

## **WEST HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

### **Minutes of Meeting: September 20, 2006 at the West Harrison Fire House**

**Attendance: Total – 55:** Board members present: Gregg Rosenberg, Angela Amodeo, Charles Russo, Mario Gallo, Fred Sciliano, Geri Barbagallo, Jeff LaGrotte, Lisa Faillace-Sciliano. Board members absent: Lori Wilson,

**Fred Sciliano** introduced Assemblyman Adam Bradley who updated us on the DOT issues. They are not doing the sound barrier closing off Silver Lake, but they may come back and re-evaluate in the future as the construction moves forward – maybe 5 years. We will continue to monitor. Most residents received letters to that affect. He wanted to personally confirm the issue. Thanked his assistant Linda Levine for her efforts. The Legislature passed increased property tax rebates for senior residents thru the STAR program. They eliminated the state sales tax on goods under \$110.00. His office is always available – call 686-7335. Go see them at their office on New King St.

The minutes of the last meeting of **June 27, 2006** were approved.

**Treasurer's Report: Jeff LaGrotte** – Balance is \$12,400.00. We had purchased Director & Officers insurance and we now have purchased general liability for events. There has been a lot of work involved in trying to procure the 501C3 status for tax exemption. There is more follow up to be done and we are still pursuing it.

**WHNA Board of Directors Elections:** Nominations are being taken for vice president, Lori Wilson presently, treasurer, Jeff LaGrotte presently, and trustees #2 and #4, Charles Russo and Mario Gallo presently. The present office holders are willing to serve again. Nominees must be current members in good standing for 1 year, they must be present at the October meeting, and the election will be held at the November meeting. All votes will be by secret ballot and by current members in good standing present at meeting.

**Senior Committee Report: Ro Verano** – Busy summer. Met with Pilone's to discuss menus. Lunch will now 2 days, Monday and Tuesdays at both centers. Movies on Monday. New exercise program will be launched like the one Ron started downtown. The new grandparents program is starting in October. They are planning on having sandwiches on Bingo Thursdays. The new Senior Board, headed by Nancy DeLeo, is running their own affairs now. Some goals – men's game day, maybe tournaments with other centers; senior aerobics class at new future pool; reading room, card room; computer classes.

**Planning & Zoning: Mary Malara** – coordinating a list of illegal apartments. Give her locations and the list will be submitted when compiled.

**Park & Recreation: Charlie Russo** – 2 projects, the lake cleanup and cleanup around the lake. The town has made a commitment to go ahead with the carp project (that will combat the vegetation that is choking the lake) that will be modeled after the town of Southeast.

**Public Works: Lisa Faillace-Sciliano** – **Greg Rosenberg** told of getting some damaged mail boxes in town replaced by the post office and thanked the town for fixing some roadway problems that were pointed out. Lisa said the tree plantings had to be put on hold to continue the massive cleanup after the storms. The paving of White Plains Ave. is being arranged; bids coming in October. When you see problems always call the proper town office to report. If that fails use our complaint form.

**Fundraising: Mario Gallo** – We need volunteers for our booth at the It's Great to Live in Harrison/Columbus Day celebration. We will be selling various pastries freshly made on Arthur Ave.

**Membership: Angela Amodeo** – Our total combined membership is 266, but for this year only it is at 206. We need your dues for membership every year to keep the organization running. Please sign up as a member or renew your membership for 2006.

**Trustee Gregg Rosenberg** - He spent the summer collecting brochures on many important issues including health and safety. He provided tables with all the info for all to benefit from. He feels disseminating important information is an important aspect of our organization. (Gregg is our Webmaster and he keeps lots of information available on it with many links of interest.)

**Fred** – upcoming events are Harrison Day and the Holiday Tree Lighting. **Angela** – tree lighting will be December 1<sup>st</sup>, Friday and Kathryn Raio will sing for us again. It was a very successful event last year with many attending and enjoying. We need volunteers to help us that night.

**Next Meetings:** October 18 with a presentation by the Sierra Club and November 15.

#### **Floor Discussions:**

Trucks to be stored at new garage to be built at the top of Harrison St. by the school board. Concern about the trucks using the Harrison Ave. Hill in the winter and around the school. Facility will also be used for storage of supplies. Fred said that the school board told the residents at a meeting at the site that they couldn't put it on West St. as planned because the rocky terrain impeded excavation for piping. They said they would lock the gates at the parking lot a night. They were asked to make the site more attractive. Fred will send an e-mail as a follow-up.

Post Office – no further options.

