



Historic Water Tower Neighborhood

OFFICERS

President

Jeff Bentoff

President Elect

Dawn McCarthy

Treasurer

Adrienne Houck

VP Events

Joe Libnoch

Secretary

Dawn McCarthy

VP Membership

Thea Kovac

Past President

Sandra McSweeney

TRUSTEES

Area 1

(LaFayette Pl. to North Ave.)

Mary Beth Geraci

Larry Presberg

Lise Sadagopan

Area 2

(North Ave. to Newberry Blvd.)

Michael Barna

David Brust

Maria Costello

Lloyd Dickinson

Barbara Elsner

Angela Jacobi

Jeff Jordan

Bunkie Miller

Area 3

(Newberry Blvd. to Edgewood Ave.)

Camilla Avery

Mark Falci

Jennifer Runquist

Eric Waldron

MINUTES

Board of Trustees Meeting
June 2, 2010
Marcia Coles Community Room
Lake Park Pavilion

Announcements

Lighthouse Fundraiser Friday June 25, 2010

--Contact May 414-332-6542

Preserve Milwaukee! Our neighborhoods Matter!

Saturday, June 26, 8:30 am Best Place at the Pabst

Milwaukee Preservation Steering Committee

--Contact Dawn dawnhmcc@aol.com

1) Call to Order by Dawn McCarthy, President-Elect

2) Guest speaker: PETER GRABER, Community Liaison Officer, District 1, Milwaukee Police Department

Officer Graber has been with MPD for 14 years. He was previously in another district since 2004. He has been the Community Liaison Officer at District 1 since 1/1/2010.

--His contact info: direct line with voicemail: 414-935-7701

Office hours: M – F, 8 am – 4 pm.

He will respond. He is particularly interested in specific incidents.

--If you want a squad sent to a location, call 414-933-4444, the city-wide non-emergency phone number.

--To register a complaint or concern about police response, call the District 1 Shift Commander, 414-935-7211 (24 hrs a day/ 7 days a week/ 365 days/yr)

District 1 Captain is Steve Basting.

The HWTN area has been included in MPD District 1 since July 2009. District 1 has the lowest rate of violent crimes in the city. The most common crime is illegal entry to autos, known as “smash and grab.” Career criminals (many are homeless and/or drug addicted) are responsible for the majority of these crimes. He recommends that residents not leave anything in the passenger compartments of cars, including cords for electronics, mounts for GPS systems. Put these items, and other items, such as laptops, in the trunk at the start of a trip, NOT at the destination. Prospect Ave is a popular place for car break-ins.

MPD Telephone Response Unit, initiated by Police Chief Ed Flynn. This system puts a citizen in touch with a civilian telecommunicator, who puts the complaint into the computer. A dispatcher then determines its urgency on a scale of 1 to 5, with a situation involving violence rated at “1”, and noise and nuisance situations at “4” or “5”.

The MPD Horse Patrol Unit and the Boat Patrol Unit are part of District 1.

UWM

Officer Graber is working with UWM, City Hall, and neighborhood associations to deal with the effects of more students in the area. There are problems when students leave “party houses” and bars. There is noise and other nuisance behaviors, stealing, breaking lawn furniture, and other vandalism. These perpetrators are hard to catch.

UWM is interviewing to hire someone for the position formerly held by Oscar Perez.

Lakefront

30 – 50 Milwaukee County Sheriff personnel are deployed at the beach and Lincoln Memorial Drive to monitor the crowds at the beach that arrive with the summer weather. Sheriffs patrol the beach and Lake Drive. Milwaukee Police Dept. covers the residential areas along the bluff. The MPD mobile camera is currently near the helicopter pad.

-- A member comment re: vandalism on her income property involving breaking stained glass windows.

--A member commented re: Memorial Day Weekend: law enforcement did an outstanding job on Memorial Day weekend which followed the first weekend of hot weather when crowds overwhelmed the beach, Lincoln Memorial Drive, and surrounding residential neighborhoods. Problems included traffic routed up the bluff to the neighborhoods, cars blocking driveways, loitering, and loud music coming from parked and moving cars.

Officer Graber acknowledged that both the Sheriff Dept. and the MPD were to blame for not anticipating the situation that occurred that weekend before Memorial Day weekend. He will ask Capt. Basting to request more DPW parking checkers to patrol for illegal parking, and for MPD to prevent loitering around cars.

This member also commented re: the seeming lack of coordination among city and county planners that allowed multiple events on one weekend that could impact public safety.

Specifically he referred to the upcoming Breast Cancer House fundraiser on Wahl Ave. that coincides with the Air Show and other events at Bradford Beach. This member suggested that Officer Graber should be included in the overall planning for events that require city and county permits.

