

CTM Meeting Minutes  
7:00 PM  
August 1, 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 August 1, 2011 at 7:08 PM at the Clifton Recreation Center at 320 McAlpin Avenue, by Trustee Karen Imbus, who chaired the meeting.

Trustees in attendance for the meeting: Eric Clark, Dick Druffel, Bill Fant, Christian Huelsman, Karen Imbus, Malcolm Montgomery, Ben Pantoja, Jeff Rose, Pete Schneider, Jim Segers, 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 June 6, 2011, meeting had been previously circulated to the Board for review and comment.

Motion: K. Imbus moved to approve the minutes. P. Schneider seconded.

Vote Results: The revised minutes of the June 6, 2011, meeting were unanimously approved with one abstention.

**Treasurer's Report:** B. Fant reviewed the July income statement and balance sheet.

B. Fant mentioned that CTM has exceeded their fundraising efforts to date. They could do another membership mailing but were still discussing cost effectiveness. The YTD postage expense also includes other mailings, but it's difficult to separate on bulk permit, so the expense is an overestimate of the actual Chronicle mailing. There was one returned check during the month for \$112, but we will not know what it is until the bank statement is received. The Esquire Theatre was paid \$300 for movie rental. Memorial Day Parade expenses included police, raffle tickets, etc.

Motion: B. Fant moved to approve the treasurer's report. M. Malcolm seconded.

Vote Results: The report passed unanimously with one abstention.

**Regular Reports:**

**Fire:** Report was given by Captain Kevin Campbell. Engine 34 made 176 responses in July, including 142 EMS runs and 19 confirmed fires (3 structure, 1 extra alarm, and 15 car/outdoor fires). The new fire chief has expanded the fire department's EMS base with Advanced Life Support capabilities. Twelve firehouses now have this equipment. Previous administration had the equipment, but they did not make use of it.

**Police:** Report was given by Captain David Bailey, District 5 Commander. He noted that July saw a small increase in burglaries and thefts from autos. Additionally, there have been some complaints regarding panhandling in the business district, for which they have made some arrests. The new police chief, James Craig, will be sworn in on August 2, 2011. The ceremony will be held at Cincinnati State at 10am. The chief's first duties will be dealing with personnel and trimming budgets. He'll also have to work on ways to get officers back on the street. An audience member who lived on Greendale Avenue asked about recent incidents on the street including two hit and skips (vehicle damaging another vehicle), car break-ins, and one home burglary. Captain Bailey stated that communication among the neighbors and with the department is key and that many of these incidents happen between 9am and 1pm. The audience member stated that some of these events are occurring at night and asked how they could curb them. Captain Bailey stated that patrols are deployed according to crime patterns, but he suggested that the street turn on their porch lights at night. The audience member also asked about response time for hit and skips. Captain Bailey stated that budget cuts are creating pain for everyone. M. Montgomery suggesting emailing items to Officer Lisa Johnson at [Lisa.Johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:Lisa.Johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov) and signing up for her updates. The audience member mentioned that the residents have created their own Facebook page to communicate as well.

**Clifton Recreation Center:** Report was given by Tom Reese. He stated that the last day of summer camp is August 12<sup>th</sup> and that August 16<sup>th</sup> is first day of school for most children. He reminded everyone to be watchful of children crossing the street. Mr. Reese also reported that some members of Citizens on Patrol noticed that a large truck has been parking in the CRC's parking lot. He noted that the issue was subsequently addressed and resolved with the owner of the truck as the CRC does not allow overnight parking except for city vehicles. He also noted that a flyer has been posted in the Center announcing a community project for a summertime kid's grant. Mr. Reese also stated that mosaic blocks are being donated to the Clifton Garden. Children in the program were able to take home the flower pot that they built. The children have also been working on a play which is currently in rehearsal. The last day of summer camp will be a luau party.

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

**CCAC:** No report.

### **Special Reports:**

**Clifton Library:** Kim Fender provided updates on both the current Clifton library location as well as updates on the plans to renovate the Cox House as the new Clifton library.

**Current Library Location:** The generous anonymous donor who stepped forward to allow for Sunday hours at the Clifton library in 2010 did so again for 2011 and 2012, making Clifton the only library with Sunday hours outside of the main library. The awnings for the current library location were also being replaced due to the generous donation from the anonymous donor.

