



WAMM QUARTERLY MEETING

January 23, 2019

MINUTES

Maria Morandi, WAMM Secretary/Treasurer, called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

1. Introduction of Officers

Maria Morandi introduced herself as Secretary/Treasurer of the association. She informed attendees that Lane Llewellyn, First Vice-President and Acting President could not attend due to health issues. Diane Baker, Second Vice-President, was not present due to a prior commitment.

2. Order of Business.

2a. Presentation of the agenda for the meeting and the speaker.

Maria Morandi described the list of topics in the agenda including a presentation of new residential construction, the status of WAMM neighborhood landmark signs and the request for additional restricted parking, upcoming improvements of Yupon St., and an update on membership. After reminding the attendees to request replacements for the CP signs that are worn out, she introduced the speaker, Don Geraci, a WAMM member, who would present his plans for the replacement of his current home at 3600 Mt. Vernon with two separate residences.

2b. Presentation of new residential construction by Don Geraci.

Don explained that the new construction in his property consists of two homes, one that will be his own residence, and another that he is planning to sell. He indicated that the buildings will not look like the typical townhomes but rather as two distinct houses. He showed drawings of the new construction. He had contacted Lane Llewellyn about deed restriction limitations but wanted to be assured that there will not be problem with the height of the homes (32 ft to the eaves), which will exceed the deed restrictions by 2ft.

There was general agreement that the homes looked attractive and that the new construction will be a positive change for the surrounding area and neighborhood. Marcus Duffel indicated that there would not be any issues with the deed restrictions because there are already several newer homes that exceed the 30 ft height limit. He asked about platting because the present lot is only platted for one home. Don answered that replatting is being done at the present time. Alle L'Eveille asked Don to please try to keep the site as tidy as possible during construction. Don responded that this will not be a problem because the architect is his nephew who is trying to grow his business. The plan is to start work this coming summer with a projected time to completion of one year. There was a question about which street the homes will face. Don responded that one will face Mt. Vernon and the other will face Kipling.

There was further discussion about the easement of deed restrictions and its potential for essentially nullifying all the provisions. Marcus Duffel explained that WAMM does not have the authority to enforce the deed restrictions, the City of Houston does. There have been challenges to neighborhood deed restrictions and the City can intervene, although typically it will not do it. Dana Padgett explained that if any portion of the deed restrictions were violated, it would not invalidate the rest. Anybody covered by deed restrictions can sue. Marcus explained that the city is more sensitive to density issues than building height.

2c. WAMM neighborhood landmark signs.

Maria Morandi demonstrated a sample of the proposed street sign toppers and mounting bracket. The sample was one-sided and printed on corrugated plastic. The actual signs will be printed double-sided on 080 aluminum. The cost per sign/bracket combination is approximately \$55, and price per unit is lowest for 20 or more signs and brackets. There are 33 street signs in the WAMM area; Elise McClain calculated that toppers/brackets for all 33 would cost \$1815. The question was raised if there were sufficient funds to cover the costs. Maria Morandi responded that the current WAMM's account balance is approximately \$7,000.

Dana Padgett asked whether the street sign toppers had been approved. Maria Morandi explained that at the second quarterly meeting last year, there had been a discussion about endeavors to enhance the visibility of WAMM. One of the proposals was to set up doggie poop posts and another was to place street sign toppers as other civic associations have done. The toppers were judged to be the more attractive of the two proposals, so it is now being pursued. David Ross asked whether this would be the best utilization of the funds in WAMM's account. Maria responded that, at this time there are no other proposals or commitments that will require expenditures. David Soderberg located the minutes of the quarterly meeting at which toppers had been discussed and read that the preponderance of attendees were in support. Maria Morandi explained that the application for city's permission to install toppers has not been prepared yet. It is a two-stage process. The first stage of the application just requires information about the number and specific location of the toppers, and the agreement that the applicant is responsible for placement, maintenance, and removal of toppers if so required by the city. Once the initial application is approved, the second stage of the application requires submission of the sign description, which is considered for approval separately. Thus, initial approval does not commit the applicant to move forward with the second stage of the application. In response to question about application fees, Maria Morandi indicated that the application form does not mention any fees, and is unclear about issues such as whether the toppers have to be placed by a contractor or whether the number of toppers requested in the initial application has to be placed at one time. If a contractor is required for placement and/or there are fees involved, it would add to the costs. She explained that the phone number provided in the application form answers with a voice recording asking to leave a name and contact number for a return call. To date, nobody has called back. Several other civic associations were contacted to find out about the process of

