

**Westwood Civic Association September 10, 2013 Steering Committee Minutes
Submitted by Karen Strasser, Recording Secretary**

Present:

Joel Kimmet, Michelle Conda, Becky Weber, Mary Jenkins, Tom Hodges, Joe Corso, Melva Gweyn, Irene McNulty, Jim McNulty, Mary Kuhl, Valerie Baumann, Leslie Rich, Karen Strasser

Excused:

Tom Minor, Jill Minor

Joel Kimmet called the meeting to order and welcomed all visitors. Tonight is a steering meeting where we prepare for things coming up.

Holiday Community Event Proposed – Tom Hodges and Mary Jenkins

Looking at 12/14, 11/30/ , 12/7 several community organizations have started a conversation about a community event with a tree lighting, etc. The organizations would like WCA to be engaged in the event.

Propose that WCA be engaged in the planning of the event.

Outreach committee along with Membership will work on the event and attend the organizational meetings.

We will put out an announcement about the organizational meeting for this event when we know more.

Mary Jenkins will find out more information and come back to WCA with suggestions for engagement.

Western Hills Viaduct Public Input Meetings – Mary Jenkins

The Western Hills Viaduct is close to outliving the period of time for which it was designed. There has been an engineering study and the City is moving towarded an upgrade. Three meeting 9/17 6p.m. Orion Academny, 9/19 4p.m. and 6p.m. at City Hall. This will be the public input phase. WCA Board members and our membership need to know that these meetings are happening. Do we want to go further than that, invite the department head, have them pitch the Westside, etc.

(Jenkins) Should we have engagement of the Westside?

(Gweyn) It is important that we be involved because this is a gateway to our neighborhood. This was once a beautiful gateway.

(Sharon Lewis) I addressed the situation because this subject was on the front page of the City's website and I brought this to the attention of the Board. They are going to knock down some of the viaduct and widen it.

New email for Michelle Conda is mconda@zoomtown.com

Motion by Mary Jenkins that we ask the proper City officials to make a presentation here in Westwood, seconded by Michelle Conda All in favor.

Westwood Coalition Update – Mary Jenkins

Looking at output from 8/22 meeting and July 27

Representatives to the Coalition will go back to their respective organizations
Revitalizewestwood.com

Special Guest, Miss Karen Bouquet – Executive Assistant to CMHA

Director Greg Johnson

(Corso) Looking for input on the Good Neighbor Agreement. We will compile folk's comments and get them back to the CMHA Director.

Good Neighbor agreement is about working cooperatively with CMHA properties.

Miss Bouquet was here on behalf of CMHA Director, Greg Johnson. Have Good Neighbor agreements with 3 other Neighborhoods already.

(Chris Kearney) These are boiler plate agreements or is the agreement tailored to the community.

(Bouquet) We have to follow HUD regulations and Fair Housing. These have not been tailored to communities.

(Weber) The agreement is as it is.

(Bouquet) Each group that has signed the agreement has used the provided template.

(Kimmet) Is CMHA open to discussion regarding rewording of an item, etc.?

(Bouquet) yes, we can certainly talk about that.

(Kearney) There is a mention of property standards. My understanding is that it is only physical attributes. We are interested here in Westwood in behavior as well. Would a property being designated as a Chronic Nuisance property be a violation of the Good Neighbor Agreement?

(Bouquet) We will address chronic Nuisance problems in the neighborhood.

(Corso) Does CMHA just have this agreement for their own properties only? Does this cover all affordable housing in our neighborhood.

(Bouquet) This is a tool to open the line of communication with our neighborhoods.

(Corso) How long have the other neighborhood had this agreement in place.

(weber) This all started because J. McNulty saw that Mt. Washington has the agreement in place.

(Corso) We are just learning. As a neighborhood we feel like we have a lot of affordable housing and we are getting beat up by landlords. We would like to solve the problem in a positive way, but we have not been successful in doing so. No attention to zoning or planning has been the past pattern.

(Boquet) There is a clause in the agreement that it can be terminated.

(Kuhl) This Good Neighbor is about the property that CMHA controls. Does this include Section 8 housing?

(Bouquet) Yes, this includes everything.

(Jenkins) This sounds like a tool that has lots of potential. It would be great for us to get the answers to some of the sticky questions that we have.

(Weber) I think it would be a good idea to have Greg Johnson come.

(Kimmert) We will be in touch with your office to invite Mr. Johnson to come to our October General Meeting. In the meantime, we can study the Good Neighbor Agreement.

(Conda) Who is going to put this on our website so that many people can make it to that October meeting.

Public Forum

Eugenie/Werkastle proposal – limited for 15 minutes

There has been a proposal from Werkastle and Eugenie Lanes, that these two streets be closed off at the intersection of Eugenie and LaFueille. This proposal has been given to the City.

(Bruce McKlung) Will this project make Westwood a safer place for everyone?

- 1) reduce crime is reason given – the cell phone has revolutionized drug dealing. Closing Eugenie at LaFuille will not do anything to deter the drug traffic.
- 2) Speeding – many people use Eugenie as a cut through.
- 3) It would increase their home values – they bought houses on through streets. Housing values on other streets will plummet.
- 4) The City promised not to use a guard rail, but rather beautiful landscaping. The City of Cincinnati does not maintain the properties that they own in the median strips.
- 5) Mr. Hennesy talked about the young, urban professionals who live on Eugenie. The people of Eugenie already tried this in 2004. There is a racial element to this.

They had a block party and members of WCA Board were invited. There was also a secret Facebook page. (don't know anything about this)

At this point a petition not to close Eugenie and Werkcastle was submitted. We demand that all public street in Westwood remain open.

