

Westwood Civic Association General Meeting Minutes September 17, 2013
Submitted by Karen Strasser

Present:

Valerie Baumann, Becky Weber, Joe Corso, Mary Jenkins, Michelle Conda,
Karen Strasser, Joel kimmet, Mary Kuhl, Leslie Rich, Tom Minor, Melva Gweyn

Excused: Jim McNulty, Irene McNulty, Tom Hodges, Jill Minor

Cincinnati Police Department report by Captain Russ Neville

Shooting in 2900 block of Harrison Ave on 9/14/13. This shooting was very random. Two guys were horse playing initially, when one guy got the better of the other and the loser went and got a gun and shot him. We aren't getting much in the way of cooperation. 99% of those who are shot have entered themselves into a lifestyle choice that made it more likely that they would be shot. These shootings weigh on our resources. If someone is uncooperative, I want them targeted. Who do they talk to on Facebook? We focus on each and everyone of them until the guy in jail begins to cooperate. Detective Mendez is working on this case. He is a fabulous detective and he has a nice sound case here. I can't put a timeline on when this case will be closed out. I would be more concerned about this case if it was a random act. We lead the City in the reduction of crime. Since March of 2010, CPD has reduced every area of crime. This doesn't mean that your neighborhood is the best it can be, but we are headed in the right direction. We are the largest District in the City. We focus on patterns and trends to the violence. We select and deploy where we can have the most impact. We are way down in robberies. We have been able to drive that down. We are doing good on shootings. We are getting beat up down near Beekman and I'm not sure what to do with that activity yet. We have identified 300 violent felons in Westwood. Our ability to provide the service that we would like to provide in certain areas is a question of resources.

Our services are taking a kicking. If your keys are left in the car on an auto theft, I'm not investigating the auto theft. I'll let you know when the car is found. Please appreciate my position on the decisions that I'm making about what to do with my limited resources.

Jeffrey Blackwell is the new CPD Police Chief. We welcome Chief Blackwell to Cincinnati.

(Kuhl) You are not getting the resources you need here. Why is that?

(Neville) We don't have extras to shift officers between districts when needs arise. We need to focus on Public Safety with regard to the resources of the City.

(Weber) Repeat offenders are in Westwood. Certain agencies will draw offenders to a neighborhood. We all need to be mindful of that when the issues come up. People say that they don't want to live in Westwood anymore because of the crime. We need to pay attention to what social service agencies are in our neighborhoods.

(Baumann) Do you think they know the individual who shot the gun at the incident on Saturday, 9/14? Will he be sent to prison if convicted?

(Neville) I can't say. We've had some luck getting time for criminals in the Federal system. Your voice is very well heard by judges.

Gamble Montessori, Principal Jack Jose

We are seeking approval for a sign on Westwood Northern Boulevard. This sign will be across the street from Millridge Ave on Westwood Northern Blvd. The proposed sign is 4' x 8". This will sit off the road about six to eight feet. There is a concrete structure there that protects the gas. The colors will be violet, purple and kelly green.

(Sess) In the recent past, there have been two entities, Newcomer Funeral Home and the YMCA at Boudinot and Montana, who have requested a sign variance.

(Kimmet) The Newcomer Home sign was going to be way too tall.

Motion to approve the sign proposed by Gamble Montessori by Karen Strasser, seconded by Joe Corso.

Discussion followed:

(Conda) I would like to know what the code is for a sign at this location. I'm not comfortable making a decision tonight on this.

(Strasser) I resend my motion.

(Kuhl) I'm going to vote against it if the vote is tonight.

Michelle Conda and John Sess will look into this.

(Jose) I will talk to WCA soon regarding how WCA can plug into Gamble Montessori's needs.

Broadhope Art Collection – Sharon Montavon

The Broadhope Art Collection is moving to the Reuhlman Building at the corner of Montana and Harrison. We will be opening on November 1st. We will have an open house on November 9 from noon to 9p.m.

White Oak Christian Church – Josh Benforado

Our original campus is in White Oak at Cheviot and Blue Rock. A few years ago we opened a second campus in Ross, Ohio. We are looking at opening a third campus in the Cincinnati area. We have it narrowed down to a few locations and the Westwood, Bridgetown areas are on our radar. This is a recon mission for us to learn more about Westwood.

(Baumann) What are the other areas where you are looking?

(Benforado) Norwood, Westwood, Downtown and Northside.

(Baumann) Westwood is very close to White Oak.

(Benforado) It may seem close, but it does fall into the formula where we are looking to succeed in our spear of influence.

(Rich) Other churches who have located satellite congregations within the neighborhood, have occupied spaces that have been vacated, etc. Is that your idea?

