



**CTM Meeting  
Monday, December 1, 2014  
Clifton Cultural Arts Center**

Present: Ashley Fritz, Adam Balz, Tom Dwyer, Joyce Rich, Morgan Rich, Linda Ash, Kevin Marsh, Michael Moran, Tony Sizemore, Pat Knapp, Ben Pantoja, Eric Urbas, Adam Hyland

Absent: Buddy Goose

**Police Report**

Neighborhood Officer Nick Hageman shared STARS report comparing neighborhoods in District 5. In last 5 years, all crime is down dramatically in the District. We are doing more with less. Captains are using assets as best they can. We are struggling with theft from autos. Utilizing our light tower, we have walking patrols out. Violent crimes are down substantially, but the nuisance property stuff is still causing problems. Keep your homes locked up and keep watch out for each other.

Ben Pantoja asked if people still trying to kick in doors. Hageman said it has been a nuisance/mischief thing, but it hasn't resulted in any additional crime.

Officer Hageman can be reached at 513.569.8527; email is Nicholas.Hageman@cincinnati-oh.gov.

**Fire Report**

Captain James Kettler from Engine 34 reported that his company had 1900 runs, but no major structure fires in the Clifton area during the past month. Through December, the fire department is urging people to not leave candles, space heaters, or food unattended. December is the worst month of the year for structure fires.

For more information, call 357.7501 or visit the fire station on Ludlow Avenue.

**Library Report**

No library report was provided.

**Recreation Center**

Service Area Manager Tom Reese reported that the center will be open in late January for its grand reopening. It is open now from 10 to 6 and staff will be happy to give people an informal tour. Some of the ideas from the community have turned into programming. The center will be adding pickle ball two days a week in the gym. Senior volleyball during the day is also a possibility. Fencing, yoga, and pottery are coming back. There is a new ping pong table for table tennis tournaments. The center also includes an open room that could be used for people to work/share before major programming for the kids starts each day. New staff are being hired to replace staff that did not return after the center was closed for renovation.

### **CCAC**

CCAC Executive Director Leslie Mooney reported that the Clay Alliance Holiday event will happen Saturday Dec. 6. The exhibit *Contemporary Narrative* starts December 12, including pottery and 2D art. Offering more classes than ever before, about 80 total, including 5 from Art Academy of Cincinnati. Dec 14 Second Sunday Showtime, *Night Before Christmas*.

Mooney also reported on facility improvements including roof repair and clock tower repair on the main building and a new roof for the carriage house. New catering services area is almost complete, thanks to a grant from Scripps Howard Foundation. Two new board members: Jennifer Mooney and Joe Huber.

### **CBPA**

No report was provided.

### **Holidays on Ludlow**

Trustee Tony Sizemore reported Holidays on Ludlow is happening Friday, Dec. 5. The evening will include carriage rides. Events start at 6. AT 6:20, Santa will arrive on the plaza and walk over to Ace Hardware for photos with the kids. Musicians will be on the plaza and along Ludlow. PNC Bank and United National Bank will have some refreshments and activities as well as many other merchants. Pop-Up Cincy will include 10 storefronts with fairytale-inspired window displays. Sponsored by CBPA, CTM, and TriHealth.

### **Minutes of the November 2014 CTM meeting were approved.**

### **Trustee Election Results**

The CTM Trustee Election was held Dec. 1 from 6 to 7 p.m. prior to the CTM meeting. There were planned to be five candidates for five open positions. Trustee Kevin Marsh, chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that candidate John Jeuch withdrew from the election Dec. 1 because his job for the city of Cincinnati precludes him from serving on CTM. Four trustees were elected to the CTM Board for three-year terms: Shaun McCance, Rama Kasturi, Michael Moran (incumbent trustee), and Nicholas Hollan. According to CTM bylaws if there is a trustee position open, a trustee can be appointed by the board for a one-year term until the next annual election. Marsh moved to appoint Mike Schur, a resident who has been active

in the efforts to alleviate traffic issues on Clifton Hills Avenue. Trustees voted to approve Schur's appointment for one year.

### **Zoning Request for 3461 Manor Hill**

Trustee Adam Hyland reported that Tim Anderson, 3461 Manor Hill Drive, requested CTM's approval of a setback variance for his master bedroom addition. He is proposing a 3-ft.-wide by 12-ft.-deep expansion on the west side of his single-family detached home. The expansion to the rear (north) side of the house will actually increase the distance to the rear property line but still be less than the city's required setback of 35 ft. It is currently 21 ft. from the property line and the addition will increase the setback to 27 ft. from the property line. All neighbors have signed off on the addition.

Hyland moved to approve the variance and send a letter of no objection to the City of Cincinnati. The motion was passed.

