

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

In attendance: D.Bagley, G.Baker II, J.Boggs, M.Cole, J.Decker, N.Hitch, D.Horn, S.Laughlin, J.Manley, R.Mendez, M.Potts, K.Whitman

Meeting opened with pledge to the flag. Minutes of the February meeting approved with correction. Treasurer's report indicates a balance of \$149.49. It was noted that the GHAC has yet to receive its annual funding from the City.

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Special recognition:

..... Because of her recent accomplishment in wrestling, Gabrielle Henry was recognized as the City 2007 wrestling champion. Gabrielle attends Briggs High School.

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Zoning:

..... Pete Colosimo, Spring/Nextel, spoke about a proposed cell tower to be built on top of one of the light poles at West High's football stadium. The zoning request is for approval of a Council Variance to replace the current light pole and extend it to accommodate the cell tower. This has received City staff approval. The zoning committee recommends approval. It was noted that nearby residents had received notification of this. There was a question/answer time. One question asked was whether Spring would be able to contribute to some funding to have the sound system enhanced at West's stadium. Mr. Colosimo said the company believed what they were doing was sufficient but he would ask. The vote taken resulted in 9 affirmatives; 1 negative; 2 abstentions.

..... David Breem, Design Group, spoke about further plans for the Westside Health Center. He indicated that the entire engine house would be saved and utilized in the new design. He also addressed earlier concerns regarding Wheatland Ave. traffic and said that it would become two-way from W. Broad to the first curb cut, which is the entrance to the facility; he has met with the Fire Dept. regarding visibility at the southeast corner and this issue has been resolved; also working with the Community Advisory panel on specific site amenities and more details will be available in the coming months.

Members from the audience questioned him about -- outdoor space for community events – response: while no provision is being made to build a stage, there should be electrical outlets in the parking lot; green space at the north end – this would only be on the health center site and would not encroach on future housing in the area; could a bus stop be placed in front of the building – response: will contact COTA, but the neighbors really need to make the request to COTA; what about sidewalks on the east side of Wheatland – response: not in the plan right now, but willing to keep on the agenda.

Earl Potts remarked that he had not been informed of any community meetings on this issue even though he is involved in several community groups. G.Baker responded that he was on the advisory group list as an alternate and he would make sure Mr. Potts receives information regarding future meetings.

It was noted that there will be a public hearing on March 8 at the City's Carolyn Ave. facility.

After further brief discussion the vote was taken on the request for rezoning of the site for the health center with members voting 10 in the affirmative and 2 in the negative.

D.Horn announced that there would not be a zoning committee meeting unless notified.

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Announcements:

.....Joe Decker has been invited to be the guest speaker at the Hilltop Kiwanis meeting on March 22.

..... the GHALA newsletter has been mailed.

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Presentations:

..... Andrew Cano, Columbus Public Library, addressed the GHAC to talk about his position as literacy liaison at the Hilltop branch.

..... Betsy Meleski, City of Columbus Development Dept., talked briefly about the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and the selection process . This program started in the 1980s as an economic development program to provide low interest loans for businesses. The area of W.Broad from Highland Ave. to Roys Ave. has been targeted for funding and she is asking help from the GHAC to identify an organization that would oversee the development of this area. A meeting is being scheduled for March 21, 6-8pm, to talk about the development.

..... Sharon Ware, United Way Neighborhood Partnership Center, spoke briefly about the series of information sessions/classes that are available to organizations and individuals.

..... Sandra Geronimo, Community Housing Network, gave an update on 115, 121, 123, Belvidere Ave. The former houses have been demolished and once the remainder of their funding comes, construction will begin on the new facility. Former tenants have been relocated with the option to return once the new facility is finished.

..... Don Cable, Ohio Youth Diamond Sports Assn., informed the GHAC about what this organization does in providing youth with an opportunity to participate in sports. This organization has funds available to support teams and individuals and there is an application process.

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Committee Reports:

..... Recreation/Parks – S.Laughlin reported that Mark Young of the City’s Recreation and Parks Dept., has been working to address our concerns in Westgate Park. It seems that the lights area now on around the Rec Ctr. On Saturday, April 7, there will be an Easter egg hunt at Westgate Park and volunteers are needed to help; contact Sue or Joe Decker. The condition of Glenwood Park at the bottom of the hill is still an issue. Sue stated she and Joe are working on a grant for a mural on the racquetball court and that Bonita Lee is working on a Hilltop parks directory.

..... Community Relations – in the absence of C.Patterson, M.Cole reported on the progress of the web site.

..... Human Services/Education – D.Bagley said she is still waiting on the health assessment results. On March 29 there will be fire education class for the Somalian community.

..... Public Safety – nothing new to report.

..... Planning and Economic Development – G.Baker reported in the absence of R.Mendez stating that the Lincoln Street Studies is working with the City to develop W. Broad.

..... Government/Legislation – M.Potts handed out copies of the Election Rules process that had been approved at a previous meeting, stating these were now in closer relation to the Bylaws. For the April meeting he will have a sample packet of the election application.

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Old Business/Follow-ups – none

New Business – none

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
J.Manley, secretary