

## **Westwood Civic Association General Meeting**

**January 17, 2012**

7:00 P.M.

Westwood Town Hall

### **Attendance**

*Present:* J. McNulty, J. Sess, M. Kuhl, K. Strasser B. Weber, J. Minor, J. Hildebrand, M. Jenkins,  
J. Kimmet, V. Baumann, M. Gweyn

*Absent:* Sr. Anne Rene McConn (excused), J. Henke

Recording Secretary: Mary Jenkins

### **Call to Order and Minutes**

J. McNulty called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Approximately 26 people were in attendance. The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed.

MOTION by J. Sess to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2012 meeting.

SECONDED by J. Kimmet.

PASSED unanimously.

### **Boudinot and Harrison Intersection**

J. McNulty initiated a discussion of recent problem and criminal activity in the vicinity of Boudinot and Harrison Avenues. He called for a coordinated effort to develop a strategic plan to improve safety, appearance, lawful behavior, and public perception about that area. J. Hildebrand and I. McNulty raised concerns about people choosing not to call the police. Captain Russ Neville of District 3, Cincinnati Police, reiterated his request for Westwood residents to report crime or suspicious behavior and to contact him directly with concerns about interactions with police. Captain Neville described a commitment letter that other neighborhoods are using among the business community to address matters like cleanliness, loitering, and responsiveness to crime, for example. He emphasized that the content and focus of the letter is up to the community; the basic idea is to draw local businesses into the neighborhood's planning and response related to undesirable behavior, like a block watch for business districts. He suggested a merchant coordinator, a positive media/public relations effort, training, and other approaches. He noted that the majority of crime in Westwood is drug-related. Attendees responded favorably to these suggestions, generally, commenting on the need for Good Guy Loitering, block watch expansion, trash clean up, business development, and door to door efforts to engage the community. Several people commented on problems with loitering. Captain Neville clarified that loitering is not a crime until businesses post signs about the rules on their private property. Several people urged WCA to connect with churches and social service organizations in the area. Others pointed to some of those groups as creating unintended consequences with their outreach. J. McNulty concluded the discussion by merging the library issues into this larger matter and calling for the development of a strategic and coordinated response to the problems and locations that were identified.

MOTION by J. Sess to give I Love Westwood t-shirts to Captain Neville and Lt. Bauer.

SECONDED by J. Kimmet.

PASSED unanimously.

### **Police Report**

In addition to the discussion just described, Captain Neville responded to several questions. A 32 year old man died in a huffing incident on January 7, 2012 at Glencrossing. A shooting at Harrison and Boudinot was drug-related, not random. A question about time of day for school zone traffic enforcement near Mother of Mercy School will require verification.

### **YMCA Sign**

Ray Siegel of ASI returned with a new proposal for a sign and a zoning variance for the YMCA at the corner of Boudinot and Montana. A horizontal design, with a brick base, lower than the one presented at the last meeting, and to be placed closer to the fence, was favorably received by attendees, although it will still require a variance. MOTION by J. Sess to note that WCA is not opposed to the variance request.

SECONDED by V. Baumann.

PASSED unanimously, along with a second, related motion to give I Love Westwood t-shirts to the YMCA representatives who were present.

### **Review of Ongoing Issues**

J. McNulty commented that the City Gospel Mission/Queensgate matter has a hearing scheduled on January 26, 2012. WCA took the West End business community's side on this issue.

The Western Hills viaduct is slated for replacement beginning in 2017. Meetings are being scheduled for input. The City is seeking public input on the West Fork watershed.

Sharon Lewis commented that Jamel Crossty, a Westwood resident with a significant criminal record and several current serious charges, is out on bail.

### **Benches**

At J. McNulty's request, J. Sess will draft a WCA request for a Keep Cincinnati Beautiful Safe and Clean Grant for park benches to replace illegal advertising benches around Westwood.

### **Citizens on Patrol**

Ralph Vanderman reported on behalf of Citizens on Patrol. He commented on the COPP's tenacious efforts to remove illegal signs from utility poles and showcased his creative efforts to reuse the materials for a variety of purposes. He noted that graffiti is less prevalent than in recent years. He noted a COPP blood drive scheduled for February 15, 2012 at St. Peter and St. Paul Church.

### **Westwood Historical Society**

Liz Kissel reported on WHS activities. Its next meeting, scheduled for February 7, will feature a talk on unusual health problems of the presidents. She also noted that the matching gift for the school bell was made, thanks to many donors. She commented that the Westwood School expects to move back in this summer with classes resuming in the fall. Lastly, she announced April 29, 2012 as the Home Tour and invited recommendations for homes to include.

### **Westwood School**

L. Kissel noted that administrators of the Westwood School hope to connect with the local community and plan open houses over the summer. K. Strasser urged WCA to help Westwood School in every way we can to support and strengthen its role. L. Kissel agreed, commenting that the school is integrally tied to the future quality of Westwood. Several attendees commented on means of improving the school's quality and on the desirability of magnet school status. WCA will invite the principal to a meeting to discuss ways that WCA can be supportive and to seek information about the school's plans to address issues including accountability, safety, discipline, and quality.

### **CMHA, Chronic Nuisance, and Other Housing Issues**

B. Weber reported that she is reviewing the 178 page long subsidized housing list for Cincinnati, focusing on Westwood addresses and correlating them to criminal activity. Her hope is that the results of this review will help police and WCA to address chronic nuisance issues and other crime locally. J. McNulty remarked that Hamilton County has the 17<sup>th</sup> largest MHA in the U.S. with 10,680 housing vouchers but is the 68<sup>th</sup> largest county.

### **Westwood Community Gardens**

M. Jenkins reported on behalf of the Gardens. She noted that the mid-year grant report to Keep Cincinnati Beautiful was positively received. A request for funding from the local Kiwanis group was made recently. Several raised beds are already rented for the 2012 growing season. Most major site development plans are on hold until additional funding is procured but she was optimistic about 2012 developments.

### **TIFF Grant**

J. McNulty reported that the city is returning \$100,000 to our fund for the demolition of blighted properties, as a refund for the site on Harrison near McHenry where the new fire house will be built.

### **Recreation Center**

M. Trapp announced a Madcap Puppets performance at the Westwood Town Hall on January 28, 2012. The WTH is hosting a movie and potluck lunch series at noon on Fridays. A pizza and pajamas event is planned for school vacation. She has found a Zumba instructor who will resume classes shortly.

### **2111 Harrison**

V. Baumann noted that the city has approved a time extension for the owner's compliance with requirements related to the structure's condition.

### **Nominating Committee**

J. Sess remarked on the need for a second nominating committee for compliance with the by-laws. Up to five candidates may be nominated by each committee. A previously appointed committee included M. Gweyn (chair) and J. Kimmet.

MOTION by M. Gweyn to appoint J. Kimmet the chair of the second nominating committee.

SECONDED by J. Hildebrand.

PASSED unanimously.

There being no other business before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and passed at 8:47 p.m.

Minutes submitted respectfully,

Mary Jenkins