
Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

Minutes

Minutes: September 23, 2021 - Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group Meeting

Taken by Michael Rountree, Childress & Cunningham, Inc.

Attendance:

Kathryne Gardette
Christina Hartlieb

Jane Keller
Samir Kulkarni

Mary Pat Raupach
Samantha Reeves

Michael Rountree
Jo Ryan

Opening:

Meeting called to order by Samir Kulkarni at 9:08 AM. This meeting was postponed from its regular scheduled time (the prior week) due to schedule conflicts for a portion of the Executive Committee. Meeting was held as a video conference using Zoom software.

Minutes from the August 19, 2021 meeting were approved, Samir Kulkarni 1st, Jane Keller 2nd.

Treasurer's Report - Tim MacConnell not present, no formal report. Samir said the only recent changes would be to our race account, regarding sponsorships and signups for the Peebles 5K.

With just one month to go until the 5K, Samir noted that it should be the focus of the agenda.

Committee Reports:

Planning & Development – No Report

Communications & Membership – No Formal Report

Events – Samir Kulkarni

The Peebles 5K Run/Walk is coming up on October 17th, with about 100 race participants expected. Flyers are going out to local stores. Volunteers on the day of the race will be needed, to help setup and tear down as well as other things. Gary Dangel will be helping to coordinate a clean-up on the 16th, utilizing students from U.C. Jane asked about activities in Green Man Park, saying that Artworks can host some youth-oriented activities. Samir said he would discuss how to incorporate that with the race coordinator, and noted that activities would probably need to begin about 10:45 AM. Musical act(s) for after the race are still being sought; Kathryne said that they may be able to provide drumming at the start.

Samantha noted that truck vendors are still being sought for the upcoming Street Food Festival, which will be on Oct. 9th.

Safety – No Formal Report

Jane spoke about her perception of the crosswalks at Peebles Corner (McMillan and Gilbert), since Artworks has a clear view of this intersection. She has seen a pedestrian get struck (though uninjured), and said that the time to get across seems to be too short. Samir said that DOT has compiled a list of minor things that can be done, but noted that there is difficulty in implementing any changes since McMillan is City-managed, while Gilbert is a state highway and controlled by the State of Ohio. Jane said that she will keep more thorough notes on what issues they see.

Jane mentioned that there seems to be a lot of debris that accumulates on the street over the weekends, and wondered whether placing a garbage receptacle would help; Samir replied that adding a can doesn't seem to help. Michael cautioned that when we talk to the City about Peebles Corner, we need to remember that we were a primary voice championing 2-way traffic on McMillan with the expectation that it would slow down traffic, among other benefits. In our request to look into options for this intersection, we should try to avoid seeming like we might be reversing our position.

Other Matters:

Jo Ryan gave a first presentation to WHBG (previously presented to WHAC) regarding a request for a Zoning Variance to allow Carvana to develop a vehicle rental facility with a glazed storage tower between May Street and the highway. Carvana has been growing since 2016, especially during the pandemic. The panhandle lot at May & Tuxedo will work well for them, while it

Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

Minutes

would pose challenges for other kinds of uses. The requested Variance would be in relation to the allowable building height, which for the ML zone is 45 ft.; the proposed storage tower would be 75 ft. but still considered just a one-story building since the height is for car storage racks that are not occupiable floors. Many buildings in the vicinity already reach a height of 65' to 75', and the tower height is meant to be visible from the highway but is set back well away from major neighborhood streets. Michael asked whether transect zoning might apply, that would require a building form that addresses the street, but Samir said that this location is not part of the transect zoning.

The facility would bring about 20 to 30 full-time jobs (covering multiple shifts) with an average salary of \$45k. Samir asked how Carvana's operations might impact existing local car dealers, and Jo noted that there wouldn't be any direct competition since Carvana does not sell, but only rents, and they don't rent brand new car models. Samir and Kathrynne both encouraged Jo to reach out to local car dealers, and Jo said that she would bring responses to the various comments to the next WHAC meeting (on the first Thursday of the month). A second presentation and formal request for a letter of support from WHBG will take place at the October WHBG meeting.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 9:41 AM.