



**CTM Meeting**  
**June 2, 2014**  
**Clifton Cultural Arts Center**

In attendance: Ashley Fritz, Adam Balz, Morgan Rich, Joyce Rich, Bruce Bernard, Tom Dwyer, Kevin Marsh, Eric Urbas, Linda Ash, Tony Sizemore, Adam Hyland, Mike Moran, Pat Knapp, Ben Pantoja

Absent: Buddy Goose

**Police Report**

Sgt. Jason Volkerding reported that Neighborhood Officer Lisa Johnson has been reassigned to the Chief's office. He introduced Officer Nick Hageman, Clifton's new neighborhood officer and a 15-year police veteran.

Volkerding reported that a major graffiti writer has been arrested on numerous charges. Police did a "garbage pull" at his house, which gave police probable cause to issue a search warrant for his house. Police found paint and other paraphernalia, as well as numerous photos of graffiti tags on his cell phone. Caper and BC Joist are father/son team that has tagged all over Clifton, Northside, and other Cincinnati neighborhoods, including on the I-75 sound barrier near Mitchell. He has a felony indictment pending and is charged with hundreds of thousands of dollars in vandalism. His son is 15.

Sgt. Volkerding also reported Cincinnati Police is working with University of Cincinnati on prevention efforts in the campus area, including additional police officers, campus ombudsmen (similar to a community concierge service), and orientation for incoming UC freshmen focused on not being a victim of crime and being a good neighbor.

**Fire Department**

Capt. Jim Kettler from Engine Company 34 reported the company has gone on 900 rounds so far this year. There were no major fires or incidents in May. Capt. Kettler apologized for the engine company leaving the annual Clifton Memorial Day Parade for a non-emergency run; he said there was a miscommunication and that shouldn't have happened.

Firehouse personnel have removed the large bushes at the corner of Clifton and Ludlow because they were obstructions to fire vehicles leaving and backing in to the firehall. They have been replaced with rose bushes and grass. Capt. Kettler says they also hope to do

some painting and cleaning up of the historic firehouse, which is Cincinnati's second oldest (built in 1906). Some painting done in recent years has covered up beautiful architecture features of the house and they want to uncover them.

As always the firehouse has smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors available to residents. People can stop by the firehouse to get them or fire personnel can deliver them.

### **CCAC Report**

CCAC Board Chairman Kevin Reevey reported the sixth annual summer concert series starts Wednesday, June 4, with the Comet Bluegrass All Stars. Concerts will be every Wednesday evening in June and July. During the June concerts, CCAC will be collecting personal hygiene items for the CAIN Food Pantry in Northside. In July, school supplies will be collected for Crayons to Computers. After the 9 concerts, a bonus performance August 6 will feature the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company performing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### **Library Report**

Branch manager Chrissy Bailey reported that updates on the construction of the new branch on Brookline are available at the [cincinnati.library.org](http://cincinnati.library.org) website. The new branch will open next summer.

The Clifton branch has many programs scheduled for the summer. The Summer Learning Program was kicked off last Saturday. June 7, Artists Beads (Ludlow Avenue bead shop) will lead a beading workshop for adults. June 9, Cincinnati Museum Center will come to do an animal adaptations program and will bring some critters with them. July 10, Cincinnati Blues Society will talk about the history of blues. July 14 a Brain Camp will be held, themed "Grosser than Gross." theme. Teen programs happen Tuesdays at 2 p.m. starting June 10 with a Sharpie tie-dye program. The branch staff has rearranged the space to make room for a teen area.

### **Recreation Center Report**

Arnelle Dow, Rec Center Director, reported that June 2 was the first day of Summer Camp. Due to the building being under construction, it is being held at the McKee Recreation Center in Northside. The building renovation is moving along and the catwalk between the Rec Center and the CCAC has been removed.

### **Approval of May 2014 Minutes**

Minutes for May 2014 were not approved because trustees did not receive them prior to the meeting. They were emailed the minutes on June 2 and will review and approve them via email.

