

Westwood Civic Association
MINUTES – Steering Meeting – October 14, 2014

1. Call to Order by President Jim McNulty at 7:05 pm. Meeting was held in the Conference Room, of the Westwood Town Hall, 3017 Harrison Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45211. (Joel Kimmet- Secretary)

2. Roll Call of Board Members: 14 Present, 1 Excused. Present were Jim McNulty, Mary Kuhl, Michelle Conda, Joel Kimmet, Irene McNulty, Becky Weber, Mary Jenkins, Karen Strasser, Joe Corso, Melva Gweyn, Valerie Baumann, Ken Tarvin, Emily Miller and Shawntee Stallworth. Excused was Leslie Rich.

3. President McNulty started a short discussion concerning the upcoming Great American Clean-Up Event, and possible expenditures that would be needed for that event.

MOTION by Ken Tarvin, **SECOND** by Irene McNulty, to allow up to \$90.00 to be spent by WCA for the upcoming Great American Clean-Up Event. Short discussion followed at this time.

MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.

4. President McNulty stated that Board member Joel Kimmet has volunteered to be the WCA Recording Secretary for the rest of the year, to end in April, 2015.

MOTION by Michelle Conda, **SECOND** by Emily Miller to appoint Joel Kimmet as the Recording Secretary.

MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.

5. President McNulty created a small Committee consisting of Joel Kimmet, Karen Strasser, and Mary Jenkins who will work together in the next month or so to collect any and all past WCA Meeting Minutes that have not been previously approved, so they can be presented to the Board for approval. This could be done in one large group, or as soon as they can all be located and assembled. Several Board Members volunteered to take the Meeting Minutes during the past 5 or 6 months.

6. President McNulty stated that WCA received a \$5000.00 check for the 2014 NSP Funding, and that the check has been deposited in the bank.

7. President McNulty began a discussion about the traffic issues on Montana Avenue, and that we should encourage people to use Westwood Northern Boulevard as an alternate to Montana Avenue, especially during rush hour, for getting in and out of Westwood, to and from I-75. Discussion ensued. It would help the traffic issue on Montana Avenue, if more people used Westwood Northern Boulevard instead, both in the morning and in the evening.

8. It was proposed by President McNulty that new signs on I-75 and the new Hopple Street Exit ramps could say, “Westwood Northern Boulevard” and/or “Westwood”, along with “Hopple Street”, similar to the Exit 8 sign on I-71, which lists several streets on the Exit Sign, not just one street name. A short discussion followed on this topic, and whether WCA should ask the City or ODOT for this request.

MOTION by Joel Kimmet, **SECOND** by Valerie Baumann, that WCA write a letter to the City and ODOT requesting that “Westwood” and “Westwood Northern Boulevard” be listed on the Exit 4 signs to be placed on I-75, in addition to “Hopple Street”, when construction is completed. The letter would also ask if an informational sign could be placed before the Exit 4 signs as well, with the same information.

MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.

9. Michelle Conda gave a report on the Meeting which occurred on September 26th, concerning the Bid Proposals for the Old Westwood Firehouse. Michelle Conda attended that meeting, and stated that the group went through each proposal very carefully. Michelle Conda stated that the Committee is leaning to support a business that is open to the public, and there was no support for a proposal that would use the building for a rental. Three Proposals were received that fit the above requirements:

- A. WestCURC Proposal – open up a Pizza Restaurant in the space.
- B. Private Company proposing a “Hard Cider” distilling business in the space.
- C. Private Company proposing a “Bakery” and “Bed & Breakfast” business in the space.

Michelle also reported that the “feeling” of all those present at the meeting was that the site could be a “gift” to Westwood, by the City, if the end-use was to historically preserve the building, and that the building should not be converted to a private residence or rental units. There are concerns about parking, dumpsters, traffic concerns, and whether Mr. Joe Henke (neighbor nextdoor) would support another “Pizza Restaurant” in the neighborhood. A discussion occurred concerning the above listed proposals and suitable use(s) of the building. It was asked if the City’s Trade and Development Department could send WCA a report on how the bidding process was constructed and managed.

10. Mary Kuhl and Helen Russo reported on the upcoming Westwood Candidates Night, October 28th, at 7:00 pm, and the Westwood School. Helen Russo is inviting all the candidates. The program will consist of a short presentation by each candidate, followed by a few questions from the audience. President McNulty asked if WCA should support or sponsor this event?

MOTION by Joel Kimmert, **SECOND** by Irene McNulty, for WCA to support and sponsor the Westwood Candidate’s Night, October 28, 2014 at 7:00 pm, at Westwood School. No Discussion followed.

MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.

11. Mary Kuhl reported on the progress of the Bylaws Committee. The Committee has been meeting on their own for the past 8 weeks, and are making definite progress. Several members and Board members are serving on the Committee. All proposed changes fit with the requirements of the 501c3 application and regulations. The Committee proposes that the following will occur:

- A. November General Meeting: Association votes on the First Section (presents Second Section)
- B. December General Meeting: Association votes on the Second Section.

