

## Westwood Civic Association Steering Committee May 8, 2012

Present: J. Kimmet, president, M. Kuhl, M. Jenkins, K. Strasser, J. Minor, V. Baumann, B. Weber, J. Hildebrand, I. McNulty, T. Minor, M. Gweyn, N. D'Angelo

Excused: J. Henke, M. Conda

Absent: J. Sess

### **CCRN Presentation**

17 acre property located at Montana and I-74. Proposal for a new gated community.

Mr. Mike Haas, LDG, presented a thorough study of Westwood, which was an effort to understand Westwood and the needs of this community. The study looked at Cincinnati and Westwood, employment rates, median income and average number per household. The study concluded there are a tremendous number of people looking for affordable apartment style living. Other rental communities such as Pine Ridge and Montana Valley were looked at as a point of comparison for the proposed development called Westgate on Montana Avenue overlooking I-74 and the valley.

Chuck Squeri, Big Picture Learning, gave a presentation on the look of this new gated community. LDG develops and manages their own properties from Virginia to Texas, developing over 4000 units in the last ten years. Amenities at their developments include a clubhouse, pool, walking trails, business center, fitness center, community gardens, picnic and bbq area, covered parking and on site management.

After the presentation, Jim McNulty spoke to everything being wrong with the project. Iren McNulty concurred and spoke to this planned development being counter to Westwood's strategic plan which calls for 40% multi-family housing and 60% single family housing.

Mary Kuhl continued supporting Westwood and the Strategic Plan stating, "We are against multifamily" and giving several examples of why. Per Nick D'Angelo, the proposed buildings are beautiful and have nice amenities. The problem is that we have too much low income and affordable housing. The entire neighborhood of Westwood has lots of apartments for rent. Per Becky Weber, why aren't we making this development luxurious? Others suggested condos or a change of location to Green Township for the development. Some members of our Board are not sure and voiced concerns about gated communities in general.

### **Chronic Nuisance**

Becky Weber reported about a meeting with the City solicitor that occurred in regard to enforcing the new chronic nuisance ordinance passed by City Council. Fines for CR will start from scratch in March. Chris Kearney and Becky Weber will go to a public safety committee meeting to talk to City Council. 2201 Harrison and 2880 Harrison are high on the nuisance calls list of 50 worst chronic nuisance offenders. We have many questions for City Council and the City Solicitors office. A tour of problem properties with the City's Chronic Nuisance attorney, Mark Manning is coming up. Mary Kuhl will lead that tour. Joel recognized Becky Weber and Chris Kearney for their outstanding job on chronic nuisance.

There has been a great response by businesses to the crime prevention in neighborhood zones program held on 5/7 at Westwood First Presbyterian Church. Close to 60 people attended.

### **Westwood Community Gardens**

Many of our members have rented beds and all of the beds are rented. All projects are on hold until the ground dries some. The water bill for winter was \$22.90 – summer will be more. We had received a \$10,000 grant from Keep Cincinnati Beautiful which ends in June. The committee will ask the Mills Fence Co. to invoice for the last section of fence so that we can get that going.

### **2111 Harrison**

Becky Weber spoke to Dave Lockhorn. We are questioning why he doesn't get the finishing permits to open it up. Becky will get back in there and inspect it. This is a pre-prosecution inspection. The owner has received one extension after the next. By next week, Becky may know more. Irene McNulty made a motion that we write a letter to the city requesting that any owner that is not current on taxes can't get a permit to build or hold or be permitted a VBML or any other permit.

SECONDED by Jerry Hildebrand

APPROVED unanimously

Joel Kimmet would like to make 2111 Harrison a committee until we get the building torn down. Becky Weber will head this committee.

### **West Fest planning report**

Mary Jenkins met with Becky Weber and Irene McNulty. The West Fest application has been submitted. We are waiting to hear about our booth assignment. The event will be held 6/23- 6/24. Irene McNulty passed the volunteer signup sheet around. John Sess and Joel Kimmet volunteered to setup. Volunteers will collect money at the booth and manage the Split the Pot.

Donations and pledges for West Fest:

\$75 from Tom Bonhaus Automotive

Pledge of \$200 from Vitors – we will count pledge as fulfilled when pledge is paid in full.

### **Student awards**

Karen Strasser reported that Mercy High School submitted 3 nominees for the Student of the Year award. None of them have been told they were nominated or have won. She will get back to Mercy and get one nominee. Irene wants us to think about the award being reserved for students who are Westwood residents. Mary Jenkins motioned that we spend up to \$150.00 on the awards.

SECONDED by Irene McNulty

APPROVED unanimously.

Councilman Chris Smitherman is confirmed as the presenter at the 5/15 General meeting. Joel will see if we can get the auditorium. Last year we gave \$25.00 gift card to award winners. Karen Strasser motioned to spend \$20 on target gift cards in addition to the trophies.

SECONDED by Valeria Baumann

APPROVED unanimously

### **Membership report**

Jill Minor reported that we have 227 names in our WCA database. This means that 227 households are getting the newsletter. Of these, 30 members are businesses. 35 members units/households in total have not yet paid their 2012 dues and are set to come off the roster in June. Becky Weber suggested that we contact those 35 before their

memberships expire. Valerie Baumann said that she would not mind sending a letter to those memberships that are going to lapse.

