

Mt. Auburn Community Council

April 17, 2023

4/17/2023 – April Meeting Minutes (Zoom)

Prepared by Ken Farmer

Mt. Auburn Community Council – April

Tonight's Agenda

1. **Call to Order and Moment of Silence** –7:05 pm
2. **Safety Report (Officer Maggie Bower)** – Officer Bower reported that most of crime is down in Mt. Auburn. There are just a few exceptions, for example, this month, car thefts increased from 1 to 8. However, 6 of the 8 vehicles were recovered.

Traffic calming on Reading Road. Traffic calming across from the hotel has begun with the installation of speed bumps, pylons, and a crosswalk. Typically, the speed limit will also be lowered to 30 MPH, however, it is not sure if that will follow here. This was requested by the hotel and is expected to increase pedestrian safety. **Chin Nkudwe:** Will there be additional calming devices coming? Chin agreed that what is installed now is a step in the right direction, but probably not sufficient to calm traffic as needed. **Carol Gibbs** said the promise had been that the entire installation would be similar to what was done at Avondale and Bond Hill. She will find out the status and report back.

Accident at Rising Star Academy. Christian Huelsman: Is there an update on the vehicle that ran into Rising Star Academy? Maggie was unaware of this. She will check and get back with us.

3. **Special Guest Speakers and Presentations**
 - a. **3CDC New Findlay Recreation Center Community Engagement (Anna Barchick-Suter)** – Anna is project manager with 3CDC. The Findlay Community Center Project, started in the fall of 2020 with the City and CRC. They requested 3CDC to assist in the project, which involved several sites, four parks, building a new comminuting and rec center, and renovating old space for better utilization. For example, Grant Park would be improved and have better programing: childcare (full day) and child watch (short time when adult is engaged with a program); Golden Gloves and Health Center would be able to expand. There would be streetscape improvement, and better connectors to Grant Park and the new Rec Center. This phase of the project is budgeted at \$60 million.

Questions: There was some concern for the rate that will be charged at the new Rec Center. Anna said that the charges would be scaled based on income in an attempt to keep it affordable to all. Some questioned whether there would be realized as with other projects, promises were made but not kept. **Lee Wilson:** Where is the parking was for all this? There is no dedicated garage. However, there were about 75 spots that would be available in existing adjacent parking areas. **Lee:** What type of senior programs would be offered, as there were none listed? They want to make sure adults are included and that available transportation would be put on the list. **Christian:** What about opening pathways that were currently closed and installing better lighting to make walking to and

between buildings easy and better protected? That focus on exterior concerns would happen later (after phase 1), but accessibility was already on that that list. **Steve Gibbs:** What is going to happen to the old Crossroads building? That building will be sold to 3CDC and they will later develop and sell it. **Kevin Berry:** Who will run the Rec Center? CRC and 3CDC may partner on this, however, not sure at this point.

Notifications. Those who wish to be receive updates of this project, send a request to add your email to FindlayRec@3CDC.org. There is also a Community Engagement event on April 19th at 6:00 p.m. at the OTR Rec Center and is open to the public.

- b. **Burnet Avenue Street Sale Alternative (Mark O'Brien) – Request by Kingsley Organization to buy portion of Burnet Avenue – Steve** began by giving a brief history of the issues related to the potential sale and closure of this street. Steve asked Chin Ndukwe, of Kingsly Consulting, to discuss what the hotel wanted to do with the area. **Chin:** Because of problems in the area (theft and assaults), the hotel has proposed to buy the street and close it to vehicular traffic. They would design an alley with a pedestrian gate with a code for access for use for foot traffic and bicycling. They have hired a professional urban planner to work on that. **Christian** said there were tools available to the City to close streets and alleys and leaving it open for foot traffic, bikes, and pets, but not vehicles. It would be kept as a public space, open to all. Utilizing these public resources might meet both the hotel's needs and also address neighborhood concerns. A particular city tool that may be of use is the "Revocable Street Closure" which goes through DOTE.

Steve then asked Mark Obrien to share his counter proposal. **Mark:** Mark pointed out that too often his objections were misconstrued as being his personal objections and stated that it is rather the consensus of a group is homeowners in the area who would be affected negatively if the street were sold and closed. This group is collectively opposed to Chin's project. This is the fifth public meeting that has been held on this and the neighborhood has always been against it. The placement of bollards to block the street might be dependent on what the final desired results are. In an earlier meeting, the City had suggested utilizing a double dead end. This would likely address the dumping and drug dealing. Mark would like to get together with everybody to do what we can short of selling the street. What can be done to improve the street and bring value to everyone. People often point out that bollards require a turnaround. However, there are exceptions. There is also a small field there owned by the City which would allow a turnaround. **Chin** stated that a double dead end did not allow him to expand green space which he intends on making accessible to the public.

Steve said that this issue would again be discussed at the upcoming May board and council meetings, that latter of which will be held outdoor at Inwood Park. He expected an updated proposal from Kingsley.

- c. **Peete Alley (Christian Huelsman) – Christian** commented that his group, Spring in Our Steps, had been trying to get a portion of Peete Alley closed to prevent vehicles from attempting to drive through or park back there. He is requesting letters of support from adjacent property residents and a council letter of support to help get this proposal approved by the City. They have worked 10 months on this alley and have restored the cobblestone. Now they are hoping to preserve that work by having the City close an 87-foot section of the alley to vehicular traffic. Letters supporting the recommendation to close this portion of the alley should go directly to DOTE. He also noted that the City is pushing owners of the nearby empty lots to sell, as they are in constant violations. The City is poised to put them under Vacant Building Maintenance License. One of these

owners is Vision and Beyond. **Carol** said she would check with Vision and beyond to to see what their intentions were. **Steve** asked Christian to develop a short proposal/motion for the May board meeting.