All proposals will be printed ahead of time in the WestWords newsletter according to the current Constitution, so the members can read the proposed additions/ corrections/ edits.

12. Mary Kuhl and Mary Jenkins gave a report on the Westwood Coalition. At the previous Coalition Meeting, the members of the Coalition proposed a series of recommendations to the public. Members of the Coalition have been making comments on the recommendations, but now there is need for public input on the various recommendations. Most of the Coalition members have supported Option #4, the “Bow-Tie” option. The Coalition needs feedback by November 4th from all the Westwood groups. (Mary Jenkins brought a Power-Point Presentation which will be shown later in the Meeting)

13. Ms. Rita Ross, WCA member, spoke about crime prevention efforts in her neighborhood and on her street. She invited Officer Rich Minella to her home several weeks ago, and no one ever came over. She is very concerned with crime in her area. Ms. Rita Ross stated that she works in Walnut Hills, and she walks for 1 to 1 ½ miles each day for lunch. Each day, in Walnut Hills, she sees 2 police cars during her lunchtime walk. In Westwood, she walks at night, and in 1 to 1 ½ miles, she sees no police cars.

President McNulty stated that he recently attended a meeting with the new District 3 Police Captain, Captain Gerard, and many of these types of issues and concerns were raised. President McNulty stated that people stop reporting crimes, because the Police do not respond when called. So many people try to call District 3 directly, but that does not help. The 513-765-1212 number works better.

A consensus from the group was to invite the Cincinnati Police Chief to a WCA Meeting in the near future to discuss these issues. There was a long discussion amongst the group about crime in Westwood. Problem properties are not getting reported enough or properly. Becky Weber gave an example that 2400 Harrison (a long-time Westwood problem property) was taken off the Chronic Nuisance List, when in reality, that building had the highest crime stats in our neighborhood.

14. Mary Jenkins started a short Power-Point Presentation regarding the Westwood Coalition Options that are currently being proposed. The Options that were highlighted are as follows:

A. Option #1: "No-Build", basically leaves all the buildings and streets with no changes, but allows for addition of trees, street-scapes projects, and deferred maintenance of landscaping.

B. Option #2: "Original Small Square" was the image that was presented over a year ago. It was determined not to be possible, due to the fact that it is too small for traffic requirements.

C. Option #3: "Large Square" requires more property acquisition than above options, and the traffic and safety concerns are much better with this option.

D. Option #4 "Triangle" or "Bow-Tie" does not require much property acquisition, and is the least invasive plan. Also allows for landscaping improvements on WTH grounds and surrounding bldgs.

E. Option #5: "Huge Westwood Square" or "Nuclear Option", requires the most property acquisition, and is the most invasive plan. This is not feasible at the current time due to funding.

F. Option #6: "Town Hall Rotary" uses the huge 2-acre greenspace around the Town Hall as the center, with improvements to surrounding buildings and streets.

Much discussion occurred on the above listed options, and the pros and cons for each option. It was apparent that the majority of members present supported either Option #4: "Bow-Tie" or Option #6: "Town Hall Rotary". It was decided by the group that WCA needs to vote and choose to support one of the above, either Option #4, or Option #6.

MOTION by Joe Corso, **SECOND** by Michelle Conda, that WCA should only vote between Option #4 and Option #6, since these two Options have received the most positive support at this time by the group.
MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.

Next, President McNulty presided over a vote between Option #4, and Option #6.

The Vote: Option #4: received **10 votes**; Option #6: received **3 votes**. **Option #4: "Bow-Tie" was chosen.** Further discussion in the group suggested that in addition to Option #4, the WCA recommendation would be that the City be extra sensitive to greenspace around the WTH as a priority.

15. Mary Jenkins reported on the progress on the new WCA Website. A short Power-Point Presentation showed the look of the new Website, and how to navigate on the first few pages of the Website. To sign in: go to "beta.westwoodcivic.org" please look over the new website and make recommendations for edits, corrections, and changes. Most people present were happy with the changes that were shown on the Power-Point screen, and the look of the new website.

16. Mary Kuhl reported that Ms. Debbie Gardner, a self-defense specialist, conducts workshops in Cincinnati on "self-defense". Ms. Gardner could be scheduled to an upcoming meeting if requested.

17. President McNulty stated that the November Steering Meeting will be conducted on Monday, November 10, 2014, at WTH, due to Tuesday, November 11, 2014 being a federal holiday.

18. Becky Weber stated that due to time constraints, she will not be able to continue to do the "Holiday Yard of The Month" program, and suggested that WCA look for a new volunteer to assist with that program.

19. With nothing further on the Agenda, Meeting was Adjourned by President McNulty at 9:05 pm.

Submitted by,

Joel Kimmet, Secretary