventh-grade English teacher. I used to be a teacher, and even though I'm no longer in education, she inspired me to pursue it. She also instilled in me a love for reading, which I still enjoy, especially up here on the rooftop. I'd love to tell her about my journey since I was in her class."

Anyone would be lucky to be a guest of Maureen. She made me feel instantly at ease and created a space that felt unhurried, where conversation came naturally. Before we knew it, three hours had passed. It was one of those early evenings that slips by when the wine is flowing and everyone feels completely comfortable.

As summer settles in, there will be plenty of rosés ahead, but the best part is simply staying a little longer and enjoying each other's company.

**For summertime wine recommendations and orders, please contact Mere's Concierge at: meredith@meresclt.com or 513-403-5615.*

*** If you'd like to be featured in Porch Pours for drinks and conversation, contact Abbey Boggs at: abbeykristineboggs@gmail.com or @akb1089 on Instagram.*



DŌZO Delights Diners in Dilworth

Japanese-American Cuisine Fuels Dilworth's New Food Scene

By Nina Rose

In a neighborhood known for charm and culinary creativity, DŌZO is growing in popularity as one of Dilworth's most exciting dining destinations—bringing a fresh take on Japanese-American cuisine that feels both elevated and deeply comforting. Residing in the previous space of Fern, Flavors from the Garden, Dilworth diners are flocking to a new food scene.

Born from the beloved Katsu Kart food truck by chefs Perry Saito and John Gamble, DŌZO represents an evolution.

"When we came across this space, we learned the history of East Boulevard," says co-owner and chef Perry Saito. "At one point, it was the food hub for the entire city. Now, to be the new kids on the block alongside so many great restaurants in this neighborhood—it means a lot."

But DŌZO isn't trying to blend in.

"The vibe we bring is very different," Saito explains. "We don't have a traditional concept. It's a lot of small plates to share along with the music we play—we don't shy away from the things we like, and we offer that to our customers."

From the moment your dish hits the table, it's clear: this is comfort food with intention.

The menu is composed from a duet of American and Japanese flavors with lunch and dinner favorites.

The Chips and Dip appetizer blends a melody of American Kettle Chips with a dusting of Japanese Furikake dunked into savory blue crab dip and polished with gems of Japanese ikura, sized for sharing. The Crab Fried Rice features American southern pride of pork belly with UGF mushrooms, doused in crab fat butter, sprinkled with Japanese ikura, and drizzled with Kewpie Mayo.

The symphony of spices sends your taste buds on an adventure around the world.

The Ten Don features golden, crispy, and succulent local shrimp tempura with crunch-worthy kakiage veggies over a bed of sticky, warm rice, serving as the perfect foundation. It arrives piping hot, practically inviting you in before the plate even settles. Each bite feels deliberate, from the



crisp exterior of Tonkatsu to the rich, savory depth layered throughout their signature Donburi comfort bowls.

Then there's the contrast of the Sashimi—delicate, buttery, and smooth, melting in your mouth effortlessly, offering a refined balance to the menu's heartier dishes. It's this interplay of texture and temperature—hot and crisp, cool and silky—that makes the experience feel dynamic and indulgent.

Even the smallest details are thoughtfully considered. Dishes are served with a generous spoon, encouraging you to savor each bite slowly, one perfect morsel at a time.

Beyond the food, DŌZO delivers on atmosphere—one that shifts with the rhythm of the day.

