



Short North Civic Association

Agenda

March 17, 2022

7:00 pm – Caretaker’s Cottage – Zoom

Attendees: Bobby Thaxton (Board), Marc Conte (Board), Chet Ridenour (Board), Bob Stern (Board), Jim Farmer (Board), Caroline Stinziano (Board), Kathy Rhinehart (Board), Edwin Eblin, Michael Broe, Eric Hill, Jack Decker, Harrison Poku-Yeboah, Officer Mark Hauenstein, Lisa Morton, Jeff Smith, Debbie Tavenner, Cheryl Pentella,

- I. Welcome – Bobby Thaxton
- II. Approval of Minutes for February -- Caroline Stinziano

Caroline presented the February 2022 minutes for approval.

Motion: Bob

Second: Jack

Member vote: Minutes passed with unanimous approval.

III. Report from the Organization

- A. Financial Report – Jim Farmer
 - Jim provided financial update for March
- B. Membership – Kathy Rhinehart
 - Working to filter and update e-mail listing
- C. Committee Changes – Bobby Thaxton
 - Discussion of possible Committee Changes
 - Proposed Development Committee – HWS/IVS both have Development Committee
 - Proposed Membership Committee – lots of ideas on increasing membership but no formal structure for increasing membership
 - Other Existing Committees – Tour Committee, Nominating Committee & Executive Committee
 - Executive Committee will discuss and bring proposed changes and structure back to SNCA
 - Key factor in success – having a clearly identified chairperson for various committees

IV. City/Community Reports

A. Update from the City of Columbus – Harrison Poku-Yeboah

City News

- Training for zoning changes – there is a video on zoning
- Councilwomen Favor hosting a Women’s History Event
- Nick Bankston will be having community meetings online
- \$8M funding available for grants to local small businesses
 - First wave of applications full
 - There will be a second wave for applications
- Councilwoman Lourdes is making the rounds to civic association meetings and hopes to attend a future meeting

B. Short North Violence and Injury Prevention Workgroup – Chet

Scooter Discussion:

- City is reviewing the previous restrictions put in place
- City learned there are other tools that scooter operators have to geofence area restrictions put in place for certain times, etc...
- Residents indicated that they have seen impacts to scooters blocking sidewalks, restricting passage for those with limited mobility etc...

C. Good Neighbor Agreement Meeting Report - Chet

Good Neighbor Pledge:

- could be cumbersome and challenging to get businesses to commit
- want to hear feedback from residents if this pledge addresses their concerns
- voluntary commitment to show how they value the neighborhood where they operate (especially within the SN SID)
- adopters would support community standards and prevent negative impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods
- Noise:
 - to adhere to noise ordinances
 - to operate in a manner than noise after 11pm would not penetrate another tenant in the same building or adjacent building
 - or otherwise, install noise mitigating solutions
 - outdoor speakers would comply with historic standards
- Cleanliness
 - would clean up their adjacent sidewalks
 - would clean up within 1 hour of end of business
 - maintain adequate refuse support
- Safety
 - commit to share special duty officers
 - de-escalation training with staff
 - provide camera footage when requested
 - provide mobility options to staff

- Operations
 - not engage in excessive alcohol consumption marketing
- Inclusion, Diversity & Equity
- Arts, Culture, Community
 - showcase art, music
 - participate in Gallery Hop
- High Impact Fund Qualifications
 - after 11pm
 - more than 200 occupancies
 - business started after 2010
 - shared formula and annual limits
 - will give a window cling decal for participating businesses to put in window
 - complaints will be directed via 311 and via info@shortnorth.org

V. SNCA Organizational Reports

- A. Short North Yard Sale – Bobby Thaxton
 - Returning – June 4th 2022
- B. Goodale Park Music Series – Bobby Thaxton
 - Back this summer for 4 weeks
 - 3 of the 4 weeks booked with bands
 - Applying for a City of Columbus grant
- C. Screen on the Green – Bobby Thaxton
 - In process
- D. Tour of Homes and Gardens – Caroline Stinziano
 Tour is September 18th; Preview Event is Saturday, September 17th @ Hubbard Park Place
 - Actively working on securing homes (2 solid commitments)
 - Will start to target sponsors at the end of this month
- E. Block Watch – Chet Ridenour
 - Lights – 50% of reported issues have been updated by the city
 - Considering a trash can audit in the future
 - 311 is coming out with a new app (finishing up internal training) – should have some new features
 CPD report:
 - Crime is generally down from report out in previous meeting
- F. Short North Foundation Report – Chet Ridenour
 Updates from other groups in attendance at meeting:
 - FGP – put out yearly event calendar which includes work days
 - IVS – have narrowed down to top 3 names for renaming of Christopher Columbus Park
 - At Home by High has started their in person meet ups
 - Betsy Pandora provided the Foundation an update on SN Parking Benefits District

- General consensus from SNF meeting attendees that opportunities exist for improvement for residents

G. **Victorian Village Commission – Marc Conte/Jack Decker/Jeff Smith**

- Interviews – 8 Applicants (1 submitted from City)
- 7 interviews – all good and would be good volunteers for other
- Identified 3 names and back up
 - Melinda Shaw – architect not in neighborhood (Clintonville) – trained in historic preservation and has worked on other projects – submitted by City
 - Robert Dodson – On Neil – attorney – has applied previously
 - Reid Sprite – On 3rd – used to work for City
 - Back up – Peter Schuler

Motion to recommend Melinda Shaw, Robert Dodson, and Reid Sprite to fill vacant VVS positions

Motion : Jack Decker

Second : Lisa Morton

Member Vote : Motion passed with unanimous approval.

