



CTM Meeting
Tuesday, September 2, 2014
Clifton Cultural Arts Center

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

Absent: Bruce Bernard, Buddy Goose, Tony Sizemore, Eric Urbas

Police Report

New District Commander, Capt. Bridget Bardua was introduced. District 5 Sgt. Jason Voelkerding reported that violent crime is down 9% in Clifton and property crime is down 20%. He reported a rash of aggravated robberies and said three cases will be closed with arrests.

Police have given notice to people living in a homeless camp in Burnet Woods. Also, graffiti has been getting worse lately. Deer cameras posted by Keep Cincinnati Beautiful help identify taggers but police are also following known offenders. A father and son graffiti team from Northside are now being prosecuted for multiple graffiti incidents.

Fire Report

Capt. James Kettler of Engine 34 reported a fairly quiet month. There were no major fires in Clifton. Engine 34 responded to a three-alarm fire in Walnut Hills that was caused by a child playing with matches. Capt. Kettler reminded the audience that children are curious about fire and the department has professionals who teach children about fire safety. For more information, call 357.7501 or email, visit, or call Capt. Kettler at the fire station on Ludlow Avenue.

Recreation Center

Center Director Tom Reese reported that construction is about two-and-a-half months behind and the center reopening has been delayed. The center will possibly reopen in December. Long-time CRC employee Arnelle Dow is retiring on December 1 and a party is being planned in her honor. Before- and after-school programs are continuing at Fairview School.

CCAC

Board President Kevin Reevey reported that CCAC kicked off its 5th annual golden Ticket art exhibition. The opening reception was September 5. The show includes 200 artworks from local artists. September 24, CCAC is kicking off its Sunset Salon series with a night focused on local filmmakers. The center has a great line-up of classes ranging from dance to wellness and visual arts. The center also recently signed a contract to install a catering kitchen on the first floor, thanks to a \$17,000 grant from the Scripps Foundation. The project will be completed by the end of October and will help the center increase its earned revenues by renting the space for weddings and other events.

August 2014 minutes were approved.

Clifton Hills Avenue Update

Clifton Hills Avenue has historically been the most frequently used cut-through for commuters exiting the I-74E ramp at Central Parkway on their way to Cincinnati State and the rest of Clifton. It has also been used as a cut-through from Ludlow Avenue to the I-75N entrance ramp off of Central Parkway. The frequency of cut-throughs has increased dramatically with the construction happening on nearby sections of I-75. In June 2014, the City of Cincinnati worked with Clifton Hills Avenue residents to come up with ideas to calm traffic. On August 3, the city's Transportation and Engineering Department installed a partial diverter that blocks access from Central Parkway to Ludlow Avenue but allows traffic from Ludlow to Central Parkway. In addition, residents recommended that the ramps from I-74E to Central Parkway be closed in 2015/16 as originally planned rather than closing in 2018 as Mayor Cranley has proposed. They also requested that Clifton Hills Avenue residents and CTM be involved in design review for a new connector that will be built from XX to Central Parkway.

Clifton Hills Avenue resident Mike Schurr said the diverters have virtually stopped the flow of traffic from Central Parkway to Ludlow, but there is still a significant number of vehicles that bypass the barrier illegally. This has caused a lot of frustration for residents living near the barriers. It causes commotion in the morning when the traffic is at its highest volume. Cars are turning around in driveways and on lawns. The barrier is temporary (60 to 90 days), but residents may ask to have its use extended.

An audience member asked, How did 18 households (on Clifton Hills Avenue) stop 4,000 people from using a city street, which anyone by law is allowed to drive on. He also wondered why there are no streetlights or sidewalks on Clifton Hills Avenue.

Mike Schurr said City traffic numbers showed 3,500 cars passing along the street each day, up from 2,200/day in 2008. That count was done in the summer, when Cincinnati State and University of Cincinnati have much lower numbers of students and Cristo del Rey High School was also on break for the summer.

Originally, the I74E exit ramp onto Central Parkway was to be closed in 2016. CTM President Ben Pantoja said he met with Mayor John Cranley and it is very clear that he is not going to budge on his decision to delay closing the ramps to the 2017-2020 timeframe.