For 2012, we have 162 paid households. We don't know exactly how many members we have. Jill is working on starting to keep track of this. Jill has requested historical membership numbers if any of us have these stats. Sharon said that she believed our membership number was 400 something in 1992. City Council members don't pay dues and advertisers don't pay dues.

Jim McNulty said we can go back two or 3 years. Before that Judy Seiferman did membership for many years. Mary Kuhl stated that the goal should be to have paying members. We don't know what the normal percentage of residents to neighborhood council memberships should typically be. Maybe our low numbers are normal. Mary Kuhl stated that what we did in the past was little neighborhood pot lucks, etc. We met Jerry Hildebrand that way and Jerry has brought several neighbors. Lilly – schools are looking for student volunteer hours. Students could go door to door for the membership committee with information about WCA Membership committee.

### **Westwood School opening** -

Proposed WCA membership event tied to the opening of Westwood school. We could have a “fun fun” event. National night out will be at the Ferguson location. To avoid conflict, we need to support the Ferguson National Night out. Joel Kimmert looked at the National Night out website and they are promoting more and more events on that night. To avoid conflict, we do this how d3 wants to do it. Joel thinks it is a great idea to do something with the school. Jill Minor let us know that Monica Battle, Westwood School Principal, wants to meet this summer after school is out. The Membership and School committees need to meet together to plan the event.

Jill Minor received a letter from Dale McClane. The McClanes don't want to deliver signs anymore. They just want to nominate. Tom and Jill delivered 8 signs. Jill has divided Westwood into zones and would like to see one sign in each zone. Jill brought to our attention that this is the most awesome thing that WCA does resulting in opening up doors for us. It is great fun. Mary Kuhl stated that this should be on our website and we should take invitations to join WCA when talking to people about yard of the month. Per Joel Kimmert, Michelle Conda wants to propose finding one apartment complex each month that does an outstanding job and award them a yard of the month too. Irene McNulty suggested that Yard of the Month can also be awarded to churches. Jill Minor requested that we keep the nominations for Yard of the Month coming to her via email. This is also a great way to promote WCA because our name is on the signs.

### **American Flags** –

Melva Gweyn would like to see the flags go up for Memorial Day. NSP money is available if we need to replace any flags. Per Joel, we should meet on a Saturday or Sunday and put the flags up. We need to have uniform bolts/hardware to hang the flags. We need more durable flags – a thicker type of material. The NSP contract says signs, banners, flags therefore we pay for them first and then we get reimbursed. We have two “Welcome to Westwood” signs in storage. One needs to go back to Parkcrest where the bus hit it. It has since been repaired, leaving one in storage. Sites for the one sign in storage were suggested. Mary Jenkins suggested a very nice location near Dunam.

### **Traffic Island Cleanup**

Per Valeria Bauman, the traffic islands are very weedy at this point. John Sess is the mower.

John asked that \$100 of the \$380 donated be used to mulch and maintain the islands. Valerie wants to use roundup on the islands. It was noted that Crookshank and Glenway are very difficult to maintain. The reason the City can't mow the

traffic islands was questioned by Mary Kuhl. Mary Jenkins requested that we all report to [www.5916000.com](http://www.5916000.com) asking that the city mow at Crookshank and Glenway using the Walgreens address.

### **New Incoming Mail**

May 22, Liveable Communities meeting

Liquor control – transfer of stock Applebees.

Announcement about Chase school having a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Gamble Montessori School – request to make Karen Strasser their LSDMC rep. Melva Gweyn motioned that Karen Strasser be appointed to LSDMC Gamble.

SECONDED by Mary Jenkins

APPROVED unanimously

### **Other Committee Reports**

#### Education

Jill Minor toured Westwood School and gave us a glowing report on the renovation. Jill will work on arranging a school tour for our Board.

#### Problem Properties

Becky Weber noted that our website needs to be updated. We need to figure out a way to make changes to the website – at the present time we can log in, but we can't make changes.

#### Free Flowers

Per Valeria Baumann, Spring Grove cemetery will be getting rid of many flowers and we can utilize the flowers to beautify the islands.

#### Committees

Per Becky Weber, we still need to get all Board members signed up for committees and then chairs will be chosen.

### **New Business**

#### Flower fund

We will individually contribute to seed a flower fund.

#### Good neighbor letters

Good Neighbor letters were mentioned by CPD at the Crime Prevention meeting held 5/6 at Westwood First Presbyterian Church. Karen Strasser motioned that we start sending good neighbor letters.

SECONDED by Melva Gweyn

APPROVED unanimously

Community Development

Per Jim McNulty, we need to inform Community Development and all other appropriate committees that our Strategic Plan is approved by Council and we are against multi-family housing. Motion by Mary Kuhl that a letter be sent by WCA informing the appropriate parties that we are against multi-family housing and we do not want a zoning change required for the Westgate on Montana Avenue project to move forward.

SECONDED by Nick D'Angelo

APPROVED unanimously

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Strasser  
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