

**WCA Steering Meeting
November 9, 2010
7:00 P.M.
Westwood Town Hall**

Attendance

Present: Baumann, Gweyn, Henke, Hildebrand, Kimmet, Kuhl, Lewis, McConn, McNulty, Neeld, Sess, Weber

Excused: Hollan

Absent: Bach, Boyd

Recording Secretary

Mitch Neeld

Verdin Ave. Block Watch

Mary Jenkins spoke regarding the newly formed Verdin Ave. Block Watch. So far they have a 73% participation rate including Grace Lutheran Church. Their kickoff meeting with Officer Minella is at 6:30 P.M., November 15 at Grace Lutheran Church.

Nicholas Hollan

Sess noted that Nicholas is busy with a business he is starting and would need to be excused from the meeting. Nicholas had asked John if he should resign due to too many unexcused absences. John recommended that he not resign and that there were no outstanding applicants for board membership.

DAAP Partnership with Westwood School

Sess met with P.G. Sittenfeld with the Community Learning Center Institute and discussed the possibility of a University of Cincinnati Design, Architecture, Art and Planning partnership with the Westwood School.

2111 Harrison Ave.

Sess spoke to John Pielsticker of Advantage Bank – the owner of 2111 Harrison Ave. Apparently there is the possibility of a VBML extension if a new owner buys the building and files for it. Weber noted that we want to fight the possibility of a VBML extension. Kuhl noted that Advantage Bank was not being a good neighbor by selling the building and suggested that WCA might close its accounts with Advantage Bank as a symbolic gesture.

MOTION by Kimmet to withdraw WCA money from Advantage Bank

SECOND by McConn

DISCUSSION – Kuhl – they didn't honor the wishes of the neighborhood. Sess – let's give them a couple months. Weber pointed out that they are only asking \$85K to buy, it would only cost \$100K to bring it up to code, but it would take \$400K to make livable. The new owner intends to make it into Section 8

housing. Kuhl noted that withdrawing the money won't have an affect other than symbolic. McNulty – would rather remain a customer of the bank in order to maintain a good relationship for future discussions. Kimmet suggested we could write a letter as to why to go with the action. McConn suggested a newsletter article stating our intentions prior to the action. Sess asked whether we could table the issue for 30 days to see what happens. Weber suspects the buyer may be BUILD and that they intend to flip it. Baumann noted that we have approximately \$22K in accounts at Advantage Bank.

FAILED – For: Kuhl, Weber, McConn, Kimmet; Against: Baumann, Gweyn, Henke, Hildebrand, Lewis, McNulty, Neeld, Sess.

Gweyn suggested that we might announce that we are going to remove our funds in the newsletter. Hildebrand suggested inviting Advantage Bank to our next meeting.

Henke Winery Robbed

Henke Winery was burglarized on Nov 1. The front door glass was broken and the (empty) cash register was taken. Joe called 911 at 6:30 A.M. A CPD officer arrived at 10:00 A.M. Joe was very unhappy with the response. He noted that he is currently looking for a new location. Sess suggested sending an email to Capt. Neville.

Triangle by UDF

Sess noted that the advertising bench located within the triangle property at Glenway Ave., Glenmore Ave. and Muddy Creek Rd. is collecting trash. John is trying to contact Mike Niswonger with the City to have the bench removed. John suspects that it is not allowed in the public right-of-way. Sess suggested canvassing Westwood and identifying the location of all advertising benches. He would like to divide the neighborhood into sections and dividing the effort among the board members. There was discussion about the possible waiver the benches have if they are associated with a bus stop. McNulty noted that this is a pet peeve and project of Council Member Bortz and that someone should contact his office. Sess asked Kuhl to make note of the bench types (advertising benches or otherwise) that are located in other neighborhoods such as Hyde Park. Sess will contact Council Member Bortz.

