

**Westwood Civic Association**  
**MINUTES – January 13, 2015 – Steering Meeting**

1. Call to Order by President Jim McNulty at 7:00 PM. The Meeting was held in the Conference Room, at the Westwood Town Hall, 3017 Harrison Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45211. (Joel Kimmet, Secretary).
2. Roll Call of Board Members. 13 Present, 1 Excused, 1 seat Vacant. Present were: Jim McNulty, Mary Kuhl, Michelle Conda, Joel Kimmet, Irene McNulty, Mary Jenkins, Karen Strasser, Joe Corso, Melva Gweyn, Valerie Baumann, Emily Miller-Reynolds, Shawntee Stallworth, and Trinetta Zawadzki. Excused was: Ken Tarvin.
3. One guest was introduced to the group: Boy Scout Lou Walro is present this evening, who is working on his Eagle Scout Merit Badge. A warm welcome to Mr. Lou Walro.
4. Short discussion in regards to the WCA Christmas Party held on 12/9/2014 at Cancun Mexican Restaurant. Board Member Kimmet needs to be reimbursed \$120.00 that was approved for appetizers. An approved receipt was turned in by Kimmet. **MOTION** by Mary Jenkins, **SECOND** by Valerie Baumann to reimburse Joel Kimmet \$120.00 for appetizers purchased at Cancun Restaurant on 12/9/2014. Discussion. **MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.**
5. President McNulty began a short discussion on the Board Member vacant spot. He suggested that since there is a vacant Board member spot, due to the resignation of Becky Weber, should WCA include a 6<sup>th</sup> position in the upcoming WCA election in April that would cover that position. This would essentially be to select a 6<sup>th</sup> person from the pool of candidates presented at the January 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting. Short discussion about whether the Board should wait until April to fill the position, or just fill it in January. No decisions were made at this time.
6. Board Member Michelle Conda was appointed by President McNulty to fill the WCA vacant spot on the Westwood Coalition, which was vacated by the resignation of Becky Weber.
7. President McNulty discussed problems that occurred with the December Newsletter. Normally, a small date appears above each recipient's name, on the mailing label, which is the year when each member's dues expire. This date was left off of all the labels on the December newsletters. President McNulty explained that this was a printing company error, and not a Board member's error. The issue should be resolved on the January Newsletters.
8. Discussion on 2458 Harrison Avenue. The owners of this property have submitted a "Conditional Use Variance" for the Zoning to allow for a Used Car Lot and Business on the site. President McNulty asked to wait until the WCA General Meeting on January 20<sup>th</sup> for the official WCA vote on this issue, to allow residents opportunity to give input on this issue. President McNulty will send out an email with the City contact information in it, should our residents want to write letters to the City about this issue. We are asking that everyone write letters to the City to oppose this Variance. The current Zoning does not allow a Used Car Lot and Business at this site, which is why the owners asked for a Variance. It appears that WCA will officially oppose this Variance request. Melva Gweyn and Michelle Conda volunteered to attend the upcoming Variance Hearing, on behalf of WCA, at the City Hearing Room. No other action was taken at this time.

9. Report on illegal Billboard Benches in Westwood, by John Sess. This is an on-going court case that has been monitored by John Sess for the past four years in Westwood. The City has won the latest court case for the removal of the illegal benches in Westwood. So now, we are just waiting for the final Judge's decision, which should happen any date now. This will be a final decision on when and how all the benches will be removed. Updates will follow at future meetings.
10. Short discussion on the City's NBDIP Grant Application (Neighborhood Business District Improvement Plan) Grant. This has historically been a WestCURC project in Westwood. Annually, all applications need to be submitted in February and March. Board members Joel Kimmet, Karen Strasser, Joe Corso and Shawntee Stallworth volunteered to work with WestCURC this year on the NBDIP Grant Application. Joel Kimmet reported that WestCURC is already working on a draft proposal for the grant.
11. Short discussion on the Cincinnati Community Priority Request (CPR) application. Jim McNulty and Mary Jenkins will work on the WCA application for this request.
12. President McNulty reported that the WCA Zoning Committee is continuing to meet weekly. This has been an ongoing process. Mr. Bill Spetz will be at next week's meeting (January 20<sup>th</sup>) to give a report.
13. President McNulty reported that our main guest at next week's meeting (January 20<sup>th</sup>) will be Vice-Mayor David Mann. We should prepare a list of questions for Vice-Mayor Mann. We can also ask Mr. Mann about Zoning issues, Community Council issues, questions about the 1989 City Ordinance referring to Community Councils, and any other resident concerns. This should be a great discussion.
14. Short discussion went back to the 2458 Harrison Avenue issue. More questions and discussion came up about what we can do to help convince the City to oppose this Variance Request. President McNulty and others stated that we can notify the Fire Department, and get their concerns, since the subject property is located across the street from the new Fire Station. We can try to get citizens involved, by writing letters and attending any upcoming City Hearings. We can find out if the surrounding residents in the neighborhood and nearby streets were notified of this Zoning Variance Request. We can talk with McHenry Street residents nearby this location and find out their opinions about this issue as well.
15. Newsletter Discussion. Renewals and New Memberships: Discussion about adding a field to the WCA Membership Application to "opt out" of getting a mailed version of the newsletter, and requesting an email version of the Newsletter. We can utilize Constant Contact for notification of this change. Discussion that many more people will see the Newsletter if it is in a ".pdf version, especially the ads. President McNulty stated that all residents will automatically get a "mailed" newsletter, unless they specifically request not to get one, and select to "opt out" and get the ".pdf" version.
16. President McNulty has been working with Mayor John Cranley's aid on an upcoming Press Release about crime. Crime is up in Westwood, as stated by President McNulty, and we need to discuss this issue in detail before the Press release comes out. No action taken at this time.
17. Parking Meters in Westwood. President McNulty stated that we need to interview the Westwood business owners, and find out what the business owners want or do not want in reference to parking meters along Harrison Avenue. There are pros and cons to this issue. Currently, if vehicles are illegally parked, they are subject to receive a \$45.00 ticket. No action taken at this time.

