

WCA General Meeting

October 18, 2011

7:00 P.M.

Westwood Town Hall

Attendance

Present: J. McNulty, B. Weber, M. Jenkins, M. Gweyn, J. Minor, J. Sess, V. Baumann, M. Kuhl, J. Kimmet, Sr. A. Rene McConn, K. Strasser

Absent: J. Hildebrand (excused), J. Henke

Recording Secretary: Mary Jenkins

At 7:00 p.m., Jim McNulty called the meeting to order and led a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes of the September 19, 2011 general meeting were approved as written.

District 3 Police Report

Officer Rich Minella, neighborhood liaison officer, reported on behalf of District 3. He distributed comparative crime statistics and noted the new format. Then he reviewed notable arrests for the past month. Eddie Austin was arrested for carjacking, armed robbery, and drug charges. Jamel Crostty was arrested on charges related to drug trafficking and weapons. Danny Shows was arrested on aggravated menacing, drug abuse and drug trafficking charges. M. Kuhl asked if addresses of the arrested could be made available on crime reports. Officer Minella noted that, in several of these high profile cases, the person did not live in Westwood but was at the home of a relative or friend. M. Kuhl noted her concern that tax dollars are paying for subsidized housing for people who are harboring criminals. Officer Minella reported that the vice squad recently conducted a reverse prostitution sting and arrested 35 men on charges related to solicitation of prostitutes.

Fire Department Report

Randy Freel, the new captain at Westwood's fire company 35, introduced himself and offered a report. He noted that they are performing fall service on fire hydrants in the area. Captain Freel reported that 95 people attended the open house at the fire station in early October. When asked about his take on the new fire station, he commented that he has seen drawings and expects that it will open about 18 months after construction begins. S. Lewis asked about fire engines at Mayridge apartments in the past week. Captain Freel said it wasn't a fire and may have been food-related. J. Minor offered her thanks to the emergency personnel who responded to the scene at her house following a car accident that resulted in damage to her house and property. She also thanked him for support for the four-way stop sign at Epworth and Lischer.

Candidates and Issues

J. McNulty invited candidates for office or speaking on behalf of issues to talk for a couple of minutes on their positions. Eric Rosier, assistant principal at Midway School, spoke on Issue 32 related to the schools levy. Kathy Aktinson, a candidate for city council, spoke about her positions and concerns and responded to attendees' questions on issues related to citizen participation, public transportation, and council operations.

3454 McHenry Avenue

J. McNulty reported that Alex Peppers of the city's planning department is scheduling a meeting for November 28 to discuss issues related to the zoning change request for 3454 McHenry. There is some dispute related to the location, with some WCA board members requesting a Westwood location. Discussion focused on preference for retention of the current single family zoning of the property, excess available housing units in Westwood, concerns about multi-family housing, and the possibility of green space on the property. Sr. Anne Rene McConn suggested that J. Kimmet meet with members of the planning department to review plans for Bracken Woods development as a model plan.

MOTION by J. Sess to maintain WCA Board's position in favor of the current single family zoning designation.

SECONDED by J. Kimmet.
PASSED with two abstentions.

Consolidated Plan / CDBG Funds

J. McNulty reported that WCA has been invited to comment on Community Development Block Grants funding. Discussion centered on a preference for demolition of blighted properties as a top priority and against emergency shelter grants. J. McNulty explained that there is a federal mandate related to the percentage of the fund to pay for each category. Several people suggested it is time for HUD to redistribute the percentages to favor blight removal.

MOTION by M. Gweyn to request that the maximum allowed funding be committed to slum and blight removal and to recommend to HUD via the city that the percentage for blight removal be increased and identified as a priority for Cincinnati.

SECONDED by J. Kimmet.
PASSED unanimously.

Westwood Town Hall and The Drama Workshop

Marlene Trapp, recreation manager at Westwood Town Hall, reported that The Drama Workshop is moving to the Glenmore Bowl property but is committed to its location at the Westwood Town Hall through June 2012. Ms. Trapp noted that the recreation department is expanding its arts programming and looking for other arts groups to use the space. She commented on Halloween activities planned for town hall.

Liquor Application

J. McNulty reported on an application for a liquor license for a new Japanese restaurant at 5714 Glenway. L. Bramasco suggested that WCA invite the owner to participate in WCA. J. Sess will extend that invitation.

MOTION by J. Kimmet not to oppose the application.

SECONDED by Sr. Anne Rene McConn.
PASSED unanimously.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal Award

J. McNulty reported that WCA has won an award from Housing Opportunities Made Equal for Westwood's stable and integrated community. A presentation will be made on November 19, 2011 in Springfield Township. M. Kuhl will accept the award on WCA's behalf.

2487 Harrison Avenue

J. McNulty reported that a zoning variance has been requested for 2487 Harrison Avenue to accommodate the new fire station planned for that location. There was no stated objection to the variance request.

Citizens on Patrol

Ralph reported on a recent flurry of drug overdoses in Westwood that do not involve Westwood citizens, suggesting that people are buying drugs locally. He said that COPP has a goal of 1,000 volunteer hours logged in 2011 and they are at 947 hours to date. On September 26, COPP will host a blood drive at St. Peter and St. Paul United Church of Christ. In early November, there will be a Thanksgiving dinner at the UCC.

Chronic Nuisance Ordinance Passed

B. Weber reported that both of Charlie Winburn's motions related to changes to the chronic nuisance ordinance passed nearly unanimously. The proposals may go to full council for a vote on October 19.

3031 McHenry Avenue

J. McNulty reported on a notice of public hearing for 3031 McHenry. The city plans to tear down the building but the owner requested a 106 hearing, claiming the property is historic. M. Kuhl reasserted her concern about tearing down any single family homes.

MOTION by M. Jenkins to ask Westwood Historical Society to advise WCA on the historic value of the property.

SECONDED by M. Gweyn.

PASSED unanimously.

MSD Community Design Workshop

The Metropolitan Sewer District will be holding a community design workshop at Dater Montessori on November 10 from 6:30-9:00 p.m. Several attendees commented on the HUD requirements associated with the proposed Lick Run project.

Make a Difference Day

October 22, 2011 is Make a Difference Day as part of the Great American Clean Up. Several projects are planned around Westwood.

MOTION by M. Gweyn to pay the recreation department \$36 to have Town Hall open for bathroom use on Make a Difference Day.

SECONDED by V. Baumann.

PASSED unanimously.

Just Desserts

Keep Cincinnati Beautiful is holding its Just Desserts event on November 10, 2011 to honor individuals and groups for beautification and community improvement efforts. WCA received invitations.

Vicious Dog

K. Strasser reported that a hearing will be held on October 21, 2011 regarding the dog that killed another dog on October 8. She expressed concern for public safety. J. McNulty commented on enforcement issues and will invite city and county officials to an upcoming WCA meeting to discuss dog laws and enforcement responsibility.

Westwood Community Gardens

M. Jenkins reported that progress continues on the Gardens with winter peas planted and gardeners harvesting crops. The fence and toolshed construction are delayed until additional funds are secured.

Adjournment

There being no other business, J. McNulty adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jenkins →