



**CTM Meeting Minutes**  
**February 4, 2013**  
**Clifton Recreation Center**

In attendance: Ben Pantoja, Linda Ash, Brian Curwin, Michael Moran, Ashley Fritz, Adam Balz, Buddy Goose, Anthony Sizemore, Kevin Marsh, Morgan Rich, Joyce Rich, Tom Dwyer, Eric Urbas, Bruce Bernard, Pat Knapp

**Police Report**

Liaison Officer Lisa Johnson stated that Cincinnati Police made another graffiti-related arrest for offenses in the Clifton/UC area. Suspect is a UC/DAAP student. In addition, warrants are out for two "TA" crew members.

Officer Johnson also advised that thefts from auto continue in the neighborhood and a juvenile was arrested for a burglary on Greendale. She noted graffiti, theft from autos, and burglaries are the top crimes in Clifton.

An audience member asked Officer Johnson about an incident on Riddle Road. She replied that a suspect was arrested for breaking in cars and that there were also a couple of robberies in that area; one suspect was arrested. She noted that students and others walking in the area wearing headphones or talking/texting on cell phones are vulnerable to robberies.

**Recreation Center Report**

Tom Reese reminded the group that the recreation center will be closing in August for planned renovations. The project may take up to a year to complete. Summer camp will be held at the center. Starting Fall 2013, before- and after-school programs will be held temporarily at Fairview School. Pre-registration for 2013 Summer Camp has started. The center has also opened registration for the ongoing Arts for Artists classes; a Friday studio has been added.

**Probasco Fountain Committee Report**

Jan Checco Brown, Dick Druffel, and Mark McKillip represented CTM's Probasco Fountain Committee with a progress report on the committee's activities.

Almost a year ago, the Clifton Community Fund (CCF) board of directors discussed renovation of the fountain as a potential neighborhood improvement project. They approached the City of Cincinnati to determine if the city had plans to renovate the

fountain. Representatives from the city confirmed that City Council had discussed renovating the fountain about 20 years ago. Joel Koopman from the city's Department of Facilities Management had informed CTM in December 2012 that he planned to include costs to renovate the fountain in the 2013 budget. Based on this history, CTM established the Probasco Fountain Committee to explore a potential fountain renovation project.

The fountain committee includes representatives from major stakeholders including CCF (Dick Druffel and David Mann), CTM (Joyce Rich, Tony Sizemore, and former CTM member Mary Jo Vesper), CCAC (Mark McKillip), interested Clifton residents (Jan Brown Checco, Ted Johanson, and Karen Imbus), and the City of Cincinnati (Joel Koopman and Jamie Accurso from the city's Department of Facilities Management).

The committee's stated goal is "To restore this historic fountain to excellent condition, and to improve the public access and enjoyment of Henry Probasco's iconic gift to the Clifton community."

So far, the committee has discussed issues related to renovating and possibly relocating the fountain and set up a process to gather community input. An initial community brainstorming session will be held Tuesday, February 19, at the Clifton Recreation Center. Interested neighbors are invited to attend the meeting to provide their ideas and input for the project. If people want to submit their ideas but cannot attend the meeting, they can contact Dick Druffel, committee chair, via email at [druffelrt@fuse.net](mailto:druffelrt@fuse.net).

Dick Druffel noted this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Clifton to have a say in the renovation and restoration of a major neighborhood landmark.

Jan Brown Checco shared the history of the fountain. Henry Probasco presented it to the people of Clifton in 1887. Designed by Samuel Hannaford, it features an "ornamental trough for horses and other animals, of Quincy granite and bronze," and was inspired by a 16th century fountain on St. Peters Square in Rome. It was last renovated between 1974 and 1980.

The restoration will include the cleaning of stone elements, cleaning and coating of bronze elements, cleaning and coating of the subterranean vault, addition of a sump pump, alterations to the water supply system, and alterations to the electrical system. Other improvements could include a return to the fountain's original water display (water coming from the top of the fountain); reconsideration of its current placement in relation to the street, water utilities, and future plans for CCAC's geothermal system; and possible addition of seating, pavers, landscaping, lights, or other amenities to enhance public access and enjoyment. The committee is also sensitive to the impact that relocation of the fountain on the CCAC lawn could potentially have on the CCAC's popular Wednesdays on the Green in the summer months.

Druffel noted the project will be funded through the city's capital improvement funds, not out of its operating budget.

Mark McKillip reported the committee's proposed timeline for the project:

February 4, 2013—present goals and process to CTM  
February 19, 2013—community brainstorm session  
March 4, 2013—update CTM  
March 18-21, 2013—second community input session (if needed)  
April 1, 2013—present preferred options to CTM for approval  
April/May 2013—submit formal capital budget request to City of Cincinnati  
May 2013—meet with mayor and city council to present capital budget request  
June 2013—secure city council approval of capital budget request  
Fall 2013—city Facilities Management Department receives appropriated funds and commences design study  
Spring 2014—complete design/community review of design/secure necessary easements/construction bids  
Fall 2015—construction completed

Audience member Daniel Ames asked, “If we move the fountain, what is to keep the city from widening Clifton Avenue, installing left turn lanes, and making this a four-lane boulevard?”

