

WCA General Meeting February 19, 2013
submitted by Karen Strasser

Present: Joel Kimmet, Karen Strasser, Becky Weber, Irene McNulty, Jim McNulty, John Sess, Jill Minor, Tom Minor, Mary Kuhl, Mary Jenkins, Valerie Baumann, Jerry Hildebrand, Michelle Conda

President Joel Kimmet called the meeting to order and welcomed our guests. Representatives from many Westwood organizations were present.

Captain Russ Neville, CPD

At 3322 Felicity, near St. Catharine School, the SWAT team served a search warrant and found so much stolen jewelry that the jewelry had to be weighed by the pound. Stolen guns were found as well. The neighbors had seen the residents hauling things in through the back door since October. They also said they were too scared to call about it.

Midway School -

(Weber) Two weeks ago while driving on Glenmore headed towards Schwartz, Ms. Weber took note of many traffic problems. The resource officer crossed a group of kids right in front of her and if she had been going faster, she would have hit them. Cars are parking in the middle of the street. Ms. Weber spoke to Mrs. Lutz, Midway School Principal, to try to resolve the situation. Miss Lutz and Sergeant Richardson have been talking about how these problems can be resolved.

(Sergeant Richardson) Tradition enforcement will not be effective. Using the school newsletter to address the parents is the first idea that we will implement. There will be more officers present to try to help the situation.

(Principal Lutz) I want to make everyone aware that Glenmore is a four-lane street in front of Midway School. When Midway was first built at this new location, it was determined that all four lanes would be open at the beginning of school and at dismissal. This has not happened. The school has gone from 600 kids to 750 kids. Perhaps we can revisit the idea of all four lanes being open with no parking on the street during opening and dismissal. CPD has been very good with enforcing the 20-mile per hour speed limit. As with all schools, we dismiss and all of the students are off campus by 2:25 p.m. This is a very fast dismissal process.

Motion by John Sees that Joel Kimmet will write a letter to Traffic and Engineering asking that there be a traffic study to restrict parking in the four lanes around and near Midway School during opening and dismissal.

Seconded by Melva Gweyn.

All in favor – motion passed.

(Sharon Lewis) Mrs. Lewis has made various observations with Principal Lutz. The students don't know how to stop at corners, etc.

(Principal Lutz) Anyone is free to call and discuss these issues with me any time.

(Hildebrand) There are also problems at the corner of Glenmore and Werk. Only three cars are able to go through on the green light at the corner of Glenmore and Werk.

Motion by Michelle Conda that Glenmore and Werk be looked at as well as part of the requested Traffic and Engineering study in the motion above regarding four no parking lanes in and around Midway School on Glenmore.

Seconded by Becky Weber

All in favor – motion passed.

(Principal Lutz) Midway School is now rated effective on the State Report Card.

CPD Neighborhood Report – Officer Rich Minella

Officer Minella distributed the neighborhood crime stats. CPD has identified and is breaking up a group of juveniles, primarily male, known as the Scheme Team. One of the members robbed a gas station plus five other robberies.

Approximately fifteen members of this gang have been identified as CPD works on breaking up this group.

Comment [Michelle I]: This isn't the correct name—ask Mary Jenkins.

(T. Minor) Has there been an increase in traffic tickets and accidents on Montana since the changes were made to Montana?

(Officer Minella) I don't know the answer to that question, but I will look into this.

(Sess) There has been one fatality on Montana. We are wondering if this accident was alcohol related.

(Officer Minella) I will need to look into that as well.

Traffic and Engineering – Andrea Henderson and Jeff Stine

(Henderson) The Montana Avenue project is almost finished. The contractor still needs to complete the punch list.

(Baumann) At the corner of Montana and Harrison, I noticed that the bricks set in the road don't seem to have any mortar around them.

(Henderson) There are supposed to be sand joints around the bricks and then they will be sealed. This is one of the punch list items. This will be addressed.

(Dina Hanks, Town Hall Director) There are barrels, tape, etc. right in front of the Town Hall signs and I don't know why they are there. Is there going to be mulching around the trees, etc.?

(Henderson) Yes, there should be mulch. I will look into why there are barrels in front of the Town Hall sign.

(Kuhl) What is the end date for the punch list because contractors don't like to deal with the punch list. Can we give them an expected date of when we want the work complete?

(Henderson) Yes, we will give them a date. It is up to Duke because there are some things that Duke needs to do. We will put an end date on this so that the contract doesn't just linger and linger. Keep in mind that some things are weather related. We will walk through the punch list items with the contractor.

(Sess) I personally really like Montana Avenue now. Thank you.

