

CTM Meeting Minutes
7:00 PM
June 6, 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 June 6, 2011 at 7:03 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, Eric Clark, Brian Curwin, Dick Druffel, Bill Fant, Karen Imbus, Malcolm Montgomery, Ben Pantoja, Jeff Rose, Pete Schneider, Jim Segers, and Mary Jo Vesper. The presence of a quorum is duly noted.

Special Announcement: Cincinnati Councilman, Wayne Lippert, attended the evening's meeting to introduce himself. He was appointed to fill Jeff Berding's vacant spot. Mr. Lippert presented a petition, to get himself on the ballot, for audience members to sign after the meeting.

Reviewed and Approved:

Secretary's Report: A draft version of the minutes of the May 2, 2011, meeting had been previously circulated to the Board for review and comment. K. Imbus proposed one edit to the comments on the Clifton Plaza property tax valuation.

Motion: K. Imbus moved to approve the minutes with the minor edits. B. Pantoja seconded.
Vote Results: The revised minutes of the May 2, 2011, meeting were unanimously approved with three abstentions.

Treasurer's Report: B. Fant reviewed the May income statement and balance sheet. YTD actual results are on track with the YTD budget. Thus far, expenditures are below budget; however, CTM still has two issues of Chronicle to cover.

Motion: B. Fant moved to approve the treasurer's report. M. Malcolm seconded.
Vote Results: The report passed unanimously with one abstention (B. Fant).

Motion: B. Fant moved to approve the **payment of a \$1000 bill**. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Fant spoke about CTM's NSP 2011 submission, which was done earlier in the year. The submission was based on an expected receipt of \$5,000, but due to NSP fund levels was reduced to only \$2,500. B. Fant proposed that Clifton's submission be revised to be solely focused on supporting one issue of the Chronicle. He stated that an entire vote of the

community was needed on the revision. A vote of the audience was taken and the revision passed unanimously with 22 votes.

Regular Reports:

Police: No report.

Fire: No report.

Clifton Recreation Center: Tom Reese stated that summer camp has started and to keep an eye out for kids around the Center. During heat emergencies, the CRC is a designated “cool center”. The CRC has air conditioning and seniors, children, and others are welcome to come to the center to escape the heat. The CRC pools are also open now. Kroger is once again sponsoring Kroger Family Fun Pool Days for the seventh year. These are Sunday pool parties with free snacks, soft drinks, and music. Mr. Reese noted that free teen memberships are still available, and anyone in Cincinnati can submit applications.

Burnet Woods Trailside Museum: No report.

CCAC: No report.

IGA Update: Marilyn Hyland thanked CTM and the community for their commitment to having a grocery store in Clifton. She then introduced Steve Goessling. Mr. Goessling received a round of applause from the audience, and introduced himself. He stated that his son, Mark, was also in the business, and they were both very excited to be in Clifton. Mr. Goessling stated that he had been a CPA for several years before owning and running his own grocery store. Mr. Goessling said that the building will be undergoing a \$1.5 million renovation with plans to have a September grand opening. Job applications for the expected 50 new hires are currently being accepted at the Reading IGA. Mr. Goessling stated that he bought his first store in 1998, and before that, he spent 10 years working for an IGA store in Mt. Airy. He now owns 4 stores. They now have enough volume to be able to negotiate with vendors. They are currently removing existing products to work on the flooring. He recommended visiting the Reading store to get an idea of what one of his stores looks like, and he stated that the Clifton location will most likely not be an IGA-branded store. K. Imbus stated that the community is thrilled to have Mr. Goessling and looks forward to meeting him. She suggested polling the community for items they'd like to see at the store, and B. Fant mentioned that he could place a post on the CTM website. B. Blum asked about what would be done to ensure that the store's parking lot is only used by store patrons. Mr. Goessling stated that he could put barriers in place during construction and then be watchful after the store opens.

