

July 9, 2013 Westwood Civic Association Steering Committee Meeting

Present: Karen Strasser, Joel Kimmet, Leslie Rich, Mary Kuhl, Mary Jenkins, Jim McNulty, Irene McNulty, Valerie Baumann, Melva Gweyn, Michelle Conda, Becky Weber, Mary Kuhl, Jill Minors, Tom Minor

Excused: Tom Hodges

Guest - Jack Jose, Principal of Gamble Montessori

Gamble Montessori is one of two schools in Cincinnati Public, rated excellent on the State Report card. Walnut Hills is the other excellent rated HS in CPS. This 2013/14 school year, Gamble Montessori will be adding a middle school community of sixty students. The school has also added a school band and full time art teacher position. At Gamble, we utilize the budget to enrich and nurture the whole child. Gamble is moving into the Gamble Building. There is a sign owned by CPS that is 8' x 9' that we could place along the front of our property on Westwood Northern Blvd. Our school is accessed via Felicity Drive to Felicity Place. At some point in the future, we would like to place a sign in the front of the school at the driveway to Felicity. Mr. Jose is asking for a sign variance. He will get us a picture of the sign so that we understand how the sign will look on the school's property.

(J. McNulty) Motion that we take no objection to the sign. Seconded by Leslie Rich. Discussion followed.

(Gweyn) Where would the sign be?

(Jose) Westwood Northern Boulevard or the center of our driveway.

(Rich) Consider the purpose of the sign. If the purpose to let the greater community know what is happening, then Westwood Northern Boulevard would be the best location.

(Conda) Do you want 2 signs?

(Kuhl) I would like to see the sign before approving it. We have a precedence of knowing what a sign will look like.

(J. McNulty) Two signs may be a good idea.

(Conda) What if St. Catharine's wants to put up a big sign?

(Jack) I will email Karen Strasser and come prepared next Tuesday at 7p.m.

Motion withdrawn by J. McNulty

Committees

(Weber) We may want to restructure committees and determine if we have too many committees. We may want to concentrate on fewer committees in order to get more done.

(Jenkins) This is not about changing the charge of the committees, more about what priorities should be for the committee. To be more realistic, some committees did not have a clear purpose. Should we hone in on specific things?

A discussion followed regarding the WCA committees and on what committees Board members would serve.

Jenkins: We should periodically have a review of the by-laws. There should be a packet for all board members.

Kuhl: When Sanregret was on the board, we started this. It is definitely an ad hoc committee. Kuhl would like to be on the committee.

Sharon Lewis (WCA member) Steering meetings were created to be run as a good working meeting. The Steering and General meetings have become two general meetings.

Discussion followed regarding time management for the Board and paying attention to Steering meetings being for Board work and General meetings being for guests and general members.

Public Safety- Becky Weber

(Weber) The idea is to give each councilman several Public Safety issues. Becky has been working on a list to release to the Board. We will make our suggestions and then it will be released to the assigned Councilman.

Coalition Public Meeting

(Jenkins) The Public Coalition meeting on 7/27 is being promoted. Blasts are being done via social media and an image will be given to B. Weber for the Constant Contact list.

Thursday 7/11 is the next Coalition meeting.

(McNulty) Drug dealing is happening at the BP at the corner of Boudinot and Harrison.

(Jenkins) Asked for access to the Constant Contact account for purposes of outreach to Friends of the Community Garden.

Motion by Strasser that Mary Jenkins be given access to the Constant Contact list for purposes of promoting and informing friends of the WCG and members of the WCG about garden things. Seconded by Michelle Conda.

The initial list would be people who are gardeners. There would be an option for people to join the Garden list.

All in favor – motion passed.

Westwood Demolitions

(J. McNulty) Demolition in Westwood has stalled out. Nothing is being torn down anymore. They have stopped tearing down buildings in Westwood. We need to get a handle on this. Things are going well with Ed Cunningham. We want to tear down blighted properties. They are tearing down hundreds in Price Hill. We want to push multifamily blighted buildings through the system. Ed is saying that he can push them through if they are a safety issue. They are all safety issues. We are targeting specific buildings in Westwood. In committee, we really have to find a way to feed the info to Ed Cunningham.

(Rich) We should reach out to Price Hill because they have been successful.

(J. McNulty) It is strange that they have stopped tearing down buildings in Westwood.

(Kimmet) There is a burned out house on Shafer that has been sitting burned out for two years. It is supposed to be under contract to be torn down.

(Jenkins) Concurrently, we should have a conversation with Ed Cunningham in addition to our picking one focus property after the next and getting them torn down.