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approval of topper installation but, apparently, they had gone ahead with the installation without applying for a permit. After some further discussion, there was a motion to move forward with the filing of the initial application. There was a recommendation to contact Ellen Cohen's Office to ask about whom to call in the city regarding installation of street sign toppers in order to get the additional information needed. After some further discussion, the consensus was to move forward with the initial application and present all the information regarding costs at the next meeting.

2d. Status of additional restricted parking application.

Maria Morandi reported that there was a meeting of the Parking Committee lead by Kathy Conti (present at this meeting). Kathy, Lori English, Diane Baker, Lane Llewellyn, and Maria Morandi were present. At that meeting, there was a discussion about eligibility, the hours when restricted parking would be enforced, and the cost of parking permits. Clarification on these issues was obtained when needed by calling the city. It was confirmed that restricted parking hours were limited to the 11:00pm to 7am period, which would not solve the daytime street parking concerns of many WAMM residents. In addition, restricted parking would not address the problem of two-way driving with cars parked on both sides of the narrow local streets. Thus, the committee decided that it would be a better strategy to first apply for one side parking, and leave restricted parking for a later effort.

There was a discussion and concerns were raised one-side parking could make problems worse for those living on the side of the street where parking would be allowed. David Ross indicated that he needed long-term parking space for his two sons when they stay at his home for extended periods. David Soderberg explained that he could register their cars at his address and apply for yearly permits for parking. Dana Padgett described the problem with parking by patrons of the newly opened wine shop, Light Years, at W Alabama and Graustark, who have parking available at a University of St Thomas lot across W Alabama, but park along Graustark nonetheless. After further discussion about the basis for eligibility for restricted parking, the consensus of the attendees was to move forward with one-side parking only if it could be done simultaneously with restricted parking.

There was further discussion about the loud noise from the gatherings of patrons at the outdoor side patio of the new wine shop and what could be done about it. No specific suggestions for addressing the problem were offered, but there was a general feeling that the business would not survive for long. There was some discussion about the continuing problem with drivers that barely stop at the neighborhood's two-way stop signs. Maria suggested that it is relatively easy to get the signs warning that cross-traffic does not stop by calling 311. There was a recommendation to get information about how to get more 4-way stop signs. Tremont Tower residents continue to have problems with parking in their restricted area cars from patrons or valet services of venues on Westheimer. There has been some movement in the past for

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encouraging places like the Catholic Charities to lease their parking lots for use in the off hours, but there have been no updates on these efforts.

3. Other Business

3a. SWAT Project coming for Yupon St.

Maria Morandi announced great news for the neighborhood. As of January 19, 2019 the City of Houston –Storm Water Action Team (COH-SWAT) will start a repair /renovation project on Yupon St., from the intersection with W Alabama and going North all the way to Westheimer. A brand new street surface, eight new manhole covers, and new curbs/sidewalks where needed are some of the neighborhood improvements we are getting as part of this project. A project manager from Reytec Construction Resources will be an invited speaker at our next WAMM meeting in March, with full plans for what the city has approved for improvements to Yupon St. Reytec is the company that will oversee the project for the COH. At this time, the SWAT is researching the conditions along Yupon St. The project is scheduled to be completed in 6 months. Reytec will keep us updated on street closures, water cut-offs, etc. WAMM will be sending information to our neighbors via email as the project progresses. Say hello to the workers when you see them and try to work with them and project management so that improvements proceed in a timely manner. More information about SWAT projects can be obtained at <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/swat>

3b. WAMM membership.

Maria Morandi informed the attendees that 2019 paid membership to date was 29. Email reminders will be sent in early February.

4. Other Announcements.

Maria asked the attendees to submit relevant information and photos they could have to be included in the upcoming February 1 Gazette to the WAMM news editor at wammnews@wammcivic.org.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

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