--A member commented that when Lincoln Memorial Drive was closed and traffic was sent along Kenwood and Lake Drive there were an unusual number of cars traveling well above the speed limit that eluded police, who were busy re-routing traffic.

This member also inquired re: crime statistics. How can we get them? Are we paying overtime, and if so, does this negate some of the increased revenue from vendors having increased crowds at the lakefront. Otherwise, is the revenue for the County and the expense for the city?

Officer Graber responded that there has not been overtime drawn from local law enforcement budgets. Three extra officers have been assigned to District 1 for the summer. Overtime is usually covered by federally funded grants. The UWM spring initiative involving 3 extra officers for 3 – 4 weekends was funded by UWM. Officer Graber sends 3rd Aldermanic District crime statistics to Jeff Bentoff, HWTN President.

It was suggested that Jeff Bentoff send these statistics to the entire HWTN membership, since the City e-notify can be late posting statistics. Statistics can also be found on the City Website under “Compass.”

--A member wondered that since the overcrowding at Bradford Beach is “weather-driven,” why didn’t law enforcement anticipate the situation that occurred on the first weekend when very warm weather was predicted?

Officer Graber responded that the MPD has a Neighborhood Task Force that was deployed elsewhere. It was the MPD District 1’s first spring covering Bradford Beach. “We will be more vigilant next spring.”

--A member asked for clarification re: the allocation of law enforcement responsibility.

Officer Graber stated that the Sheriff has the responsibility for the County Parks. MPD can have a presence in the parks as well. The two law enforcement entities have decided to share responsibility in the following manner: the Sheriff’s Dept. has the main responsibility for Bradford Beach, Lake Park and Lincoln Memorial Drive. MPD has responsibility for the residential areas surrounding Lake Park.

--A member asked about panhandling.

Officer Graber explained that panhandling is legal. However, panhandling on private property and aggressive panhandling on any site is illegal. Aggressive panhandling is persisting after the person who is approached says “no.” If someone experiences or observes illegal panhandling, call the police and ask for a squad. If the panhandler(s) leave in an auto, get a description of the car and its license plate number, if possible. Also provide a description of the panhandler(s). He noted that people seeking donations for inner city churches are often seeking out homes that are unoccupied, and will avoid approaching a residence that appears to have someone inside.

--A member noted that the MPD is planning to locate a substation near UWM, probably on Oakland Ave.

--A member asked about the relationship and duties of the UWM police and the MPD and about Officer Graber's duties.

Officer Graber said that the working relationship between the two entities is very good.

Officer Graber responded that his job is full-time as liaison to the community. He meets regularly with neighborhood and business groups, and conducts public safety awareness meetings with schools and businesses. He compiles statistics and shares them with groups. He answers all calls and emails from individuals. He can make arrests and does investigations.

--A member asked about camps in parks and elsewhere that are set up by homeless people.

Officer Graber encouraged reporting these to him. He will work with DPW and the County to remove these camps.

--A member suggested that a message board be installed at the far south end of Memorial Drive (near the Milwaukee Art Museum) to warn motorists of heavy traffic or street closing, so that motorists can exit to Prospect Ave. to avoid being stuck in traffic further north on Lincoln Memorial Drive.

--A member asked about safety along the Milwaukee River trails between North Ave. and Locust.

Officer Graber stated that he knew of one incident this year involving a stolen bicycle. He also noted that the homeless camp under the bridge at North Ave. has been removed.

BUSINESS MEETING

3) Minutes of the previous meeting – Bunkie Miller moved and Jennifer Runquist seconded a motion to approve the minutes as amended by Dawn McCarthy, Secretary and President-Elect. The motion carried.

4) Reports of Officers.

President's Report

Vacancy on Board of Trustees – Motion to nominate Lisa Sadagopan for Trustee, Area 1. Sandy McSweeney moved and Lloyd Dickinson seconded. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee for 2011

Joe Libnoch, Area 1
Dawn McCarthy, Area 2
Adrienne Houck, Area 3
Sandra McSweeney, past-president, non-voting

Angela Jacobi moved, and Michael Barna seconded. Motion carried.

--Bradford Beach crowd issues: There are an increasing number of events and multiple events on the lakefront. HWTN should keep track of the events, and problems, this summer in order to report to the city and the county.

--Air Show: this is the 2nd year that the launch area of the Air Show has been moved from further south along the lakefront to Bradford Beach.

Barbara Elsner moved and Adrienne Houck seconded that a letter be sent to Supervisor Broderick and County Executive Walker objecting to the location of this launch area so close to residential area, and suggesting that it be moved further south to the state park near the Summerfest Grounds. Motion carried: 8 in favor; 7 opposed.