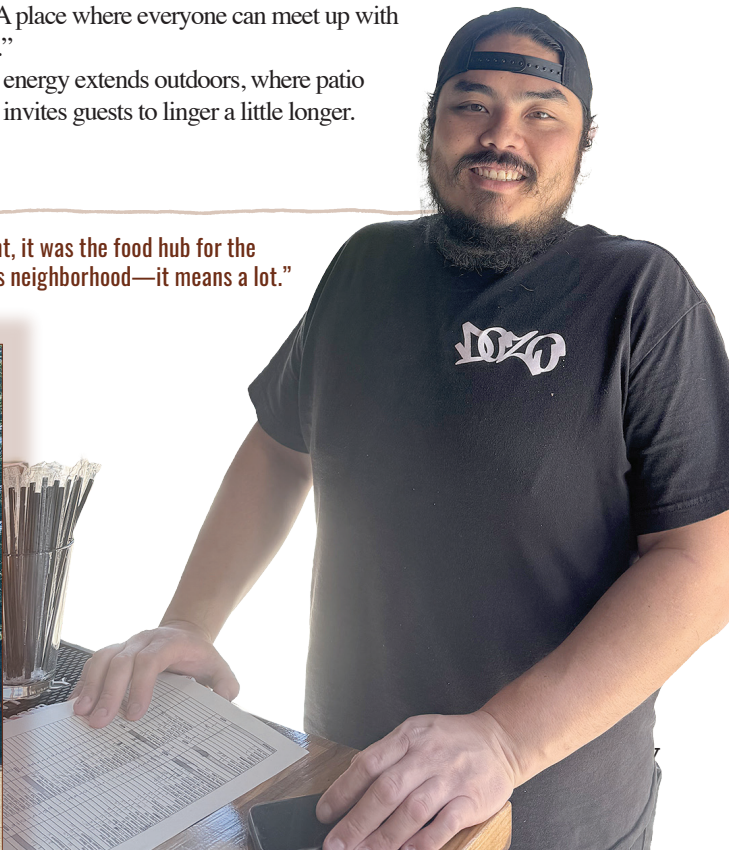
At lunch, reggae and an eclectic mix of music set a laid-back tone, while dinner transforms the space with low lighting and a nostalgic '90s hip-hop soundtrack. The result is a vibe both intentional and effortlessly cool.

"We want a fun experience here at all times," Saito says. "A place where everyone can meet up with friends."

That energy extends outdoors, where patio seating invites guests to linger a little longer.

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Rather than a full dinner menu, the patio focuses on snacks, appetizers, and drinks—perfect for turning a quick stop into a full evening.

“You can come out, grab a few bites, have some drinks, and really make a night of it,” Saito adds.

Even the lighter offerings shine. A salad of fresh baby greens feels like a meadow on a plate—earthy, bright, and refreshing—offering balance amid the richness.

And while the concept may feel fresh, the response has been immediate.

“We’re happy to be here. Everyone has been sharing so much love and support—we’re very grateful,” Saito says.

At its core, DŌZO is about creating a space that feels both exciting and familiar—where bold flavors, music, and atmosphere come together with instant curb appeal. It’s what keeps you coming back.

And in Dilworth, that’s exactly what makes it stand out.

Together, let’s raise our chopsticks to this new Dilworth dining destination.

Nina Rose is a native Charlottean who enjoys pursuing her passion of foodie adventures. With her master’s degree in communication and wide-ranging experience in the food industry, she hosts local restaurant reviews on her Instagram channel @thesouthernbites



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50 Years: Then & Now

Dilworth Quarterly Contribution

This year not only marks the 250th birthday of the United States, but it also marks 50 years since the designation of the city's first local historic district—Fourth Ward. Since then, seven other local historic districts have joined Fourth Ward, including Dilworth (1983, with a boundary expansion in 1992), Plaza Midwood (1992), Wesley Heights (1994), Hermitage Court (2006), Wilmore (2010), Oaklawn Park (2020), and McCrorey Heights (2022). This 50-year milestone provides a golden opportunity to share a brief history of how Charlotte's first historic district came into existence and where the future of the city's preservation program is headed in the coming years.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Charlotte's urban core was divided into wards, with Fourth Ward being a prosperous residential area home to merchants, clergy, and professionals. When streetcar lines were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to newly developed areas like Dilworth, Myers Park, Plaza Midwood, and Elizabeth, residential development shifted away from Fourth Ward. Additional factors—including the construction of the interstate system with the passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1956 and new home construction spurred by the low-cost mortgage incentives of the GI Bill—continued to pull homeowners away from urban areas in the decades following World War II. Federal urban renewal programs aimed at eradicating “blight” exacerbated the decline of urban residential areas, and,

in the case of Charlotte, virtually erased the once-vibrant African-American community in Second Ward's Brooklyn Village, the area now occupied by the Government Center Complex. This left urban residential areas—in Charlotte and across the nation—underinvested or vacant. By the 1970s, many historic residences in Charlotte neighborhoods like Fourth Ward and

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Charlotte's urban core was divided into wards, with Fourth Ward being a prosperous residential area home to merchants, clergy, and professionals.

