



**Livingston Avenue Area Commission
Meeting Minutes
640 S. Ohio Ave, Columbus, OH 43205
September 16, 2014
6:30pm – 8:00pm**

Meeting Agenda

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Secretary Report
- Treasurer Report
- Committee Reports
- Rita Parise – City of Columbus Development Department – Tax Abatement Program
- David R. Celebrezze – GreenSpot Columbus
- Notes from the Chair – HHFS – Health Fair HRSJ, October 11, 11:00am – 3:00pm
- Adjournment

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by President, Brian Scarpino.

Roll Call

Brian Scarpino – Present
Clarence Wicks – Present
Commissioner Copeland - Present
Commissioner Nesbitt – Present
Terry Elliott – Present
Mustafaa Shabazz – Present
Lucy Wolfe – Excused
Latrice Holmes – Excused

Treasury Report (Copeland)

Submit 2013 receipts to Copeland. Receipts can also be dropped off at 1493 East Livingston, Commissioner Shabazz. President Scarpino noted that 2014 receipts still need to be closed out, too.

Previous Meetings Minutes

The Commissioners agreed to table the minutes until they all able to review them.

Zoning (Elliot & Wicks)

Elliot noted that she has been working closely with Driving Park Civic for Neighborhood Pride. She has passed those down to Bruce Black and others.

Elliot noted that there are no demolitions.

Elliot stated that any candidates who want to go before our community for the Civic Association will have that opportunity in November.

Elliot stated that Neighborhood Pride needs volunteers.

Wicks noted that the Commission has just received a for rezoning from 1297 Memory Lane Crematorium. A representative will be expected for this next week.

History (Nesbitt)

Nesbitt asked for remarks from the floor. Stacy Green, Driving Park resident and History Committee member, noted that she has a copy of the cookbook they are creating, and that it will include the Fire Department and Police Department. They are also looking for more contributions from community members.

Elliot for Holmes (Parks and Recreation)

Elliot noted that we received \$2 Million from the city to revamp Driving Park. An architectural firm submitted ideas for a new pool and revamping lockers and gym. They discussed four potential sites and discussed the need for more tables, and chairs, etc. for the site.

Scarpino (Transportation)

Scarpino noted that COTA was asked for ways to reclaim the branding of bus stops, especially in regards to the bus stop at Champion and Livingston, in which the glass has not been replaced. COTA asked if it is possible for the bus stop to be replaced because the special glass is very difficult and expensive to replace repeatedly. Scarpino asked if anybody had objections to this. None were raised.

Scarpino invited Mary Simmons to speak about an issue which she brought tonight. She stated, “we voted on the area being 18th – Livingston and Stone – Newton, and they don’t want this to be part of the area. The other thing is that we voted on a study, not on a project. We started on this five, six years ago. We are not able to park on our street because of all the people from Nationwide Children’s Hospital (employees, patients and visitors).

Scarpino noted that the fee for parking is \$25.00 per year if permit parking is put in place. He noted the following problems:

1. Mary’s request for permit parking was for 8:00AM – 4:00PM; the hospital is open 24 hours.
2. There are guest passes for people who live in the area and have guests spend the night.
3. Scarpino would like to see neighbors in Southern Orchards and farther east invited.

Scarpino invited Simmons to contact him offline so that the two of them can talk about this.

Scarpino asked for the Commissioner's input. A discussion followed in which it was determined that Nationwide Children's Hospital has stated that they will not fight permit parking.

Education (Copeland)

Focus group with Michelle Mills, St. Stephens Community House, discovered that there will be a listening tour as follows:

Focus groups

Town Hall Meeting (Oct, Nov, Dec)

Economic Development (Shabazz)

Meetings are held every 1st Saturday. No August meeting because Shabazz was not in town

Guest Speaker - Rita Parise, Housing Administrator for Dept. of Development

Tracy Davis

Ian Shell

Review of Residential Tax Abatement current policies.

They are here this evening because in the changing housing market, homeownership no longer has the appeal that it had in 2005 & 2006. There needs to be improvements to vacant lots. One of the proposals is to allow new buildings on the vacant lot. There has also been discussion for Africentric Middle School coming up on the market. One development noted that the adjacent church may also wish to be available for purchase. This is the reason they are looking to expand this tax abatement area. She noted that if you are aware of projects in the existing or expanding area and you think they should expand these areas, this is a good time to begin that process.

