

**West End Civic Association and NRZ
Board Meeting Minutes
United Methodist Church
February 6, 2018**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Roger Minor, Ed McEachin, Max Condron, David Klein, Bongi Magubane, Kurt Malec, Jan Klein, Jon Esmail, Cindy Courtney.

Welcome and Introductions: Bongi welcomed members of the community and asked the Board to introduce themselves. The minutes from the January meeting were approved.

Bongi announced that Lakisher has distributed a list of open committee chairs. David suggested that information provided on membership forms about interest in committees be used to recruit committee chairs. Cindy Courtney volunteered to tally the information on the current membership forms.

Financial report: David Klein distributed the financial report. January's financial position is positive because the proceeds for Dinearound are in. Membership is behind last year's numbers. WECA has made a payment to the church for the meeting facilities. We are awaiting about \$5000 for SNAP doubling.

Farmers' Market: Sally Taylor spoke on behalf of the Farmers' Market committee. She will act as liaison between WEFM and the WECA board. She reported that 14 people have signed up for the committee, of whom 8 live in the West End. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has awarded a grant of \$6000 to the market. Kurt Malec suggested that the committee seek sponsorships for funding the Farmers' Market.

Newsletter: Kurt suggested issuing a newsletter in March. A discussion ensued about whether to mail it or use block captains. Suggestions for distribution included Youth Service Corps and sector reps taking ownership of distribution.

Planning and Zoning: Kyle stated that there is no new information to report on the watch list projects. It was also reported that (1) the Colonial Theatre Renaissance Corp., which owns two restaurants in Connecticut, has leased the Colonial Arms theatre, and (2) that permits have been submitted for the Colonial Arms project.

DineAround: Roger Minor reported that this year's DineAround was smaller than in past years, by design. Jan Klein said that the committee would like there to be 20-30 more people and 3-4 more hosts.

Public Safety: Officer Sherbo reported that burglaries and car break-ins were down last month, and that a drug dealer was arrested. 9 Gray Street is operating as a "scrapper" and has trash in the front of the house. 16 Evergreen will be ready to have tenants soon. 55 Evergreen is also being re-done.

The new chief started yesterday. He hopes to attend next month's meeting. A city-wide inspection of convenience stores is being carried out.

Janice Castle: Janice addressed panhandling, the issuance of cards stating where one can get a hot meal, scheduling the swearing in of Chief Rosado, scheduling of bulky waste, and the availability of positions on her staff, for which she is seeking applications.

Mark Twain house: Jennifer Larue, director of marketing at the Mark Twain House, addressed the group. The new executive director is Peter Roos, and he hopes to renew the association with the neighborhoods. Rosalie Roth is the new development director. There will be a new membership category for 06105 residents.

Community discussion:

- There is a digital sign near Noah Webster School. It is red with messages, has been up for a year but only turned on recently.
- Jon Esmail stated that discussion is under way about whether to hire the acting principal of Noah Webster School or conduct a search.
- David Klein stated that the board is looking for members for the grant committee. April 15 is the date for submissions for grants to wecagrants@gmail.com. The budget is \$6000 for grants.
- A rep is coming next month from Farmington Ave. Street Scapes to gather information from people who may have lived in the neighborhood in the past.
- Christina Newman Scott will attend next month and talk about tax credits.
- It was suggested that we invite the state reps to a meeting.
- WECA board structure and membership
 - Bongi stated that she would like to revisit how to attract new members. Kurt mentioned that Gail Billet hosted an event when she was president.
 - Bongi also noted that the WECA board structure places too much of a burden on the president instead of distributing it among other officers, and that it will be difficult to recruit someone to take on that role. For example, the president has assumed NRZ responsibilities instead of having separate roles for NRZ-related tasks. (The NRZs meet the third Thursday of each month with two reps from each neighborhood.)
 - There is a lack of engagement on the part of the sector representatives.

The meeting was adjourned.