(Henderson) We do gather the accident reports and will look at the reports before and after the Montana project.

(Jenkins) I would like to request a report for next month regarding traffic before and after the project. It would be a good idea for Joel Kimmet to write a letter requesting this.

(Henderson) From Memorial Day to Labor Day is when the detour work will be done down on Harrison. Work on Fairmont needs to be done before the detour can happen. Work on McHenry and Harrison will start. Work will be done at Woodrow and Lafeuille as well.

(Kuhl) At Lafeuille and Harrison, there is a stake with an orange ribbon on it very far back onto a private property. Is the work going to go that far back onto this private property?

(Henderson) It could be the stake mark for the right away line. This is not a curb, but we will go look at it. I hope it is not a pole placement.

(Gweyn) With regard to the wall at the bottom of Harrison Avenue, are all of the stones going to be removed?

(Stine) The road will get closer to the wall and the big curve will be shaved off. On the tall wall itself, there will be a system of mesh reinforcing with concrete on it.

(Gweyn) Any more houses going to be taken down?

(Stine) No, not by Traffic and Engineering.

(Gweyn) Could the lights be made brighter on Harrison?

(Stine) As they are replaced, the new lights will be good and bright.

(Gweyn) Going into the parking lot of Walmart and Krogers on Ferguson, the signage is poor. Could there be some better signage?

(Stine) I will ask the traffic department about this issue. If the problem technically sits on private property, the department will send a letter.

(Sess) I want the intersection at Harrison and Montana to be a four left hand turn intersection. Please look into this.

(Conda) At Fleetwood and Woodrow, there is a terrible problem in the morning when parents are parking and waiting for their student's buses. I have written a letter with a request to look at this area.

(Guest) The traffic on Montana is much worse.

(Richardson) The project was put in and we are not changing it. With that said, we are always willing to look at streets where there are problems if we have high accident rates, etc. We have tweaked the signals in an attempt to cut down on congestion. We need to hope that some people will find another route into Westwood and see if that loosens up traffic.

(Sharon Lewis) Mrs. Lewis thanked Andrea Richardson for talking to her personally a week ago. Mrs. Lewis was on the committee for the Montana study. That committee had suggested an advertising campaign to encourage residents of the Westside to utilize the Boulevard. Is this advertising campaign going to happen?

(Stine) ODOT has specific rules regarding the types of signage that can be placed along the highway. I will look into it.

(Sharon Lewis) ODOT indicated at some of the planning meetings that the Boulevard could be promoted. .

(Dina Hanks) On McHenry East, there is a section of the road that has given way.

(Stine) That problem has been directed to the Structures Department and they are working with the owners of the property.

(Sister Ann Rene McCona) WestCURC is working on a house at 3289 Montana. I feel that I am taking my life into my hands every day when I park to go to this house. If I was a parent, I wouldn't let my kids play in that front yard. A study should be done on speeders on Montana. It is virtually impossible to back out of a driveway on Montana.

(Stine) Please ask the police to monitor any area where you have concerns.

Form Based Codes Presentation - Cameron Ross and Alex Peppers, City Planning Department

(Kimmet) WCA is in agreement that we will be participants in the Westwood Square Project. We have a coalition that exists now with all of the organizations of Westwood.

(Kuhl) We have approved participation in the discussion of the Westwood Square Project.

(Ross) Getting to this point has been a long process over four years in the making. This process has included meeting with neighborhood leaders. City Planners even took a trip to Nashville to see how Form Based Codes (FBC) have gone there. We worked with a form based code initiative with large participation in the *Charrette*. There is now a Public Review Draft of FBC now available on the City's website. The Final Draft of FBC came out in Feb. 2013. All of these efforts have been to try to get the best FBC for the City of Cincinnati. The focus has been on Westwood, College Hill, Madisonville and Walnut Hills. In March there will be a City Planning Commission review of text amendment. FBC is building on previous efforts including the Westwood Strategic Plan. The Consulting Team carries a wealth of knowledge and we are excited about moving forward.

The Urban to Rural Transect –

(Ross) We looked at Cincinnati's DNA and developed various codes for various situations. There will be a focus on the Business District in Westwood. Most of the work in Westwood was done along the Business District. The form code is a simple 7 step code. This is simple and is coding for what the neighborhood wants.

(Ross) Street Design principles make sure that streets are built for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, cars, etc. We want the intersections to work smoothly.

Bridging the Gap

(Ross) The community and City need to collaborate to find solutions. National and local market recovery will be needed. We have utilized visions from the neighborhood charrettes.

(Guest) Is there enough parking to do this?

(Peppers) Parking is a concern. Pockets of parking will be created, versus a parking lot for every business.

