

**Westwood Civic Association 6/11/13 Steering meeting minutes
Submitted by Karen Stasser, Recording Secretary**

Present: Joel Kimmert, Karen Strasser, Mary Kuhl, Valerie Baumann, Jim McNulty, Irene McNulty, Leslie Rich, Becky Weber, Tom Hodges, Jill Minor, Mary Jenkins, Melva Gweyn, Irene McNulty, Tom Minor

Excused: Michelle Conda

Our 501-C4 status is being questioned per the IRS website listing suspended 501-C4 organizations. Joel Kimmert will go to the IRS and request an official reason and file an appeal. We will find out why our status was revoked and find out what we need to do to get our status reinstated.

**Motion by Karen Strasser to approve the WCA minutes from the 4/23/13 Special Board meeting and the minutes from the 4/16/13 election dinner meeting. Seconded by Leslie Rich.
All in favor, motion approved**

A discussion was led by Jim McNulty regarding the document called "Suggested Coalition Guidelines."

Suggested Coalition Guidelines Line item 1

(referenced excerpt from the document) WCA and the Coalition acknowledge and respect the hard work and enthusiasm associated with the form based code and square projects and the importance of thriving business districts.

Motion to approve line item 1 by Mary Kuhl, seconded by Jerry Hildebrand. A discussion followed and it was decided that the line item needed the words "and the coalition" removed and the word "respect" changed to "respects."

Motion passed, all in favor.

Suggested Coalition Guidelines Line Item 2

WCA will facilitate the coalition process. Please note that page 3 of the Westwood Strategic Plan spells this out clearly- "This plan will be the guiding document for Westwood's future. Proposed issues or projects that are not covered in this plan, or do not conform to the plan, will be resolved in open meetings with full community engagement facilitated by the Westwood Civic Association."

Motion by Jim McNulty, seconded by Mary Kuhl, to approve line item 2 in the Suggested Coalition Guidelines document.

Discussion followed and Tom Hodges disagreed with adopting line item 2 stating that the coalition should facilitate the Coalition. B. Weber added that this is getting very confusing for the public.

(J. McNulty) The document is saying that WCA should facilitate the Coalition.

(Kuhl) Anybody can form a group. There has to be a voice of the neighborhood.

(Hodges) I think that the Coalition is a good thing.

(Kimmet) The Coalition has been formed for this one project only.

(Jenkins) Jim McNulty is suggesting that the Coalition is an Outreach of WCA.

(Kimmett) Four members of WCA are on the Coalition.

(J. McNulty) There are three groups that are seriously engaged in the Westwood Square project. We need to be the overarching organization that gets people involved. I believe that it is crucial that we facilitate this project.

(Gweyn) We need to investigate what will work with regard to Form Based Codes. We need to get the good out of it and address the serious problems that we all see every day.

(J. McNulty) I am excited about this maybe turning into a Town Hall Square project.

With the motion on the floor, the vote was called.

7 in favor:

Irene McNulty
Jim McNulty
Becky Weber
Valerie Baumann
Melva Gweyn
Jerry Hildebrand
Mary Kuhl

6 against:

Karen Strasser
Tom Hodges
Leslie Rich
Mary Jenkins
Jill Minor
Tom Minor

President Joel Kimmet then cast a vote of no.

Motion fails

(Jenkins) It is our role in the Coalition and in WCA that we teach the public about our values.

(Kuhl) If not for J. McNulty hearing it on the radio and me getting a Facebook message, we would not have known about the spending of the \$10,000 TIF money for the Westwood Square feasibility study.

(Jenkins) Many people want to be for something. It is our role to speak up about the issues that are really real concerns. We haven't just walked away from that process.

(Weber) There has to be one group that speaks for the neighborhood.

(Kimmet) This is just one project.

(Jenkins) There isn't a settled plan for Westwood Square.

(Kuhl) We have all lived in this neighborhood and there is lots of good stuff going on and lots of really bad stuff.

