

Westwood Civic Steering Committee Meeting

Tuesday, July 8, 2014

Called to order at 7:03.

Present: Mary Kuhl, Shawntee Schramm, Emily Miller, Mary Jenkins, Joel Kimmet, Jim McNulty, Ken Tarvin, Becky Weber, Michelle Conda, Valerie Baumann.

Absent: Irene McNulty, Joe Corso, Karen Strasser, Melva Gweyn, Leslie Rich

Announcement: Former WCA board member & Treasurer, Jim Huhn passed away last week.

A variance for a deck has been asked for by a citizen in Westwood. McNulty found this through an attachment sent by the city. Question: is this the new process, or are we going to get paper requests sent via postal service?

Owner of the Honda dealership, Herschel Benkert, talked briefly about worries he has as Westwood Historic District changes over to form-based code. He feels our troubles started with HUD and section 8 housing. A postcard was sent out several years ago that showed his business as a negative in Westwood. He was assured by McNulty that we will support him, as well as other businesses in the historic district.

A short discussion was held on the six different drawings that could be the new Westwood "square." It was brought up that the square could change, according to ideas presented—it could take features of one drawing and incorporate it into another drawing. There was also a discussion on the method used by people to choose their favorite drawing.

Motion by Conda that Westwood Civic objects to any version of the square that would take property by eminent domain. Seconded by Kimmett. Passed unanimously.

Jenkins reported on works of the Westwood Coalition. Drawings of the square, suggestions, and notes can be found on the Coalition website at revitalizewestwood.com. The June meeting showing drawn versions of the Westwood "square" resulted in a number of valuable comments. Since the meeting was not attended by everyone on the Steering Committee, and in order to show the suggested versions of the square to a wider audience, it was decided that the August general meeting would focus on the Westwood Square. Jenkins will take the lead, and bring several people who can ask questions.

The July general meeting will focus on the new zoning maps the city of Cincinnati has shared with its districts. McNulty reported that this is a long process and important to Westwood, as we have the opportunity to affect the density of housing in Westwood, as well as make sure our strategic plan is being followed. There is also the opportunity to adjust definitions of code designations.

McNulty will look into getting more detailed and larger maps, as well as copies of the code study (700 pages) from the city.

A discussion of the boundaries of Westwood was held. John Sess had meticulously pinpointed all our boundaries. This document had been approved by Westwood Civic. The July General Meeting will talk about these boundaries, and McNulty asked that they be put in the constitution (by-laws) immediately to guide zoning discussions. This will be about a two month process, as it needs to be voted on by membership.

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The 501c4 has been reinstated to Westwood Civic, retroactive to May 2012. It was requested a thank-you needs to be sent to the CPA, Mr. Roth, as well as make sure he has been paid for his services.

Kuhl is working on the new by-laws, with a meeting being scheduled in the next two weeks.

The Westwood Yard Sale is coming up on July 19. We still need donations. We will sell Westwood flags for \$25.

Important information:

1. McNulty will bring two tables
2. Several people will bring pop ups
3. Baumann will bring change
4. Note: McNulty at Conda house at 8:00 to pick up donations

Several people have offered to be there all day: McNulty, McNulty, Weber, Baumann, Gweyn. Many other Civic Board Members are available at least part of the day.

The first “At Home in Westwood” event will take place as part of the Westwood Yard Sale. Jenkins is leading this, with McNulty. They have rented a spot, and have information about open houses and properties for sale in Westwood. This is the first of what we hope are many events that market Westwood as a suburban neighborhood within the city limits. There will be a city-wide event similar to this on August 6, 2014.

Miller asked to be reimbursed for the \$15 she paid for the rented spot—approved by WCA. It was suggested Jenkins have a sign made for the spot. \$75 was approved for expenses associated with the “At Home in Westwood” event. Approved, with one “no” and the rest “yes.”

Westwood Town Hall is in need of repairs. McNulty noted one gutter had been repaired. However, there are water problems, roof problems, and paint peeling. We don't want this beautiful building to be neglected, as it is the center of the town. McNulty will follow up on this.

Weber met with Sheriff Jim Neil about drug and chronic nuisance problems in Westwood. This was a very positive meeting. Sheriff Neil pointed out he is “our Sheriff,” and would love to come to a meeting sometime. Weber pointed to the over one hundred juveniles in Westwood who had committed crimes, with over 70 being felonies. We need information about repeat offenders, and who might be violating housing regulations.

Sheriff Jim Neil provided a list of contact numbers and pointed to their improved web presence.

Note: Are code is 513

Drug Related Crimes: RENU@sheriff.hamilton-co.org

Text a tip: 513-808-4500

Phone: 352-DOPE

Criminal Investigations: 851-6000

Gang, Terrorist and suspicious activity: Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center

Tip Line: 263-8000

Email: tewg@cincinnati-oh.gov

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Website: www.hamiltoncountyohio-tewg.org

Neighbors from Morningridge Drive and Mayridge Apartments area have requested landlords of apartments in these areas be more accountable for problems. Neighbor on Morningridge Drive had her fence torn down by people cutting through from the LaFeuille Apartments. Weber is sending the owners Good Neighbor letters, and will ask them to come to the August Steering Committee meeting.

bruce mcclung from Westwood COPPs wrote an article for the June newsletter and his name was inadvertently left off. A correction will be furnished in the next newsletter. It was discussed that all article should have a name accompanying them.

NSP funds were diverted from Westwood because of clerical errors. McNulty looked into this, and the city is considering amending the problem and reinstating the funds as well as altering the due dates.

Adjourned 8:53

Submitted by Michelle Conda
Wednesday, July 9, 2014