

Pleasant Ridge Community Council Meeting Minutes – August 5, 2008

The minutes from the July meeting were approved by general consent.

Treasurer's Report

Robert Ramsay distributed a balance sheet and income statement for July.

Fire Report

Lieutenant Eric Enginger from the Engine 8 firehouse reported that the company made 139 runs in July. 10 were fires, 94 were EMS responses, and 35 were non-fire responses. The company is still working with the city to find a good location for a new firehouse.

Police Report

Lieutenant Joe Williams provided copies of the neighborhood's crime statistics for July. He reported that officers are doing walking patrols in the Pleasant Ridge and Kennedy Heights business districts through the summer. He discussed delays with the deployment of a license plate-reading unit, and reported that a person has been arrested who was connected with burglaries on Orchard and Grand Vista.

Steve Simon asked about safety concerns related to the opening of Pleasant Ridge Montessori School this month, noting that Gregory Forrest Lester has renewed the lease for the RNS convenience store across the street from the school. Lieutenant Williams responded that an officer who is very familiar with the neighborhood will be working some extra shifts. There was also discussion of cataloguing offenses observed at RNS and contesting the store's liquor license renewal in June.

Rick McCollum, the new Recreation Center director, said that liquor license renewals go through the local Recreation Center, and that he will support PRCC's position. Ruth Anne Wolfe suggested that the Safety Committee work with the PRMS PTO to generate other ideas, such as having PTO members present around Montgomery & Lester during the school day.

Recreation Center Report

Rick McCollum, the new Service Area Coordinator who will serve as the director for the Recreation Center, introduced himself to the residents at the meeting. He has worked for the Cincinnati Recreation Commission for 30 years. He is very interested in community involvement and looks forward to working with everyone in the neighborhood.

Montgomery Corridor Arts Collaborative

Maria Kreppel and Deron Neblett (Vice Chair of MCAC) provided an update on the project. The business district between Pleasant Ridge and Kennedy Heights will be branded as "District A" this October. A street festival anchored at the Pleasant Ridge Recreation Center and the Kennedy Heights Arts Center is scheduled for Saturday, October 11th. The vision for the district is to have a base of resident artists who live,

work, and raise their families in the area. They are working on a list of potential artist tenants. More information and a calendar of events are online at www.district-a.org .

Safety Committee Report

Andy Powell reported that the Safety Committee will also discuss new ideas for RNS at its next meeting, on August 19th.

Business Committee Report

James Devanney Reported that the Business Committee will be meeting at 7:00 PM at the Gaslight Café on Tuesday, August 12th. A resident asked about the former BP location on Montgomery. The site is being sold by an out-of-state agent for BP, and its future is still unknown.

Clean Up and Beautification Report

Stephanie Amos reported that the next neighborhood clean up and planting day will be on Saturday, October 25th.

Schools Report

Carl Evert reported that the new Pleasant Ridge Montessori School building will be open for public tours from 12-4 on Sunday, August 10th. Mr. Evert will be meeting with CPS' treasurer to discuss dedicated investment of the income from the cell phone tower at the school. Ruth Anne Wolfe discussed ideas for getting PRMS students motivated and involved in local environmental and conservation projects, including soliciting their opinions on how they want their environment to feel.

UDOD/Zoning Report

Jim Abbot reported that he has been getting calls about foreclosed properties in the neighborhood. The National City branch on Montgomery will close on August 15th. The new branch location on Ridge will open immediately afterward, and will have a "green roof."

Events Report

Beau McGrath thanked all of the volunteers who helped make Ridge Day a success, especially John McCarthy (who did much of the organizing, among various other tasks).

Communications Report

Kate Powell provided some statistics for traffic at the new pleasantridge.org Web site. There are almost 1300 subscribers to the weekly e-mail bulletin.

Library Report

Kate Powell directed residents' attention to a flyer highlighting the library's August programs, including a special event with several retired African-American baseball players on the evening of August 11th. Designers are currently working on preliminary sketches for the library's renovation project.

Hilton Davis Report

Steve Simon reported that the Enquirer ran a story about the neighborhood campaign to urge the Ohio EPA to require that the final clean-up of the Hilton Davis site fulfill the requirements of the consent decree between Kodak, the EPA, and Citizens Concerned About Hilton Davis. The Ohio EPA has approved Kodak's Comprehensive Measures Study, and is now accepting public comments. Steve reported that community representatives will be meeting with the OEPA director.

Marjorie Evert reported that CityBeat is interested in doing a story about Hilton Davis. Although community members were upset by CityBeat's alarmist portrayal of the issue when they reported on it previously several years ago, Mrs. Evert feels that they will present it appropriately in the forthcoming article. She noted that the OEPA's approval does not necessarily mean that they have approved Kodak's recommendations for the actual clean-up procedures.

After new manufacturing begins at the site, neighbors can call the Hamilton County air quality hotline at 946-7777 to report nuisance odors.

Miscellaneous

A resident complained about irrational driving he has observed on Woodmont. Another neighbor, who has information about a neighborhood street calming program, said that he may petition the city for a study that could lead to various traffic calming efforts.

Proportional Representation Presentation

Dan Zavon, a volunteer for the campaign to use Proportional Representation (PR) for City Council elections, attended the meeting to give some background on the PR system. Cincinnati used PR to elect Cincinnati City Council between 1927 and 1955. Mr. Zavon explained that on a PR ballot, voters rank the candidates they support in order, from one to a possible maximum of nine (1,2,3, etc.), with their favorite candidate as #1. He illustrated how the 9X system tends to over-represent majority groups and how PR divides seats fairly among political parties when voters vote according to their party preference. The campaign is collecting signatures to place a charter amendment on the ballot this November to use PR for City Council elections again.

Respectfully submitted by Josh Krekeler