



General Membership Meeting Minutes Monday, October 21, 2013 Allegheny Traditional Academy, 7:00 p.m.

In Attendance (37)

Michele Adams, Steve Adams, Jacob Anderson, Wendy Blake, Patricia Buck, John Canning, David Charlton, Chris Gates, Joan Gielas, Pam Grove, Tom Hardy, Kent Hensley, Arthur James, Paul Johnson, Brian Kaminski, Kate Kay, Deena Kelly, Todd Kilgore, Todd Meyer, Gregory Mucha, Rebecca Nuttall, Jason Owens, Henry Reese, Craig Ryan, Vincent Salvino, Bob Sechler, Sheila Sechler, David Shlapak, Patrick Sweeney, Katie Tarara, Brian Toevs, Christine Toevs, Leslie Ward, Karina Westfall, Thomas Westfall, Al Zanon, Randy Zotter

Introduction

The regular monthly meeting for the membership of the Allegheny City Central Association was held on Monday, October 21, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Allegheny Traditional Academy, President Steve Adams being in the chair and Secretary Arthur James being present. The minutes of the last regular monthly meeting on 09/09/13, being posted on the web site beforehand, were approved.

Presidents Introduction

Steve Adams, as the new president, presented his goals for the organization and changes in the organization.

- Will continue to focus on the same three primary goals; Development, Safety and Communications
- Development projects include continued work on the Garden Theater Block, housing infill, and renovations.
- Pam Grove is now the chair of the Safety Committee.
- We plan to produce a detailed budget for 2014 and bring it to the membership for approval.
- We will pursue hiring an executive director.

Treasurer's Report

David Shlapak presented the Treasurer's Report.

Development

David Shlapak reported on development topics.

- 1405 Buena Vista
 - It had been slated for the Great House Sale.
 - It went through the Treasurer's Sale process in April.
 - The city was unable to provide a clear title by the summer.
 - The ACCA requested a license from the city to get on the property to stabilize it. The city denied the request. They still didn't have the title.
 - Demolition began soon after the denied request.
 - In earlier talks with the city, they had planned on giving it to us or to some other developer.



- However, once the city became aware of the dangerous tree in the back yard, they went ahead with the order to demolish it and leave it to the absentee owner.
- The Development Committee was always opposed to demolishing it.
- After demolition began, and was then halted by an injunction filed by Todd Meyer, the Development Committee approached the city and offered to take down the tree in the back yard at the ACCA's expense and secure a developer to build a new house on the property in exchange for the city to turn the property over to the ACCA through the land reserve program.
- Sent the city a letter agreeing to these terms with a letter of intent from a developer willing to build a new house on the property.

Todd Meyer asked for and was given the floor. Todd reported the following.

- Stepped forward when demolition began.
- Used an attorney to file an injunction to stop the demolition.
- Reached out to the ACCA, but no one stepped forward.
- Doesn't understand why the ACCA didn't step up to pay the \$10,000 bond on the \$100,000 liability that the city was requesting to halt demolition.
- Was told that in the minutes of the May HRC meeting that Sarah Quinn stated that the ACCA supported the demolition.

David Shlapak was given the floor to respond.

- The ACCA never told the city that it supported the demolition.
- Dave was in communication with Todd's daughter on the matter. Todd was out of the country when this all happened.
- The ACCA couldn't afford the \$100,000 in liability that the \$10,000 bond would incur. That would wipe out all of the ACCA's cash.
- The house was half demolished when the injunction was granted.
- The ACCA is moving forward to correct the existing situation as best as possible.

David Shlapak responded to questions.

Q: If the ACCA expressed to the city that it wanted to save I405 Buena Vista, how did it come to be that communications broke down and the city tore it down?

A: It was probably a case of one department within the city not knowing what was going on in another department. The Development Committee had interaction with the city's Finance and Legal departments and they knew of our interest before the T-Sale.

Q: Did the ACCA tell the city that they wanted them to tear down I405 Buena Vista?

A: The board did not write a letter to the city, or to Sarah Quinn, telling them we want them to tear it down.