(J. McNulty) We could all work together and put together an organized way of feeding properties that are ready to go to Ed Cunningham of the City Building Department. We just need to get more organized. We have contracts on certain properties, but the contractors are just sitting on the contract and should not be allowed to do so. There is lots of demolition money without the capacity to get the job done.

Westwood Town Hall - Kimmet

A good fight was made to save the Gamble House.

We need to protect Westwood Town Hall, not wait until there is a budget crisis. The community should take control of the future of WTH. It is a community space and there are many future plans that we could make for this building.

(Jenkins) Don't create another committee to do it. Tuck it under Preservation and make it a priority.

(J. McNulty) It is more than the Preservation Committee. Aside from the programs, it is the building. Besides preserving the Town Hall building, we need to insure that it is used, etc.

(Jenkins) Please bring up WTH preservation at the Coalition meeting.

(Sharon Lewis) It would be good to promote the WTH committee on the Constant Contact list. This could also be advertised in the Western Hills Press.

Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Program

In Hamilton County, one must register a rental property. Some people do it and some people don't. We also have all kinds of housing codes that are on the books for rental and owner occupied dwellings. In Minneapolis, if one wants to rent a home to somebody, one must go to the City, buy a license, it is inspected and perhaps a background check is done on the landlord. There is a fee with the City inspection.

(Strasser) Take the idea to a Councilman who will run this.

(Conda) There would not be any problems with properties if people in the first place were willing to do what they are supposed to do.

The problem properties committee will work on this.

#14

(Kimmet) We have been working on the Bracken Woods project for a few years. We have a lot of work to do on this project. As soon as WestCURC purchases the property, then the City buys the property from WestCURC. The goal is to get all 27 properties on Bracken Woods. The going is slow.

(Kimmet) The City wanted to start somewhere so they chose Bracken Woods as a Phase 1 TIF project. I will report later on down the road as that goes further.

New District 3 Headquarters on Ferguson Avenue

Final site of new D3 headquarters is on Ferguson Ave. On 7/23, there is a Design Phase meeting at 6:00p.m. at Elder H.S.

Jenkins plans to attend the police meeting. We should go there in force to support D3.

July 17 will be the next properties committee meeting.

(J. McNulty) What ideas do we have for how CPD should use the old building?

(Jenkins) At the other meetings, space and use of space in the new D3 headquarters were discussed.

(Sharon Lewis) This meeting is the first of many meetings and the planning meeting will be about the design.

American Flags along Harrison Avenue

The flags will be inventoried and team will go out, hang additional flags and move the two flags on poles that are being torn down near the new Firehouse location.

Westwood Yard Sale

We need items donated for the Westwood Yard Sale on July 20th.

Miscellaneous

(Kuhl) I would like for J. Kimmet to apologize for his behavior.

(J. Kimmet) I apologize for my behavior at that meeting and apologize to Becky Weber for my behavior. Let's try to have great meetings. I do apologize.

(Weber) At Midway School, there will be the addition of a crosswalk. Traffic and Engineering is going to make a turn lane at Glenmore and Schwartz.

Art Show Committee

We are looking for sponsors and we have sponsor forms.

We are going to have Greg Johnson of CMHA come in September. They want to know the priorities of our organization regarding the Good Neighbor Agreement.

Mail

(Kimmet) There is a zoning public meeting tomorrow, at 9a.m. regarding HH Gregg at 5043 Glencrossing. They want to put up a sign.

Hearing on 7/24 for 6186 Glenway, Planet Fitness Center. They are requesting a variance to reduce the number of parking spaces from 500 to 158. (Red Lobster property)

Motion from Weber to ask for a continuance of that hearing, seconded by Jenkins so that we can see pictures of the HH Greg situation.

Motion passed/ All in favor

We have another lease agreement from the City for next year to lease the Westwood Community Gardens space.

Our NSP contract has been approved through the City. We can start turning in vouchers.

With regard to the Westwood Art Show, we need a one day special insurance rider in order to serve alcohol at the event.

Motion by Jenkins for up to \$800.00, seconded by Conda to purchase a one day special insurance rider in order to serve alcohol at the event

A brief discussion followed.

Vote –

Jill Minor– no

All others present – yes

Motion passed

(Kimmet) Valerie Baumann, Treasurer, thought that we had to file every 3 years for our 501 4c status with the IRS. We need to write an explanation letter stating why we missed a filing deadline. The fee will be \$450.00.

Becky Weber and Joel Kimmet will help Valerie with the necessary forms, etc. to resolve the problem.

Motion to adjourn by Joel Kimmet.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Strasser

Recording Secretary