### **Cincinnati Zoning Changes**

Trustee Adam Hyland is leading CTM's efforts to review proposed Cincinnati zoning changes that affect Clifton. Another public meeting will be held soon. We are now in round 3 of a series of public meetings and inputs on the proposed zoning changes. Audience member Steve Slack said Plan Cincinnati.org has all the proposed changes and maps for review.

### **Treasurers Report and Proposed 2015 CTM Budget**

Trustee/Treasurer Michael Moran reported that CTM filed its 2013 tax returns after an extension but before our obliged Nov. 15 date.

Moran said he received about 250 checks for CTM membership, representing upwards of \$6,000 in the last month.

Moran reviewed 2014 actual expenses and made some projections for the rest of the year. He projects total expenses of \$49,315 in 2014. Income for 2014 is projected at \$29,928, with a couple of income streams still expected (\$5,000 from NSP, \$6,000 from TriHealth, and some membership income). The deficit is due to the fact that CTM's major fundraising event, the Clifton House Tour, happens every three years. In non House-Tour years, the budget in recent years has shown a deficit. He said CTM also has 2014 revenue coming from membership dues, which is difficult to project. He said CTM had expected to spend about \$12,000 more this year than we took in, which is typical for non-House Tour years.

CTM has total assets/reserves of about \$75,000.

Moran prepared a first rough draft of the 2015 CTM budget, projecting expenses and income based on 2014. The 2015 budget shows a \$16,000 surplus based on expected House Tour income of \$21,765.

Trustee Pat Knapp asked if it's okay that we're depleting the CTM reserve at the rate of about \$7,000 or \$8,000/year. Moran said this question comes up every year. The question has also arisen if we are not using enough from the cash reserves. The intent as a non-profit community organization would be to spend the funds in a responsible manner on events and projects that benefit the neighborhood. CTM's goal is not to gain money, but it's nice to have a buffer in case major unexpected expenses arise. Some people say we should spend it all, some say we should sit on a nest egg.

Trustee Eric Urbas said that typically we spend the reserve down in non-House Tour years and build it back up in the House Tour years. Moran agreed that if we have \$7,000 or \$8,000 in drawdowns from the reserve in non-tour years, that is typical. Former Treasurer/Trustee Tom Dwyer agreed. He said that about 3-4 years ago we have a reserve of about \$100,000 and if we have a good House Tour, we can build it back up to that level. He said CTM really doesn't do any fundraising other than the house tour. Income comes from Chronicle advertising, membership, and the House Tour. Moran and Pantoja mentioned CTM could consider new fundraisers as well as more outside sponsorship of events.

Urbas commented that the CTM Golf Outing established by Tom Dwyer is great because it is purposed specifically. This year, golf outing revenues went to the renovation of the CCAC's Great Hall. General fundraising, with no focus, is more difficult for an organization like CTM. Urbas said he believes CTM should try to be cash-neutral over the long term.

Moran agreed CTM should work toward being cash neutral, but should not sit on large amounts of cash. CTM assets include \$50,000 in CDs. CTM should consider rolling that into a trust. This should be looked into this year.

Trustee Kevin Marsh said we have a risk factor in the fact that the Clifton Plaza LLC can spend money as long as the four people on that committee agree to it. CTM is contractually bound to pay 50% of whatever they agree to spend. There is potential there for spending a lot of money and Marsh said CTM should explore this potential.

Moran said he will distribute the proposed 2015 budget to the trustees for review and input.

Trustee Morgan Rich said that with CliftonFest (proposed expense of \$7,500 for 2015), CTM was told the expense would scale down in the future, that CliftonFest would be more economically self-sufficient. He also noted that CTM should spend money on projects that make a big impact in the neighborhood. If CTM is identifying good core projects, the neighborhood will appreciate that.

Moran also noted that he is still withholding \$2,000 from the final payment on the Ludlow 21 study. Morgan Rich reported that Kathleen Norris still needs to provide one final deliverable. Once we get that, we'll approve release of the check.

### **Membership Update**

Marsh reported we hit a high-water mark for membership in recent history. \$7,358 was generated from this year's revenue was only about \$5,700, so we have returned to 2010-2011 days when it was about \$7,300. Mailing the membership renewal reminder to 4,700 addresses in the community made a big difference. CTM has had as many as 800 members in the past.

### **Listserve "unsubscribe"**

Marsh reported that all emails going out from CTM now contain an option to unsubscribe to the email listserve, as agreed during the November 2014 CTM meeting.

### **Events Update**

Tony Sizemore reported that we had a count-the-beans contest during CliftonFest and the winner with the closest guess will receive 4 tickets to the Clifton House Tour.

The Lantern Walk on Nov. 9 was a big success, with 500 luminaries set out on the route as well as, 80 no parking signs and numerous barricades. 20 hours of volunteer time went into that one event. Sizemore emphasized the need to recruit, retain, and recognize volunteers who help out at events.