New Library Location: A grant from a trust at Fifth Third was received for \$50,000. The Cox House was also being prepared for a roof replacement and masonry work, totaling about \$500,000 in cost. The project is getting started sooner than the Cincinnati Library had planned since engineers have warned that additional damage will occur to the building if these improvements are not undertaken as soon as possible. A sign will also be posted in the yard to announce the project, which was donated by United Signs. This work will begin at the end of August or early September. C. Huelsman asked about the garage behind the Cox building and its role in the library's plans. Ms. Fender said it would be torn down for parking spaces, as it was created by a later architect and the space is needed. Ms. Fender stated that they still need approximately \$3 million to finish the library. B. Pantoja asked about the annual operating expenses for the new library compared to the existing library. Ms. Fender stated that it will be less than a \$100,000 annual addition over the current location. She mentioned that they will have to budget carefully, as no additional funding will be coming from the city or county. Funding to all libraries was cut again on July 1<sup>st</sup>. J. Segers asked about the timing of fundraising completion. Ms. Fender said her hope was 3 years or less, as people may become disinterested if it takes longer than that. She added that once all of the funds have been secured, they could finish the construction/ renovation in one year.

**Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance (GCEA):** Lila Glick spoke about two projects. The first project, the Green Your Home Contest, now has five semifinalists, including one from Clifton. They should be announcing the winner within the next few weeks. For the people who did not win, a home energy assessment was provided for only \$50, which normally costs \$400-\$500. GCEA magnets were also left behind with 5 steps to energy efficiency. GCEA can cover 35% of follow-up projects. The second project was currently in progress with Ameri-Corp members canvassing Clifton to talk about GCEA services available. Ameri-Corps members will be in Cincinnati for two months with energy conservation as one of their goals. Clifton has been one of most receptive communities to date, with a number of interested residents. Audience member Michael Elovitz stated that he works for the EPA and was impressed with the job that the GCEA did. He stated that they check for natural gas leaks, and one of his neighbors had 5-6 small leaks. He highly endorses their service for \$50. Ms. Glick said that in about 50% of assessments, they find natural gas leaks, and in about 10% of those findings, it's fairly serious. She reminded everyone that federal support will only be available for another year or two.

**Runner's Club of Greater Cincinnati (RCGC) Anniversary Race:** Todd Hofacre presented on behalf of the RCGC. The club was founded in 1976 in Clifton and many of their meetings still occur in Clifton. This year, they're celebrating their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary and plan to hold a race to celebrate (the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in November, whichever is opposite the Flying Pig Marathon). The race will take place on or alongside Lafayette, Middleton, and through Mt. Storm Park. It may affect traffic for a few hours that Saturday morning. C. Huelsman asked about race length. Mr. Hofacre said it would be a 5k and would take about 1 hour. C. Huelsman asked about after-race activities. Mr. Hofacre said that there will be some activities in Mt. Storm Park. P. Schneider asked about the race route. Mr. Hofacre said due to the condition of several sidewalks, the race may be a road run this year but that the route was not yet set. M. Montgomery asked about notification to the residents along the race route. Mr. Hofacre said there will be various methods of communication, including CTM. K. Imbus said that CTM would be happy to help publicize the event.

**MLK Redesign:** Karen Imbus spoke about the MLK redesign, which was discussed at the regular June CTM meeting. At that time, CTM was not sufficiently familiar enough with the project to acknowledge the plan. Thus, a line of communication was put in place with the City, and the plans were revised to take into account feedback from CTM. A subsequent special meeting was held in July and was very successful. Andrea Henderson, Project Manager, Transportation and Engineering, sent a summary of the new plan that K. Imbus subsequently circulated to the Board. K. Imbus asked that CTM now vote on the project.

Motion: K. Imbus moved for CTM to approve the City's current plan for the MLK redesign plan. E. Clark seconded.

Vote Results: Passed unanimously.

**Streetscapes:** Karen Imbus spoke with Kip Eagen today about StreetScapes. She stated that this is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event. Setup will take place on Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> with the event taking place on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 6pm. The workshop to make chalk will be on September 4<sup>th</sup> at the CCAC, and there will be 9 to 11 “paintings” this year. There will also be six art cars this year, for which the owners will pay \$500 each for primer. CTM is partnering with Uptown, CityBeat, and CBPA for the event. There will be several activities for children. She noted that volunteers will be needed for Saturday and Sunday; either 16 people for 1 hour shifts or 8 people for 2 hour shifts to man the main tent. T-shirts will be sold again this year with a new design. She also noted that funding will be more difficult this year and she asked B. Fant to provide additional insight.