--Water Tower Park. Jim Shields will do a plan for re-landscaping. Lise Sadogopan and Mark Falci have done some of the historical research for this project. Lisa asked for more volunteers.

--Bike Race 6/26/10

The streets will be closed at 8:30 am.

The Downer Avenue Merchants Association (DAMA) does not support the Superweek Bike Race, originally scheduled for late July.

Treasurer Report, Adrienne Houck

Income: \$135 Expenses: \$930 for website

Membership Report, Thea Kovac

Since the beginning of the year there are a total of 156 memberships. That includes 52 renewals, 11 new memberships, 1 returning. There are 39 past-due members. The Membership Committee has met 3 times in April and May. Members are working on revising the HWTN brochure and devising strategies for retaining and recruiting members. Recommendations will be presented to the Executive Committee for review at a meeting this month.

Downer Ave Merchants Association (DAMA), Mary Alice Wasielewski

Dairyland Bike Race: Volunteers will be lit-dropping info re: the Bike Race. Race activities will run from 11 am – 7 pm, including races for children, teens and women as well as the main race.

New establishments: VIA restaurant and JAKE'S BIG DOG custard stand.

Downer Days will be held at the end of August

Eric Waldron moved that HWTN allocate \$250 to purchase a dasherboard promoting HWTN which will displayed during the Bike Race. Lise Sadagopan seconded. The Treasurer questioned the cost-benefit. Jeff Grecza recalled that the HWTN reserves have been slowly dwindling over the years, and that it would be wise to “pull in the reins” on allocations such as this. (Bunky Miller suggested that sponsoring a “preem” at the race would get more attention) In favor, 3; opposed 11, 2 abstentions. Motion did not carry.

DAMA website

A member noted that Schwartz Books is still listed on the website (historicdowneravenue.com), and has not been replaced by Boswell's.

Lake Park Bandshell

Tom Cheney reported that the HPC granted approval of the site and use. A more detailed set of plans for the design will be considered at a future HPC meeting.

Plans were made available for review after the HWTN meeting.

HWTN website

Jeff Jordan reported that after 3 ½ months of work, substantial changes have been made. The URL is the same, and the website remains: historicwatertowerneighborhood.com. The site contains the bylaws, minutes, structure, committee members, and history. More historical data and photos will be added. He will add Officer Graber's email address to the site.

Restoring the Popcorn Wagon

The Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) issued by the HPC ordered that the wagon be restored and returned to Downer Ave. Progress has been made on locating a suitable storage space and funding for restoration. DAPL, the corporate entity that built the Downer Ave. parking structure, donated it to Mike Eitel's Urban Playground Foundation. Originally Mike Eitel offered to give it away. He now has reconsidered this offer. The HPC has to approve the new site for the wagon. No spot has been chosen for it yet. Barbara Elsner expressed her concern that it must be stored properly pending restoration efforts.

Buildings and Institutions

Sandra McSweeney reported.

--Request for rooming house variance

Sandra McSweeney moved to oppose the request by the owner to support a rooming house variance for 3222 N. Downer. Bunkie Miller seconded. 0 approved. 15 opposed. Motion carried.

--**Mercy** (City parking lot and US Bank site) and **Common Bond** (Prospect Mall site) both have housing development proposals.

HWTN already objected to the rushed process, in the spring, when the Mercy purchase of city property was scheduled to go to the City Plan Commission before neighborhood meetings had been held. The Mercy project was pulled from the agenda at that time.

Common Bond's proposal is 50 to 60 foot height, with 80 units of 1 or 2 bedrooms. Parking is below with space for 54 vehicles. The design is for moderate incomes. Rentals will be \$600 to \$900 per month.

Sandra McSweeney moved to oppose both the Mercy Housing and Common Bond Housing proposals, *at this time*, based on the following:

The plans for these projects could proceed before HWTN has an opportunity to respond. The Northeast side plan does not contain provisions for workforce housing.

The developer of the Prospect Mall (Common Bond Housing) site has been reluctant to present plans to HWTN and other neighborhood associations until the Common Bond Housing application for WHEDA tax credits has been approved.

These projects would add to traffic and parking congestion.

Reasonably priced rentals seem to exceed demand on the east side, and there is no need to add to the inventory of available rentals.

14 voted to approve the opposition to both proposals. 1 abstention. Motion carried.

Joe Libnoch moved to adjourn. Adrienne Houck seconded. All in favor: meeting adjourned.

These meeting minutes constitute the author's understanding of the issues discussed and the decisions reached. Please contact the undersigned with any additions, deletions, or changes.

Prepared by,

Thea Kovac
VP – Membership
HWTN