

CTM Meeting Minutes  
7:00 PM  
March 7, 2011  
Clifton Recreation Center

Meeting Called to Order:

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Clifton Town Meeting was called to order on March 7, 2011 at 7:05 PM at the Clifton Recreation Center at 320 McAlpin Avenue, by Trustee Karen Imbus, who chaired the meeting.

Trustees in attendance for the meeting: Bob Blum, Dick Druffel, Linda Goldenhar, Christian Huelsman, Karen Imbus, Malcolm Montgomery, Ben Pantoja, Jeff Rose, Jim Segers, Pete Schneider, and Mary Jo Vesper. The presence of a quorum is duly noted.

**Reviewed and Approved:**

**Secretary's Report:** A draft version of the minutes of the February 7, 2011, meeting had been previously circulated to the Board for review and comment.

Motion: J. Rose moved to approve the minutes; B. Pantoja seconded. K. Imbus and M. Vesper proposed minor edits to the minutes. Edited minutes were proposed.

Vote Results: The minutes of the February 7, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved with two abstentions (M. Montgomery and L. Goldenhar).

**Regular Reports:**

**Police Report:** Report given by Officer Lisa Johnson. Officer Johnson stated that thefts from autos were still going on near U.C. but had slowed down in Clifton. She stated that people should call her if they notice anything suspicious in their neighborhoods. M. Montgomery asked what number to call and Officer Johnson provided two numbers: her direct line 569-8507 and Cincinnati dispatch 765-1212. Officer Johnson can also be reached via email at [lisa.johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:lisa.johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov). She stated that there were two older female panhandlers that have been seen on Loraine, Clifton, and Woolper. A few vacant homes had recently been burglarized for copper and other valuable materials. She reminded people to be aware of suspicious activity and to watch the homes of neighbors when they're out of town. Graffiti has been a constant problem in Clifton lately. The police department will be signing a warrant on one individual next week and plans to make an example out of the individual. Officer Johnson is also pushing a petition to provide for harsher punishment on criminals who create graffiti. She requested that all residents and business owners take pictures of graffiti before painting over it in order for the police to record damages. J. Segers asked off-topic about the police show done for Cincinnati. Officer Johnson stated that it was a positive for the city and that the force had received a large amount of feedback from the community.

**Fire Report:** No report.

**Recreation Report:** Report given by Arnell Dow. Clifton Fairview School is holding its Fasching festival this Saturday, March 12, from 1 to 6pm. Tuesday evenings starting March 8<sup>th</sup> will be Beach Body Building Fitness evenings open to all levels. The exercises are done to video and supported by volunteers. The classes are free with a CRC membership. Ms. Dow mentioned that CRC membership cards can be purchased at the Clifton Recreation Center office. Prices are \$15 for individuals under 18 year olds, \$25 for 18-50 years old, and \$15 for individuals over 50 years old. The membership also provides entrance into CRC pools. Summer camp 2011 registration runs from March 20<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> for previous attendees and is then open to all interested children. The cost is \$1000 per child for 10 weeks; additional children receive a \$100 discount.

**Burnet Woods Trailside Museum:** No report.

**CCAC:** No report.

### **Reviewed and Approved:**

**Treasurer's Report:** B. Fant reviewed the February income statement and balance sheet. The report also now includes the previous two years' net inflow/outflow of funds to emphasize the surplus run during house tour years and the deficit run in off years.

Motion: B. Fant moved to approve the report; M. Montgomery seconded.

Vote Results: The report passed unanimously with one abstention (B. Fant).

Motion: B. Fant moved to be reimbursed for technology expenses, which are a once per year expense. L. Goldenhar seconded. The expense covers the costs of maintaining the listserv, domain name, website hosting, etc.

Vote Results: The motion passed unanimously with three abstentions (B. Fant, C. Huelsman, M. Montgomery).