Seven featured Clifton House Tour homes have been selected and 8<sup>th</sup> may be added. Tickets will be \$18 in advance and \$22 day of the event. The House Tour committee began meeting last May (a year in advance of the event) and is meeting every two weeks now.

### **CTM Welcome Letter/Zoning Reminder**

Trustee Adam Hyland distributed a draft CTM letter welcoming new businesses to Clifton and informing them of their obligation to meet city of Cincinnati zoning codes. He will distribute to the trustees electronically to be discussed during the January 2015 CTM meeting.

### **Woolper Garden Plant Removal**

Trustee Adam Balz reported that a handful of CTM volunteers moved plants from the intersection of Woolper Avenue and Vine Street, at the property owner's request. The group moved many of the plants across the street to the Richie's restaurant planting and moved the rest to the City Barn for wintering and replanting in the spring.

### **Ludlow Holiday Decorations**

Balz reported that on Nov. 23, a group of CTM volunteers decorated Ludlow gaslights for the holidays with pine roping and LED lights.

### **Website improvements**

Trustee Kevin Marsh reported several improvements to the CTM website, including technical work, news postings (often contributed by community members), a new public safety page (with thanks to Fire Capt. Kettler for contributing), additional community links, updated business listings and links, new events posted on the calendar, dual auto-posting to the CTM Facebook page, a Facebook feed, a donation option for online membership renewal, and Google Analytics for monitoring traffic volumes. TriHealth sponsored the website improvements so their logo is posted on the site.

### **CTM Offsite Meeting**

The annual CTM Trustee off-site meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 4. The major focus of the meeting is the 2015 budget, appointment of CTM officers, committee and liaison roles, 2015 objectives. Results are presented at the January CTM meeting.

### **Ludlow trash can update**

Ben Pantoja says a group needs to be formed to look at the trash can issue on Ludlow to determine if and where litter is accumulating due to the decrease in trash cans. Scott Crawford, CBPA, is asking business owners to be a part of the group. New Trustee Rama Kasturi said she is happy to lead the committee and also wants to promote recycling on Ludlow. Adam Hyland also volunteered to work on the committee and will liaise with Scott Crawford, CBPA, and community volunteer Dave Gutmann.

### **Parking wayfinding signage**

Trustee Joyce Rich reported Clifton is on the city's list for wayfinding signs to be fabricated and installed for the Merchant Lot. The new bike station is in the location where the large pylon was to be installed, so the sign location will be changed. Another pylon will be on Clifton Avenue. Rich is working with Laura Martin from the City of Cincinnati on the signage design and location.

### **Chronicle**

Trustee Ashley Fritz reported that January 24 is the deadline for the spring Chronicle. The winter Chronicle is now available and the online edition includes the first-ever online advertisement.

### **Outgoing Trustees**

President Ben Pantoja thanked outgoing CTM trustees Buddy Goose, Tom Dwyer, Linda Ash, and Bruce Bernard for their service on the CTM Board.

### **Public Q&A**

Audience member Michele Murphy asked if House Tour volunteers would again be charged to tour the houses. She said that volunteers should not be charged, even a reduced fee.

Audience member Lloyd Engelbrecht asked about the traffic issue on Clifton Hills Terrace and wondered if it has been considered to have a traffic circle/roundabout on Central Parkway. He thinks the road is wide enough for that. Pantoja said the city concluded there is not enough room for a roundabout or for a traffic light at that location.

Engelbrecht also asked about the bus stop at Rue de la Paix and Ludlow. He said students have no where to stand except for a private lawn that gets muddy. He thinks they need and deserve a bus shelter. Also, buses often have to stop at the site for long periods, which makes it harder to turn onto Rue de la Paix. He also noted that senior citizens in the area have noted there is not enough time to cross the street during the crosswalk light.

Malcolm Montgomery asked if there is an agenda for the CTM trustee off-site meeting. Pantoja said it has not been created yet. Montgomery suggested that the trustees discuss designating roles and committees. He also said the board should discuss the budget in a more in-depth way, including balanced budgets, capital investments, and policies on how CTM's money is spent. The sleeper issue that needs to be addressed is where does the CTM money come from, and do those sources affect CTM's judgment on community issues. Underwriting funds from institutions in our neighborhood could potentially affect CTM's future decisions related to the institution's encroachment into the neighborhood.

Dan Ames said CTM approved the November minutes and he wondered when they would be posted on the CTM website. As of Saturday Nov. 29 the approved October minutes were not posted on the CTM website. Trustee Pat Knapp said she would post the minutes in more quickly.

**Adjournment/next meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at about 8:45 p.m. The next CTM meeting is at 7 p.m., Monday, January 5, 2015, at CCAC. CTM meetings will resume at the Clifton Recreation Center (behind CCAC) for the February 2015 meeting.