

Westwood Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. by president Ron Huster

Officers present: Bob Bolinger, Angie Ponzini, Ron Huster, Penny Thompson

Neighbors in attendance: Jim Ferner, George Korr, Denise Hartsough, CoCo Cook, Laura (?), Beau L., Warren Cook, host Kalee Henderson

**Approval of minutes of last meeting: No corrections or additions
Moved by Bob B. and seconded by Denise H. Approved by voice vote**

Regarding the possibility of constructing a roundabout at Nichols and Ravine: Increased traffic would necessitate a larger roundabout than originally envisioned. Also double bottom gravel trucks and Kal Valley River Trail issues would further complicate building a roundabout.

Jim Ferner asks if public comments can be given at the beginning of the meeting rather than waiting until the end. Ron will research this request.

Safety and Crime report: Angie reports speeding vehicles and noisy vehicles seem to be getting worse. Angie and Ron attended the township zoom meeting regarding traffic and safety issues. Board members have been asked to log concerns as they occur and report them to police. Police are being responsive and trying to respond to concerns. An improved relationship seems to be developing.

Police cannot engage in high speed chases unless a crime is observed and documented.

The City of Kalamazoo has placed 6 new speed monitors and can construct their own speed bumps. No progress has occurred with getting either in the township. Chief Ergang continues to seek funding for their addition.

Jim Ferner reports he has been working on the issue of speeding and running stop signs at Berkley and North Streets for over 10 years without

any resolution. He suggests the road commission be reorganized and staffed with people who live locally. Ron feels the road commission is not serving us despite our contribution of tax dollars. Perhaps the county commissioners may have some clout?

Townships plans for the future are still undergoing updates. Changes will be reported as they become available.

Kalamazoo Township Planning Commission notes from May 6 meeting. Denise reports a special use permit was issued for Healthy House at 3625 N. Douglas Ave. It is a halfway house for recovering female substance abuse persons. This was already located in the township but is relocating. Most residents are employed, there is very little traffic in and out.

A one year extension was granted for the proposed recycling center at Nichols and Ravine. There remain issues to be resolved.

At 1100 Foster in Lakewood, a manufacturing greenhouse supply company was approved.

Other issues discussed included sidewalks, solar panels, fencing, home offices and building heights in PUDs.

The master plan still needs maps added. An effort is being made to make maps accommodating to those with impairments and also make them understandable. The plan will be sent out to neighborhoods for review and input. It is hard to extrapolate how things will change in the future and potential best uses going forward. Patrick Hudson is retiring.

Waste Not Construction and Recycling Center: Approval of Mulder's project and the Miller Road recycling site (believed owned by Republic?). Ron visited the Miller Rd site recently and found it to be very noisy, smelly and dangerous for passenger vehicles with many large trucks moving about.

The property adjacent to Mulder's on Ravine Rd has a crossing of the KVRT trail. By law, KVRT has to continue to honor those crossings. Possibly Mulder's can annex the property and use that crossing for their vehicle

traffic. The East end of the property includes wetlands into which there will be run off from Nichols with the proposed modifications. Any wetlands lost must have new ones created to replace loses.

The location of the scale for the company continues to remain an issue. Many requirements are already in place.

Imagine Kalamazoo 2025: Work continues on the volleyball courts at Frays Park. Discussion about changing one to Pickle Ball or just more grassy area.

Chick Fil A has not yet had their grand opening at the Drake Rd. location. They may consider making a donation to the neighborhood association.

Water Main Breaks: the task force is still seeking feedback on the best ways to notify residents of both breaks and restoration efforts.

Infrastructure: Nichols and Solon barriers and closures are coming soon. Driving in the neighborhood will be challenging this summer as improvements are implemented. The new road surface should last longer with the truck traffic from the gravel pits.

Yard Sale report: Many homes had strong sales. The Salvation Army had a restrictive list of things they would not accept, which left donations sitting on the terraces after pick up and led to some confusion.

Ron sought permission from individual homeowners before placing advertising signs in yards, either in person or via a note in the door. He also picked up signs promptly after the sales ended.

Citizen comment: Jim Ferner feels our group needs to get more serious about issues and take more action on traffic and safety issues. Enforcement is only one aspect of the issue. Jim feels the board doesn't use good stewardship. Sidewalks in the neighborhood are barriers to non-motorized travel and need much repair. Jim suggests we get the township manager on a contract. The manager has only been evaluated

once in 6 years and that evaluation is not public. Jim has initiated a petition to put the manager on a time limited contract with established goals. Evaluations should be public since tax \$\$ are involved.

Angie is opposed to a merger of township with the city. She feels it will not benefit the township. The question was raised as to why the township needs a manager.

Angie asks about township trustee turnover in the past 5 years. A couple trustees have left. Members expressed that they feel Chief Ergang is doing a good job.

Bob moved for adjournment at 8:36 p.m. Meeting adjourned by voice ascension.

Next meeting: June 16, 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 889 5140 7570 Passcode: 582549

**Respectfully submitted: Penny Thompson, secretary
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