**Guest Presentation - Supervisor/Mayor Stephen Malfitano:** We have a right to a post office here. He told of the many efforts and people involved with zero results. Very frustrating. The postal authorities are not at all concerned about it. Maybe do another petition drive and get channel 12 News involved. He will do anything else he can. He is still trying to get them to consider a portable (truck) facility. He reviewed the Westchester Joint Waterworks ongoing project replacing and improving the water lines, improving our water supply services. Water rates haven't gone up because the district merger is working as it was supposed to. The re-paving projects after the piping work will proceed with West. Water Works paying for the area they are working on and the town paying for the rest – the largest repaving project ever. Let him know about any sidewalks, curbs, or roadway sections that need attention right away.

The head of the Westchester Water Works is now our former town engineer. He feels he will be beneficial in improving services for this inter-town agency. He will make the office much more customer friendly.

He told of the upcoming court ordered construction of the \$60 million dollar filtration plant to be built near the airport. Our share will be \$30 million (the other half from Mamaroneck.) We don't want to do this and have fought it. But the highest court has ordered it to be started and we have to. The cost will be lighter on residents and heavy on commercial properties. The larger increase will go to the larger users. And Old Lake St. will get water. The plant will be off Purchase St. by Hangar E and will not be seen from the street. Westchester Joint Waterworks is an agency comprised of the Town of Harrison (55%), the Town of Mamaroneck, and the Village of Mamaroneck.

Our police department is patrolling the wooded areas around the lake frequently searching for homeless camps. Report to police any sightings.

Illegal housing enforcement – the job was being done. Ed DiBouno, our enforcement officer has suffered a very serious heart attack. In the meantime we are looking at staffing and the police dept. has

pledged full cooperation and will conduct periodic raids based on supplied info when verified and will hit a number of homes at once. We will assign another one of our building inspectors and the process will resume. When we find illegals we are reporting their illegal status and hitting them with cumulative fines. (The mayor was implored from the floor to let the people know openly when these things happen. He said that we could report on a quarterly basis and will share some of this activity with the association board. He will give us numbers and results.) He told of a raid on West St. where they found 26 people living in one house.

The mayor announced that they will construct a new senior center on the grounds of the Mintzer Rec Center. Joe Cannella worked with the WHNA senior committee, with Chairwoman Ro Verano, and will put up a portable structure on the right side of the existing building, independent of it, with 2000 sq. ft. of open floor space for the senior programs. It will be 1 floor, ground level entry, heated and air-conditioned, to be built next spring.

**Streetscape** – Con Edison will be moving the poles and wires to this side of street with little cost to us. The reconstruction will involve the area from the fork of the Veterans Memorial Drive/Lake St., through the business district and Taylor Square, to the intersection at Underhill/Lake St.. That intersection will be changed adding an island with a better traffic pattern, and better aesthetically. The Harrison Beautification clock will be placed there.

Sidewalks will be widened all the way through – new walks, curbing, plantings, stamped concrete areas, etc. There will be granite planting boxes with benches on the other side of the street (from the firehouse). Walkways will be constructed throughout green spaces of asphalt overlaid with epoxy and colored. We will go out to bid by the end of the year. Construction should be done by Memorial Day. The cost is 2.2 million dollars.

An intersection will be formed with Grant and the park entrance, crossing Veterans Highway making a new entrance into the park. No traffic light. The walkway will be properly set and safer. The entrance will be one way for now. Safer that way. He used poster diagrams to show the new traffic pattern through the new park. The park exit will be where Columbus and Washington St. meet. Lake St. may be going over to Harrison from the county and we will have better control of the speed.

**Park Phase 2** - The new pool will be 3 times the size of the present one. It will be a zero gravity, 3 section pool with transition from lowest to greatest depth, 2 ½ to 4 ½, with a 25 yd. swimming lane. Built for population growth to 30 years. Kiddie pool with slide feature. 2 buildings with bathrooms, lockers, showers, offices, food services. Work to begin the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of next year.

**Park Phase 3** - the design will begin in about 6 months. It will be a 4 story recreation building with an indoor pool. A walking trail system will go through out the whole property of the park.

As for funding, we are doing everything to connect fund sources for these projects. Formula found to borrow money against the asset of the recreation fund from developers. We will use this interest and the interest on the proceeds of the sale of town owned property that must go to the recreation dept., and raised park fees. Therefore we will be able to borrow \$10 million without raising taxes. Eventually, as we move forward, we may have to raise taxes somewhat, but we are committed to not raising taxes dramatically.

**Fred** – Jeff Combs, a West Harrison resident has lost an arm in combat in Iraq. He is at Walter Reid. The mayor agreed to work on some way to honor him.

Fireworks will be held here on Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with It's Great to Live in Harrison/Columbus Day festivities. The base of operations has been moved to the parking lot of the park to protect the new turf field.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Angela Amodeo, Secretary  
West Harrison Neighborhood Association