18. Report on (IIN) Invest-In-Neighborhoods AIG (Annual Interest Grant) report. Every year, all community councils must turn in this report to IIN by the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. Joel Kimmet and Valerie Baumann are working on this AIG report, and it will be turned in by the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.

19. Sgt. Eric Sierra Memorial. Valerie Baumann discussed placing a memorial engraved rock, and planting a memorial tree for Police Sgt. Eric Sierra on the Westwood Town Hall grounds. Discussion on options. Price quotes have been obtained from Allison Landscaping. Another landscaping company is located at I-74 and Indiana State line. Prices for a blue spruce tree can go up to \$550.00, and up to \$300.00 for rock engraving. A total of up to \$850.00 was discussed for this memorial project. MOTION by Valerie Baumann, SECOND by Irene McNulty to spend up to \$850.00 for a memorial tree and memorial rock to be purchased and placed on the WTH grounds, honoring Police Sgt. Eric Sierra, if approved by the City Park Board. Discussion. **MOTION PASSED – Unanimously.**

After the vote, it was requested that the Park Board should be able to assist the WCA with planting and mulching the tree, and installing the rock, once they are both purchased, approved and obtained.

20. President McNulty discussed the proposal to “merge” with East Westwood, into one neighborhood. President McNulty recently met with the East Westwood community council board, and discussed the options. He reported that East Westwood is not interested with merging with Westwood at this time. No further action taken at this time.

21. Mary Jenkins reported on the CBI “Asset Mapping” survey and project in Westwood. All four Westwood organizations have been asked to “map” and record their “assets” in this survey, so a report on all neighborhood assets can be compiled. See Mary Jenkins about what WCA assets should go into this survey and report, if you are interested. The Westwood Coalition is heading up this survey with CBI.

22. Demolitions in Westwood. President McNulty stated that we need to revise our Westwood “Top-20” Worst Buildings in Westwood List. The old list is dated “2014”. We need to have a meeting and discuss adding new properties on this List, and keep track of demolitions as they occur. If you notice a bad property, please report it, so it can be added to this List. One property recently demolished was 2280 Harrison. It is currently under foreclosure by the State of Ohio. The Port Authority may be able to assist with obtaining this property for WestCURC to redevelop it. If interested, please contact WestCURC and discuss this project. Please send any emails to Jim McNulty about the “Top-20” List.

23. Bylaws Revision Group. Report by Joel Kimmet. The group has been meeting to discuss Bylaws revisions. A possibility of conducting a “Public Meeting” after April, 2015, for public input and discussion. No formal proposal has been introduced yet. The group has been meeting and sharing ideas. Contact Joel Kimmet with ideas, questions, comments and concerns.

24. WCA Street Flags. Report by Michelle Conda. Discussion about designing a new Westwood Flag. The flag could be red/white/blue, incorporate the American Flag, but have “Westwood” on the bottom, or “Westwood – est. 1863” or something similar written on the bottom. Michelle Conda showed some design examples on her computer. Special new flags could cost \$100 each for hardware, and \$100 each for the flag itself. A discussion centered around replacing flags in groups of 10 at a time, or just focusing on one intersection at a time. Michelle Conda and Joel Kimmet will work on designs. No specific actions taken at this time.

25. WCA Flower Pots. Karen Strasser is working on this project, and reported that she is working on a written plan, which will detail how the pots will be taken care of by businesses and residents. The proposed written plan will be presented to the Board for approval at an upcoming meeting. No action taken at this time.

26. President Jim McNulty wanted to recap the plan for next week's General Meeting (January 20<sup>th</sup>). Main agenda item will be the David Mann discussion. We should start with the Police Report, then the Fire Report, then the Elections Nominating Committee Reports, followed by the David Mann discussion. Any other agenda items or business will have to wait until after the David Mann presentation . We can put David Mann on the Agenda for 7:30 pm.

27. With no further business, MOTION to Adjourn by Mary Kuhl, SECOND by Karen Strasser. Meeting Adjourned at 8:21 PM.

Submitted by Joel Kimmet, WCA Secretary.