

# WEST HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## MINUTES OF MEETING: November 19, 2008 West Harrison Fire House

**Attendance: Total 28:** Board members present:, Jeff LaGrotte, Gregg Rosenberg, Mario Gallo, Angela Amodeo, Charlie Russo. Absent: Gerri Barbagallo, Jo Ann King.

The **minutes** of October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 meetings were approved.

**President Lori Wilson** opened the meeting and welcomed all. She announced the resignation of WHNA board member Lisa Fallaice-Siliano. The board is looking to fill that position. A trustee must commit to attending board meetings, general meetings, chair a committee and share in leg work and behind the scenes duties.

WHNA board members, Lori, Jo, Angela, and Charlie attended the town board meeting of Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> and she read the letter that was sent to all members and provided to all town officials and attached to these minutes. It outlined issues that had been discussed with the mayor and others that needed their immediate attention and action. At that meeting the town board did vote to raise the fines for illegal housing violations, not as much as we hoped for, but much more of a deterrent. The mayor mentioned in a town communiqué that they have increased the number of inspections of possible illegal dwellings that they are doing. WHNA has to keep up the pressure. We will continue to advocate for these issues. Individuals need to step up and report violations that they know of on their own. We have been pushing for town personnel to be used appropriately in reporting violations that they come upon in their daily routines.

She attended the 2009 town budget review meeting at Mintzer last week and at that time it was at a 14% increase, but they were looking for areas to reduce it more. The mayor has suggested cutting services at the West Harrison library and has even suggested closing the library. We feel this is totally unacceptable and we need to pay attention and put this suggestion down to our town officials. Some council members did reject it at that meeting.

The mayor told the seniors at their meeting that the town is in bankruptcy – that was an inaccurate statement or misunderstanding and we state that the town is not in bankruptcy. (*Comment from floor – don't sell town property to lower taxes in this economic climate.*)

**Building Community & Fundraising: Mario Gallo** – Our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas tree lighting and Holiday Celebration will be held on December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm with entertainment, pizza, hot and cold drinks, cookies. We need helpers. We are planning our annual dinner dance and auction for Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Senior Committee: Ro Verano** – **Stated** the fact that this committee is a true team function, not just one person, and the team includes members of the senior club that meets at the Mintzer Center. Met with Joe Cannella, Ron Belmont and Rocco. Presented suggestions about furnishing the new building. We don't want to have to use the old furniture in the new building. They agreed we will have a big grand opening celebration in the spring. Our next meeting will focus on finding out what activities the senior want to have when the center is open 5 days a week and having a sandwich lunch day. It will be December 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Open Discussions:**

1. Progresses of streetscape – things are better for the merchants and pedestrians then they were, but some access for street crossing is dangerous and difficult. We will address with the town. Why isn't there a walkway between the planters?
2. New restaurant opening – Trevi in the old Via Appia.
3. Main Street project – residents frustrated that work has not begun. But we know it went out for bid and the process is proceeding. Main St. will be closed when the work starts.
4. Complaint about pile of large tree limbs that aren't being removed by the town even after calling them. We should call on this – across the street between 216 and 218 Columbus.
5. Town can save money by renegotiating some union contracts. This was discussed at resent budget meeting. Maybe they should take a look at benefit packages and make them more reasonable. They will not be rehiring retiring positions.

**Member of the Month** was chosen – Virginia Hobby – and she was presented with a gift certificate to Pilone's Meateria.

**Next general meeting** is Wednesday January 21<sup>st</sup>, location to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,  
Angela Amodeo, Secretary