

**West End Civic Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Connecticut Conference United Church of Christ  
December 1, 2015**

**PRESENT:** Amy Bergquist, JoAnne Bauer, Fi Bookwalter, Max Condren, Ruth Fortune, Lakisher Hurst, David Jorgensen, Lucas Karmazinas, David Klein, Jan Klein, Dorothy Lovett Bukcley, Bongi Magubane, Kurt Malec, Ed McEachin, Guy Neumann, Angela Pomfret, Florence Wolff-Nicholas.

Bongi Magubane called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**1. WELCOME**

Ms. Magubane welcomed everyone.

**2. NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES**

David Klein moved to approve the minutes from the November 10, 2015 meeting with a second from JoAnne Bauer. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. FINANCIAL UPDATE**

David Klein announced that membership checks started to come in and have totaled to about \$4,700, not including those still in the WECA post office box. The wrong post office box was receiving WECA mails, but the error was rectified. Future correspondence should go to the right post office box.

WECA paid the Knox Park grant.

The Evergreen block party was a success. The expenses were about \$1,200, instead of the usual \$250. JoAnne Bauer added that the additional expenses covered the Halloween costumes given out to the kids and food. Ms. Magubane said many more went into the block party since it was essentially 3 events wrapped in 1.

**4. BUSINESS ITEMS**

David Klein said the last print newsletter was particularly difficult to get out. Sector reps and block captains will distribute the next issue to all but the North and SE sectors, where it is more effective to mail via USPS.

Kurt Malec announced he rarely receives submissions besides the tax credit events and updates on the DineAround for the print newsletter. Since part of the objective is to reach and engage West End residents who are renters, the current content of the newsletter lacks relevance with that demographic. Mr. Malec requested that committee chairs and sector reps submit information on past and upcoming events and activities. Currently, there is not enough content to merit spending \$4,000 on postage and printing. All present seemed to agree with Mr. Malec; therefore Lakisher Hurst will send reminders on when to get the committee and sector information out to Mr. Malec.

Updating the WECA strategic plan is a big project that requires the City's involvement.

## **5. DINEAROUND**

Fi Bookwalter said they are moving along with the 2016 DineAround. All 33 dinner houses are confirmed. The dessert house on Oxford St is also confirmed. Invitations went to the printer. One of the dinner hosts would like to do an alcohol free dinner. The committee agreed, provided that enough people sign up for the alcohol free dinner option. The alcohol free option is advertised in the e-news and must be selected by checking the box on the reply card. Max Condren thanked everyone for keeping an open mind at the request of the host from the alcohol free house.

As usual, there will be a Farmers' Market house.

On December 10, the committee will stuff the invitations. They will be mailed on December 12 to WECA members. About 3-4 days later, invitations will be mailed to non WECA members. 150-170 seats are available to the general public out of a total of about 275. The difference is reserved for sponsors.

Lakisher Hurst is updating all membership mailings that are returned to sender as she obtains the new addresses.

## **6. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

David Jorgensen said currently, the main concern is car break-ins all over the West End and other areas, including West Hartford. WECA is contributing \$500 for decoy cars for the police to watch for car breakers. The police asks everyone to lock their car doors and not leave valuables in their cars. Nicely wrapped gifts in the home can also attract thieves and lead to break-ins.

There was a robbery at the 566 Farmington Ave CVS after hours. The perpetrators cut through the Venom Vintage wall, thus leading the police to believe it is an inside job. There are other late night petty thefts along Farmington Ave. All else is pretty calm.

Ms. Magubane attended another NRZ's meeting and found the closeness of community officers with the group impressive. In response to Ms. Magubane's remarks about involving the police in WECA meetings, Mr. Jorgensen answered that perhaps the March general meeting can focus primarily on public safety. He reminded everyone that the Hartford police department is understaffed by 100 officers. The satellite office is no longer open as a police substation. JoAnne Bauer suggested having the police attend with a problem solving attitude and volunteered to help with the agenda for the March general meeting. Max Condren said Officer Sherbo and his partner attend the SW sector meetings. Mr. Condren suggested marketing the March general meeting as a strategic and high level discussion, instead of discussing individual grievances. Ms. Magubane said that she sees a lot more panhandling at night.

Mr. Jorgensen added he is willing to ask the chief to attend every quarterly general meeting. Finally, he said there's an operation going on to catch some drug dealers.

Ms. Bauer stated that all committees should have co-chairs and trained leaders to build capacity.

## **7. P&Z UPDATES**

Amy Bergquist announced the sign for Clemens' Place will be going up since they obtained approval from the ZBA. At the last meeting, WECA opted not to take a position due to lack of information.

Ms. Magubane said some people have expressed an interest in being P&Z chair.

## **8. 12/8 GENERAL MEETING PLANNING**

Ms. Magubane asked Florence Wolff-Nicholas for an update on the agenda for the December general meeting. Ms. Wolff-Nicholas expressed that she needs more guidance to move forward and help plan the meeting. Toni Gold invited the DOT. Ms. Wolff-Nicholas said one sector was unaware of the December 8 meeting and has a sector meeting the same night. David Klein suggested advertising the December general meeting in the e-news.

Ms. Magubane would like the Board to plan the general meetings farther in advance and not have the Board meeting and the general meetings fall on the President. Ms. Magubane will assign the general meetings to the VPs, though it is currently only Amy Bergquist.

JoAnne Bauer and Max Condren would like to do a toy drive by having folks bring toys to the board meeting and collecting toys from the community. After some discussion, all agreed a task force will plan and carry out the toy drive.

## **9. FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup> 2016 BOARD MEETING**

Kurt Malec will run the Feb 2 Board meeting in Ms. Magubane's absence.

Amy Bergquist asked for more advertising for the vacant VP position.

David Klein said in January he will present a budget for the coming year. He would like to get a budget from the committee chairs with income and expenses. He'll contact the committee chairs. The proposed budget will be refined during the January meeting. Ms. Magubane added that all committee chairs will be asked to state their goals for 2016.

## **10. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Community Engagement:** JoAnne Bauer announced the committee is more ad hoc and does not have regularly scheduled meetings. She is involved with various events but currently does not have the capacity for more regular meetings without more committee members.

**Architectural History and Resources:** Lucas Karmazinas spoke with the developers at UConn and said their intention is to move forward more aggressively in 2016. He believes it would behoove WECA to have a P&Z committee chair in place. Amy Bergquist thinks the P&Z chair can suggest changes to how the committee is run and the board decides whether or not to approve the recommendations.

## **11. SECTOR UPDATES**

**Central East:** Dorothy Lovett Buckley and Guy Neumann are hosting a sector meeting on December 3 at Gretchen Unfried's house at 107 Elizabeth Ave at 7pm.

**North:** Kurt says the North sector is having a meeting in January with Toni Gold about the i-84 project.

**Southwest:** Max Condren announced Toni Gold will attend the sector meeting on December 15. John Gale and Julio Conception will also attend the event. They are also working on a pub crawl for the sector but will keep it open to all West Enders.

**Central West:** Ed McEachin said there has not been a sector meeting. He will move up the distribution date for the print newsletters at the request of some board members.

**SE:** On behalf of the SE sector reps, Max Condren announced there has been some pushback from people who feel WECA was not involved in prior efforts for traffic calming on Evergreen,

a push that never came to fruition. To make it happen this time, it would require an official letter from WECA endorsing it and some residents willing to step up. Jeff Hill has been collecting signatures. The SE residents are also concerned about parking tickets. Mr. Condren asked whether WECA would support the traffic calming efforts. All present agreed WECA would support such efforts if the residents want it.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32p.m.