4. **MACDC Report** – Carol said the construction contract related to the renovation of Five Points is up December 1, 2023 followed by a 30-day period to make any final repairs. Presently there is no railing around Flatiron Café. Carol noted that Short Dorchester will be shut for a couple weeks while the corner is being finished.
5. **Board Report (Steve Gibbs)** – There were no questions concerning the recent board minutes.
6. **Previous Month's Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes from last month were approved (Roger Hildebrand/Christian Huelsman).
7. **Treasurer's Report** –
8. **Old and Unfinished Business** – No old business
9. **New Business and Announcements** – No new business
10. **Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn: Alice Williams / Daryl Frazier, motion carried at 8:34 p.m.

4/10/2023 Board Meeting Minutes (Zoom)

Recorded and Prepared by Cody Sheets

Board Members Present: Steve Gibbs, Carol Gibbs, Roger Hildebrand, Ken Farmer, Tami, Hendrickson, Lee Wilson, Darryl Frazier, Alice, Christian Huelsman

1. **Call to Order and Moment of Silence** – 7:04 PM
2. **3CDC** – 3CDC would like to attend our public meeting next week to discuss a new recreation center by Findlay Market to replace the existing recreation center. We are not being asked to sign off on this. This is just an informational session. Some changes have been made since the last presentation.
3. **Request by Kingsley Organization to buy portion of Burnet Avenue** – Kingsley plans on not blocking off the street or continuing the purchase of the street. It appears as though City Planning would probably not approve the transaction. They will hire a landscape architect to do some improvements to the area behind the hotel. Bollards and speed bumps should be considered for traffic control as well as additional lighting to deter criminal activity.
4. **NSP Funds for Next Year.** – We did receive the NSP check on the 21st.
5. **Peete Alley** – Running into issues with City where upper part of alley is not walkable. Spring in Our Steps attempting to go to City Council to have portion of alley closed to prevent vehicles from attempting to drive through or park back there. Letters of support from adjacent property residents and a council letter of support will help try and get alley closed to through traffic.
6. **Previous Month's Full Council Meeting Minutes** – N/A
7. **Treasurer's Report** – Paid for PO Box (\$176). \$9,872 for NSP funds.
8. **Old and Unfinished Business** – N/A
9. **New Business and Announcements** – N/A
10. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 7:44.

Mt. Auburn Community Council Meeting

3/13/2023 Meeting Minutes (Zoom)

Mt. Auburn Community Council – March

Tonight's Agenda

- 1. Call to Order and Moment of Silence –7:03 pm**
- 2. Safety Report (Officer Maggie Bower)** – Car thefts are significantly down. Kia and Hyundai are offering an update to owners to prevent auto thefts. Officer that was doing overtime with parking vehicles has retired. Any parking complaints entered will come directly to Officer Bower. Penny Stocker mentioned that updates are not available for her car yet but they will give you a rebate steering wheel lock if you call in.
- 3. Special Guest Speakers and Presentations**
 - a. Proposed sale of Cumberland Street by the City to Kingsley Hotel Organization –** Darryl Frazier mentioned that citizens routinely call the police on drug dealing activity and nothing is every done about it. Cinedum Ndukwe introduced himself and mentioned that they had hired a new hotel manager Josh. Josh shared that Cincinnati Police were contacted because someone staying at the hotel was robbed at gunpoint over the weekend by three individuals. Christian raised the issue that other options should be explored beyond a sale of the street. Concerns were raised regarding permanently privatizing a street. Mark O'Brien mentioned that there has always been crime in the area and some of the crime is coming from within the hotel. He strongly objects to the sale. Mark O'Brien was also upset about not being notified. Carol and Chinedum both stated that the meeting was being orchestrated through the Planning Department. Kevin Berry asked if any neighbors were in support of it or if all neighbors were opposed to the sale. One neighbor that is a tenant of Chinedum was in favor of it. Christian mentioned that cutting back overgrowth and increased lighting could be an additional crime deterrent. There are extended stay residents living in the hotel. Mark raised concerns about parking on Helen Street as well as the apartment going up across Reading which has a shared parking agreement with the hotel. 30 parking spaces are allotted for the apartments across the street that are being built.
 - b. Talbert House** – They are looking for a letter of recommendation / endorsement from the neighborhood. Need the letter by April the 3rd. This is for auditing purposes. 86% employment rate. Helps criminals enter back into society. Tami moved that we provide the letter of endorsement and Christian seconded.
- 4. MACDC Report** – Railing for Flatiron was supposed to be delivered but it was not. Construction on Auburn Avenue will be finished by December. 4th of July fireworks will occur on July 2nd. This is the 2nd annual firework show. There will be an in person meeting in Inwood Park in May.
- 5. Board Report (Steve Gibbs)** – Tami approved and Carol seconded.
- 6. Previous Month's Full Council Meeting Minutes** – No minutes
- 7. Treasurer's Report** – Ending balance of \$3,340.90. One outstanding check. \$1,703.13 available to the council right now. Will hopefully be augmented when Tami and Steve present for the NSP funds tomorrow. Landscaping, benches, enhancing school properties, 4th of July firework

celebration, open air council meeting, possible newsletter, Christmas tree lighting. Total of \$9,872.

8. Old and Unfinished Business – No old business

9. New Business and Announcements – No new business

10. Adjournment – Tami moved that we adjourn. Lee seconded.