Druffel replied that while there had been discussions in the past about widening Clifton Avenue, he believes “we’re in a different era now than when this came up before... In great part because of pushback from the community (twice), that was folded and we moved on.” He said that the city has come to realize that the boulevard approach got traffic to the hospitals quicker, but it also destroyed communities. “Now we know you have to have livable communities.” He also noted that fountain committee members would be talking with the mayor and city council and “we’ll ask for promises. Maybe we can even get it in writing.”

Other audience members asked about ownership of the fountain and the committee's aggressive timeline. Druffel responded the timeline is based on the need to interact at the earliest possible time with the city's budgeting process for 2013. Joel Koopman noted that the city plans capital budgets for six years out into the future. He said the Probasco Fountain renovation is on his department's list for its next capital request. “We’re going to do something [with the fountain]. We want to do what Clifton wants to do.” He also noted the fountain is in significant need of restoration. Audience member Cindy Herrick asked if Koopman could estimate the cost of the restoration. Koopman said it is difficult to say, but in excess of \$100,000.

Another audience member expressed concern that there is not enough time to get word out to the community and invite them to the community brainstorming session. She asked if there would be additional community input sessions beyond the Feb. 19 meeting. Druffel noted that if necessary, there would be additional community meetings. The committee will use the CTM email system/listserv to get the word out.

### **CliftonFest/Streetscapes Report**

Jan Brown Checco presented a report on the 2012 Cliftonfest/Streetscape event and plans for the 2013 event. The Cliftonfest/Streetscapes Committee includes Jan Brown Checco, Scott Crawford, Pete Schneider, Buddy Goose, and Tom Lohre.

CliftonFest 2013 is scheduled for September 27-29.

CliftonFest 2012 was a successful event blessed with great weather. It featured sidewalk sales by local merchants, expansion of the sidewalk chalking that Clifton is so well known for, a range of family and children's activities, art cars, street musicians, and other events.

Suggestions for 2013 include more varieties of beer, wine sales, more balloon animals/hats, shopping bags with chalk images, more food vendors, yard signs for pre-event promotions, etc.

New events/features are planned for Cliftonfest/Streetscapes 2013: a wine walk Friday night with music, active encouragement of spontaneous sidewalk chalking, more merchant-commissioned art on Ludlow, expansion of the kids carnival, a possible dogs and cats parade, a 5K race Sunday. A potential partnership with the Cincinnati Parks Board would provide access to additional funds, and would extend parts of the event to Diggs Plaza and the Burnet Woods bandstand.

Challenges include the need to close Ludlow Avenue, the need for leadership and volunteers for event production, the need for sponsors, and volunteer coordination.

### **Approval of Minutes from January 2013 CTM Meeting**

The January 2013 minutes were approved. Brian Curwin (not present at January meeting) abstained.

### **Budget Discussion**

Tom Dwyer, CTM Treasurer, reported a light month of revenue and expenses: \$192.14 in revenue and \$50 in expenses. He reported the addition of \$700 from the 2012 Memorial Day Parade, and \$400 left over from the former Main Street initiative as well as \$550 from a past Streetscapes event.

Board member Kevin Marsh asked about the payment of property taxes on Clifton Plaza, which CTM understands is the responsibility of the Plaza LLC. Dwyer noted he has reached out to Plaza LLC and asked for a meeting to discuss plaza finances.

CTM's available cash as of February 4, 2013, is \$88,600 and the 2013 budget shows a deficit of \$11,000. Ben Pantoja noted this is not typical. He asked why there is such a deficit. The group noted that the budget includes \$5,000 for capital improvements to the Clifton Plaza, but there are no known plans for a capital project in 2013. The budget also includes money for updating the CTM website and for the purchase of deer cameras to help Cincinnati Police with graffiti monitoring. Membership revenues are down, due in

part to the fact that only one membership letter was sent out in 2012 instead of the typical two letters. Dwyer noted that CTM has taken on some new projects but has no fundraising events planned this year. Brian Curwin noted this is typical, since CTM's major fundraiser, the Clifton House Tour, happens only every three years. Small deficits are not unusual in the years when the House Tour is not scheduled. Dwyer noted that CTM needs to plan more fundraising events, including the membership letter and improving the website to encourage online membership registration.

The group also noted that 2012 House Tour revenues were lower (\$16,000 versus \$27,000 in 2009), partially due to rain on the tour day. The group consensus was to generate another membership mailing, better articulate the benefits of membership, and facilitate online membership registration. The Communications Committee will explore options.

Malcolm Montgomery noted that for purposes of planning, perhaps the CTM budget should be prepared over the three-year cycle to reflect House Tour revenue flow.

Bruce Bernard noted that CTM currently has a more than \$88,000 cash flow, and that CTM should be exploring ways to use the money to help the community instead of trying to hold on to it.

The budget as it currently stands was approved unanimously.

### **Business Committee Report on Ludlow Leasing Study**

Morgan Rich, chair of the CTM Business Committee, discussed CTM's potential participation in a leasing study for the Ludlow Business District. CTM would partner with Uptown Consortium, the CBPA, and Clifton 20/20 in paying for the study by leasing consultant Kathleen Norris.