### **Special CTM Reports:**

**Uptown Small Business Assistance Program:** Janelle Lee, Director of Business Affairs for Uptown Consortium, spoke about the newly created Uptown Small Business Assistance Program (USBAP). The Consortium partnered with Hamilton County Development Company (HCDC) to help small businesses. The collaborative will focus on three strategies: business retention, business coaching, and business outreach. Out of the five Uptown neighborhoods, Clifton was identified as the one with the most urgent need. The Consortium is currently surveying business owners and will set up personal meeting to discuss their needs – from marketing to finances. The Consortium has a one-year contract with HCDC. Catherine Fitzgerald, Assistant Manager for HCDC, spoke about HCDC and USBAP. She described HCDC as a private, non-profit company with a small business incubator, economic development office, and SBA loan assistance program. They have met with ten Clifton businesses to date, and plan to meet with approximately 30 in total. They're currently working to determine the

businesses' view of the business climate and address primary concerns as best as possible with the City and the Consortium. Scott Jacobs, Business Coach for HCDC, stated that he helps small businesses with business plan development, helps with strategic planning, helps with marketing and sales assistance, helps locate avenues for access to capital, and acts as a general resource for other sources of assistance. L. Goldenhar thanked them for their work. She then asked about what would be done for business recruitment, to determine what other businesses Clifton could support, and asked if those items would be in the final report. Ms. Fitzgerald stated that the recruitment portion was being asked of current businesses. Ms. Lee said that she is working with K. Imbus and CBEC to develop a marketing and strategy plan for Ludlow Avenue. She stated that Saybrook Marketing developed a plan and the Consortium and HCDC will be reviewing it. L. Goldenhar stated that Mary Schubauer-Berigan has survey results from a resident survey completed many years ago. Ms. Lee stated that the CBEC meeting was this Thursday and that she would speak with K. Imbus then. M. Montgomery asked about the process of relocating the library and asked if pedestrian traffic would further decrease (beyond that of Keller's IGA closing) when the library moved. Janelle stated that after their three-four month assessment, the USBAP will have findings published as part of the final report. B. Blum asked about how marketing could happen as a district instead of as individual businesses. Ms. Fitzgerald stated that this was not in the current scope of the project. They're initially trying to determine business needs and then can go back to edit/refine the scope. Ms. Lee said that one of the top issues when Uptown was formed was to ensure that the five communities kept their identities. The Consortium will continue to highlight the character of each community but will also market Uptown.

**Keller's Update:** John Vierling and Marilyn Hyland presented. Mr. Vierling thanked Ms. Hyland for all of her help. He stated that they recently went up to Columbus. The politicians attentions were elsewhere, but they had some positive conversation. They currently have a verbal agreement that the fines will be forgiven if the back taxes and interest portions are paid. Mr. Vierling is working with investors and financiers now to pay these amounts. He's also looking at a Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing if necessary. They must work to ensure that the State will allow the store to regain its vendor's licenses if payments are allowed over a period of time. It has been difficult for them to determine the appropriate points of contact within the State, but they have been primarily working with the Attorney General since the Department of Taxation has not been responding. They would ideally like to reopen in a few weeks. Ms. Hyland thanked CTM for the resolution passed last month and for the letter. She reiterated the fact that Keller's could reopen in as little as two days once an agreement was met. The resident response from Clifton and nearby neighborhoods on the Friends of Keller's campaign was phenomenal with over 1,500 signatures gathered in eight days with inclement weather. Ms. Hyland stated that a delegation visited Columbus on the 17<sup>th</sup>, consisting of Mr. Vierling, Councilman Wendell Young, Ms. Hyland, and three other people. Cincinnati City Council also passed a resolution urging the Governor to work with Keller's. Councilman Young introduced it in Council, and it had unanimous support. Ms. Hyland circulated an update with the Governor's phone number and urged people to call the Governor to express their support. She stated additional updates will be on the Friends of Keller's website. They're also still working on fundraising through an Escrow fund at Columbia Savings Bank – She stated donations can also be given online through PayPal. M. Montgomery suggested that