Greening Your Home Contest: Lilah Glick introduced herself as the Marketing and Communication Outreach Director for the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance (Energy Alliance). They have partnered with Uptown Consortium to create the Greening Your Home Contest, in which one winner will win a free full home energy efficiency improvement of up to \$7,500 in home energy improvements. The goal of the contest is to educate the community

and get folks talking about energy efficiency. The Energy Alliance was started in 2008. They can schedule 3-4 hour long energy tours for homeowners for only \$50 instead of \$500, due to government subsidies. They work with 12 preferred contractors who are all BPI certified. They perform pre- and post-checks for all of their jobs. On average, homeowners are able to get 20%+ annual savings in energy expenses, and the payback on the home improvement costs is usually 4-7 years, with improvements designed to last 20 years. The Energy Alliance is also help by subsidizing 35% of improvements, and they have access to a GC Help Loan with a 6.99% interest rate. Sponsors of the contest include Bill Groh Construction, Tri State Wholesale Building Supplies, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, Aquarius Star, Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance, and Uptown Consortium, Inc. To date, 25 people have signed up. Those interested can go online to sign up at: [greatercea.org\greenyourhome](http://greatercea.org/greenyourhome). Entrants must provide 200 words on why their home should win.

Audience member Steve Slack asked if there was a recommended contractors list. Ms. Glick said they have 12. She stated they do a number of tests including a blower door test that can determine where air is escaping the home. Some contractors also do thermal testing. She mentioned that about 10% of homes have a gas leak (carbon monoxide, etc.). Contractors also check duct work and attics. They then provide an itemized report to improve homes, with quotes provided on suggested improvements. Homeowners can decide which contractor they want to use. In 90-95% of the cases, though, the homeowner goes with the contractor who does testing. This specific contest is only for Uptown neighborhoods, but other neighborhoods can still get the low cost assessment and 35% reduction. Ms. Glick mentioned that contractors will revisit homes that don't pass an improvement test.

MLK Improvement Project: Andrea Henderson introduced herself and provided a brief background on the project: It was first presented in 2009, which led to a series of meetings over the next two years. The current proposal extends from West McMicken Avenue to just east of Clifton Avenue.

She stated that pedestrians and cars both find it difficult to maneuver the intersection, and the narrow lanes and parking lanes cause traffic flow and accident problems. There were four alternatives for the project in the initial phase, with six to eight options for the MLK/Clifton intersection. The alternatives were eventually narrowed down to the current plan of widening the intersection from Dixmyth to MLK with four 11 foot lanes with a median. A shared use path would be installed along the north side of MLK. With over 30,000 vehicles traveling on MLK per day and 20,000 vehicles traveling on Clifton, the goal of the project was to improve safety for both drivers and pedestrians. The plan for Riddle Road is a right-in, right-out only turn. A signal will be installed at Probasco to allow traffic to enter that part of the community. Lanes through the intersection will be increased to three to allow more traffic to flow through. The current plan also includes two left hand turn lanes from MLK to go south on Clifton. The plan also calls for larger pedestrian islands and adding medians. The Brookline entrance to Burnet Woods will become a right-in, right-out only turn. Ms. Henderson stated that several institutions have been involved in discussions on the project, including Hebrew Union, the Forum Apartments, CTM, CUF, and others. C. Huelsman asked if the speed would increase due to the higher number of lanes and if that would cause issues

with people jaywalking. Ms. Henderson stated that this is a law enforcement issue for both. B. Blum asked about the number of lights and timing. Ms. Henderson said a traffic study would be done, and they would be timed together. Audience member, Michael Burrill, stated that he worked in U.C.'s planning department for 13 years, and requested that parking should be removed, as there are a number of other places to park and those parking lanes just cause problems. K. Imbus asked if the speed limit could be reduced to 25 MPH. Ms. Henderson stated that due to the volume and design of the roadway, 35 MPH is the lowest the speed limit could go. The 12 foot shared path north of MLK will be for bikes and pedestrians.