Pantoja also noted there is a conflict between the Central Parkway ramps and the Hopple Street ramp for I-75N. The eventual goal for Hopple Street is to have a ramp to I-75N that is entered near the corner of Central Parkway and Hopple Street (near White Castle). Unfortunately, this new ramp goes right through the middle of the existing Central Parkway ramps. Until those ramps close, the new Hopple Street ramp can't open. So for the next 4-6 years, if you want to get to I-75N from Hopple Street, you have to drive down Central Parkway through several traffic lights and past Cincinnati State to take the existing Central Parkway ramp.

Another audience member, John Bressler, asked, Why not have permits for people who live in Clifton so that they can use Clifton Hills Avenue from Central Parkway but others (such as those cutting through to get to UC or the hospitals) would not be allowed? This way Clifton Hills Avenue would not get as much cut-through traffic but their fellow Clifton residents would not be inconvenience by having to go around so far to get to Ludlow and beyond. Pantoja noted it would be very difficult to enforce something like that. Bressler said it is a major inconvenience to have to drive around. Another audience member agreed.

Mrs. Vesper, who lives on the street, says the cut-through traffic has also included gas tankers, semi trucks, and fully loaded flatbed trucks. This increase has been since the reworking of Hopple Street and the I-75 construction. Traffic will relax again when the construction is over. If people can just bear with the situation until the construction on Hopple Street is over, the problem will go away.

At this point, no other action was taken but the traffic volumes on Clifton Hills Avenue will be monitored.

Clifton Market Update

Shaun McCance, treasurer of the Clifton Market board, reported that the market group has been working for a little over a year now and there are 675 shareholders/owners, mostly from Clifton. The group started its owner loan program a month ago and that is how they are financing construction on the former IGA building. As of September 2, the group had raised \$331,000. They are also talking to the City and other organizations about other sources of funds.

Generally speaking, to get a bank loan for a venture like this, they want to see you raise about 50% of the money before asking for loans. The group's goal is to raise \$1 million by early October. Another public meeting for the market is scheduled in September.

CliftonFest

Jan Brown Checco, one of six co-chairs for CliftonFest, reported that the annual festival will be held September 26-28. It will include 140 musicians, 36 art carpets, 41 artisan booths, and several neighborhood booths. The street will close at 6 a.m. Saturday September 27 and reopen at 8 p.m. September 28. Activities are planned all weekend. The group also achieved its non-profit 501(c)3 status.

Ludlow 21 Study

CTM Trustees Joyce Rich, Morgan Rich, and Ben Pantoja met with the working group overseeing the business district study conducted by Urban Fast Forward/Kathleen Norris to close out the contract and obtain project deliverables, including a written report. The group agreed to call the study completed with the revisions of the Ludlow 21 report.

The original contract asked for recommendations for use by property. Instead, the working group (including representatives from CTM, Clifton Business and Professional Association, Clifton 20/20, and the Uptown Consortium) agreed that Norris will produce a recommendation for the ideal mix of businesses on the street. A public review meeting will be scheduled in mid-October when the report is revised and finalized. In this meeting, Norris will outline her recommendations and community members, business people, and others will have the opportunity to comment.

Trustee Kevin Marsh asked if the report is finished. Two CTM meetings ago we went through a list of things that were missing that had been promised in her contract. Rich noted that she will revise some language about CliftonFest that was deemed offensive and that she will add a 9-page demographic study. Other missing items included an attendance list for a focus group, a list of recommendations for specific property owners, recommendations for desired businesses in the district (this item was modified to provide a recommended mix versus specific businesses), documentation of the leading strategy, and a report on key marketing strategies.

When complete, the final report will be published on the CTM website (www.cliftoncommunity.org) and make it accessible. The goal is for the public presentation of the report to be scheduled for October 16.

Marsh said he feels we've been given a discounted product so one thing we might choose to do is use the power of our spend. We've made a partial payment, but we don't have to pay it all. He said he is uncomfortable with the product at this point.

Pantoja noted that he feels withholding payment would cause potential damage to our relationship with the Uptown Consortium, the primary funder of the study.

In the interest of time, it was concluded that a CTM Business Committee meeting would be called to resolve the conflicts.