Make-a-Difference Day Pizza Reimbursement

MOTION by Gweyn to reimburse Weber \$64 for pizza expenditure for Make a Difference Day

SECOND by Baumann

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously

Jim Hoog Recognition

Sess asked whether the WCA would like to recognize neighbor Jim Hoog who “tirelessly” watered the Westwood Town Hall flowers during the drought months

this summer. Hildebrand suggested an "I Love Westwood" T-Shirt. McConn suggested a plaque. Henke suggested a Westwood banner.
MOTION by Gweyn to recognize Mr. Hoog with a T-Shirt, a banner and a letter of appreciation
SECOND by Neeld
DISCUSSION none
PASSED unanimously
Sess will author the letter of appreciation.

Gamble House Hearing

Sess noted that there was a "great" showing at the hearing held November 3, 2010 at Midway School. There were at least 250 people. Weber mentioned a memorandum in the works to have Council to conduct an up-or-down vote on the issue. Weber noted that Council Member Winburn has found the money. Kimmet asked if WCA has taken an official position on the idea of taking the property by eminent domain. Sess noted that we have gone on record in support of the preservation effort in the past, but not on the matter of eminent domain. Sess noted he personally is opposed to eminent domain, but will stand behind any decision made by the Board. He noted that the hearing has shined light on the subject. McConn suggested that WCA support the acquisition of the house by any means. Lee noted that he is also opposed to eminent domain, and that either way we end up with a park. Kuhl noted that if the Green Acres plan comes to fruition, it will not be a public park.

MOTION by Kimmet that WCA goes on record in support of taking the house by eminent domain

SECOND by McConn

DISCUSSION – Sess suggested that we support saving the house by any legal means possible.

MOTION amended by Kimmet that WCA write a letter to City Council to save the house by any means possible.

SECOND by McConn

DISCUSSION – Kimmet noted that he also takes seriously the issue of eminent domain and that it should only be used in an emergency (e.g. the Harriet Beecher Stowe house, the Taft House, Music Hall).

PASSED unanimously

Legal Assistance

Kuhl has a meeting Thursday to talk to an attorney – Tim Mara – that may be interested in representing us and getting some legal advice regarding the Gamble House. She is not sure of the cost of the service. She is also hoping to talk about Chronic Nuisance. Valerie noted that on March 9, 2010 WCA approved \$2K to John Cranley for legal representation regarding the Gamble House.

MOTION by Kuhl to re-allocate the funds from John Cranley to Tim Mara

SECOND by Kimmet

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously

Weber

Becky reminded that the WCA Christmas party is December 10, 2010 at Palomino's. Happy Hour is from 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. Dinner is at 7:00 P.M. Information is in the newsletter. Becky asked whether we need to send invitation/reminder cards this year. The consensus was that we do not. MOTION by Weber to spend up to \$100 on Hors d'oeuvres for WCA Christmas Party

SECOND by Sess

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously

Becky noted that there is a Chronic Nuisance hearing tomorrow at 10:30 in Judge Ruehlman's court room. She would like to make a strong showing. Council Member Berding made a resolution in today's Liveable Communities Committee meeting that passed – stating that owners cannot receive vouchers if the property is not within the City ordinances. Sess requested an opinion on that matter six months ago. Weber would like to contact Steve Chabot and request that he deal with the HUD and Section 8 problem. Sess recommended that we solicit the other neighborhoods (in particular those from the West-Side Summit) to also contact Congressman Chabot. Sess asked that Board members forward ideas for a letter to Mr. Chabot.

Henke

Joe mentioned that he/they are still working on getting Cincinnati Metro to use parking lot at the old Habigs for a park-and-ride. WestCURC is participating. They are working on getting a Metro shelter.

Hildebrand

Trying via the City to get a street light on Hanna Ave. Sharon Lewis recommended starting with Duke Energy. There was a theft Monday on Hanna Ave. A truck was broken into and tools were stolen. Karen Strasser is trying to implement an instant notification system via email. Jerry mentioned a possible new member.

Kuhl

Mary asked whether we were going to have the City come talk regarding the issue with a Montana Ave. resident losing property with the planned improvements. Sess noted that that was no longer necessary. It was a misunderstanding. The issue involves a temporary easement (i.e. no permanent taking of property).