residents can call elected officials in the evening to leave a message of support if they're nervous about actually talking to elected officials. Ms. Hyland stated she could be reached via email at [friendsofkellers@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofkellers@gmail.com) C. Huelsman asked about what model the store may take once reopened to gain viability going forward. He said that demand may drive offerings. Mr. Vierling stated they are looking to set up a board of advisors to determine this, but slower sales has created their current dilemma; thus they need to first focus on reopening and establishing a profit, then they can work to determine offerings. Uptown Consortium and HCDC can help after taxes are paid (the organization cannot help until Keller's is current with their taxes). They're looking at small business loans and other ways to make enhancements once reopened, especially with input from the community. Ms. Hyland thanked everyone for all of their help and stated she hopes the store will reopen soon.

**Groesbeck Fund:** M. Vesper spoke about the Groesbeck Fund. It was established in 1869 to provide music in Burnet Woods for residents/visitors and is managed by the Cincinnati Park Board. This year, the Board eliminated music in all park due to budget cuts. However, the Groesbeck fund is still available for Burnet Woods since the money is specifically earmarked for that purpose. The issue was brought up at the last CTM meeting. Kip Eagen produces StreetScapes and has made a proposal to put music in Burnet Woods for summer 2011. The Park Board requested support from CTM in order to approve Mr. Eagen's proposal. Mr. Eagen's proposal was circulated to all CTM Trustees prior to this evening's meeting. He stated that he has led StreetScapes for the past 10 years. When he was on the CTM Board, he partnered with the Park Board to have music at the dedication of the trailside museum, to which 1000 people attended. He stated that time is short on getting a plan in place. Mr. Eagen's proposal to the Park Board is for a three part project: 1) Outdoor instruments designed to survive the elements that allow people to play in Burnet Woods – these mainly consist of tubes, and he is trying to get 2-3 installed this year, and maybe more next year. They are open tuned to each other, and the Park Board told Mr. Eagen about the instruments. 2) On the trails music with music performed by classical musicians throughout the park. He has contacted CCM and said the organization is very excited. 3) He plans to continue with music events at Diggs plaza and the trailside museum to tie in with community events, perhaps StreetScapes and Holidays on Ludlow concerts. He presented the plan to both Naturalist Michael George and Superintendent of the Park Board Gerald Checco. They both asked for a more detailed overview, including a schedule, marketing, plans for how the money would be spent, Park Board participation, etc. before reviewing. The Park Board would need to charge for services they offer due to budget cutbacks. The Park Board needs a letter of support from CTM. Mr. Eagan stated that he is not asking for financial support, just support from CTM that the proposed plan is acceptable. Mr. Eagan then showed a draft budget with four concerts in July (on Sundays from 1-3pm) at \$300 each, a concert by the lake (a three band afternoon concert from 1-5pm, date TBD, with rock, jazz, and pop at \$2,300, two concerts on Diggs Plaza to coincide with other Clifton events at \$300 each, two or three musical instruments for \$2000 and installation of \$200, promotion/marketing expense of \$700, administration and project management of \$2000, and park costs of \$1000. M. Vesper stated that she circulated a resolution to the CTM Board prior this evening to ask for support. She said we may have discussions whether CTM needs to be involved going forward since we don't know if every year will be in need of outside support like this year. B. Pantoja asked for