B. Fant provided a brief background of the event, stating that it typically breaks even with \$2,000 of NSP funding. In 2007, income was \$10,500 and event cost \$14,500; with NSP funding, CTM funded about \$1,500. In 2008 the event was not held due to street renovation. In 2010, budget jumped to \$18,000 in income with expenses of \$18,000. In 2011, \$22,500 of income, and after NSP funding, the event was about \$700 in the black. He stated that this year there is no NSP funding and no free insurance. Invest in Neighborhoods is currently working to get insurance up and running. Insurance will be approximately \$1,000. CTM has currently budgeted \$2,000 for the event and has a \$1,500 donation from Good Samaritan. B. Fant recommended that CTM place this money in a checking account and let Mr. Eagen work from that budget. B. Fant said that CTM could alternatively cash in the StreetScapes CD and cover the expected loss, but it's probably not a good idea to use all of the money in one year. Historically, CTM has provided about \$3,000 to support the event. This year, CTM has set aside \$3,500. P. Schneider asked about what loss CTM would be willing to accept. M. Montgomery expressed concern that contingency of funds may earmark them for use. He asked about other better uses of funds. D. Druffel asked if a budget had been provided by Mr. Eagen. B. Fant stated that no budget had been provided to date. B. Fant said the event was a significant risk, similar to The Chronicle, and also asked how much CTM would be willing to cover. He recommended that someone on the Board co-chair the event this year to protect the asset. M. Vesper asked about art cars history. B. Fant said it went from \$150 in expense to \$5,000 over three years. Two cars first year, then 5-6 last year. B. Fant said he doesn't know all of the costs. All entertainers create expenses. B. Fant said paying folks more than \$400 causes 1099 issues. E. Clark said that Director's Fee of \$5,100 (last year) brings along issues and a “for profit” motive to a “non-profit”. C. Huelsman asked about adding other items to sell alongside t-shirts. J. Segers stated that philosophy has been to support the business district to help generate

sales. He said Mr. Eagen is requiring \$500 this year from each art car owner to help cover costs. He stated that \$5,000 was given to Art Works last year to do art cars and that a similar fee was provided to Mr. Eagen. Businesses donate money and other payments in kind to help out with the event. P. Schneider said he'd be happy to co-chair with Mr. Eagen. B. Pantoja stated that we should ask Mr. Eagen to come back with a budget, and asked if we could host the event with \$3,500 of expense. B. Fant mentioned that two meetings were necessary to approve funds. He noted that one simple action that could be taken was to raise the potential funding to \$5,000 this evening, with a goal to keep the event at \$3,500 and then vote at the September meeting on a final cap. M. Montgomery thanked P. Schneider for volunteering. D. Druffel said asking for \$1,500 additional without a budget was a challenge and said that we should have Mr. Eagen involved. He said Mr. Eagen could fundraise to help cover the costs. He was not against the contingency, but believes if the \$1,500 was set aside that it would be used. He said that we generally have minor overspending anyway and that all parties should know what is in the \$3,500 budget. K. Imbus said that this year, CTM had planned to go through ArtsWave for a grant to pay Art Works to cover art cars. In June, CTM agreed to be the fiscal agent. However, it did not work out. CTM has instead agreed to be fiscal agent for the sculptures in front of the CCAC. K. Imbus agreed that it was hard to make a financial decision without a budget. B. Pantoja said there were two schools of thought: 1) potentially allow for \$5,000 with \$3,500 budget, or 2) \$3,500 budget period. K. Imbus called for a resolution to approve the contingency of \$1,500 with a budget at the September meeting for review. B. Pantoja suggested that the \$3,500 budget should be the goal up front. P. Schneider asked for clarification on CTM covering NSP funding of \$2,000. B. Fant said that CTM was already covering. B. Fant said motion tonight would allow us to decide and vote next month. M. Montgomery asked for straw vote and said we'd have a second chance to vote in September.

Motion: B. Fant moved to add an additional \$1,500 to StreetScapes budget to be consistent with past years of funding with final approval in September and a goal of a \$3,500 budget.

Vote Results: Passed with two opposed.

**ArtsWave:** B. Fant described \$4,000 request of ArtsWave. CTM is a co-sponsor.

**Groesbeck Fund Music in Burnet Woods Recap:** K. Imbus spoke about the concerts in Burnet Woods. She stated that she saw Faux Frenchmen. Over 95 people attended in spite of 90+ degree weather. The musicians performed wonderfully and people of all ages attended. Sweet Basil had 45 attendees, The Poluenc Woodwind Trio had 73 attendees, and Mohenjo Daro had 80 attendees.

**Morrison Place Streetsweeping/Ticketing:** CTM heard from a few residents on Morrison Place, who, with very short notice, were required to remove their cars from the street. Many people who were on vacation and several sick/eldery people without other places to park, were ticketed. Audience member Steve Slack stated that he and his neighbors have had closures for street parties on Howell Avenue with less than 24 hours to move cars. C. Huelsman stated that three months ago he ran into a similar situation on Hosea. He stated that it was a hassle to get the ticket reversed. K. Imbus proposed sending a letter to the City. An audience member from C. Bortz's office stated that their office was contacted about the issue and that they were looking into the issue. K. Imbus requested to be copied on the follow-up email.