Lewis

Trent noted that Capt Neville and District 3 are starting or are underway with a focused effort in Westwood. Trent also noted that cameras were going to begin going up in Westwood. He mentioned several locations including Glenway Ave

and Federal Dr. Trent said that they should be installed by the end of the week. McNulty suggested that the cameras were “target gateway cameras” and asked what happened with the previously approved 20 neighborhood cameras. Lewis thinks that this camera effort is the start of that. Trent mentioned the Invest In Neighborhoods email regarding budget survey and noted that it is the most direct way to comment on it. McConn wondered what was going to be done with the survey results.

Sess

John would like WCA to buy a computer projector. He estimates that it would cost between \$250 and \$700.

MOTION by Sess to spend up to \$500 on a computer projector for WCA presentations

SECOND by McNulty

DISCUSSION – Lewis mentioned that if it could wait for next NSP submittal that it would likely be covered.

PASSED unanimously

Sess and Chris Kearney met with Greg Baker and Lt. Breet Isaac of CPD regarding new Chronic Nuisance Ordinance. Weber stated that we have reviewed the new ordinance and that we are completely opposed to new ordinance.

Gweyn

Melva voiced concern over an email she received regarding a meeting of the Liveable Communities Committee on November, 23 and zoning code changes. She asked whether we needed to learn more about the changes prior to the meeting. McNulty suggested we find out more about what specifically the changes are. Melva has been attending meetings where poverty statistics are quoted and questions the validity of the statistics. McNulty wonders whether the poverty industry is attracting the poverty. Kuhl mentioned that we now have permanent bums on Harrison Ave. (near Friendly’s Market).

Baumann

Valerie noted that in March we approved a \$100 donation to the firefighter’s memorial – for a brick. It never went any further. Sess will look into whether we can still purchase the brick. Valerie noted that we have approval to buy hardware and that we need to hang the “Welcome to Westwood” signs. A decision was made to move the “Westwood – Est. 1869” boulder from the bottom of Montana Ave. to the triangle at Glenway Ave. and Glenmore Ave.

McNulty

Jim asked if we could take down the American flags. Jim mentioned that the Verdin Company requires \$40K to restore the bell from the Westwood School. The Historical Society is donating \$2K. Jim asked if WCA should donate to the cause. McConn reminded that next year is the centennial anniversary of the

Westwood Civic Association and suggested that we might want to symbolically donate \$10 for each year of our existence – which would amount to \$1K.

MOTION by McNulty to donate \$1K to save the bell

SECOND by Gweyn

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously

Jim brought up the topic of a stop sign at Epworth Ave. and Lischer Ave. He mentioned that since being declined by the City, there have been numerous accidents.

MOTION by McNulty to ask City Traffic Engineering to re-consider placing a stop sign on Epworth Ave. at Lischer Ave

SECOND by Kuhl

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously

Sess will contact City Traffic Engineering requesting they re-assess.

Kimmet

Joel asked whether we could hold off paying the \$1K save the bell donation to see if we could use 2011 NSP funds. Joel noted that the NSP funds were less (we were required to pay \$300 insurance). Of the \$5K grant, \$3K goes to the newsletter, approximately \$1K goes to neighborhood improvement and approximately \$1K goes to membership promotion. Someone noted that we need addition flags. Joel asked the Board to brainstorm ideas for expenditures. Sess noted that we have previously approved and not yet paid \$35 for reimbursement of the Karen Strasser school take home flyers. Baumann noted that we have approved and not yet spent \$300 for Westwood banners. Sharon Lewis recommended the purchase of EZ-UP tents. Lewis noted that we might spend funds on a storage facility for WCA property. Gweyn would like to replace planters. Kimmet is working with McNulty and now WestCURC on the Bracken Woods project which involves the purchase of 24 properties with TIF funding. There is over \$1M available. The City requested that WestCURC be involved. McConn noted that the WestCURC Board was bemused by the idea.

MOTION by McNulty to oppose the liquor renewal application for the Quick Shop located at 3323 Wunder Ave

SECOND by Gweyn

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously

MOTION by Lewis to adjourn the meeting

SECOND by Gweyn

DISCUSSION none

PASSED unanimously