(Benforado) The most cost effective way to launch a new campus is to find existing space that is not in use. That would be the initial plan. One never knows if someone wants to donate a building, etc., but we have no buildings in mind.

(Gweyn) I have never heard someone speak of a church as a campus.

(Benforado) The best way to explain this is it is kind of like franchising – same mission, same values, same leaders except we just meet in a new location. We meet at the same time. We are a non denomination Christian church unaffiliated with any governing body.

(Conda) What is your mission? What are you planning to do?

(Benforado) We want to develop and build communities that are followers of Jesus. I want this campus to be a great positive impact in the community. We want to make the community a better place. We would need to look at the needs for service for the community where we are located. We are not a school at all.

(Kuhl) When you look at Westwood, Northside, etc., what do you see that our community needs from you?

(Benforado) What drove us to this idea is census tract research. We wanted to highlight the areas around Cincinnati that have the largest number of Christians therein.

(Kuhl) You meet in the High School in Ross. Is there a soup kitchen? Do you plan on bringing that to Westwood?

(Benforado) We partner with organizations at the beginning. Outreach services that we start would be minimal until we had a foundation for the new church. It could eventually be a food pantry. I would love your input on the biggest needs of the community.

(Sharon Lewis) The City on the Hill, located behind White Castle, attendee's have contributed to criminal activity around its location. We, the Westwood Community, are witnessing criminal behavior due to the City on the Hill owners purchasing apartments and other buildings on the side streets. Ms. Lewis asked the presenter to provide more details at a future meeting so that the Westwood Civic Association Board and Westwood residents can review them.

(Jenkins) Since one of the purposes of the Outreach Committee is to talk to various churches and social service agencies about our mission and their mission, I would like the Outreach Committee to take the lead on this.

Motion by Mary Jenkins that the Outreach Committee have followup conversations with White Oak Christian Church regarding another church location, seconded by Leslie Rich.

(Baumann) Why aren't you going to the east side?

(Benforado) The radius factor is a main consideration here. We chose Ross because we had a pocket of people who were already out in Ross, commuting to White Oak. We aren't seeing any other large pockets on our map of attendees.

Vote:

All in favor, motion passed.

Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) Presentation – Lick Run Water Diversion Project – Scott Willis, Project Manager for Queen City/Cora Avenue Project

This is 12 individual projects, all with 12 project managers and design teams. We will talk about the Queen City and Cora Avenue Project.

From mid 1800 to mid 1900, Cincinnati built combined sewers that carried rainwater and sewage to the nearest river. Many miles of streams were piped. The earliest one was constructed of clay, brick or hollowed log – some of these sewers still exist today in Cincinnati. Rain water and sewage were carried together in the same pipe to the nearest river. The combined sewers also take rain water runoff from rain, etc. Flow from the toilet and downspout goes down the same pipe.

In 1948, there was passage of the Federal Water Pollution control Act. No more combined sewers allowed. Interceptor sewers were built to intercept the combined sewers and take the flow to a wastewater treatment plant instead of to the river. Combined sewer overflow outfalls were built to allow combined flows to divert to the river to prevent flooding/backups if needed. During dry weather, everything works great. During wet weather, too much flow comes through the combined sewer overflow. First this water goes into the Millcreek and the Millcreek is a tributary of the Ohio River.

Over time, due to population growth and land increase of impervious surfaces, about 11.5 billion gallons overflow annually.

Our formal plan has two phases –

Phase one is called Project Groundwork. The cost will be paid by increases in our sewer bills.

Lower Mill Creek Solution –

More than half of the overflow occurs in the Lower Mill Creek watershed.

We are required to eliminate 1.67 billion gallons of CSOs into the Mill Creek by 2018.

Two different solutions for Lower Mill Creek between 2010 – 2012

Solution 1 - Deep Tunnel Solution: Capture, store and treat overflows until the rain is over.

Solution 2 - Sustainable Solution ; Reduce volume of stormwater entering the combined sewer system (stormwater detention basins, new storm sewers, stream restoration/daylighting)

In December of 2012, the MSD submitted the sustainable solution.

The sustainable solution will improve water quality, create new jobs and provide opportunities for neighborhood revitalization. The Total cost is 244 million dollars. It includes projects in four sub-watersheds of Lower Mill Creek.

Queen City and Cora Ave. sewer separation project -

Lick Run Project will eliminate 624 million gallons of overflows annually into the Mill Creek during a typical year.

Project includes:

- Restored streams and underground stormwater sewers to convey stormwater to an urban waterway in South Fairmount
- Urban waterway to convey stormwater to the Mill Creek

Some of this work is already completed along Harrison Avenue.

We project that we are proposing, along Harrison Ave, will seal combined sewers, restore a previously existing drainage system and get all of the flow down to the Mill Creek. This project will come down to Queen City Avenue.

