

Minutes of the Greater Hilltop Area Commission – 9/12/08

In attendance: D.Bagley, J.Boggs, J.Contonio, J.Decker, S.Hermiller, D.Horn, J.Keplar, J.Manley, C.Patterson, M.Potts, B.Spears

Meeting opened with pledge to the flag.

Minutes of the August meeting approved. Treasurer's report indicates a balance of \$174.41

Zoning:

.... A request for 2 variances in order for T-Mobile to install a cell tower at the Masonic Lodge, 2925 W.Broad St; Matt Morgan representing T-Mobile. First variance request is for the installation of equipment to facilitate the use of the antenna; second is for relief of the 60' height requirement for the tower. Zoning committee recommended approval. After a brief question/answer period from members of the GHAC and community, a vote was taken with unanimous approval in the affirmative. It was noted the company putting in the cell tower would be paying rent monies to the Lodge for their help in the upkeep.

There will be a zoning committee meeting on the 16th.

Presentations:

.... Mark Kelsey, Director of Public Services Dept for the City, updated the GHAC on the 2009 Bond Package (Issues 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 in the upcoming general election). The bond package is not a tax. Monies from this will be used by the Dept. to purchase new vehicles used in bulk pick-up and for sewer, water, roads, curbs, and gutter work/replacement. He explained that Columbus is the only large city with a Triple A rating by companies who lend money. Funding is paid back through general taxes that has been put aside from previous taxes. There was a brief question/answer period.

....Steve Torsell, Director of Homes on the Hill, gave an update on the housing status in the Hilltop related to foreclosures, as well as other matters. He stated that Homes is responding to the needs of the area – counseling residents on how to avoid foreclosure, maintain their home, etc.

....Sgt. Horton, Columbus Police, updated the GHAC on the new substation and the closing of the Big Run sub which will be moved to the new location. He also encouraged residents to be aware of their surroundings and report any suspicious activity. Residents expressed concern over the reduction in the number of helicopters used by the police.

....Bruce Black, Neighborhood Pride, reminded those in attendance of the Pride dates, September 15-19. He reported that the City's Building Services Division has been checking to make sure that contractors being used in the Pride areas have the necessary licenses, etc. This is a safety measure to curb 'fly by night' operators that often take advantage of the elderly.

Committee Reports:

.... D.Bagley reported on the latest with the Westside Community Health Advisory Committee. She reported that the farmers' market has been going well and that there has been discussion of looking into having a rotating market at various other sites in the Hilltop – J.Ashburn Youth Ctr, Hilltop YMCA, Wedgewood Complex, and other sites. She said she was asking for support from the GHAC for the Westside to pilot a mobile farmers' market at the J.Ashburn Youth Ctr, Hilltop YMCA, and other locations (designated by the Advisory Committee) for the period of September through November. She made a motion to waive the 30-day rule; unanimous approval in the affirmative. A vote was taken on the motion for piloting a market; unanimous approval in the affirmative.

....Public Safety – J.Boggs reported on an August 14 meeting/forum with Asst. Safety Director, Seth Walker, regarding the surveillance camera initiative. The cameras would be installed for the purpose of

curbing crime, but would only be installed in neighborhoods where they are wanted. Any photos taken would be used for forensics purposes only. Boggs stated that the committee recommended that the GHAC make a request to be part of the pilot initiative. He motioned (Bagley seconded) that the GHAC send a letter to the City that supports the Hilltop being part of the City's Neighborhood Camera Initiative. Boggs then motioned (second by Horn) to waive the 30-day ruling; unanimous approval in the affirmative vote. Motion on being part of initiative was then voted on with the results of 6 in favor, 4 not in favor, and 1 abstention.

....Liquor Permit ad hoc committee – J.Decker reported that an objection was made to the renewal of the license for Backporch Lounge.

....Economic Development/Planning – S.Hermiller reported he has been looking at ways to reach out to people/business to encourage them to come to the Hilltop.

....J.Decker reported that Parks/Recreation Committee has completed another grant that will be submitted to the City for additional funding to cover cost of Westgate Park mural. The artist doing the mural will be attending the Friends of the Hilltop meeting on September 11th.

Old Business:

....T.Corson wasn't present to give an update on the Neighborhood Pride. B.Black was, however, in attendance and he gave pertinent information. There will also be a neighborhood clean-up prior to Pride.

New Business:

....As the November meeting falls on Election day, discussion was held about moving the meeting to another date. Suggested was Wednesday, Nov. 5. D.Bagley motioned, J.Keplar seconded to move the November meeting to 11/5. Unanimous approval in the affirmative.

Announcements:

....On September 3 at West High a NASCAR driver will be speaking (3-5pm) about the dangers of driving and being distracted. Members were given a flyer.

....The first West High football game is September 5th.

Motion to adjourn (Boggs/Keplar).

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting Tuesday, October 7.

Respectfully submitted,
J.Manley, secretary