

WEST HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Meeting: March 31, 2005, West Harrison Fire House

Attendance: 70

Fred Sciliano opened the meeting at 7:40pm and thanked all for coming.

The **minutes** of meeting of January 20 were approved.

The **minutes** of meeting of February 17 were approved.

Treasury Report: Jeff LaGrotte reported on the incorporation as of February 17, 2005. And on the opening of our bank account. We can now collect dues, which have been kept low for this year, \$15 (\$10 for over 65), but will have to be increased next year. Each member of the executive board is donating \$100 each for a start-up fund and donations in any amount from any other members would be greatly appreciated.

Fred reviewed future meeting dates. April 21, the Mayor will be here to update streetscape plans. Other dates tentatively: May 19, June 16, then a break until October. Committees may still meet in the interim. He asked for suggestions for future meeting speakers.

Congresswoman Nita Lowey's office was contacted concerning the lack of a post office and they are working on a possible property – the old Lake Farms Market is being considered.

Mario Gallo is the chair of the new fund raising committee. He asked anyone interested in working with him to let him know.

Lori Wilson reviewed set committee protocol. Lori will be liaison and filter between committee chairs and any town officials. We must address the officials as the association, not as individuals. We are learning as we go along and develop the organization.

Fred introduced visitors Ray Kraus and Roseanne Pugliese, president and trustee of the Brentwood Preservation Committee of Harrison.

Committee Reports:

Lisa Faillace-Sciliano – Membership & Communications (see attached) - planning membership drive, website, and press release.

Charles Russo – Parks & Recreation - (see attached) – met with **Ron Belmont**, Recreation Superintendent, and viewed and reviewed streetscape and park renovation plans and new Nike property plans. Discussed problem of use of school facilities by the recreation department.

Rosemarie Verano – Seniors (see attached) – met with **Ron Belmont** and discussed expanding the Mintzer Center program to daily use for seniors.

Lori Wilson – Planning, Architecture & Zoning (see attached) – discussed illegal housing and illegal parking. Lori will coordinate attendance of town meetings with the Brentwood Preservation Committee.

Geri Barbagallo – Traffic & Safety (see attached) – met with **Chief Hall** after committee meeting. He found no problem with the speed on Lake St. but will continue to monitor. Radar is to be put on White Plains Ave. Discussed issue of snow plows in street after season.

Maryann DiSimone - Public Works, Utilities & Beautification (see attached) - fair share of municipal services, questionnaire about effectiveness of services, and necessity of Sunday services, waterworks project and condition of the library structure.

Fred reported:

- that a memorial Mass will be held for Former Mayor John Passidomo, who recently died, at St. Anthony's Church at 11:00 am, April 2, with a reception to follow at the town house.
- **Councilman Tom Scappaticci** will attend our April meeting.
- There is a subdivision planned for Park & Hancock, and another 2 lot subdivision on Gainsborg & Madison. Important to be watchdogs as projects go forward.

Floor discussion: Rye Lake water treatment plant – Harrison's share seems to be very high. Water is safe but not consistently meeting new water standards (as explained by Joan Walsh). Feds wanted the filtration plant and bought land on Purchase St. and ordered plan drawn up – our share of design for plant is over \$1 million. Plant itself will be millions to build and operate – town still fighting this. We are responsible for 47%.

Fred introduced **Ed DiBuono, Code Enforcement Officer**, for the Town of Harrison:

Ed brought piles of the code enforcement books that he works with, including various State of New York code and Town of Harrison codes, including residential, energy, fire, fuel & gas, mechanical codes, etc. He gave his qualifications for his job and resume. He's forced to do a lot of prioritizing because there is only one of him and overabundant need. He discussed in the length the process of being informed of illegal dwellings or finding illegal dwellings through fines and violations to court proceedings and judges actions. They can not get involved with property dispute issues unless there is work being done without a permit. He takes all our phone calls seriously. He discussed the ramifications of illegal apartments, the impact on our town resources – these neighbors are stealing from all of us. Make complaints when they are warranted and sign your name – they can't make illegal search and entrance, there has to be probable cause. We must file complaints. It is the quickest and easiest way. He discussed what evidence could be gathered, and then he can go before a judge for a warrant. Most of the time the judge wants more evidence.

Ed discussed some new things being done like meeting with defendants and plea bargaining and stipulation to give permission for two years worth of inspections, and no more low fines even though the judge sometimes lowers them. Town attorneys are working of new laws and higher fines – he would like to see max at \$1000.00/week.

The mayor is setting up a task force for illegal code violations – he's involved, police, fire chiefs, Department of Public Works employees, etc. If you make a written complaint he assures all that your name will not be released unless we go to trial, which is rare. A spirited and involved discussion followed. Many from the floor want him to do his work from phone call only and do not want to sign papers. He legally needs this done and needs as much info from the you as possible. People can't be afraid to say what is wrong. He gets a lot of his info from town employees. He pledged again, if you give him a name, it will not leave his office except for rare possibility of trial.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm. Next meeting is April 21, 2005, 7:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Amodeo, Secretary