

Minutes of the Greater Hilltop Area Commission – February 6, 2007

In attendance: G.Baker II, J.Boggs, J.Decker, N.Hitch, D.Horn, S.Laughlin, J.Manley, C.Patterson, K. Whitman

Meeting opened with pledge to the flag.

Minutes of January meeting approved with correction to web site host. There was no treasurer's report.

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Zoning:

..... 1) David Bream from the Design Group presented an update on the design of the new health center scheduled to be built on the site of Engine House #17. The current fire station will be kept intact with the first floor being designated as community space. Meetings are being scheduled with the Community Advisory Group to gather more input on the current plans; the Historical Society is being asked to think about what artifacts might be appropriate to display. As the site for the new center has 3 zoning categories, the Design Group is working to resolve this issue. The Columbus Municipal Power Company has been contacted about gaining access to the substation; the Fire Dept. has given the OK. Wheatland is being considered for a change to 2-way traffic.

Questions concerned – 1) the location of bus stops near the new facility with the response being that talks are being held with COTA; 2) the sight line from the new firehouse next door to W. Broad St. will be improved with the removal of a tree.

The Design Group will make another presentation at the March meeting; they plan to make a presentation to the Zoning Commission on March 8 and then to City Council by mid-April.

.....2) Mark Easterling (Home on the Hill) and Dawn Daniels McNear (Habitat for Humanity) presented a project called Valleywood (off Alkire Rd.). The organizations are partnering to build homes on the site and are not looking for anything in the way of an endorsement at this time; they are just letting the community know of the plans for the project.

..... 3) Mark Easterling passed around copies of a letter to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency requesting funding (\$450,000) to rehab properties in Hilltop. No properties have yet been selected but the expectation is, should the award be given, to use the money over a two-year period to rehab twelve homes. The OHFA has changed its policy in that organizations do not need to own the homes before applying for funding, which makes the application process easier.

A motion was made and seconded (Baker/Hitch) to write a letter of support for the funding request and to waive the rules due to the time frame in order to take a vote at this meeting. Vote: 7 yes, 2 abstentions. A letter of support will be written.

There will be a zoning committee meeting February 20.

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Presentations:

..... Andrew J.Ginther, newly appointed member of City Council, talked a little about his role on Council. He is chair of the Safety Committee and announced that 70% of the 2007 City Budget will be available to address safety issues.

..... Mark Easterling of HOTH presented information to the Commission on the acquisition of properties, 2716 Regina Ave., 485 Columbian Ave, which will be rehabbed and sold.

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Announcements:

..... a Community Housing Network representative will be in attendance at the March meeting.
..... AEP will be hosting a public meeting; members should have received information on this.
.....on February 22 the Hilltop YMCA will be hosting a 'donation' breakfast for People Helping People.
..... Members were given copies of a resource book given to residents in the Hilltop.

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Committee Reports:

.....Parks/Recreation – S.Laughlin announced that the graffiti in Holton Park is painted over and the old lights at Westgate Park are still on at the pond. She stated she has written a letter to get a grant from the Neighborhood Partnership for a grant for a mural on the raquet ball court at Westgate. Clean-up dates for Westgate are April 28, July 7, August 4, October 6 as part of Keep Columbus Beautiful.

.....Community Relations – C.Patterson passed around a mock-up of a newsletter; the plan is to publish one on a quarterly basis, if funding can come from the Commission budget.

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Old Business and Follow-up:

..... Committee chairs were reminded to turn in mission statements.

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New Business: none

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
J.Manley, secretary