perspective on why there is a need for a plan now and not before. He also asked what these funds have paid for in the past. Mr. Eagen stated that in the past that there was a specific Park position held by John Schott to provide musical services. However, he is no longer employed by the Park Board. Historically, Mr. Schott scheduled six to seven jazz concerts on Diggs Plaza and two to three concerts at the lake every summer. Mr. Eagen said that his budget will be completely transparent. In the past, Clifton was never provided full insight into how the \$10,000 was spent. B. Blum said that the live music and instrument blend would be welcomed. He asked about the \$2000 management fee. Mr. Eagen stated that this was his fee for leading all of these projects. Audience member Jack Brand asked about why concerts at the bandstand were not included as part of the plan. Mr. Eagen said that music at the lake has been better received than at the bandstand. Mr. Eagen stated that this was just a one year proposal, and then CTM can decide how to improve going forward. M. Montgomery liked the tie to the university (CCM) and the installations. The plan was different and provides for a general level of excitement to Burnet Woods. Mr. Eagen hopes to develop an ongoing partnership with CCM, CBEC, the parks, etc. to help promote the events and Burnet Woods. He said that John Fox from CityBeat would be happy to be the media partner. An audience member said that he was glad that different music genres were being planned for this summer beyond rock (e.g. classical and jazz). Mr. Eagen said that his hope was to have a variety of genres represented this summer. Audience member Steve Slack reminded the CTM Trustees that the Park Board has asked CTM if they would like to sell pre-packaged food or bottled water as a fundraiser. J. Segers requested that the intro to Mr. Eagen's proposal about music in the park being a new concept be revised since this was not a new concept. He stated that the Groesbeck fund was specifically in place to provide music within Burnet Woods. Mr. Eagen said he was happy to reword the opening. An audience member asked if a committee would be needed to help with arrangements this year and in following years. Mr. Eagen said this was likely, and they would reach out as needed.

Motion: B. Blum moved to approve M. Vesper's resolution. M. Vesper read resolution. M. Montgomery seconded. B. Fant asked who would be managing the funds. Mr. Eagen stated that the Park Board would be doing so. P. Schneider said one key point to change – wanted to state no financial contribution from CTM for 2011. P. Schneider moved to amend. B. Blum accepted amendment.

Vote Results: The motion passed unanimously.

**Safe and Clean Grant Award:** K. Imbus stated that she had good news to report. CTM was awarded a \$5,000 grant from Safe and Clean for the Vine and Woolper gateway. The Cincinnati Zoo acquired three houses on the southeast corner of the intersection and removed them. The property has since been prepared for landscaping. She stated that approximately 20,000 cars pass through the intersection daily, and these improvements would make the corner more inviting. Uptown Consortium will be providing \$1,250 toward the project, CTM will be providing \$1,250, and the Safe and Clean Grant will contribute another \$5,000 for a total of \$7,500. K. Imbus showed various renderings of the proposed landscaping. The project is getting design help from the Zoo and CTM will be seeking volunteers for planting. K. Imbus also showed that all four corners were scheduled to be landscaped. She also added that as part of the city budget priority requests last year, CTM was able to move the repaving of

Woolper up one year to 2012. The plans also include an Avondale Gateway sign. L. Goldenhar asked about a Clifton Gateway sign. K. Imbus stated that space is limited and mentioned that perhaps CTM could do something further up the hill. An audience member asked about perhaps making bus stop look better at the corner. K. Imbus stated that another community group had trouble improving a bus stop due to city requirements/restrictions.

