

Minutes of the Greater Hilltop Area Commission – April 3, 2007

In attendance: D.Bagley, B.Bair, G.Baker II, J.Boggs, M.Cole, T.Corson, J.Decker, S.Laughlin, J.Manley, R.Mendez, C.Patterson, M.Potts, K.Whitman

Meeting opened with the pledge to the flag. Minutes of the March meeting were approved with corrections. Treasurer's report indicates a balance of \$149.49

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Zoning:

.....Dick Fischer, Johnson and Fischer Painting, is requesting approval for a variance to permit a flat roof on one of the company's new buildings at 499-503 Derrer Rd. He has been before the GHAC recently seeking approval for a variance to allow storage on this property. As he had decided to place a flat roof on one of the buildings, instead of a pitched one, the BZA suggested he seek approval from the GHAC. Mr. Fischer presented renderings of what the new building would look like. Applicant stated he is interested in adding to the purchase of the site the alley that runs behind it. Q&A indicated this alley floods and needs to be corrected and the City is aware of this and considering having it paved.

A motion was made and seconded (Bair/Cole) to approve the flat roof. Vote: 12 yes (M.Potts arrived too late to cast a vote). The issue of the alley will be discussed at a future meeting.

.....D.Horn announced there would be a zoning committee meeting on April 17, 7:00pm at the library.

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Announcements:

.....T.Corson announced the Greater Hilltop Community Theater's production of "Annie" for June 29 and 30, at West High. She indicated she had forms if anyone wishes to place an ad in the program.

.....D.Bagley stated she has information on the Arthritis Foundation programs for leadership training.

.....S.Laughlin said that the City Dept. of Recreation and Parks is looking at forming a neighborhood group to determine the best place for a dog park and to let her know if you are interested in being part of this.

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Special Presentations:

.....Sandra Geronimo, Community Housing Network, updated the GHAC on its Belvidere project stating that the ground breaking will take place this spring with completion of the project in the spring of 2008. She will ask S.Schuler to come to the May meeting to make a more formal presentation.

.....Joel Teaford, Exec. Director of the Neighborhood Design Center, presented the results of the design charrette that had been held earlier in the year. The charrette area is Highland to Terrace on W.Broad; to be know as 'Highland West'. He plans to have the powerpoint presentation on the web site by the end of April (www.neighborhooddesign.org). He stated the GHAC needs to adopt something for this area soon and he is willing to continue working with the group. Q&A: what is the funding; what is the time table; upgrade surrounding housing first to encourage new business growth or vice versa?

.....Steve Walker, Ohio Director of Refugee Services, spoke who is considered a refugee by definition and how the community has changed over the years. He highlighted what services are available to this group; the goal of his organization.

.....Bruce Black, City of Columbus Coordinator for Neighborhood Pride, gave a brief background of Pride's history and growth over the years. He said that on April 13 at the Dodge Recreation Center, 1:30pm, there would be a announcement of the areas that would receive assistance in 2007. Also, on July 11th there will be a 'mini-pride' in the Hilltop at Westgate Park, from 9am-9pm. Included in this will be sessions on bike safety, an animal clinic, and a Neighborhood Safety Academy.

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Committee Reports:

.....Recreation/Parks – S.Laughlin reported that Juana Sandoval (B.Lee's office) has been working on a brochure about the parks in the Hilltop. Also, the City may, at some point, look into cleaning up the Glenwood Park area at the bottom of the hill. On April 7 there is to be an Easter Egg Hunt at Westgate Park and if anyone has time, volunteers are needed in the early morning to help pick up debris in the area of the hunt.

.....Community Relations – C.Patterson said the newest version of the web site is up and running. There is to be a committee meeting on April 24, 7:00pm at the library to discuss the charrette.

.....Human Services/Education – D.Bagley said the fire prevention education program for the Somali community went very well. She passed out copies of the health care assessment pilot study, as well as copies of the demographics committee statistical information.

.....Public Safety – K.Whitman reported that a safety event is being planned for the Westgate area for this coming September.

J.Decker brought before the GHAC a concern by parents of children attending Westgate Elementary that, even though there are crossing guards on Westgate Ave. to help students cross the street, many motorists seem to ignore this and do not slow their speed upon approach. He sought suggestions from members for slowing the traffic around the school. After discussion it was thought best to table this to a future meeting. J.Decker, T.Corson, M.Cole and K.Whitman volunteered to draft a formal proposal based on discussion from members and community residents in attendance.

.....Planning/Economic Development – R.Mendez had nothing to report at this time.

.....Government/Legislation – M.Potts said that the election packets would be available at the library soon. The deadline for submission is May 23, 5:00pm; T.Corson is chairing the election process. Potts updated the GHAC regarding a possible new location for the Hilltop branch of the U.S. Post Office, possibly in the same building with the Hilltop Market Place.

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Old Business: none

New Business:

..... It may be necessary to find another location for the July meeting and change the date, due to the July 4th holiday. A motion was made to move the meeting to July 10th; approved.

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Respectfully submitted,
J.Manley, secretary