

West Central Neighborhood Association

Meeting Minutes

June 17th, 2024, 7:00pm

Attendance: 30 people

Joel Sauer (President) welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced board members, 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.

Guest Speaker: “Jaenicke Garden- Past and Present”

- Alec Johnson, Deputy Director of Park Planning & Development, FW Parks & Rec
- Had to cancel at the last minute! We rescheduled him to come to the October meeting.
- We have speakers lined up for July & August meetings. (No meeting in September due to the Home Tour!)

Hemphill Smith Sculpture Update

- The proposal was presented at the March membership meeting and received feedback from the WCNA.
- The dimensions and placement have been revised based on feedback:
 - Smaller to better fit historic surroundings
 - Removed “tennis racket” border
 - Tucked into trees for better cover from surrounding homes
 - Lighting design will be aimed up so as not to shine toward homes
- It received HPC approval, but requires 5 approvals total. Unsure if other approvals have gone through
- Further fundraising is needed. Estimated cost is \$200,000.
- We will continue to provide updates as we receive them

Parking Permits Update

- Joel met with the city regarding parking around the new apartment building, Elex, at Electric Works.
- The parking garage is meant to serve as parking for the apartments. WC residents expressed concern about street parking here and near Lutheran Hospital.
- The City has done exhaustive looks into parking permits and came to the conclusion that they do not want to pursue this.

- An issue is how to distribute permits- how many permits per house? Cost, infrastructure, and enforcement. Does not guarantee spots near any particular house. No exceptions- guests would need a permit as well.
- The Board discussed the issue, and determined we will not push for permits as a board *at this time*. The board is not saying no to anyone else who would like to take this up as a project.
- Discussion:
 - Minimum of 6 month process if everything went smoothly, more like 9 months realistically.
 - Would working through Community Development be a better path? The parking issues will impact other near-downtown neighborhoods, not just West Central.
 - Residents of Elex are likely to use the garage because it provides direct access to the units and is more secure.
 - Could we go to Electric Works and pressure the businesses to pay for parking for their employees?
 - Optimism that the changes may encourage more pedestrians, cyclists, and car sharing rather than need for parking more cars.
 - Define the problem, measure, and then solve. Lots of feedback that it is not a problem now.
- Check out an article from Input Fort Wayne that analyzed available parking in Fort Wayne. There is not a lack of parking, but there is an expectation from residents that parking should be close to the destination and free.
<https://www.inputfortwayne.com/features/parking-publictransit.aspx>

Historic Preservation Committee

- Tom Cain reported that the City HPC asked for recommendation on guidance on landscaping and retaining walls.
- Current published guidelines booklet doesn't cover this kind of issue.
- WC HPC consulted with other historic neighborhoods and prepared a summary of guidance and a 5 page document with guidance and history of different materials used in landscaping.
- In summary, if the material was around when the house was built, it should be approved.
- The document will be posted on our website.
- There has been a significant increase in HPC approval requests for retaining walls, leading to the request for guidance.
- Concern about grass and how to include new

Home & Garden Tour Updates (co-chairs Ellen Sauer & Ryan Benton)

- **Saturday, Sept 7th and Sunday, Sept 8th from 11am-5pm**
- Ten Stops are confirmed. Just now being shared– we are revealing one at a time online for marketing purposes. Please don't share widely!
- Bands for ArtsFest are confirmed.
- Food trucks include two for Saturday night! (new this year)
- New layout for ArtsFest
 - Food trucks will be on Wayne to help with sound issues– homes are much closer to the street on Union.
 - Need 51% of owners on Wayne/Union to approve permit for street closure
 - We've received about 24 artist applications so far. NEW deadline is July 7th
 - Non-artist vendors on the "other side" (now on Union). Non-profits are not charged a fee unless they are selling something
- Art Spaces: neighborhood artists who open up their home or studio spaces
 - Diane Groenert is leading this! groenert125@gmail.com
 - Deadline is July 7th
- Sponsorships:
 - \$18,700 so far (~30 sponsors) plus \$2,000 in bulk ticket purchase to Ben Walhi
 - Two 'Lead' sponsors (\$3000): Lutheran Hospital and PG Heating & Cooling
 - Deadline is July 18th
 - Contact person is Bradley Seibt: bradley.seibt@gmail.com
 - Note on PG Heating & Cooling: the committee met with them regarding their request to sponsor and received commitment that they will improve their cooperation with historic preservation standards.
 - We will likely break a record on sponsorships this year!
- Marketing
 - Kelly is running ads and ticket presales. Already sold 100 tickets!
 - Tickets go on sale online tomorrow! \$18 online until the day of the event. \$20 on the day of the tour. Please share posts on social media!
- Ticket Pick-up Location
 - Friday evening before the Tour at Chapman's (rather than a full pre-tour party)
 - Chapman's is an ArtsFest level sponsor
 - Scott Ferguson will offer one free drink to every person picking up a ticket
 - Committee will provide appetizers
 - Chapman's is making a West Central beer!

Upcoming Events

- Friday Porch Parties, organized by Jo Buffalino. We are in need of more hosts!
- Block Party: July 20th, 11am-2pm

- Volunteers needed- contact Tyler Bowers: tyler.bowers713@gmail.com
- Home & Garden Tour: Sept 7-8
- July Association Meeting:
 - Demographics of the West Central Neighborhood: presented by Dan Baisden
 - Historic Home Restorations, Renovation, & Remodels: Charlotte Weybright

Welcome Bags are available for new neighbors! Contact Anita if you'd like her to deliver a bag or if you would like to deliver a bag to a new neighbor.

Concluded: 7:59 pm