M. Vesper inquired about the proposal's inclusion of eight lanes of traffic and how that would fare with pedestrians. Ms. Henderson stated that vehicle and pedestrians were treated as equals in the project plans. She stated that raised crosswalks were still a potential option. M. Vesper also asked about traffic increasing after the improvements. Ms. Henderson stated that traffic may actually decrease upon completion of the project. The main driver of traffic patterns will be how the Hopple interchange with I-75 is implemented. B. Blum said that he though traffic throughput would increase with this project. Audience member Carolyn Miller asked about the north side of MLK between Dixmyth and Hopple. Ms. Henderson stated that parking would be removed along this section as well as a straightening of the current S-curve on the hill. The buildings along the north side of MLK in this section will be purchased and demolished. Many of the buildings are currently suffering from foundation issues. M. Montgomery asked about the properties that would remain after the straightening, and Ms. Henderson stated that those would become part of city property. They are currently preparing the environmental documents for the project. They must also obtain a letter from the Park Board in the next 2-3 weeks for approval for work that encroaches into the park. Ms. Henderson then asked the CTM Board for a letter stating that CTM was aware of the encroachment into the park and OK or not with it. She mentioned that all project displays are on the city website, which was also shown at the February meeting. Several questions were asked about how to minimize impact to trees. Ms. Henderson stated that a 3-foot high retaining wall would be constructed to retain as many trees as possible. The park also has a master plan, and Brookline was proposed to be closed off in the future. Additionally, the project calls for a realignment of the park entrance near Dixmyth to be moved to be exactly opposite Dixmyth. D. Druffel asked why land was being taken from Burnet Woods instead of U.C. for the widening of MLK, especially since U.C. had initially been part of the park. Ms. Henderson stated that due to lane alignment, the land needed to come from Burnet Woods. Audience member Steve Slack questioned the double left-hand turn lane, as he believes the additional left-hand turn creates problems. He mentioned that the single left hand turn lane might reduce the impact to the park. Ms. Henderson stated that the inclusion of a no left turn into Riddle would back up traffic on MLK, creating the need for the second left hand turn lane. P. Schneider asked about the cycling of the lights at intersection. Ms. Henderson said that the city has tried numerous options. P. Schneider also asked about Dick's suggestion of pushing into U.C. property instead of Burnet Woods and if it had even been considered. Ms. Henderson stated that many more options had been considered. M. Montgomery asked how many people knew of the land being taken from Burnet Woods prior to this evening's meeting. Only four board members/audience members were aware. K. Imbus stated that she had concern over stating "acknowledgment" of the encroachment into the park vs. "agreement". She also stated

that entrance realignment with Dixmyth was not known until tonight. K. Imbus stated that she would prefer to delay the Board's response until August, where they could also have a Park Board attendee. J. Segers asked for a clearer cost benefit presentation at the next meeting. B. Blum asked about how many land was proposed to be taken from Burnet Woods. Ms. Henderson said the land equated a 1/3 of an acre.

Cincinnati Streetcar Project: Jeff Wallace gave the presentation. He was hired by the City as a consultant to help develop the streetcar. The committee looked for an appropriate route that had minimal environmental impact. The proposed streetcar would run on fixed rail and move with traffic. The streetcar would travel at an estimated speed of 13 mph, and run 18 hours per day, 365 days per year. Wait times would be 10 minutes with 20 minutes during off peak. The streetcar would utilize a single overhead catenary wire to minimize impact and operate five modern cars. SORTA would be the operator. It would travel from the Banks project downtown to the Zoo as the main corridor plan. However, the initial phase would just be from the Banks to Findlay Market. A second phase would include a spur up the hill. The initial phase has since been revised to only go from downtown to Findlay market.

Studies have shown that streetcars attract young professionals. The streetcar could also help return 92 acres of current parking and more than 500 vacant buildings downtown into tax-producing properties. The streetcar provides an urban amenity and helps to act as a catalyst for a larger transportation system. Development often follows the creation of permanent transportation. This project is as much about economic development as it is about transportation development. The proposed plan would create an estimated 310 construction jobs for the revised route and 25-30 jobs for ongoing operations. It also elevates the previously mentioned 92 acres to a higher and better use by accelerating housing and commercial development. It creates jobs, accelerates development, and connects assets; laying a foundation for growth. The second phase would potentially connect Downtown with Uptown and help circulation through Uptown. Vine Street would be the connector, but the exact route must be studied. Current funds on the table include \$25 million from the Urban Circulator Grant (federal); \$4 million from an OKI grant (OH/KY/IN); city bond financing of \$64 million; and Duke private funding (\$6.5 million), which all will be used for construction.