(Hodges) Most people are for this. People generally like this idea. It may not even be possible. There truly is a feasibility study.

(Jenkins) There is no hidden agenda within the Coalition being pushed forward. We want excellent participation in the process. We just have to keep putting our best foot forward and insisting on the things that we believe in. I don't think that anyone is being sold a bill of goods.

Discussion followed regarding the development of many Squares and communities, some successful, others not successful.

(Hodges) To support a walkable business district, there has to be a certain amount of population density.

(M. Jenkins) The same values are being spoken from all of the organizations in Westwood. Let's just keep bringing this to the Coalition.

(Kimmet) We have two WCA Board members on the Coalition. Additionally, two Coalition members are from the Business District.

(Gweyn) I want to be sure that we are doing the right thing. There is a percentage of "affordable housing" included in this.

Preservation

The Cincinnati Preservation Society is interested in saving a single, family home at 2625 Fenton Avenue.

Motion by Jim McNulty to ask Michael Cervay and Ed Cunningham to spare this building because it is historic and unless a building is in imminent danger of falling down, we are only in favor of tearing down multifamily housing.

Motion passed, all in favor

Action: Joel Kimmet will write the letter.

(Sharon Lewis) I would appreciate it if the Coalition meetings were announced in the Western Hills Press and in the WCA newsletter. Updates should be written for the press as well.

(Jenkins) The next Coalition meeting will be 6/13 at 6:30p.m.at Westwood Town Hall.

(Kuhl) I am requesting that the WCA Board be copied on all letters whereby we approve a motion to write a letter.

Update on 2280 Harrison

Being demolished this Saturday 6/15 at 10a.m.

Update on 2614 Harrison

Still on the demolition list.

Discussion and Tally of Surveys taken at the May 28th WCA meeting –

(Weber) People were glad that WCA had this meeting.

When people aren't as involved in working in Westwood, they don't see the whole picture of the pros and cons of why we often feel the way that we feel on certain issues.

(Kuhl) The survey was a last minute thing. We had initially wanted to use index cards. We decided that the survey would be a very easy way to just do this.

(J. Minor) How many total surveys?

(Weber) I'd say maybe 30.

(Kuhl) I thought it was a good thing to capture the opinions of those attending the 5/28 public meeting.

(Jenkins) There were sign in sheets at the meeting.

(Jenkins) There will be a public meeting sponsored by the Coalition. Is WCA willing to send out an announcement for the Coalition?

(Kimmet) If we form a committee everyone from the committee needs to be included on the decisions being made by the committee. All members of the committee should have been included in the planning of the power point, etc. at the 5/28 WCA public meeting.

Coalition Report –

(Jenkins) We are having a meeting on 6/13.

I will email you all as soon as I know if the public meeting is happening on 7/20 or 7/27

Community Gardens –

(Jenkins) There are now 40 beds rented. The beds look awesome.

We are doing squash mounds.

We did not rent cornrows because we could not afford the dirt.

Eugenie

(J. McNulty) There are many people on both sides of this issue, who feel very strongly about it. WCA should be the place that they can all go to have a public forum on the issue. We should take the lead in making that happen before it becomes a divisive issue in the neighborhood. The WCA Public Safety committee will be working on this in committee.

Guest – Eugenie Resident, Judy Schwallie

We tried closing off Eugenie 15 years ago. Everyone from the two streets (Eugenie and Werkcastle) was for this, but those on the adjoining streets and those who cut through, were against this. We have lots of young families on our street. We just want to get rid of the bad cut through traffic. We would like to present to you before you make a decision on this issue.

(Sharon Lewis) Closing down a street isn't always the answer. Our street was always quiet. We have many drug abusers on our street. Closing down a main cut through isn't always the answer.

Tom Hodges would like to be on the committee to work with Eugenie and Werkcastle.

(Jenkins) Invest in Neighborhoods is applying for a grant to support community gardens around Cincinnati.

**Motion by Jenkins, seconded by McNulty that we write a letter of support.
All in favor, motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned by Joel Kimmet.