President Scarpino noted the Buckeye School group was working on some rent-to-own housing options. He asked if this will be handled as part of this. Parise noted that this will be one way that we can better handle these rental homes.

VP Elliot asked Commissioner Copeland if her Civic neighborhood, Hanford Village, is on the map they were given.

Copeland noted that they are.

Elliot noted that her Civic neighborhood, Driving Park, is on the map as well, and asked about an example of somebody within Driving Park who owned a duplex and was denied for an abatement. Parise responded that they prefer single home owner situations.

Commissioner Shabazz asked that if we are already congested, does this (expanding the district) add value, or do they decrease value by creating congestion?

Parise responded that there is already an existing tax abatement. She noted that the expansion is really to capture the Africentric School and the adjacent church in the likelihood that they will be redeveloped as rental units. Trying to encourage people to go in and encourage people increase the value of the properties should not decrease the value of our properties at the end of the day.

Commissioner Nesbitt asked if there is some way to make sure that people are not just going to come in and make these rental properties and then leave, and not worry about their properties.

Parise noted that when a developer or owner for a property gives them a tax abatement they have to apply, and then the abatement can be revoked later if they find that people are not doing what they need to to keep the property in compliance.

President Scarpino asked if this applies to properties attached to the Land Bank. Parise replied that it does. Abatement is based on the owner applicant.

VP Elliot asked if we can come up with a guideline that owners of properties would have to abide by. Parise noted that there is a city-wide Housing Code which must be obeyed. Code Enforcement was recently substantially expanded and they are going to go street by street and start citing those violations.

President Scarpino asked Ms. Parise if there are any action items for the Commission or was this information for the community at this time.

Parise stated that this is just an attempt to contact the Commission to share information with the community.

Commissioner Shabazz asked if there had been any discussion regarding lane expansion in the area. Parise noted that she usually does not get involved in this, but “everybody is getting input” as to the best way to do through a process involving many community offices.

President Scarpino asked for community comments.

Mary Simmons asked why in the James Johnson Home Repair Program, no funds were given to Livingston Avenue Area Commission.

Parise noted that Housing did not have any direct input on funds and that she would reach out to Councilmember Priscilla Tyson.

Stacy Green mentioned the Gertrude Wood Community Foundation, <http://www.gwoodfoundation.com/organization>, and stated that she feels favorably about them because they live in the community. She offered to give Parise their contact information. Parise stated that she will reach out to the foundation to find out what areas they are targeting for development.

President Scarpino asked if there is an area that butts north to Denton Avenue.

Parise’s office noted that there is.

President Scarpino noted that the housing issue in Southern Orchards is also on the map.

Contact Information for Rita Parise
(Preferred) Email: rrparise@columbus.gov
Phone: 614-645-6115

Greenspot Columbus - David R. Celebrezze

Go to <http://www.columbus.gov/speakup> to take a survey on sustainability in Columbus

Email dcelebrezze@columbus.gov

Phone: 614-645—6703

Survey comments will be ranked to see what the community wants them to do and come up with a strategic plan for the next five years.

Mary Simons

Noted that Move Columbus will be from 1pm-4pm

Sarah Ozminski and Apolinar Monjaras - 659 Wilson Avenue

They are working with Chuck Purdy, Land Bank, to purchase the house and do most of the work themselves. They are looking to relocate as they like urban, historic neighborhoods, and they are looking to get started with their young family as Apolinar has shared custody of his children. Sarah has volunteered at Franklin Park. They want to live in the house for at least five years.

Commissioner Wicks motioned that the Commission write a letter of approval to Chuck Purdy for the applicant Sarah Ozminski to purchase Land Bank Property at 659 Wilson.

This was seconded by Nesbitt. 5 in favor, 0 opposed

Minute Approval – August 2014

VP Elliot motioned to approve the meeting minutes for August 19, 2014.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shabazz

The motion was carried with 5 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 Abstention.

Rachel Silsdorf, Neighborhood Pride Center, City of Columbus, requested the July meeting minutes.

The meeting was adjourned.