

West Avenue Improvement Association  
Spring Member Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 12, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Marty Martin and the minutes from the Spring meeting were approved.

VCU Issues: Mayor Marty stated that he would be willing to serve as the WAIA liaison with VCU. In regard to the on-going discussions about VCU's expansion and its refusal either to abide by the existing Memorandum of Understanding or to enter into a new one, he noted that VCU is claiming that publication of its Master Plan is sufficient notice to the surrounding neighborhoods about its expansion plans and therefore that it does not need to comply with any additional notice and/or approval provisions contained in the existing MOU. Since this is inconsistent with the existing MOU, the Fan District Association will be sending a letter to VCU saying, in effect, that the local neighborhood associations believe the existing MOU remains operative and that VCU should continue to honor it.

Mayor Marty also noted that: VCU continues to claim it has no plans to move further west on Harrison Street; VCU has represented that it will include the surrounding neighborhoods in the development of its new Master Plan; and the new president of VCU seems focused on expansion eastward and on MCV, and therefore does not consider issues involved in western expansion particularly significant.

Finally, Mayor Marty noted that overall, VCU is and has been a good neighbor and therefore that it is important to balance our concerns and responses.

Parking: Mayor Marty reported that in response to our request to reduce parking time from 60 to 30 minutes, the city is unwilling to do so unless the WAIA will cover the costs for replacing existing parking limit signs and increasing parking enforcement personnel. As for VCU providing free short-term parking, he noted that by law, VCU is required to charge for the use of its parking facilities. However he also stated that VCU is continuing its efforts to move evening classes to its new buildings farther east.

An issue that fostered many comments was how close to an intersection a car may be parked. Of particular concern was the intersection of Boyd and Park, where many residents reported substantial difficulty in being able to turn onto Boyd due to cars on Park being so close to Boyd. Mayor Marty noted that by law, a 20 foot space must be maintained from an intersection, however he was told by the city engineer that this encroachment limitation has not been enforced due to parking difficulties in the Fan.

Crime Update: Mayor Marty welcomed and recognized Richmond Police Lieutenant Edward Capriglione. Lieutenant Capriglione reported the following: overall crime is down; the Richmond PD has made arrests in regard to some recent burglaries; the courts have begun imposing stiffer penalties such as jail time for those convicted of graffiti; he will make a point to enforce the 20 foot parking encroachment limitation at the intersection of Boyd and Park; in

response to one residents complaint about the recent decapitation of her statute and flowers, he will look into the matter; and he urged residents to make use of the party patrol to respond to noise complaints.

Treasurer's Report: WAIA Treasurer Earle Morrison presented his report on the balances in the general fund, Stuart Circle fund, tree box fund, and security fund. The total of the association's entire total of all the funds is currently \$7,172.22.

Election of New Officers: As former Mayor, Greg Suskin chaired the nominating committee. The slate presented was: Robert Smith for Mayor, Tim Feehan for Vice Mayor, John Fottrell for Secretary, and Earle Morrison for Treasurer. This slate was approved without objection. Thank you to Greg and his committee for all of their work.

New Mayor Robert Smith thanked Marty for all of his hard work, and encouraged all residents to do the same. He also acknowledged his goal to continue Marty's work of improving relations and communication with VCU.

Alley Clean-Up: Alley clean-up will begin in D. Walton's backyard (1507 West Ave.) at 8am with coffee and donuts provided by the WAIA. The cleanup begins with the arrival of the city garbage truck. Earle Morrison (WAIA Treasurer) will be providing liquid refreshments throughout the cleanup process. And don't forget that evening's hot dog party held in Earle's backyard (1302 Park Ave.) starting at 5:00pm.

Garden Tour: The 70th Garden Tour will be Sunday April 25, 2010. Scott McLaughlin, as Chair of the Garden Tour committee, provided the following: most of the volunteer positions have been filled, but more are always needed so please help as you can; the cocktail party will be held on Saturday, April 24 from 6 to 8 in Sarah and Cheairs Porter's home at 1404 Park; Jean Longest has graciously agreed to host the Judge's Luncheon (thank you, Jean!); this year's judges will be Calden Loth, Ann Bradshaw and Chuck Bateman; Scott will see if St. James will open its new facility so that those attending the Garden Tour may take a break and enjoy cookies and lemonade; and, most importantly, he encouraged everyone to **OPEN YOUR GARDENS!!**

New Business: Several West Avenue gardens will be on the Historic Garden Week in Virginia tour on **Thursday, April 22, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Upon motion duly made, the meeting was adjourned.