### **I-74 Exit to Central Parkway**

Residents of Clifton Hills Avenue requested the support of CTM in addressing a dangerous traffic problem created by motorists exiting I-74 at Central Parkway, turning right onto Central and then turning left onto Clifton Hills Avenue as a cut-through to other parts of Clifton and surrounding neighborhoods. Residents reported that traffic has

increased dramatically since the Hopple Interchange Project began and they are extremely concerned about the safety of children who live on that street and particularly students at the DePaul Cristo Rey High School in the former Concordia Lutheran Church building. Bruce Meizlisch (sp?), the group's spokesperson, said the traffic is unrelenting Monday through Saturday, starting at 6 a.m. and running through mid-day and beyond. Cut-through traffic has always been an issue, and neighbors knew the volume would increase due to surrounding highway construction. But they were told there would be an end in sight in the form of the Hopple Street Interchange and the "flyover" that would take traffic over Central Parkway. Martin Luther King is being expanded to handle the additional traffic and the I-74E ramp onto Central Parkway was scheduled for closure.

At the request of CTM, Stefan Spinosa, District Design Engineer with the Ohio Department of Transportation, and Michael Moore of the City's Transportation & Engineering Department attended the meeting. Spinosa provided a summary of ODOT's construction schedule for the Hopple Street Interchange (originally slated for completion Fall 2015 but delayed due to winter weather and now slated for completion in early 2016), as well as other phases of I-75 reconstruction in the area. The overall project is an almost 8-mile stretch of highway from Hopple Street to the Cross County Highway. The project was broken down into 10 phases, 7 of which have been completed or are under construction.

The Mitchell Avenue interchange will be mostly completed Fall 2014 with some additional work in Spring 2015. highway construction nearby. The Colerain/Beekman interchange has been completed. The largest phase of the project is the I-74/I-75 interchange. That project will be ready for bid in Fall 2016 after completion of the Hopple Street Interchange. Part of the planned I-74/75 interchange is that it would close four local connections at 74 and 75, including the Central Parkway entrance ramp. According to Spinosa, the Hopple Street Interchange is designed to handle traffic coming from I-74 and direct it to the hospitals, UC, Cincinnati State, and other destinations in Clifton and Uptown. About a month-and-a-half ago, he said his department was asked to reconsider closing the ramp.

A key concern of Clifton Hills Avenue residents is that the I-74 entrance ramp has been slated for closure for several years, yet ODOT and the City are now discussing leaving it open, reportedly on request of O'Dell Owens, the president of Cincinnati State Community College. Owens apparently believes closing the ramp will make it more difficult for Cincinnati State students to access the campus.

Currently cars coming from I-74 enter Central Parkway from the ramp going much faster than the posted speed limit, then turn onto Clifton Hills Avenue despite posted signs that say No Left Turn between 7 and 9 a.m. Cars cutting through are also driving dangerously fast and often do not stop at the stop sign at Clifton Hills and Clifton Hills Terrace, according to residents. Students at the high school are often walking in the area early in the morning and Principal Andy Farsing said it is an extremely dangerous situation.

Michael Moore of the City of Cincinnati Dept. of Transportation & Engineering has scheduled meetings to talk with Clifton Hills residents to address the issues and identify what can be done from a traffic control and law enforcement standpoint. Trustee Kevin Marsh asked why the city has not moved faster to address these clear safety issues, and Moore said it's necessary to gather information from local residents and get their ideas so that any possible solutions don't cause different problems. One resident suggested closing the street with construction sawhorses but Moore pointed out that might make it difficult for emergency vehicles to use the street. Other residents suggested better enforcement of the No Left Turn restriction, more speed humps, or other physical barriers to people using the street. Sidewalks and better lighting have also been suggested as possible safety improvements.

Spinosa said ODOT and the City are also considering a \$35 million new connector from Elmore Street to Central Parkway. This connector will need its own study and traffic evaluation and would require the city to acquire rights of way in South Cumminsville.