**Residential Parking Permit Proposal Update:** Parking update provided by P. Schneider. He said that the Committee has been working with residents in the general vicinity of Cincinnati State to implement resident only parking. Jon Childress, Supervising Engineer of Traffic Control, has been involved with proposal. Clifton resident Don Miller initiated. Mr. Childress stated that 75% of available parking must be being used for parking program to be implemented and that the area near Cincinnati State met this requirement. He asked general clarification questions about what streets were involved. He stated that parking on Clifton Hills Terrace was not permitted and the street would be removed from the request. Additionally, Clifton Hills Avenue currently has restricted parking from 7am-6pm and asked if residents wanted to get rid of that restriction in order to implement the new program. Audience member Josephine Keenan expressed her thanks to Mr. Childress for his help. She asked about the ability to download visitor passes. Mr. Childress stated that resident passes would be \$30 each (two passes per household) plus \$30 for one visitor per household. He stated the parking restriction would only be in place Monday through Friday. An audience member stated that 7am-10pm on weekdays was necessary to account for early and late classes. Discussion ensued about the need for parking on both sides of Old Ludlow and for parking around Dunore Park. Various solutions were provided by the CTM Board, trustees, and Mr. Childress including one-side of street restrictions, parking time limits and other solutions. Mr. Childress then asked what the residents in attendance thought in terms of preference on restricting both sides of the streets. P. Schneider said preference was both sides. M. Montgomery said that he taught at Cincinnati State and that students have tough days (working, children, etc.) and wants to find balance between resident and student needs. P. Schneider stated that residents have priority due to living in neighborhood. He said that Cincinnati State's job was to provide parking facilities and shuttle services to those parking locations in addition to the parking spaces in surface lot. He said that quality of life was important to the people that live in Clifton, and that their needs should have preference over visitors. Mr. Childress said that a petition would be created and would require 60% approval before the parking program was implemented. B. Fant stated that the area around Dunore Park should be open for visitors. He said that the rights of all Clifton residents should be considered, even those that don't live in the immediate area surrounding the park. Audience member Allen Daniels said that the map of the restricted parking area only goes up to Dunore Park. A map was then shown with the restricted area highlighted. Audience member Gina Marsh asked about how the boundaries were determined. She asked if there would be a movement of parking issues further to the east. Mr. Childress said that once the program was in place, it could be revisited to see how it was performing. C. Huelsman reiterated that time limit parking might discourage students from parking for classes.

**Communication Committee Update:** L. Goldenhar reported that the annual membership drive was ongoing and the Committee is close to sending out 2011 renewal letters. This year's

letters will include Clifton bumper stickers with “Historic. Walkable. Eclectic” tagline and should be sent out in 3-4 weeks. Early bird special for the first 200 responders is a free ticket to the zoo. Dues will not go up this year. Last year was the best year ever membership drive and she believes the bumper stickers will improve the drive this year.

K. Imbus stated that Melissa English came down with the flu and will be in next month to talk about the Rumpke Landfill expansion.

### **Community Q&A:**

Audience member Mark Lutwak stated a concern over the Park Board taking garbage cans out of the parks. He said that litter is now accumulating in Clifton parks. K. Imbus stated that this may be due to budget constraints. M. Vesper stated that a sign was supposed to be posted to encourage park visitors to take out what they carried in. Another audience member stated that she had asked the Park Board about the garbage cans and was told that due to budget constraints, the cans would stay permanently removed. M. Montgomery stated that this is partially a public health issue. Audience member Gina Marsh stated that we may need to form a Clean and Safe Committee to pick up trash once a month. K. Imbus stated that this is also partially a street and sanitation issue. Audience member Steve Slack said that we should address Cincinnati City Council for funding. The parks oversee 10% of the land in Cincinnati, and the budget cuts will most likely get worse next year. He stated that some parks may even close. C. Huelsman stated that the Great American Cleanup in Clifton last year didn't come to fruition due to time constraints, but he is looking forward to assembling block groups (Clifton may be the only community in Uptown without them) to pick up litter. He also wants to encourage more cleanups outside Great American (which will be held on 4/16). Audience member Tom Lohre asked about block groups. C. Huelsman stated it's a combination litter control and community watch to keep areas clean of litter and crime. K. Imbus stated that in the short term, CTM may need to write a letter to City Council and the Park Board to get garbage cans back. C. Huelsman stated that the University of Cincinnati's Center for Community Engagement is a great asset since they have a strong volunteer base looking for service hours. CTM can collaborate with the Center to cover these issues and cultivate a relationship with the university. An audience member asked if residents could put up their own garbage can in the parks. K. Imbus stated that the only issue would most likely be that the can could potentially be confiscated. The audience member said she would a garbage can in place. M. Vesper stated she would follow up with the Park Board.

Audience member Betsy Black stated that 2011 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CTM and asked if anything would be done to celebrate. K. Imbus stated that CTM would look into it.

Announcements: Next Meeting April 4, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the Clifton Recreation Center

Meeting Adjourned 8:47 PM

Respectfully submitted: Jeff Rose, Secretary