

ODWNA Neighborhood Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday October 17, 2012

Place: Winchell Elementary Library

Board Members:

Present: Peter Kushner, President; Chris Shook, Vice President; Sandy Bolstad, Secretary; Becky Mutsaers

Absent:, Diana Morton-Thompson, Treasurer, Tom Keyser, Deb Klug, Kathy Shook, Barb McCrea



- I. **Call to Order:** Peter Kushner, President; 7:02pm
 - Welcome and Introduction of Speaker (Notes Below. Normal business and discussion followed the speaker.)
- II. **Treasurer's Report**
 - Member and Dues Drive, there is a link to sign up to become a dues-paying member in every eNews and on the website. Paying your dues gives you the right to vote in elections and supports the works of the Association.
- III. **Secretary's Report**
 - Next month the meeting is November 28, and our Speaker is Blaine Lam, the Race Director of the Kalamazoo Marathon. Even if you do not run, this is an event that comes through our Neighborhood, so it's a great opportunity to find out more about it (like who pays for all of the live bands?)
- IV. **Old Business:**
 - Sandy reached out to Kalamazoo Traffic Engineer via email to find out status of plans for Winchell and Rambling (if the stop sign will stay, if there is any other news, if there are any plans for a 3rd stop sign), but no reply yet. Need to reach out by telephone. Klaus tried to attend their monthly meeting this past month but it was cancelled. Klaus will try again this coming month.
- V. **New Business:**
 - **Interest in** what is happening at Asylum Lake was expressed during the meeting. This was to be a topic for our February meeting. Since the speaker has moved to Chicago for a career opportunity, Becky will follow up with WMU to see if we can still get someone else in to speak regarding Asylum Lake.
- VI. **Public Comments: None noted other than above**
- VII. **Guest Speaker:** Bob Miller, Associate Vice President, Community Outreach, WMU. Bob facilitates a number of projects on behalf of the University, including the ongoing development of the WMU Business Technology and Research Park, south of Parkview Avenue and Drake Road. He is a member of the Operations Committee for the new WMU School of Medicine and is Co-Chair of the East Campus Redevelopment Task Force. He also serves as the University's point person working directly with adjacent neighborhoods, local elected officials and municipal administrations, particularly the administration of the city of Kalamazoo. A native of Jackson, he is a 1972 graduate of WMU.
Topic: WMU Update

Notes from our Speaker (you missed the picture show) regarding Happenings at WMU:

- If you have an iPhone, get this!!! WMU now has a Mobile Application for Smart Phones. It was developed by the Students, and is Free at the iTunes App Store. It can be downloaded and used by anyone. Some of the features include a Campus Map, Events at WMU, a Contacts directory, streaming Radio stations from WMU, WMU sounds such as the WMU Band performing the Fight Song, what is on the Menu in the Cafeterias, and where the Bronco Transit Bus is currently at (uses the GPS feature on your phone). (Ok I embellished a bit, but I have downloaded it already and that is just what I found that I thought might be of interest).
- Sangren Hall was recently rebuilt. This building will now save WMU between \$350,000 and 500,000 per year in energy savings. If you haven't been to Campus to see Sangren Hall lately, WMU is happy to have you visit.
- A recent addition to the Lee Honors College has been completed. Good Morning America said that Honors Colleges are the best value in higher education.
- East Campus: A Private Sector Development Team wanted to take advantage of some tax incentives to improve the state of the buildings and develop them, possibly as Condominiums and/or Apartments. Those tax incentives have expired before plans could be finalized. WMU is not allowed to take advantage of those incentives, but has an interest in preserving East campus since that was the birthplace of WMU. The architecture of East Hall is also something that WMU (and several in the neighborhood expressed agreement) would like to see preserved. The challenge with preserving many of these old buildings is that it is less expensive to build new than it is to restore the old buildings and bring them up to code. A question was posed and answered that it would likely be LESS expensive if they were not to be fitted as living quarters, but that there would still need to be accommodations made for the handicapped, etc. They would like to find a Private Sector Developer with a plan to utilize the campus and develop it once the archives are moved.
- Construction on the new Collections Center (Archive Building) southwest of the State Hospital, near the intersection of Oakland and Howard is underway.

