

Ohio City Incorporated Regular Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

June 21, 2017

Board Vice President Alex Frondorf, stepping in for Board President Chris Schmitt, called the meeting to order.

Minutes Presented for Approval

Minutes for the May, 10 2017, Board meeting were presented to the Board for approval. Maria Nosse motioned to approve meeting minutes. Joel Wimbiscus seconded the motion. Minutes approved by all Board members present except for Roger Scheve who abstained.

Presentation

A presentation was given by Assistant Professor Laura Voith, of the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, regarding a four-week study conducted by her social work class about the assets and challenges of certain sectors of the Ohio City neighborhood. Assistant Professor Voith noted that a study of this kind typically takes six (6) months. A total of thirty-seven (37) residents and community leaders were chosen based on some of Assistant Professor Voith's contacts in the neighborhood and her class broke the neighborhood into five (5) parts to study. A number of categories were studied, including race, educational attainment, income difference, employment rates, and poverty rates. The study determined many strengths and challenges in the Ohio City neighborhood and Assistant Professor Voith encouraged the Board to read the full report provided.

Committee Reports – presented by Committee Chairs

Finance Committee – Maria Nosse

The Finance Committee met in May and saw a rough draft of the budget, although the numbers from the City and Neighborhood Progress are still unknown. The Committee plans to review the budget again at its July 25th meeting for presentation to the Board at the August meeting. There have been a number of changes to the 2523 budget due to the projected sale of the of the Great Lakes Brewing Co. (GLBC) parking lot. Tom McNair and Ben Trimble are studying financing options. It was noted that GLBC wants to hold the loading docks as part of the parking lot sale. A discussion of the history of the parking lot property ensued. Between the parking lot and the budget there will be much to discuss this summer.

Governance Committee – Alex Frondorf

The Committee is in the process of determining how to fill the seat of departed Board member Natalie Leek-Nelson. Board members with suggestions should reach out to the Committee.

Real Estate & Land Use – Joel Wimbiscus

The Committee Chair discussed the proposed seven-story development at 4000 Detroit that would require a number of variances. There is a concern by some in the community that permitting a development like this to go forward could set a precedent for other similar developments along the Detroit Avenue corridor. No items have yet been submitted to the City for formal approval. The developer attended the Franklin-Clinton Block Club meeting, where issues were raised, and the developer represented that changes would be made to the proposal. It was noted that one of the biggest issues is that a seven-story building on Detroit Avenue there will effectively act as a seven-story wall for the community. A larger discussion ensued regarding the neighborhood and OCI having an organized and consistent voice for proposed development in our community. Tom McNair stated that building typologies can be developed and that staff is talking with firms about costs to develop guidelines for developers that are interested in pursuing projects in the neighborhood so that developers understand from the outset the expectations of OCI and the neighborhood. A suggestion was made that perhaps a charrette could be held to determine guidelines for developers. Several leaders from various Block Clubs also met to discuss neighborhood development and the same theme of consistency and having one neighborhood voice. Finally, it was mentioned that there needs to be clarification regarding whether the project at 4000 Detroit is rental or for purchase as “for sale” is very unusual for this particular developer.

A meeting regarding the proposed Irishtown Bend project was held and had approximately two hundred (200) attendees and had a lot of media coverage. Many different designs were discussed and the process is moving along nicely. The process should wind down by early September.

Resolution 2017-0621-01 was presented to the Board. Ben Trimble stated that one of the focuses of the new Strategic Plan is to find parking facilities in the neighborhood and the owner of Forest City Shuffleboard is seeking to add seven (7) new parking spaces to Forest City Shuffleboard’s parking, which would be utilized as district parking, and restricted by easement. OCI has the opportunity to apply for funding from the City of Cleveland’s Vacant Property Initiative Fund in the amount of \$35,000, to be held as a forgivable loan. The City of Cleveland requires an equity contribution of \$5,000 from OCI for the funding of the parking lot. The plan is for the parking lot to eventually be hidden from view by townhomes that will be built; the townhomes would be built by the owner of Forest City Shuffleboard along with a development partner. If the townhomes are never built, any liens on the property would be the responsibility of the owner. The Real Estate & Land Use Committee thoughtfully considered how to use this project to compliment the other surrounding parcels of land. Ben Trimble stated that OCI is looking at other properties on Lorain Avenue for similar projects in order to help with parking down that street. The parking lot will be maintained

by the property owner and it was noted that there are more projects going up in that part of Lorain Avenue, including the squash courts for Urban Community School, and it is important to get ahead of the game as it relates to parking.

Helen Qin motioned to pass Resolution 2017-0621-01 and was seconded by Roger Scheve. The Resolution was approved by all Board members present except Maria Nosse and Al Mancuso.

Safety – Helen Smith

Members of the Safety Committee and Mike Lewis of Security Installations met with Commander Stacho, Detective Janet Murphy, and others in the Second District regarding the recent rash of crimes in the neighborhood. Commander Stacho stated that a burglary detail would be starting in order to catch the perpetrators responsible for the home break-ins. The Second District also offered to perform safety audits for businesses in the neighborhood in response to the crime wave that has recently taken place on Lorain and Detroit Avenues.

Interviews start next for the safety organizer position and the salary range has been posted. The question was asked regarding the involvement of Tremont Near West Development (TNWD) and Tom McNair responded that TNWD is as involved in the hiring process as OCI.

Advancement – Dr. John Malone

The first quarterly mailer will be going out soon. They were inspired by LAND Studio. An organizational calendar is also being developed with dates for grants, CBDG resolutions and more.

Executive Director Report – Tom McNair

The Strategic Plan is 99% complete and should be finished by the end of the week. OCI's insurance broker, Britton Gallagher, has done a great job and OCI has currently saved 15% and is looking to get that to 30% in savings.

There is now an LGBT Rights marker on West 29th Street in Hingetown. Big kudos go to Alex Frondorf for making that happen.

Brian Payne, from the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, will be in Cleveland for a number of weeks and will speak at the City Club. All encouraged to go and see him and listen to his message.

Executive Session

The Board went into Executive Session.

Adjournment

The Board came out of Executive Session and adjourned the meeting.