
Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

Minutes

Minutes: September 15, 2016 - Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group Meeting

Taken by Michael Rountree, Childress & Cunningham, Inc.

Attendance:

Jeff Brewster	Cindy Fischer	Baba Charles Miller	Jerome Tarver
Mike Cornette	Ibrahim Issa	Toni Miller	Greg Warner
Matthew Cuff	Aprina Johnson	Beverly Odoms	Kevin Wright
Gary Dangel	Tim MacConnell	Michael Rountree	
Chris Davis	Linda Matthews	Joe Sandmann	

Opening:

Meeting called to order at 11:40 AM, with an invitation for new faces to introduce themselves.

Minutes from meeting on August 18 were approved, Mike Cornette 1st, Baba Charles Miller 2nd.

Committee Reports:

Safety – Jeff Brewster, Officer not present

Jeff spoke on behalf of Officer Roper-Issa, who had sent him a summary email. A handout of crime statistics was presented, and Jeff noted that thefts seem to be up. An aggravated robbery suspect was arrested recently, who was a WH resident. There was discussion around a shooting on Gilbert in the previous month, that occurred right when school let out. Jeff would like to push for adoption of the NIXLE system which provides alerts via text message. The school's protocol was lockdown and traffic was diverted temporarily, but it seemed there was a communication breakdown.

Police are currently updating information regarding their camera sharing package, and full information should be presented at next month's meeting. Chris Davis said that the Brew House is getting cameras installed and is working with Police, hoping to disseminate login info so that others can utilize them. It was noted that the Fire Dept. offers to install smoke detectors in homes for free, which should be shared at the next WHAC meeting. There was "How to Avoid Being a Victim of Crime" training at the Bush Center on Sept. 16th.

Constitution/By-Laws – Jeff Brewster

During the previous 30 days, the draft of By-Laws was available for review by general membership. Any further comments or feedback should be directed to Jeff or to Michael Rountree; it is intended that a final version be submitted for approval at the October meeting. Tim asked for clarification as to why the By-Laws should be developed in advance of a formal vote to separate from the WHAC.

Chris noted that starting up a new group under new By-Laws is not really the same as the current group separating, from a legal standpoint. It was agreed that current WHAC By-Laws (now in effect) as well as proposed draft should be made available on the website.

Finance – Jeff Brewster

Treasurer's Report was given as a handout, and was accepted Jerome Tarver 1st, Beverly Odoms 2nd. An invoice for the recent website development work remains outstanding, with approximately \$1,600.00 owed; the website is live at wearewalnuthills.org.

Beautification – Jeff Brewster

Jeff and Betty Waite plan to do a walk-through to map out the locations of 28 existing flower pots, with the intention of developing an adopt-a-pot program. Kevin commented that the Parks Dept. price of \$400 per pot annually is not

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really that high for year-round maintenance, considering the difficulty of coordinating volunteers. Some pots will need to be relocated due to upcoming construction work at Paramount Square. Jerome asked why the Business Group should bear this burden, and was answered that the pots are expressly located throughout the business district.

Planning & Physical Development – Kevin Wright

The weekend of Sept. 30th will be a big one, including the unveiling of a mural on Friday evening, the Street Food Festival on Saturday 11 AM to 5 PM, and an after-party Saturday evening at 5-Points Alley. There may be two new businesses that open that weekend, Video Archives and Gomez Salsa. Jeff asked about the potential for daytime or lunch hour activities at 5-Points, as that location is becoming more established; Kevin said that it is available for rent.

The Reinvestment Plan was presented, with hopes for a vote in favor of support at the next month's meeting. Comments can still be made at planwalnuthills.com; the plan represents a process that was begun back in February 2016 (working with MKSK as consultant). The overall goal is to make WH into a “to” rather than “through” neighborhood, focusing on four main categories: Transportation, Housing, Retail/Hospitality, and Employment. The presentation will be published in book form and made available at the October meeting.

The Plan is intended to guide development without unnecessary displacement, and may include a toolkit to help existing property owners to make improvements. Baba Charles asked how long it might be until this residential counterpart to the facade development program is available, and Kevin said they are working on grant applications now, may have it organized by January 1.

Gilbert was once a highway and is still managed as such, but part of the Plan involves changes to Gilbert that prioritize pedestrian safety over traffic speed. Other public realm investments would be prioritized, such as public wifi and new parks & gardens. Development resources would be focused in three zones, at Buena Vista, Lincoln & Gilbert, and Peebles Corner, with hopes that these serve as a catalyst for other development within the community.

Jeff said that some business owners have already expressed certain concerns, and those concerns seem to have been taken into account. Kevin said that the WHAC Board has already voted to approve the Plan, that it should go before the WHBG's Executive Committee next, and thereafter will be presented to the City for adoption.

Membership – Jeff Brewster

Jeff reminded members to renew if past due; Michael noted that July 1 is the current due date and a handout presented at the prior meeting listed those whose membership expired as of July 2016. In addition, handouts of a Meeting Time survey and a Business Profile were also available (as at previous meeting).

Education / Workforce Development – No Report

Other Matters:

Linda asked whether there was any planned collaboration with the Mayor's initiative in the war on poverty, and Toni said that she has attended some meetings, and will look into it more.

Gary Dangel announced the Run For The Hills 5K run/walk which is to be held on the coming Saturday, beginning at St. James and continuing through Eden Park and other parts of the neighborhood.

Linda asked whether there was any plan to begin to fight the epidemic of heroin overdosing, which seems to be frequent in Eden Park. Jeff said that we should notify Officer Roper-Issa regarding any noticed activity or “hot spots”. Toni said that the WHAC's Safety Committee meeting is open to any who wish to attend, and she reiterated that we have to call it in every time. The City is overwhelmed though; Baba Charles Miller said that he has some photographic evidence that the Police do not use.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 1:10 PM.