Treasurers Report

For the period August 5 through September 2, 2014, CTM Trustee/Treasurer Michael Moran reported income of \$8,646.69, including \$6,474 from the second annual CTM golf outing and \$1,510 from Chronicle advertising. He reported \$4,700 in expenses for the golf outing and \$1,841 for the Clifton Plaza.

CTM's current cash position is has a total of \$80,392 in total assets. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

Golf Outing – Tom Dwyer

CTM Trustee Tom Dwyer, organizer of the golf outing, reported the event netted about \$7,000, which will go to the Clifton Cultural Arts Center for improvement projects. 73 golfers participated. A third annual golf outing is already being planned.

Probasco Fountain

Trustee Joyce Rich reported the fountain has been removed and taken away for restoration. It will be back in mid-October.

Zoning

Trustee Adam Hyland reported he met with CUF and Avondale neighborhood councils about Cincinnati's new zoning plan. Reviews of the new zoning plan and their impacts on Clifton are ongoing.

Clifton BikeShare Station

Kevin Marsh reported that concrete was scheduled to be poured today for Clifton's new bike-share station. It will be located on Howell Avenue by the merchants' lot. Installation is scheduled for September 6 and bicycles are being assembled. The bikeshare program will be rolled out all over the city in the coming weeks.

CTM Board Nominating Committee

Marsh reported that the CTM Nominating Committee is soliciting candidates for the CTM Board election in December. One current trustee has served two 3-year terms and must go off the board. 4 other trustees have terms expiring but could be re-elected. A total of 5 trustee positions are open. In addition, 2 trustees have completed two-year terms on the board executive committee and must be replaced.

Tri Health Funding Request

In past years, TriHealth has generously contributed to CTM for various community events. CTM generally makes a funding request to TriHealth in September. Trustee Bruce Bernard prepared a letter to TriHealth requesting \$6,000, including funding for items such as ongoing maintenance of the cliftoncommunity.org website, the Lantern Walk in October, carriage rides during Holidays on Ludlow, the Memorial Day Parade, and the Clifton House Tour.

Public Q&A

Steve Slack noted that Good Samaritan installed a new air handling system on one of its towers about a year ago and the noise is very loud and obnoxious and can be

heard in the area south of Ludlow Avenue. He requested that CTM ask them about whether they are finished with that project or if they can buffer the sound.

Robert Gutzwiller, a resident of Rawson Woods Circle, brought a petition signed by about 30 neighbors protesting the proposed deer-culling initiative by the Park Board in Mt. Storm Park and Rawson Woods Bird Preserve. He requested that neighbors opposed to the bow hunting of deer in the two parks be allowed to speak during the next CTM meeting. He said he was surprised there weren't any other deer advocates attending the meeting other than him. CTM President Ben Pantoja said the Park Board made a presentation to CTM in August but was not available to come to the September meeting. The topic is on the agenda for the October 6 meeting.

Molly Wilke asked about the Ludlow Avenue retail report, wondering if the consultant's critiques of businesses will be included in the report or cut out. She said the business owners need to see the critiques. Trustee Rich noted that the study was designed to focus on an ideal mix of businesses, but not focus on individual businesses. Wilke asked if the consultant met directly with the business owners. Rich said yes she did. Any landlord or business owner that was willing to talk with her had her ear to get her opinions on what they could do to improve their space. One of good byproducts was the rapport it built on Ludlow.

Another audience member said he had never heard of the study, but everything he heard during this meeting indicated we have not gotten what we hoped from this study.

State Board of Education District 4 candidate Pat Bruns introduced herself and asked for support. The retired art teacher (30 years at Colerain High School) said 475 of 613 Ohio school systems have charter schools and she believes our public schools are under assault from Columbus and she wants to be an advocate for public schools. The Northwest school system lost \$3 million last year due to charter schools and Cincinnati Public lost \$72 million to charter school vouchers. These private nonprofit schools are not performing well and graduation rates are dramatically lower than public schools. She will advocate for a moratorium on giving public tax dollars to private charter schools, and for regulations requiring those schools to be held to the same accountability as public schools. She will also advocate for the return of arts to all our schools.

Adjournment/next meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, October 6, 7 p.m., CCAC.