

West Central Neighborhood Association

Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2024, 7:00pm

Attendance: 20 people

Joel Sauer (President) welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the mission and vision of the WCNA:

The vision of the West Central Neighborhood Association is to create a friendly environment that is rich in history, culture, diversity, and community that is valued by its residents, business owners, and visitors.

Joel introduced our newest board member, Anita Kuker, who is our new Membership Chair, taking over for Terry Taylor.

Guest Speaker: Perry Gay, CEO of Lutheran Downtown

Shared some of his background in the healthcare field. He has been in Fort Wayne for 5 months, was previously in Logansport, Indiana. At the time of his arrival, the hospital has not been able to transfer all of the services. The cath lab is coming back, nephrology is coming back. More general surgery is coming. (A request for PT- this would come with orthopedics). Looking to grow- bringing pain management in the next six months. He welcomed questions about the hospital and construction presence in the neighborhood. He acknowledged that we've seen a lot of people come through in this position. He assured the group that he is planning to stay a long time and that he and his wife love Fort Wayne. Email contact: perry_gay@lhn.net

Q: What is the timeline for finishing the parking lot?

A: Parking lot (200 spaces) will likely be done around July 1st, which is about what was expected. For patients, not employees.

Q: Will there be a sidewalk between Van Buren and Broadway, as there always has been?

A: I will pull the drawings and get you an answer. Provided his email address to Joel.

Q: The ambulances have been using Jackson with emergency sirens on when exiting the hospital. Wouldn't it be better for them to use the Van Buren route that is less residential?

A: There was a pledge about this. I will remind them of this.

Q: Can you speak to the issue of hospital employees parking and smoking in the neighborhood?

A: We have had complaints from the neighborhood that employees are parking in front of the houses. They are smoking in cars and standing, sitting on the sidewalks. They are not to be doing this. We should be designating somewhere for employees to smoke. They are currently not permitted to smoke anywhere on campus.

Q: Will there be landscaping around the parking lot?

A: Yes. I can't speak to the aesthetics.

Q: At one time there was talk of a pharmacy. What's the status of that?

A: As I understand it, the pharmacy was supposed to be where the front meeting room now is.

Q: What kind of emergencies do you not deal with?

A: Recently, the cath lab has not been open due to staffing (in the past several weeks). Right now the ambulance will not take a patient to us who needs that. That will be opening in the next few months. There are a few other traumas (like gunshot wounds) that will be taken to other facilities.

Q: Has the hospital been performing as expected?

A: No, worse. It has to do with poor planning when services were transferred. We have made improvements, but have a long way to go.

Any ideas or requests for guest speakers for neighborhood meetings, please contact Joel or Kelly!

2024 Board Priorities:

Joel discussed our decision making process around priorities for the 2024 board year. We are trying to rank/prioritize. Current ideas, ranked in order of feedback include:

- Expanding our programs: beautification, curb & sidewalk replacement, security, trees
- Neighborhood crime
- Historic preservation (this is automatic because it is our reason for existence)
- Bikes to boulevards. We are pursuing a grant to work on connecting the trails to Moody Park
- Improvements to Moody Park- we have already committed ~\$25,000.
- Signage: entry into the neighborhood, from West or East
- Trade scholarships for folks would learn historic preservation trades or grow their businesses.
- More activities: alley tours, collaborating with ARCH.

- Keeping sidewalks clear.
- Dog park at Moody. Dog poop bag areas.
- Pickleball court at Moody or Swinney
- Neighborhood cleanliness.

Question: what within historic preservation is our priority/project for the year? Perhaps education? Answer: We have reinstated the Historic Preservation Committee, which is mandatory according to our bylaws. There are now 7 members, who will be bringing their recommendations to us in the February meeting.

Could the board have historical information on every property in the neighborhood? This could be included in the welcome packet for any new people moving in.

The neighborhood donated a clock to the northeast corner of Washington and Broadway, which no longer works. Could we either repair it or remove it?

Annie shared that she often sees drivers going the wrong way down Rockhill and Washington, around the elementary school. We need better signage for one-ways and wrong ways. There are also no lighted cross-walks. We can campaign by calling 311 to have the City take care of this.

If you are unsure of your membership status, please see Anita! If you did not get an email letting you know that your membership was going to be renewed, it was not. You can go the website to register as a member. Our goal this year is 200 members!

Concluded: 8:00pm