Bobby to submit names to the City

- Following the vote there was discussion of a conceptual drawing recently circulated by Wood Company for a 12 story tower on Buttles & N. High (old Chevrolet dealer)
 - Drawing suggests building would be 40 feet higher than highest building in the neighborhood (The Lincoln)
 - Something to keep an eye on and possibly something for a Development Committee to monitor

VI. Community Discussion

A. **Casto Development at Buttles/Neil – Jack Decker**

- Harrison West Society March meeting – recommendation on 2 zoning changes to accommodate new Casto Development on Buttles/Neil
- Most recent drawings reflect positive changes – 2 story building for CVS and outside aesthetic nature has changed dramatically including more brick
 - HW voted 5-2; 6-1 to approve both zoning changes
- SNCA discussed submitted a separate statement of support to the City

Jack Decker read prepared statement to be provided to the Committee (Refer to Appendix A to these minutes for reference). Motion to approve statement and submit to the City.

Motion: Jack Decker

Second: Lisa Morton

Discussion:

- Casto has been very responsive
- At HWS meeting - consistent comments that small businesses in previous format will not be able to stay or be maintained
- Preservation of the trees
 - Include emphasis on protection of trees where possible
- Chet – would like to echo for record there has been neighborhood chatter on social media on disappointment in the lack of small businesses
- Letter to be sent to City, Casto and Harrison West

Member Vote: Motion passed with unanimous approval.

B. Community concerns with noise and safety issues.

- Discussion of continued issues with sound and safety related to the High St.
- Eric Hill – Star condominiums – near check cashing location
 - New bar/restaurant being proposed (owner of Julep and a handful of other bars) – would extend to space that is currently being used as apartments
 - Proposing a patio in the back that backs up to condominiums
 - Concern from neighbors that this will negatively impact nearby residents
 - Have spoken against this to VVC several times and was pointed to code believed to prohibit the use
 - Eric is looking for guidance from the association and what other avenues can be explored
 - VVC has not taken action yet
 - Recommendation that neighbors identify someone to coordinate effort, pick a theme, and ensure all feedback and commentary revolve around this theme

VII. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned.

Appendix A

The Short North Civic Association serves the areas commonly known as Italian Village, Harrison West, The Circles, Dennison Place, Jeffrey Place and Victorian Village – including the Victorian Village Historic Preservation District. The area known as 777 Neil Avenue – *i.e.*, the Thurber Village Shopping Center – lies just outside the boundaries of the Victorian Village Commission, Victorian Village and SNCA. The 777 Neil Avenue parcel is bounded on the south by Westminster-Thurber Retirement Community, on the west by the City’s Wheeler Dog Park and a pair of aging 1960-era apartment complexes built on the ashes of Flytown, and on the north and east by Victorian Village residences. It is the historic properties along Neil and Buttles Avenues, located in Victorian Village, that will be most directly affected by the proposed redevelopment of the Thurber Center. It is Neil Avenue, a gateway to the area extending the length of Victorian Village, whose streetscape will be most directly affected by the redesign of the Center.

The City, however, has deemed the Harrison West Society to be the appropriate entity to provide community zoning recommendations for the Thurber project. HWS has generously permitted SNCA to participate informally in this process, and HWS has worked with the developer to obtain many design changes which SNCA representatives had advocated or would have advocated. We are grateful for the efforts of HWS, and for the responsiveness of the Casto Organization in making remarkable improvements to the initial plan.

On March 16, 2022, at a meeting attended by a large number of neighbors ineligible to vote, HWS voted 5-1 and 6-2 to approve the proposed rezoning and variances for the property. While SNCA has no particular quarrel with the rezoning or variances themselves, and views the scale of the proposed buildings and the proposed palette of exterior materials as appropriate (within the constraints that have narrowed the developer’s options), SNCA continues to view the project, in its current iteration, as a missed opportunity to create a streetscape that is fully compatible with the historic Neil Avenue and Buttles Avenue streetscapes and that befits its location at a gateway to the historic neighborhood from I-670.

SNCA is disappointed with the loss of retail space for small businesses on the site, and the failure to plan storefronts for the length of the Neil Avenue frontage, but understands that these features are not compatible with Casto’s business plan or the demands of its current and prospective tenants.

We urge Casto and its tenants to continue to “tweak” the design of the project’s commercial buildings to eliminate additional architectural features suggestive of a suburban development, and to add detail, such as brick relief, parapet walls atop towers, and/or other features, that are more suggestive of turn-of-the-century commercial structures. Improvements of this nature could easily be made within the zoning commitments Casto is making to the City, without impairing the functionality of the buildings, and at modest apparent cost.

This project presents an opportunity to create a development in which the entire community can take unqualified pride, and one nearly as successfully integrated with its surroundings as the Harrison Park Place or Leafy Dale/Sanborn projects, for example. We hope that Casto’s presentation to the neighborhood group tasked to provide feedback does not signal the end of

Casto's efforts to make the project as emblematic of and compatible with the neighborhood as it can be.