

Westwood Civic Association

General Meeting

March 19, 2013

Present: J. Kimmet, M. Jenkins, V. Baumann, M. Conda, B. Weber, J. Hildebrand, J. Minor,
M. Gweyn, I. McNulty, M. Kuhl, J. McNulty

Absent: J. Sess

Excused: T. Minor, K. Strasser

J. Kimmet called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and noted the excused absences. Board members decided to send flowers to the Strasser's, acknowledging a family illness, from funds donated to the flower fund. Then J. McNulty led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Police Report

Officer R. Minella reported on behalf of Police District 3 and handed out crime and arrests reports. He noted that total violent crime was down 34% over the same period last year. Repeat calls for service locations were noted. Officer Minella announced the March 27 public meeting regarding the location and other matters related to the new District 3 Police headquarters. Information was previously sent to the WCA membership. M. Gweyn asked about recent police action at McHenry and Harrison Aves, near the Sunoco, police action. Officer Minella said it might have been related to a stabbing March 15 at the laundromat. He had no specifics. There was also a robbery involving firearms at Queen City Pizza (suspects have been questioned) and a bar shooting in Price Hill on the same night. An attendee asked about possible action regarding an allegedly irresponsible property owner at 3279 Montana, reported multiple times. Officer Minella commented that he has discussed it with attendee before and has investigated the situation which he described as a civil matter. J. Kimmet noted that WCA has also reviewed the issue. He suggested mediation. M. Conda raised a concern about probable drug exchanges on Morningridge and on Harrison. J. McNulty advised the attendee not to let it ruin his life. Officer Minella offered to talk with the attendee again.

Westwood Engine 35 Fire Report

Officer Minella presented statistics on behalf of the Engine 35 lieutenant who had to leave on a call. He reported

311 total responses in February, including 17 fire responses, 27 EMS non-fire, and 267 EMT responses. There were 4,413 total responses in 2012, including 3,765 EMS runs.

Minutes

MOTION by M. Jenkins for the approval of all minutes from November through March meetings, with minutes from March amended to include a reference to Westwood Historical Society and a name correction to a motion, noting J. McNulty as the speaker.

SECONDED by M. Gweyn.

PASSED unanimously.

Neighborhood Support Program

J. Kimmet reported on the NSP and his recommendation for the distribution of \$5,000 of Westwood's allocation for 2013. He asked Westwood residents to sign the attendance list. He proposed funding for the newsletter and for neighborhood improvement. He noted that the city's fiscal year is changing from January-December to July-June which impacts the distribution of the \$5,000: an initial \$2,500 for January – June 2013 and then \$5,000 for FY2014 (July-June) to be requested separately. Past areas of support have included town hall gardens and clean up, community gardens, and the newsletter. S. Lewis suggested that WCA focus on the business district on

Glenmore near Montana a little more. B. Weber mentioned that Ferguson is a business district as well. J. Kimmet said that the board will discuss specifics at a steering meeting. It was noted that \$500 annually for Town Hall gardens is generally requested. An attendee commented on the level of trash in neighborhoods of Westwood, particularly lower Harrison (partially S. Fairmount) and Montana by I-74. M. Gweyn commented that Westwood is far from the worst in terms of litter volume and she announced the clean up scheduled for April 28, which will involve a Westwood clean up. J. McNulty urged attendees get identifying information if possible and to report litter and other concerns to 513.591.6000 or online at 5916000.com. He pointed out that it is useful to have multiple people report an issue. S. Lewis noted the Mayor's office number: 513-352-3250. She also provided the number for Hamilton County Environmental Services for concerns about open burning: 513.946.7711. Some concerns were voiced about calls going without response and possible retaliation. M. Gweyn mentioned a proposal by P.G. Sittenfeld regarding neighborhood cleanup in addition to a bill in the Ohio General Assembly.

MOTION by J. McNulty for approval an allocation of \$2,500 in NSP funds for January-June 2013 as follows: \$1500 WCA newsletter and \$1000 for neighborhood improvement.

SECONDED by V. Baumann.

PASSED unanimously.

Building Demolition Hearing

J. Kimmet reported on addresses to be dealt with at the March 29, 2013 DBL hearing. Two of the addresses are on the WCA worst buildings list: 2614 Harrison, which has housed a store, and 2680 Shaffer, a condemned but occupied four family property in the Bracken Woods project, which both are significantly in arrears in taxes and have multiple violations. V. Baumann asked if we need additional advocacy on 2280 Harrison. J. Kimmet said that WCA will ask that the properties be rezoned for single family. J. Kimmet will represent WCA at the hearing. MOTION by J. McNulty for WCA to write a letter to request the demolition of these two buildings.

SECONDED by V. Baumann.

PASSED unanimously.