The site is a ravine that begins behind the Judson Care Center and follows a southeasterly path toward Queen City Ave. MSD will restore a natural, historical ephemeral stream that used to flow through this ravine but is now captured in a combined sewer.

For the project we will -

- Seal existing stormwater inlets
- Stream channel stabilization along portions of the existing ravine
- New stormwater sewer along Fenton Ave.

Complete design – 11/2013

Construction begins 9/2014

Construction ends 11/2015

There are no odor control measures as part of this project.

(Baumann) On my street, when we have dry weather, the sewers really smell.

(Willis) There is a minimum velocity required to make sure that sewage is flowing.

(Baumann) Will the storm water be treated before it reaches the Millcreek?

(Willis) No, it will not.

(Baumann) I had heard at one time that the EPA would require the treatment.

(Willis) This is further down the road for us.

(Corso) How much is the traffic going to be impacted?

(Willis) We are trying to stage the project at different times to offset those impacts. We would love to get feedback from the neighborhood regarding securing the project area after the work is completed. In order to really have this project flourish and this asset thrive, we need to partner with neighborhoods, police, etc. We are looking at gates, etc. for security. We would love to come back to get ideas to maximize the benefits of this asset and keep it secure as well.

For more information: www.Projectgroundwork.org/lickrun
Customer Service 513.557.3594
MSD.Communications@cincinnati-oh.gov

Mrs. Sharon Lewis requested that future MSD presentations should note Hamilton County's logo at the bottom of any presentations.

Westwood Art Show – Leslie Rich

70 artists participated in this event with 6 craft booths for kids and families, food vendors and MadCap Puppets. All artists reported that the Westwood Art Show was the best Art Show. We received great feedback regarding how to improve the Art Show too.

Leslie took the opportunity to thank the WCA Board members for their participation in the event.

There was a profit between \$450-500 from the Art Show itself. The final numbers are not in at this time.

(Kimmet) Thanks to everyone who helped. Many people stopped by the WCA booth and we were busy constantly from start to finish. We are still working on the accounting of this event with some bills outstanding. We will do a report at a later time.

**Motion by Michelle Conda, seconded by Leslie Rich that we send a thank you to Dina Hanks Chris Bigem of CRC and Town Hall.
Motion passed, all in favor.**

Community Gardens – Mary Jenkins

Joel Kimmiet and Mary Jenkins attended a meeting and accepted a gift for \$750.00 from the Cheviot Westwood Kiwanis. We will use this to finish the arbor gates. Mary Jenkins will write a note of thanks to the Kiwanis Club.

9/28 Harvest Party for the community at the Westwood Community Gardens. This will be a casual potluck affair.

Eugenie Lane speeding issues – Mary Kuhl

(Kuhl) Speeding is still an issue on Eugenie Lane. I would like to propose an adhoc committee to work with the people on Eugenie and Werkastle.

(Jenkins) You are correct that we want to continue to help these people address the problem.

(Weber) This issue could go to the Public Safety committee.

(Sess) In the meantime, the CPD speed wagon is sitting idly on Glenmore Ave. I suggest that we call Captain Neville and get the speed wagon moved over to that area.

(Kuhl) We need more informed people. Montana is safer and better than what it was. We worked hard on that project. I'll call Captain Neville regarding the speedwagon.

(Jenkins) This will be assigned to the Public Safety Committee. Mary Kuhl will start this ball rolling.

(Kimmet) We need a Public Safety Chairperson. This is one of our busiest committees. John Sess volunteered to be the new chairperson of the Public Safety committee.

Westwood Fall Cleanup dates – Mary Jenkins

Melva Gweyn will coordinate this as the Infrastructure committee.

(Baumann) Donations are being collected for Cincinnati Police Specialist Bob McGuire who has cancer. There is a fundraiser for Officer McGuire 9/21/13 from 7p.m. – midnight at the F.O.P. #69 Lodge Hall at 1900 Central Parkway.

(Kimmet) With regard to NSP money, everything needs to be closed out by September 30, 2013. We have had signs made that say "Welcome to Westwood." These signs cost about \$500.00. Creative Blast makes these signs for us. They are located down on Spring Grove Avenue.

**Motion by Mary Jenkins, seconded by Michelle Conda to have another welcome to Westwood sign made with our remaining NSP funds to replace the destroyed sign at Boudinot and Westwood Northern Boulevard.
Motion passed – all in favor**

(Gweyn) Can we get someone from the City to tell us what they are doing about Harrison Ave? The road is in bad shape. Will we have a finished gateway?

(Jenkins) Let's ask Andrea from Traffic and Engineering for an update on the Harrison Avenue progress.

Meeting adjourned by President Joel Kimmet.