The environmental assessment has been completed and no significant impact was found. SORTA would also need to execute a memorandum of understanding, which establishes a pass-through mechanism for federal grants. The FTA would then green light care procurement; maintenance facility ROW acquisition and final design. Estimated cost to build is \$95 million. An alternative option is to move to battery powered car instead of electric. The first segment impacts: triggers detailed planning of Phase II (Uptown); property values increase; and city gets additional revenue. First segment operations and maintenance is \$2.5 million per year, and more than enough funding sources have been identified. No City general fund operating resources would be used. An operations reserve would be created that would further protect the general fund to ensure the Streetcar doesn't compete for funding with police and fire resources. Potential sources include: (i) casino revenue of up to \$3 million, (ii) parking meter revenue of up to \$400,000 (due to planned technological improvements), (iii) fare boxes on the streetcars of approximately \$465,000 to \$675,000 (based on \$0.50 to \$1

fare), (iv) naming rights and sponsored stops of \$200,000 and potentially (v) labeled streetcar. An operating reserve of \$2 to \$3 million would be created.

B. Pantoja asked about benefit to rider of streetcars versus buses. Mr. Wallace stated that destinations are the main attraction. Additionally, studies have shown that more people ride trains than buses. E. Clark mentioned that it's the "cool" thing to do. C. Huelsman stated that people are more familiar with fixed routes and the visual representation of where the path leads. M. Vesper asked about electric running on rails. Mr. Wallace stated that the electric cars would still be rail guided. B. Curwin thought that the streetcars were normally faster; was that considered. Mr. Wallace said that the specifics haven't been worked out yet.

Memorial Day Parade Report: K. Imbus said that the Memorial Day Parade was a wonderful event. Audience member Jack Brand said that the parade went well. About 13 people played in a band. B. Pantoja stated that games and a food truck were added this year along with a clown.

Variance Request for 517 Lafayette Avenue: M. Montgomery stated that an argument was made for upholding the current code, and he provided a brief overview of the situation to date. The main focus was not to set undesirable precedent. The hearing examiner took the information into consideration, and a ruling is pending.

Clifton Residential Parking Permit Program Update: P. Schneider stated that a meeting was held on May 25th with various parties. The city requires a second survey be completed. The initial survey showed 87% utilization; however, the second survey only showed 47% utilization. For the program to be put in place, there must be two 75% utilization surveys. The current plan is to wait until the end of September to do another utilization survey. Audience member Josephine Keenan asked about what day of the week the second survey was taken. P. Schneider said he would get the date and pass along to her.

Groesbeck Fund Update: K. Imbus submitted the proposal for the Groesbeck fund, which included a pass-through to Kip Eagen. She stated that insurance for events will be covered by the Groesbeck fund. Mr. Eagen stated that all of the paperwork was in progress. He had two items to discuss: 1) to have some input from CTM on promoting the concert series and 2) about how the NSP reduction would impact the annual StreetScapes festival. Mr. Eagen asked if he could write a Fine Arts grant, which is due in early August. B. Blum motioned. P. Schneider seconded. Passed unanimously.

2012 Clifton House Tour: K. Imbus discussed the House Tour as CTM's largest fundraiser and asked that each CTM trustee determine what level of involvement they would like to have before the next meeting. She asked for involvement from the entire board. B. Pantoja suggested sending out a Doodle invite to drum up volunteers. K. Imbus agreed. K. Imbus also specifically asked for someone with great organizational skills to lead the effort.

Clifton Chronicle Update: Tom Lohre spoke about the Clifton Chronicle. August 1st is the deadline for fall articles and stories. He requested committee updates be submitted sooner

than that. He would like to start putting extended versions of articles online with PDFs. Clifton Chronicle items will also be placed in the Clifton plaza display cases.

Beautification Committee Report on Spring Planting and Announcement of “Beautiful Balconies” Contest: M. Vesper stated that the Beautification Committee was working to obtain brighter flowers for Ludlow Avenue planters. CBPA plans to match CTM funds to get perennials in place and to improve soil. This year, the committee is working to encourage residents on Ludlow from Whitfield to Brookline and one block in either direction to beautify their porches and balconies by creating a contest with three awards to be presented in early August. More info will be provided via email.

Community Q & A

Audience member John Bressler stated that Arlin’s Bar has been having loud music on the weekends until 2am. Mr. Bressler stated that the police used to go in at 11pm to ask the establishment to quiet down but that has not happened recently. M. Montgomery said that Officer Lisa Johnson would be John’s best contact. He stated that he would share her contact info after the meeting.

Announcements: Next Meeting August 1, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the Clifton Recreation Center

Meeting Adjourned 9:22 PM

Respectfully submitted: Jeff Rose, Secretary