- Garden Theater Block

- The project has been a lot more complicated and expensive than anyone expected from the beginning. That includes the ACCA, the URA and all of the developers that bid on the project.
- The buildings were in worse shape than expected.
- The finances were harder to obtain than expected.
- The permitting process was more difficult than expected.
- Don't think that any of the other developers that bid on the project could have done any better than Zukin.
- All of this has slowed down progress.
- Phase I had included the Bradberry, Masonic and Garden Theater, but the Bradberry had to be removed from Phase I because the architecture was such that costs to renovate were more than expected.
- Great progress was being made on the Masonic, but then the National Parks Service denied historic tax credits that were being counted on.
- They denied it because of the plan to remove interior walls on the first floor.



ALL TOGETHER. DIFFERENT.

- The judgment was made by one person. Filed an appeal and the judgment was reviewed by a 3-person panel right before the government shutdown. Even though the government has re-opened, we haven't heard the result of the appeal.
 - The Garden Theater still hasn't closed. The latest hang-up is from PWSA. The URA now requires a plan for remediating water and sewer issues identified by PWSA to be submitted before they will close.
- RFP to Develop Land Reserve Properties
 - Plan to start filling in vacant lots.
 - Most are in the upper streets in the vicinity of Alpine and Carrington.
 - Received several proposals from developers in response to the RFP.
- Q: Can the contracts with developers have a shorter buy-back option period than what was agreed to for 250 Alpine and 104 Sampsonia?
- A: We could consider it. We are in a better position now with more developers vying for contracts than we were for 250 Alpine and 104 Sampsonia. The buy-back option period for those was 18 months, which allowed for 12 months of development, plus 6 months to allow for slippage.
- Q: Are the Development Committee meetings open to the public?
- A: The Development Committee meetings are at 11:30 on the first Sunday of every month. They are not open to the public.
- Q: Who approves the selection of developers?
- A: The Development Committee will bring its recommendation to the membership for approval.

Communications

Arthur James reported on communications topics.

- Website Redesign
 - The committee followed the process outlined in the RFP for selecting the web development firm.
 - The four submitted proposals were narrowed down to two.
 - The committee met with the two finalists.
 - The committee selected Big Big Design, made its recommendation to the board, and the board approved.
 - Hope to have the new website up near the end of the year, or soon thereafter.
- Annual Report
 - The Annual Report will be a glossy color brochure used as a marketing tool to show funders what we have been doing and entice them to continue funding us.
 - Almost ready to go to print.
 - Will only print a small quantity, and will have a PDF version available on the website.
- Facebook
 - We're in full swing with Facebook now. The page is www.facebook.com/AlleghenyCityCentralAssociation.
 - Will post about interesting things happening in and around the neighborhood. It won't just be about meeting agendas, reminders, etc.
 - The Facebook page has about 150 likes.

Safety

Pam Grove reported on safety topics.

- The Safety Committee meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at Pam's House at 7:00 PM.
- Contact safety@cnn-cpgh.org.
- Looking for locations to put up "Cameras in Use" signs.



- Compiling a list of where cameras are pointed, in addition to where they are located.
- Have been attending the Northside Safe Streets meetings.
- Command Brackney from Zone I will begin having open sessions to meet one-on-one with residents for 15 minutes. The first session will be this Friday from 6:00am to 8:30am. Call Officer Hodges to make an appointment.
- Will continue the camera program. Will be strategic in identifying next locations to install cameras.

Bylaws

Arthur James reported on bylaws topics.

- Andrew Wickesberg is the chair of the Bylaws Committee.
- Looking for volunteers to join the Committee. Anticipate a number of changes for the bylaws (besides changing the name of the organization).
- Change the name of the organization in the bylaws from Central Northside Neighborhood Council to Allegheny City Central Association.
 - The process for changing the bylaws is as follows:
 - Provide 30 days notice of intended changes.
 - Move to make the changes and obtain a 75% majority vote.
 - Make the same motion at the next membership meeting and obtain a simple majority vote.
 - The meeting tonight serves as the 30 days notice of the intent to make a motion at the November membership meeting to amend the bylaws with the new name of the organization. No other changes will be made to the bylaws at this time.
 - The motion will be made at the November meeting. A 75% majority vote is required.
 - The motion will be repeated at the January meeting. A simple majority vote is required.

Appeal of City Council's Ruling against Expanding the Historic District

Greg Mucha moved that

The ACCA write a letter supporting the appeal filed against City Council's decision to not expand the historic district.

Paul Johnson moved

For postponement of consideration of the pending motion until the November general membership meeting.

The motion to postpone passed. The main motion will be on the agenda for the November general membership meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:55.

Meeting minutes prepared by Arthur James, secretary.
Minutes approved with corrections on 11/18/2013.