Westwood Art Show

The Westwood Art Show is scheduled for September 14, 2013. The Art Show Committee met recently. B. Weber reported that some funds are needed so that the Art Show coordinator can take care of early needs like printing, building rental, and other costs that will be reimbursed when vendor fees come in. Advertising will be sold in an art show pamphlet. Full board participation will be needed for many roles at the show. There will be a poster designed by students.

MOTION by B. Weber to allow up to \$600 for expenses related to art show start up.

SECONDED by M. Jenkins.

PASSED unanimously.

Westwood Home Tour

The Westwood Home Tour will take place on April 28, 2013. It is sponsored by the Westwood Historical Society and will feature eight houses and two buildings.

Tire Amnesty Day

Tire Amnesty Day is March 23, 2013. More information is on the WCA website and Facebook page.

Chronic Nuisance

B. Weber reported that C. Kearney will meet with the Human Relations Commission to address chronic nuisance concerns and to identify ways to empower residents in the process.

WCA Board Election

M. Jenkins, election supervisor, announced that, following last week's Steering meeting, when six candidates were announced for the board, J. Sess decided not to run for re-election. J. McNulty noted that the two nominating committees support the modified slate. B. Weber expressed concern that board members without a history of WCA participation won't be as engaged as WCA needs them to be. She prefers to have people demonstrate involvement first. M. Jenkins commented that we have five qualified candidates who are very engaged in their community and non-profits and have something to offer WCA. J. McNulty clarified that the question raised is about the participative role of candidates, generally, and not about the current candidates, who were duly nominated and vetted. J. Kimmet said the constitution is clear on participation requirements and noted that we expect board meeting and committee involvement. M. Conda suggested a by-laws review to address concerns about the elections process and other matters.

MOTION by J. McNulty to declare the election over to and appoint the five candidates to the open seats. (The candidates are T. Hodges, I. McNulty, V. Baumann, M. Gweyn, and L. Rich.)

SECONDED by M. Conda.

APPROVED, 9-1.

Westwood Square Discussion

J. Kimmet reviewed the past WCA action, including the December 18, 2012 WCA vote to have formal representation in the discussion of Westwood Square, and the current movement on a coalition. J. McNulty said WCA can serve as a coalescing place or collaboration. J. Kimmet said that some of the groups have done underhanded work to push the Westwood Square project through city council. B. Weber clarified WCA is not for or against the project but that it wants to be represented in the process and to permit time for community engagement in the decisions. M. Kuhl wondered why the groups are not actively working together. M. Jenkins referred to the motion passed at the last meeting to express WCA enthusiasm for community engagement but to start by having a leadership meeting. J. Kimmet reported that he met with the presidents of the other organizations at which apologies were issued and cooperative engagement in the process was promised. An interest in a \$10,000 Tax Increment Funding (TIF) feasibility study was announced by city council today. WCA was not aware of this prior to the announcement. M. Kuhl asked if winning at all costs is the desired outcome, noting that these developments are confusing to Westwood residents. B. Weber said this goes back a long time. M. Jenkins said our commitment to involvement dates back to December and urged attendees not to let another day go by without engaging in this process while also addressing our concerns. M. Kuhl supported working together but wants honest, open engagement. M. Gweyn said that the community wants a clear idea of the benefits of the Westwood Square proposal and a right to turn it down. J. Minor urges a survey of WCA membership to be better able to represent the membership, saying that WCA needs evidence and data to move forward. B. Weber commented that WCA needs the leadership meeting we called for last week to air concerns and develop the process now. M. Conda commented on the link of this to form-based codes, commenting that WCA needs to know more about this which is the reason we're asking for a slowing down and a period of education. WCA board members also expressed a commitment to fuller community involvement.

MOTION by B. Weber to request a meeting of the leadership and board of WestCURC, WCA, WHS, and Westwood Works.

SECONDED by M. Conda.

APPROVED unanimously.

J. Hildebrand asked why another group is serving as a conduit on civic issues. M. Kuhl commented that other groups also serve an important role in the community and in the common support for the future of Westwood.

MOTION by J. McNulty to ask city council to table consideration of the appropriation of TIF funds for a Westwood Square feasibility study and to provide a thorough accounting of Westwood's available TIF funds and expenditures against it.

SECONDED by M. Kuhl.

PASSED unanimously with one abstention.

B. Weber proposed a letter to the membership expressing concern about misinformation, the role of business owners and residents in the process, and urging expression of concern about the fast track, citing messages that went out from other group.

PASSED unanimously with one abstention.

M. Gweyn reported that John Cranley intends to attend WCA's May 21 general meeting to discuss zoning matters.

MOTION by M. Kuhl to adjourn.

SECONDED by M. Conda.

PASSED unanimously.