CTM President Ben Pantoja said he is not sure Clifton will "buy in" to another 4-year delay of the I-74 ramp closing while the new Elmore/Central connector is being studied. Pantoja and Trustee Morgan Rich asked why the I-74 ramp couldn't be closed as originally planned when the Hopple Interchange is complete. Spinosa replied that it may be in the best regional traffic interest to keep it open with the addition of the potential new Elmore/Central connector, but that it will be studied.

Moore is convening a small working group of Clifton Hills residents to discuss the issues and come up with immediate safety improvement suggestions. June 20, 2 p.m., is the first working meeting.

Nan Cahill, spokesperson for Cincinnati State, noted that the school has grown to more than 10,000 students and is now the second largest institution of higher learning in Southwest Ohio. She said she wanted to clarify the misconception that the Elmore Connector is a new project recently conceived; it has been around for several years. She noted that Cincinnati State wants to advocate for its students but also wants to be a good neighbor to Clifton and will work with local residents to help implement safety measures. She said Northside has also been concerned about traffic on its streets resulting from the new I-74 interchanges. Clifton Hills residents stated that most of the traffic cutting through on Clifton Hills is actually not Cincinnati State students; it is mostly people going to work at local hospitals, UC, and other employers.

The Clifton Hills residents formally requested that CTM adopt a resolution to City Council and ODOT stating that the I-74 ramp should be closed as planned when the Hopple Interchange is complete; that any new connector be studied for its impact on Clifton Hills and other Clifton streets; and that the city give immediate attention to improving safety and decreasing cut-through traffic on Clifton Hills Avenue. CTM passed the resolution.

### **CTM Membership Drive**

Trustee Kevin Marsh reported an email membership renewal campaign is underway. Neighbors can access online membership via the CTM website, the CTM Facebook page, or NextDoor Clifton. Thanks to a suggestion by a local resident (Paul Buckley's wife...what is her name??), CTM is also taking charitable donations via the website.

### **Treasurers Report**

Treasurer Michael Moran reported \$3098.69 in income (including \$1496 from the Memorial Day Parade picnic concession and \$1,600 in flower pot sponsorships). Expenses in May were \$2,881 (including \$2,500 for CliftonFest, \$381 for the Memorial Day Parade, and \$2,250 in Chronicle expenses).

CTM's cash position is \$76,460 with liabilities of \$9,777 including the Ludlow Avenue business district study and CliftonFest. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

### **Golf Outing August 16**

Trustee Tom Dwyer reported the second annual CTM Golf Outing is August 16. Proceeds will benefit the CCAC.

### **Beautification Committee**

Trustee Adam Balz wanted to publicly thank the people and groups who have sponsored flowerpots on Ludlow. They include Evanswood Place, a lady named Nanda, Ludlow Wine & Supper Club, Olives, the Rich family, the Hammonds Family, Skyline, and the Garden Club of Clifton.

### **Business Committee**

Trustee Morgan Rich said the Business Committee is still waiting for the final report to be submitted by Kathleen Norris for the Ludlow Avenue Business District study.

### **Chronicle Update**

Trustee Ashley Fritz reported the advertising deadline for the next issue is July 17 and the editorial deadline is July 24. Only \$200 was saved by reducing the Chronicle from 12 to 8 printed pages. She wants CTM to discuss how to proceed with the Chronicle.

### **Wayfinding Signage**

Trustee Joyce Rich reported that CTM will receive \$30,000 in funding from the Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program for wayfinding signage for the Clifton Merchants Lot and other signage in the business district. A recognized problem is that people coming to shop or eat on Ludlow from other neighborhoods do not know where to go for parking. Signage will help support the Clifton "brand" and direct people to convenient parking in the Merchant Lot

### **Streetcar Town Hall**

A representative from Believe in Cincinnati reported his group will hold a town hall meeting Tuesday, June 3, at CCAC, to discuss bringing the street car to Uptown. City Council member Kevin Flynn will be a guest speaker.

**Next CTM Meeting July 14**

Due to the July 4 holiday, the July 2014 CTM meeting will be July 14 instead of July 7.