Dilworth had been subdivided into rentals or boardinghouses and were deteriorating with little upkeep. Vandalism, fire, illegal activities, and a lack of new investment worsened these conditions.

Civic groups recognized the opportunities presented by disinvested historic residential areas like Fourth Ward and began to champion the revitalization of the neighborhood. Efforts were spearheaded by the local chapter of the Junior League and the Citizens for Preservation (CFP), whose booklet, *Stained Glass and Gingerbread*, drew significant interest to Fourth Ward and its historic Victorian homes when it was published in 1973. Other individuals, including two junior faculty members in the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's history department, Dan Morill and Edward Perzel, joined these efforts, lauding the benefits of



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preserving historic neighborhoods and their local histories. Dennis Rash, Hugh McColl, and Joe Martin at North Carolina National Bank (NCNB), which later became Bank of America, also threw their support behind the neighborhood's revitalization.

Local momentum catalyzed in 1975 when the Junior League purchased the Berryhill House (324 W. 9th Street) for \$40,000 with funding from the Knight Foundation, Ivey's Department Store, and the NCNB. Months of hands-on rehabilitation work undertaken by nearly 100 volunteers culminated in the sale of the house in 1976. The Berryhill Foundation, formed with members of the Junior League and CFP, carried on this work in subsequent years. During this period, dozens of houses were rehabilitated, and endangered properties from other locations across the city were moved onto vacant lots in the neighborhood, saving them from demolition. These local efforts coincided with a growing grassroots preservation movement taking root

Dilworth would later become the second neighborhood designated a local historic district in 1983.

across the country. This national movement was motivated by a renewed interest in the nation's architectural history during the Bicentennial in 1976, as well as a burgeoning environmental movement that valued the reuse

of historic building materials and a young generation increasingly skeptical about the benefits of suburban sprawl.

New tools were added to bolster the revitalization of Fourth Ward in May 1976 when City Council adopted the Historic District Ordinance, establishing the Historic District Commission (HDC) and enabling the designation of Fourth Ward as the city's first local historic district. Dilworth would later become the second neighborhood designated a local historic district in 1983, with a boundary expansion in 1992 that incorporated additional areas that better mirrored the boundaries of the Dilworth National Register District, a federal designation. Over the next 50 years, six other districts were designated, each with its own unique history. During these intervening decades, the Charlotte Historic District Commission has guided development and offered technical advice supporting the preservation of the eight districts' built history.

At the May 13th Historic District Commission meeting, we unveiled our new name—Charlotte Historic Preservation (CHP)—with the vision to be a city where “historic places, cultural heritage, and community identity” are essential components of the city's future success. CHP will strive towards this vision by working in three areas: the stewardship of historic districts, cultural heritage programming, and preservation trades training. In support of these goals, CHP staff have been meeting with other teams across the city, including the Office of Sustainability & Resilience, Workforce Development, Economic Development and the Corridors of Opportunity Program, and Housing & Neighborhood Services. These meetings have showcased how preservation tools can advance initiatives core to their work through programs that retain and reuse existing building materials, leverage historic building stock for affordable housing, and train a new generation of trades professionals skilled in high-demand areas like historic window and masonry repair. Bolstered by a new vision and growing partnerships, CHP will continue to support the city's historic communities for the next 50 years.

Interested in what's going on with our team and new initiatives? Follow the department @cltplanning and keep an eye out for updates.

Need help navigating the HDC COA approval process or have questions for Charlotte Historic Preservation Staff? Reach out to us via email at charlottehdc@charlottenc.gov.

