



West Hills Community Association
February 17th, 2025
General Meeting Minutes

Attending: Lee Hume, John Heins, Divina Morgenstern, Kathy Scruggs, Drew Mallard, Steve Ellis, Sara Bratton-Brengle, Anne Crais, Andrew Schmudde, Ross Dempster, Erika Fuhr, John Rosson, Donnie Ernst, Boyd Dearden, plus many residents

Lee Hume, President, opened meeting at 7:08 pm and welcomed all attending.

Lieutenant Bumpus was scheduled to speak but could not make it. He did tell Lee he did not know of any significant crime issues in the West Hills neighborhood. Lee reported there was a traffic collision at Bennington and Vanosdale recently, most likely due to running a stop sign.

Lee thanked the WHCA Board and volunteers who have taken time and effort into making West Hills a lovelier community. Lee and the West Hills board wanted to especially recognize **Ilza Wood** for her many contributions to West Hills. Ilza played a significant role in the founding and establishment of ***The Ten o'clock Gardening Club*** in West Hills and is currently the head of the Knoxville Beautification Committee. Ilza was instrumental in obtaining our welcoming West Hills signs by helping to raise money and solicit funding from City Council. Additionally, she was the founder of the *Mailbox Decoration Contest* each Christmas and also started *Yard of the Month*. She was given a wall plaque tonight and will have a dogwood tree planted in her honor in West Hills Park in April during Dogwood Arts.

Lee also thanked **Bill Michie** for his detailed refurbishment of the West Hill signs last year,

Jennifer Borth has started a local gardening group in West Hills where they learn about edible and native species gardening. Please contact Jennifer for more information or to participate.

Jennifer introduced **Sarah DeWitt** who is both certified by the programs *Tennessee Master Gardener* and *Tennessee Smart Yard*. Both of these programs are sponsored by the UT Agricultural Extension Program and are offered state-wide to help educate the public about lawn and garden issues. A link to the **Master Gardener program** can be found at <https://mastergardener.tennessee.edu> and **TN Smart Yards** at <https://tnyardsutk.edu> if you would like to learn more.

Andrew Roberto spoke next. He will retire from the Council soon after serving as councilman for the past eight years. Andrew talked about the speed cushions that will be installed on Sheffield

Drive. Speed cushions have space built into them which will allow emergency vehicles to pass by safely.

Andrew introduced **Nathan Honeycutt** who is campaigning for the open seat due to Andrew's retirement from the council.

The council will begin budget talks shortly so please let Andrew or Lee know if you have an idea for any project for West Hills that may qualify. He can always present your ideas to the council for consideration.

The council will also be voting on the **One Year Plan** and the only change this year will be the criteria for duplexes will be eliminated completely. Andrew feels the weakness in the current Knoxville duplex criteria is lack of architectural standards for duplex construction which could also lower the architectural standards of the neighborhood. **Lee** also mentioned that the Planning Commission, in this plan, did not look at the issue of potential duplexes not conforming with the neighborhood character and density limits of existing RN-1 zoning. In fact, the previous year, the commission completely ignored the criteria in their decision making. He also mentioned that building a number of duplexes could also change the character of the neighborhood, no matter how high the design standards were. Lee feels this issue challenges the notion of home ownership. Andrew noted that the city corridors are the prime place to erect buildings other than the single-story home and that design guidelines are important to have in future buildings.

Michael Moore and Christine Martens, Dogwood Arts liaisons to West Hills, kept us up to date on local plans for the Dogwood Arts Festival 70th Anniversary celebration this coming April . Several local artists from our community and also from around Knoxville will offer their wares for sale. The Chalk Walk will return as well as food vendors, dedications from both WHCA and Dogwood Arts. Student artwork will be presented for awards and a special kids play area will be featured.

Divina Morgenstern presented the **Treasury** report. Anne made a motion to approve it, and all present voted to accept.

Kathy Scruggs, Secretary, presented the minutes from January and all present voted to accept them.

Drew Mallard, Beautification Committee, will be needing upkeep on flower beds and other projects, periodically, throughout the year and will be sending out sign-ups for people to help. Drew and Lee both thanked Ellenburg Nursery for their support.

Hurley Thurston: The WHCA website is now updated with the latest newsletter and new 2025 board members. If there is someone who would donate their time to help Hurley get better at using WordPress, she would really appreciate it. Right now, she is doing the basics. Please reach out to her if you can help. A Listserv was sent out this weekend to announce this meeting. There are 593 neighbors on it. If you would like to receive occasional emails from WHCA, please visit our website and subscribe there.

The West Hills yard signs to announce today's community meeting were set out this past Tuesday. **Susan Huskisson** is now coordinating yard signs for WHCA events.

Ross Dempster, Finance Committee: is busy planning our 2025 membership drive. There will be approximately 1400 West Hills community doors to knock on and 18% of these are already WHCA members. Dues will be used for upcoming events, printing and projects. Ads in our newsletter are selling well and Hurley would like to see the newsletter go to 8 pages in the future.

Anne Crais, Healthy West Hills, briefly explained what Healthy West Hills does. Components of the program include physical activity, mental wellness, non-use of tobacco products, and nutrition. Anne sends out a monthly newsletter listing the calendar of activities each month. Healthy West Hills reports to the City of Knoxville Neighborhoods program and has received several grants in the past. This year, our eligibility for grants has run out but many of the activities including the Pickleball Tournament and the Pickleball Skills Clinic will still be put on. Anne also has 'HWH' car magnets for display if anyone wants one. The magnetic WHCA name tags were also purchased by Healthy West Hills.

Anne mentioned that the Pickleball tournament is on April 26th and she could use some volunteers that day. Call Anne if interested.

Jennifer Borth mentioned that there is a lot of clear cutting beside the Greenway starting behind the Baptist Church on Winston Road and extending west along the trail. KUB is replacing the sewer line. Scheduled completion is June 2025.

John Heins, Vice President, presented **Anne Crais** a \$500 check made out to WHCA to be only used by Healthy West Hills. This money came from Wesley Neighbors, which has now dissolved, and their funds have been given to various West Hills organizations including the West Hills Elementary Foundation and WHCA.

Clarence Hill, Zoning Committee:

1. Middlebrook and Broome Rd: construction may start soon
2. Gallaher View and Middlebrook: Developer is not pursuing
3. Property between Greenway and Interstate 40: some interest but haven't heard the outcome of preliminary discussion

A fundraiser for the restoration of the Mars Hill Cemetery will be held at Buddy's Barbeque in their Banquet Hall on April 12th. The tickets are \$25 and proceeds will go to restoration work on the site.

Lee adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Scruggs, Secretary
Approved