Aimed at improving the business district's leasing mix and minimizing vacancies, the proposed study would entail a 10-month engagement with Norris to:

- analyze the business district leasing mix and opportunities
- identify potential shortfalls and recommend improvements
- engage stakeholders including community members, CTM, Clifton 20/20, CBPA, and Uptown Consortium

Norris' current proposal is for \$27,000. Uptown has committed to funding \$10,000, Clifton 20/20 issued a resolution committing to \$5,000, CBPA has been asked to participate, and CTM's portion of the cost would range from \$5,000 to \$8,750 depending on the final negotiated contract.

Rich noted the committee will continue to explore and vet the process, but that potentially it is a good way for CTM to use some of its available funds and take an active role in improving the business district.

Rich proposed the following CTM resolution:

“CTM would potentially share the cost in hiring a leasing consultant for the Ludlow business district based on the following contingencies:

- CTM share of cost not to exceed \$8,750
- Matching commitment by CBPA
- Commitment of \$10,000 by Uptown
- Satisfaction with the deliverables and terms of the final proposal by Kathleen Norris
- This resolution is not a commitment of funds by CTM, rather, a commitment to formally explore the costs and benefits of a leasing consultant”

Trustees voted to approve the resolution. A motion to approve the resolution was passed with one abstention (Michael Moran).

### **One-Minute Trustee Reports**

Kevin Marsh reported that his research on the Hamilton County Auditor’s website showed that taxes on the Clifton Plaza dropped to \$1,537 from \$4,566 the previous year. Taxes were due January 31, 2013. Prior-year taxes were paid late, and the Clifton Plaza LLC had to pay a delinquency fee of \$75.95. CTM board members who are part of the Clifton Plaza LLC were asked to investigate if the Jan 31, 2013, taxes were paid on time by the deadline Jan 31, 2013.

Marsh also reported on his meeting with Alex Peppers from City Planning. The city approved one of three CTM community priority budget requests as part of the City's 2013 budget. The approved request is titled, "Repaint utility boxes to mimic the cover art of literary classics." City DOTE will perform the work after locations have been submitted and approved by DOTE. Marsh will work with the CTM Beautification Committee to implement this effort.

Tony Sizemore reported on the District 5 resource meeting he and Buddy Goose attended on January 4. Cincinnati Police provided crime statistics for District 5 (contains eight neighborhoods, including Clifton). Overall, Part 1 crimes (violent or property related) are down 14% in District 5. Clifton represents 13% of Part 1 crimes for District 5. Burglaries and thefts from auto represent the majority of crimes in Clifton; both crime types are at 10-year lows in District 5.

Buddy Goose reported on a recent Neighborhoods of Uptown meeting. He reported that CUFF (area just south of the University) recently established an entertainment district, which allows them 15 additional liquor licenses. He noted Clifton should pursue an entertainment district.

Adam Balz attended a recent Keep Cincinnati Beautiful District 5 meeting. The Great American Cleanup, held in April in recent years, has plateaued in terms of community engagement. Keep Cincinnati Beautiful plans to change the format so that instead of being just one weekend, communities can hold their own events any time during the year and Keep Cincinnati Beautiful will support them with resources (i.e., dumpsters, etc.)

Ben Pantoja noted that Saturday, February 16 is the annual Invest in Neighborhoods meeting held at Xavier University. It is for community councils and other interested residents to learn about how to effectively engage with neighborhoods, find resources to make improvements, recruit and sustain membership, etc. He encouraged CTM members to attend.

Bruce Bernard reported that nine new Clifton gateway signs have been installed. Old signs can be used as possible fundraisers.

Bernard also reported that the CTM Green Team is proposing to locate a larger Clifton Community Garden at Fairview School. He also noted there are funds available through the city/Queen City Art Racks to locate art-inspired bike racks in communities and that CTM should pursue those funds to improve Clifton's bike-friendliness.

Brian Curwin reported for the Membership and Communications committee that membership is down about 100 members from last year (\$1,500). The committee will look into ways to increase membership, articulate membership value, and promote online registration through the CTM website.

Tom Dwyer reported that he filed the forms for last year's \$5,000 grant from the Neighborhood Support Program (NSP). These are annual grants from Invest in Neighborhoods Inc. ([www.investinneighborhoods.com](http://www.investinneighborhoods.com)).

#### **Public Q& A/Correction to December 2012 CTM Minutes**

Daniel Ames requested a correction to the December 2012 CTM minutes. He noted that the minutes reflect that he spoke out in favor of deer cameras. His actual comment during the meeting, he clarified, was the following: "When in public, no one can or should have an expectation of privacy."

Other comments came from Tom Lohre (announced deadlines for spring Chronicle and invited CTM members to submit stories), Cincinnati Council member Yvette Simpson (noted her office will be doing community engagement around the privatization of city parking), Marvin Hugo of Clifton Adventist Church (noting a new Culinary Health Improvement Program the church is offering), and an unidentified woman who reported the safety hazards posed by unshoveled snow in the Metro bus pick-up areas, especially to senior citizens.