I understand your strife. I live at 2512 Fleetwood. (Thaeresa Harington)
I fell for the people on Eugenie, but it is a public street. I can understand where Eugenie is coming from, but I feel that it is not right. I will start making a better effort not to drive down Eugenie. I have witnessed litter being thrown on Eugenie. I understand what these residents are going through.

(Weber) I did attend one of the meetings, but I asked myself to be invited.

(Denise Guiducci) I don't believe that they have the right to say I want to live on a private street. Half of these people have moved there since the last time they tried to do this. I am almost offended that I have to come to these meetings because they want to have a dead end street)

(Donna Kermos) I sent a letter today to the WCA Board and I would appreciate it if all of the WCA Board members could take a look at that letter. If permission is granted, they are going to be trying to make their street more like a private onclave. When the City says, "No" somebody is going to sue the City. If for some reason somebody can't get to the hospital fast enough, this is going to cause increased traffic at LaFuille and Harrison and Work and Harriosn. Where is the ambulance and fire truck to go? These streets are vital shortcuts. I don't believe that the wishes of a few should outweigh the wishes of the neighborhood as a whole. Our neighborhoods should be integrated. This is an inclusive neighborhood and should stay that way always.

(Alan Guiducci, resident of Fleetwood) Minutes mean life. Minutes can mean life and death

Steve Sullivan –

There is historical relevance to not cutting off Eugenie and Werkcastle. The cars will also have to go somewhere.

(Kimmet) We have never considered Westwood to be East Westwood and West Westwood.

Motion by B. Weber to send a letter ,in opposition to the closing of Eugenie and Werkastle Lanes, seconded by I. McNulty, telling the City how WCA feels about the closing of Eugenie and WerkCastle.

(Jenkins) We have heard from advocates of closing it off. We did not have this on the agenda.

(Kuhl) I personally thing that we have heard enough to make a decision.

(Conda) I drive down that street all of the time. I have been sensitive about that street since this came up. Maybe we need bigger speed bumps.

(J.McNulty) The crime factor on Eugenie is real. Our crime problems in Westwood are everyone's problems. I don't like taking assets we have in our sitting and giving into criminals.

Irene McNulty called the question, followed by the vote:

Baumann yes

Weber yes

Conda yes

Strasser yes

Kimmet yes

Jenkins abstain

Hodges no

Corso no

Gweyn yes

I. McNulty yes

J. McNulty yes

Kuhl yes

Rich abstain

Motion passes

(Jenkins) There are legitimate public safety issues on those streets. As we communicate this decision to the residents of Eugenie and Werkcastle, we want to show support and concern to them.

(Gweyn) They have almost taken care of their problem by joining together and it is admirable what they have done.

Art Show Committee Report

(Rich) Need more help from 2-4p.m.

Motion by T. Hodges , seconded by M. Conda that we spend up to the same amount on beer as we did last last year.

All in favor, motion passes.

(Weber) We suggest not to provide booth sitters because one does not want the responsibility or the liability of the booths. Please rethink the booth sitter idea . It makes me nervous to be responsible for the artist's booth.

(Gweyn) At the Harvest Home Fair, there is something that the artist sign not holding the association responsible.

(Jenkins) Anyone who wants the link for the volunteer signup for the Art Show, we are glad to have your help.

Community Gardens Report

(Jenkins) I mentioned that we have had some theft of produce from the Community Gardens. I'm really appreciative of the effort of CPD and COPPS and good Neighbors. The issue has slowed down because there are so many eyes on the gardens. Our latest grant request from Keep Cincinnati Beautiful failed. We were recently notified of a gift from Cheviot Westwood Kiwanis. We are taking reservations and money for plots for next year. We have a wait list for next year.

Outreach Committee Report

No meeting as yet.

Buildings and Properties Report

Super duper meeting of the building and properties committee at Panera Bread last week. It was all about getting our problem properties going through the system more quickly. Joel will put together a meeting with all of the department heads. One of the problems is that the inspectors are helping the flippers find buyers for their properties. We need to find out why it takes so long for things to go through the law department. There seems to be no time limit for the demo orders to be carried out.

We are creating some template forms to help move forward on some of the problem property problems.

(Jenkins) Is there anything that we need to act on at this time?

(J. McNulty) I don't think so at this time.

(Jenkins) I'm a big fan of the letter that Becky drafted a few years ago addressing Chronic Nuisance properties with letters.

(Weber) I see no reason why we couldn't incorporate a good neighbor letter into the mix to help properties that aren't at the point of demolition.

(Kimmert) 2545 Harrison has been taken off of the demo list. A new owner wants to fix it up.

**Motion by J McNulty that we approve the minutes of June General, July steering, July General, seconded by M. Jenkins.
Motion passed and minutes approved.**

Public Safety Committee Report

We still need a chairperson for this committee.

D3 Design Report

(Conda) I will continue to represent us at the D3 design meetings. A design firm has been chosen

Joe Corso needs to decide what committee he wants to serve on.

Announcements

(Kimmert) Next week folks from MSD will be at our general meeting to discuss the Lick Run project. There is a project that they want to do in the woods behind the old Kroger.

Transfer of ownership for 5984 Glenway Work road Shell

Transfer of ownership

(Jenkins motioned to take no position, seconded by Conda)

All in favor

\$400.00 spent on beer and margarita supplies.

\$175.00 on pizza and ice.

**Motion by V. Baumann that we spend \$35.00 for D3 Resource dues,
seconded by B. Weber.**

All in favor

Meeting adjourned by President, Joel Kimmet.