**Volunteer Survey:** Ben Pantoja provided an update on the CTM volunteer survey that went out on the listserv. The survey asks about interests and skills and the events for which people would be willing to volunteer. He hopes that it will allow CTM to build a volunteer database. The survey will also be included in the Clifton Chronicle.

**2012 Clifton House Tour:** B. Pantoja showed a PowerPoint presentation. He stated that the event started over 40 years ago and is CTM's largest fundraiser. The tours usually include 5 to 8 homes each year, and the funds raised allow CTM to run deficits in other years. B. Pantoja said that K. Imbus knows people who have moved to Clifton because of homes they saw on the house tour. Previous Trustee Mark Smith provided a number of documents from the 2009 tour that CTM can employ for 2012. Now, CTM just needs the support of volunteers, including subcommittee co-chairs and CTM Trustees. K. Imbus stated that one or two people may be inclined to chair the event, but she is waiting for them to make a decision. She stated that if no Trustee is willing to chair or co-chair the event, then L. Goldenhar feels strongly that CTM should pay someone to co-chair the event who is a strong project manager within the community for a reasonable rate. CTM could advertise and be open/transparent on expectations and review candidates. C. Huelsman asked about upfront planning and about amount of work required. M. Montgomery said that L. Goldenhar had mentioned that the decision must be made as a committee. M. Montgomery said that the money would be well spent, especially in light of other monies spent, such as the director for StreetScapes. E. Clark asked about hours involved. B. Pantoja said that this is a monumental task that requires much more work than StreetScapes. P. Schneider asked for more details on what the project manager would be doing. K. Imbus said that it took 40-50 hours along just to find volunteers. M. Vesper said that we should think about this as a fundraiser and think of it differently than StreetScapes, which is a breakeven event. Someone from the Board would need to be involved with any co-chair. C. Huelsman asked about tasks performed by each chair. K. Imbus said info was available on CTM's share site. Before circulating additional info, CTM will discuss internally. Subcommittee chairs/co-chairs were then determined.

**Vine/Woolper Gateway:** Mary Jo Vesper provided an update on the southeast corner being redone by the Cincinnati Zoo. CTM and Uptown applied for a grant from Safe and Clean and received \$5,000. The project is focused on creating a gateway to Clifton and Avondale. CTM is working with Avondale's community council. Richie's restaurant and the car wash are both willing to alter their properties for a complete intersection beautification project. According to the City's Engineering Department, all plantings must be 30 inches or less around the intersection. The next step is to meet with the business owners.

**Clifton Chronicle Update:** Tom Lohre gave an update on the Clifton Chronicle. The Fall issue is progressing nicely and will have 8 printed pages. It will be sent to 4,800 residences and an extended version will be available online. The next step will be to try to get Chronicle recipients to sign up for the CTM listserv and continue to move more of the stories online. The Spring 2012 Chronicle comes out on March 7<sup>th</sup>, so CTM will be able to publicize the House Tour. Mr. Lohre is still looking for a someone to take over managing the Chronicle.

**Variance Request for 517 Lafayette Avenue:** M. Montgomery provided an update on the variance, which was granted at 37 feet from the roadway instead of 67 feet. A line was drawn on the properties from the house furthest away to front of the next door. The thought was to keep

homes in line with each other. The neighbors decided not to appeal since the cost was \$500. M. Montgomery said that this decision may create an undesirable precedent.

M. Montgomery also stated that CTM often does not receive enough notice on changes in laws or variance requests in order to respond appropriately. Most issues require emergency meetings and do not allow for adequate time to inform the community. On August 2, the question of timely communication is being taken up by the City.

Motion: M. Montgomery moved to have CTM approve a resolution for the meeting. B. Pantoja asked about public forum regarding notification. P. Schneider seconded. Audience member Steve Slack said that wording could be a little more specific. K. Imbus suggested a slight wording change.

Vote Results: Passed unanimously.

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

Audience member Don Miller asked about letter from Dr. Owens on parking issues around Cincinnati State and if he could see the draft before CTM responds. K. Imbus stated that CTM would do so.

C. Huelsman made announcement for the creation of a potential neighborhood cleanup swap. The goal would be to alternate weeks to identify problem areas for dumping and other litter issues and joining together to clean up targeted areas.

Announcements: Next meeting is September 12, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the Clifton Recreation Center.

Meeting Adjourned 9:25 PM

Respectfully submitted: Jeff Rose, Secretary