Additional Resources:

To learn more about the **Berryhill House** that helped spark the local preservation movement in Charlotte, <http://landmarkscommission.org/2016/10/14/the-berryhill-house/>

To learn more about **Charlotte's eight local historic districts**, <https://www.charlottenc.gov/Growth-and-Development/Planning-and-Development/Historic-District> or flip to Chapter 3 in the *Historic District Design Standards*, https://www.charlottenc.gov/files/sharedassets/city/v/1/growth-and-development/planning-and-zoning/documents/historic-districts/hdcdesignstandards_april2023.pdf

To access the **Dilworth National Register of Historic Places Inventory & Nomination form**, including a detailed history of Dilworth's development, architectural history, and individual property information, <https://www.charlottenc.gov/files/sharedassets/city/v/1/growth-and-development/planning-and-zoning/documents/historic-districts/dilworthnationalregisterinventory.pdf>

To learn more about the **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966**, the federal legislation that helped enable to the creation of local historic districts, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/national-historic-preservation-act.htm>

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DILWORTH CARES

Turning Community Connection into Real Impact

By Fran Miller

If you've lived in Dilworth for any length of time, you know this neighborhood shows up. We show up for front porch conversations, for the Home Tour, for one another, and increasingly, we're showing up in a bigger way through Dilworth Cares.

Dilworth Cares was created as the charitable arm of the Dilworth Community Association with a simple but meaningful purpose—to



thoughtfully direct funds raised through our community events to local nonprofits doing real work right here in our neighborhood. We don't fundraise independently. Instead, we steward what this community already gives so generously and make sure it lands where it can do the most good.

This year, we were proud to present a donation to the

Dilworth Soup Kitchen, which is a cornerstone organization serving meals with dignity, consistency, and care. If you've ever stepped inside their doors, you know this is more than a meal. It's connection, stability, and a place where people are welcomed exactly as they are.

Pictured here at the check presentation are Tom Fidell (Dilworth Soup Kitchen Board Chair), Sarah Curme (Dilworth Cares Chair, 2025), and Fran Miller (Dilworth Cares Chair, 2026). It was one of those moments that remind you why this matters—seeing the direct line between our neighborhood's support and the impact it creates.

What makes Dilworth Cares unique is our approach. Each nonprofit recipient is selected for a two-year term, providing consistency and meaningful support over time rather than a one-time gift. During that period, the organization receives two donations per year, allowing them to plan, grow, and serve with greater confidence. It's intentional, steady, and rooted in long-term impact.

Behind the scenes, a small committee—led by a DCA board member and supported by community volunteers—reviews and selects these recipients. It's thoughtful work, and it's also where we're looking to grow.

We are currently seeking three community members to join the Dilworth Cares committee.

This is a low-lift, high-impact opportunity to be part of something meaningful. The role includes:

- Helping select future nonprofit recipients
- Attending a couple of meetings per year
- Participating in two annual check presentations

That's it. Simple, purposeful involvement that makes a real difference.

Dilworth has always been a neighborhood that cares, but Dilworth Cares gives that spirit structure, direction, and staying power. It ensures that the energy behind our events translates into lasting support for organizations doing vital work just blocks away.

If you've been looking for a way to get involved, this is it. Because when a community like Dilworth comes together with intention, the impact is anything but small.

Charlotte Bridge Association Gives Back

The Charlotte Bridge Association (CBA) is housed in Latta Park and loves the Dilworth community as much as the readers of this newsletter



Left to right: Sue Peck (Vice-President of the CBA), Mr. Fedell, and Lisa Pharr (CBA Charitable Giving committee member)

do! The CBA has adopted a Charitable Giving Initiative and, on March 18, made its first donation to a local worthy organization: the Dilworth Soup Kitchen. The Dilworth Soup Kitchen's board chair, Mr. Tom Fedell, was on hand to speak to the bridge club members about the history, goals, needs, and successes of the soup kitchen. It is an impressive organization and one that the CBA is pleased to support. The contribution included a \$2,000 donation along with over 500 pounds of canned meats, fruits, chili, and cereals for the kitchen. Individual CBA members donated an additional \$800 to the Dilworth Soup Kitchen.

As funds become available, the CBA looks forward to providing support to other worthy causes in and around Dilworth as well as the greater Charlotte area.