- Groundbreaking last Friday at 11:00 am took place for the downtown Medical Center. This is a \$68 million investment which is privately funded. The former Upjohn building was donated by William Parfet, Chairman and CEO of MPI Research in Mattawan. WMU will own the building and lease back 2 floors to the Private Medical School. This medical school was made possible through a substantial monetary gift. Preliminary accreditation has been received (as of last week), which means they can begin recruiting students. They plan to begin recruiting in January and classes will start in the Fall of 2014. They hope to graduate 80 to 90 students per year, so after the first few years, the increase in students in the area that are attending the Medical School will be about 350 – 400. Full story: <http://www.wmich.edu/news/2012/10/2192>
- New apartments on campus: Western View has been completed, and these are replacing dated apartments. Stadium Drive 1 has been taken down and Stadium Drive 2 will be (these were also known to some as “Married Housing”). The net increase in housing is small. They do have a waiting list for specific housing, but all in all, are not finding a large demand or shortage.
- In other exciting news, the Business and Technology Research Park has a new private sector partner, MOPHIE, which makes (among other things) an iPhone case that charges your iPhone. They are among the top 200 fastest growing companies in the US and have had over 1700% growth in the last 3 years. They will be putting up a new building in the Business and Technology Research Park to house their Quality Control, Support and Distribution. They will also be working closely with WMU students. Link to an article on this: <http://www.wmich.edu/news/2012/07/1095>
- College of Aviation is one of the top 3 in the country. The planes are leased as that is less expensive than buying them and the planes come equipped with a parachute. The new Air Traffic Controllers program just graduated their first 4 students.
- It's FOOTBALL season, and proudly, WMU's Football Team has the highest aggregate GPA of any team in the mid-American conference – here is a link to an article with more on this proud accomplishment: http://www.wmubroncos.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=4600&ATCLID=205679391
- Staff members with recent noted accomplishments:
 - Dr. Jacqueline Eng is a Bioarchaeologist that is featured in National Geographic this month for her research on bones extracted from Himalayan caves, unlocking the secrets of ancient, prehistoric people. <http://www.wmich.edu/spotlight/eng/>
 - Eric Bowman is the top collegiate soloist Trombonist. He won an international competition in Paris this summer. The Gold Company Program at Western Michigan University is widely recognized as one of the most successful and prestigious collegiate vocal jazz programs in the world.
- Answers to questions received by email:
 - Traffic concerns on Oakland Drive: There was a light installed by the city at Oakland and Oliver. This has greatly decreased the number of accidents. There are no plans for a new road from Oakland to Howard; in fact, the property in that area is leased back to the State Hospital.
 - WMU presence downtown besides the Medical School: The Art program has a presence in the Park Trade Center. The freshmen students each year are given cameras and participate in a “Click Downtown” event where they take pictures of downtown Kalamazoo, and some of these pictures are then displayed later in downtown businesses.
 - Traffic studies are being performed regarding transportation on and between Lovell and South Street, the Oakland Campus and the downtown Medical School to study impact. Those studies will continue to take place and be evaluated.
 - No plans to acquire Kalamazoo Christian.
 - Additional information provided regarding the Medical School, most of which has been covered in the article referenced above and also on the local news.
 - There are no plans to develop the soccer fields to the east of the Business Research and Technology Park with additional buildings.
 - Asylum Lake Trail Improvement Project – WMU is committed to passive recreation only there, no development. There are funds that were allocated to maintain and preserve this space. Tim Holysz, the Director of Landscape Services, may have additional information. Also Mark Hoffman was present at our meeting and is on the Management Council and Frank Wolf represents our Neighborhood Association on this Council. More information: <http://www.wmich.edu/~asylum/index.html>
 - Kleinstuck Preserve will also stay passive.
 - Bob Miller's email information: bob.miller@wmich.edu

VIII. **Adjournment:** 8:50pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Sandy Bolstad, ODWNA Secretary