(Baumann) Did I see more multi-family housing?

(Ross) It is whatever the community wants. If the market is there for multi-family, yes. If the market is there for single family, office buildings, etc, then yes to those too. It even gives developers flexibility.

(Gweyn) The pictures that you show all seem to be one type of building. Are we losing some of the uniqueness of our area?

(Ross) No. This is designed to capitalize on the uniqueness of our area. The Westwood that our Grandfathers saw is sustained for the long run. What we showed you was at full build up.

(Weber) I saw the Westwood Strategic Plan in the presentation. We don't want additional multi-family housing, no matter what. We aren't moving anyone out.

(Ross) If a business owner would want to make expansions, they would need to adhere to the form based codes.

(Kuhl) Tom Bonhaus is a good example. His property is not shown on the rendering that we were shown this evening. Westwood Square may be a good idea and maybe it isn't. How will traffic be affected in our neighborhood?

(Ross) First we need to get the FBC adopted. It could take 50 years for a new three-story building to be built. The codes states, when the neighborhood is ready for it, when the economy is up, this is how we would like for expansion to look.

(Kuhl) The FBC is being marketed directly alongside of the Westwood Square Project.

(J. McNulty) Would FBC be an overlay over our existing codes?

(Ross) No. The existing zoning would be extracted out.

(J. McNulty) Has anyone looked at Westwood Square being placed in front of Town Hall?

(Ross) Most of the focus was at Epworth, Urweiller and Harrison because of those who attended the charrettes.

(Ross) The thing to remember about FBC, is that it is not about getting rid of businesses. If a business sells, you'll have control over the type of business that comes in to replace that business. It won't get rid of any businesses that are already here. FBC can control the content. (uses)

(Gweyn) In Nashville, they took the uniqueness of the area and built around that. My doubt about this is only in the long run. Buildings that are all uniform last for about 20 years and then people are tired of them.

(Kimmet) If I am a business owner on Harrison Ave, what happens at that point?

(Ross) Whoever buys that property is now in a form code district that has regulations. An example would be a single-family home sitting on the edge of a commercial zoning area.

(Dina Hanks) Where are liquor permits filed?

(Ross) The same place as always. Signage is also regulated.

(Sr. Anne Rene McCona) One of the problems in any neighborhood is that the main street becomes a raceway. The more people we can have walking and using a street such as Harrison Ave, the safer our streets will be.

(Kimmet) This will be an ongoing process.

(Conda) Who makes the decisions?

(Ross) Westwood

(Conda) Westwood Civic?

(John Eby) No.

(J. McNulty) Isn't it putting the cart before the horse by moving forward with the text amendments?

(Kimmet) We will look at the calendars, and have a meeting of all of the organizations as soon as possible. Many people are very excited about this project and we certainly don't want to stall the project.

WCA Board of Directors Elections –

(Kimmet) We need to revise the upcoming Director Elections schedule. We need to appoint the elections supervisor. This should be a Board member who is not running for reelection. Jim McNulty devised a process to get us back on track.

**Motion by M. Jenkins, seconded by Mary Kuhl that we accept J. McNulty's proposal with one little change being that the member purge will be 2/22.
Motion passed.**

(Weber) If there are only five candidates for five positions, there won't be an election.

Motion by J. McNulty that the vote for officers will be 4/16 , seconded by M. Jenkins.

Motion approved – all in favor

Demolition approvals -
2210 Harrison Ave.
2321 Dautel close to Judson Village
3138 and 3162 Saffire

Second nominating committee –
Mary Kuhl and Jim McNulty.

Motion by Michelle Conda seconded by Irene McNulty.
Motion approved – all in favor.

The Board Nominating Committee will be Mary Jenkins and Michelle Conda

**Motion by M. Jenkins for up to \$250.00 for printing of the election post cards and postage for those election postcards, seconded by J. Sess.
All in favor – motion passed.**

Joel Kimmet will meet with Ed Cunningham tomorrow and will remind him that WCA is totally against tearing down single-family housing.

Change of zoning notice -The property at 3630 Boudinot and 3634 Boudinot is currently zoned SF6. The owner is asking to change that to OL – office limited

Motion by J. Sess that we don't object to the zoning change, seconded by M. Kuhl.

Discussion:

(Weber) It is always a worry to change a zoning from SF=6.

(Kuhl) If the house owner wants to rally support for this, they need to come here.

Motion failed 1 in favor, all other opposed.

Motion by B. Weber, seconded by M. Conda to write a letter opposing the change to the zoning.

Motion passed – all in favor

Motion to adjourn by J. Sess, seconded by M. Conda

All in favor – meeting adjourned.