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Ten Years in Bloom: The Native Shrub Border in Latta Park

By Ruth Ann Grissom

Hearts-a-burstin'



Annabelle Hydrangea



Carolina Sweetshrub



In spring 2016, our fledgling Latta Park volunteer group embarked on a planting that, now a decade later, has become one of our signature projects—a native shrub border near the entrance at Park Rd and Park Ave.

In keeping with our goal of making Latta Park more appealing to wildlife and people, Nancy Nicholson and I were looking for a high-visibility site where we could put the beauty of native plants on full display.

At the time, the area along the sidewalk had a few large trees, but not enough sun for a healthy patch of grass. Park and Rec apparently mowed or bush-hogged it on occasion, meaning there was no tree or shrub understory. The herbaceous layer was dull and scruffy. It was the ideal spot for a glow-up!

We reached out to the late Dr. Larry Mellichamp, former director of the UNCC Botanical Gardens. He was enthusiastic about our vision and advised us to start with an array of eye-catching native shrubs. He enlisted Ed Davis, who had designed the Mellichamp Native Plants Terrace at the botanical garden, to assist us with the selections and layout.

With Dr. Mellichamp's plan in hand, we approached the Dilworth Community Association (DCA) for funding, and the board generously approved the purchase of 30 shrubs and the funds to have them watered during the first growing season.

Little did we know at the time just how powerful that initial investment would become. Because of it, we were able to leverage plant donations from TreesCharlotte, the Charlotte Garden Club, and many of our volunteers and supporters. It also helped us secure a grant from the NC Native Plant Society to procure plants for other areas of the park.

A decade later, we now have an area with four seasons of interest. In spring, there's a riot of orange, red, burgundy, and white—Florida flame azalea, Carolina sweetshrub, red buckeye, fothergilla, and fringetree. As the weather heats up, the palate shifts to a calm and cooling mix of whites—oakleaf hydrangea, bottlebrush buckeye, ninebark and viburnums.

In summer, the flowers might be spent, but the viburnums and pokeweed sport purple fruits. Pokeweed grows naturally, and some people consider it weedy, but we keep it in strategic locations. Not only do the birds love it, but it's a truly gorgeous plant. (I've seen it in posh shrub borders in England, and Nancy uses it to great effect in flower arrangements!) As fall approaches, the understated hearts a burstin' covers itself with the most spectacular fruits of all—bumpy, pink capsules split open to reveal shiny, orange seeds.

Since we're managing the area—removing invasives such as stiltgrass and privet—by hand instead of mowing, canopy trees are once again establishing themselves. We're selectively promoting oaks and tulip poplars in this area. They will eventually tower over (and coexist with) the shrubs, creating a diverse, layered planting that's attractive to humans and wildlife alike.

We plant a lot of trees in the park—from bareroot seedlings from the NC Forest Service to larger specimens from TreesCharlotte—but whenever possible, we like to manage the land in a way that allows Mother Nature to do the "planting" for us.

The herbaceous layer is also responding. In spring, the shrub border is carpeted with violets, followed by tick trefoil in summer

Fringe tree



Pokeweed



Florida Flame Azalea





Oakleaf Hydrangea



Witch-alder

and goldenrod in fall. We've also added native ferns, river oats, mayapples, and spiderwort.

After a long period of brilliant fall color, winter is marked by the delicate parchment seedheads of the hydrangeas and the peeling bark of oakleaf hydrangeas and ninebarks.

All these plants do well in conditions found in many Dilworth gardens—average soil in part sun. Keep an eye on the shrub border as it changes throughout the year and consider adding some of these species to your own yard.

Ninebark



Possumhaw Viburnum



Plant List

Florida flame azalea (*Rhododendron austrinum*)
 Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*)
 Annabelle hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle')
 Witch-alder (*Fothergilla gardenii*)
 Hearts-a-burstin' (*Euonymus americanus*)
 Carolina sweetshrub (*Calycanthus floridus*, straight species and 'Aphrodite' cultivar)
 Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*)

Bottlebrush buckeye (*Aesculus parviflora*)
 Red buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)
 Possumhaw viburnum (*Viburnum nudum*)
 Maple leaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*)
 Bigleaf magnolia (*Magnolia macrophylla*)
 Fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)
 Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)
 Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*)

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