



**Westview Community Organization
Monthly Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2008**

The meeting was called to order by President John Davis at 7:01pm.

Invocation – The invocation was presented by the Assistant Chaplain, Raymond Gambrell.

Approval of the Minutes – Raymond Gambrell motioned to approve the minutes with the corrections of the dues of \$18. Scott Smith seconded the motion. Vote – Yes: 9, No: 0

Atlanta Bureau of Housing - Patrick Berry motioned to move the speaker to the front of the agenda to allow her to leave early. Raymond Gambrell seconded the motion. Vote – Yes: 11, No: 0

Evelyn Nu'Man from the Atlanta Bureau of Housing came to speak about the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The HUD program is designed to get foreclosed/bank owned/abandoned homes owner-occupied. The State of Georgia has been allocated \$153 million, of which \$12.3 has been allocated to the City of Atlanta and the possibility of additional funds being available through the \$77 million allocated to the Dept of Community Affairs. Southwest Atlanta, and more specifically the 30310 zip code, make up one of the worst hit foreclosure areas in the City of Atlanta and are eligible for the funding. Foreclosed houses have to be purchased at a discount, will be renovated, and then be sold or rented to people making up to 120% of the area median income. The money has to be committed within 18 months of receipt and returned money can be recycled for additional houses over 48 months. The city has turned in its application to HUD on December 1st and should receive the money by February 2009. The city will work with non-profit and for-profit organizations to carry out the operation. The Development Committee has been and will continue to work with the Bureau of Housing and a few non-profit organizations throughout the duration of the program to keep Westview's best interest in mind. Information handouts were passed around.

Community Discussion – John Davis asked to allow Gwen Cain to speak so she can also leave early. Gwen announced Morehouse will be hosting a discussion about community/neighborhood issues on December 5th at 5:00pm at the Leadership Center, which John Davis will be attending. The discussion will be followed by Morehouse's Christmas Carol Concert at 7:00pm.

OLD BUSINESS

Holiday Dinner Planning – The date for the annual WCO holiday celebration has been set for December 13th from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Fire Station #17 (1489 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd). Scott Smith passed around a list asking members to volunteer to bring food.

Thanksgiving Service Project – Neighbors have brought in cell phone donations for the Cell Phones for Soldiers program and can contact Shawnika Anderson to donate additional cell phones as it is an ongoing program. Neighbors and the WCO also gave donations towards the feeding the hungry programs.

Westview Book – Patrick Berry announced seven more neighbors have been photographed and a couple more are scheduled. Any people additionally interested should contact Patrick or Steffi Langer-Berry ASAP. The deadline for the book to go to the printer and be returned before Christmas is December 9th, so orders for a copy need to be placed and paid before that date. The book price will be \$30 or \$35 depending on the number of neighbors to be added by the deadline

2009 WCO Dues – Scott Smith reminded about the plans to start collecting annual dues within the first three months of the year to those who are able to. This will allow the focus of meetings to be about community concerns rather than worrying about which member has paid what.

NEW BUSINESS

Cascade Food Mart/Application for Change of Ownership – Saaman B. bought the convenience store business located at 787 Cascade Ave a few months ago. To bring the building into compliance he has installed a handicapped-accessible bathroom. Additionally he has installed a video monitoring system for added security. He has owned an alcohol-selling gas station for two years and would implement the same strict “everyone looking under 30 will get carded” rule as his other business. Patrick Berry motioned to approve the Application for Change of Ownership. Steffi Langer-Berry seconded the motion. Vote – Yes: 8, No: 3

Cajun Restaurant/Variance Application – Craig Cooper is working on opening a Cajun restaurant at the corner of RDA Blvd and East Ontario Ave. He has hired an architect to help him with the space’s layout. The business will not sell any alcohol. The City of Atlanta said the location only allows for a carry-out restaurant due to the parking shortage and would still require 6 parking spaces under the carry-out condition. Raymond Gambrell motioned to approve the variance on the parking space requirement. Shawnika Anderson seconded the motion. Vote – Yes: 15, No: 0

Westview Master Plan – Patrick Berry announced the Development Committee was working on a Master Plan for the neighborhood. A number of studies have involved portions of Westview (West Lake LCI Study, Campellton Cascade Corridor Study, BeltLine Study, etc). The DC is joining the plans and will be working with the city to officially adopt them. This will allow the community to more easily request funding for trees, benches, etc which would also help attract more business back to the area. Let Patrick know if you have any ideas or input.

BeltLine Sub Area I Master Planning – Planning for Westview’s portion along the BeltLine corridor will begin January 2009. An exact date is to be determined. The BeltLine Master Planning will parallel with the Development Committee’s Master Planning efforts. Additionally the path along Muse Street and the old rail road tracks is said to begin January 2009.

KIPP STRIVE Academy – Ed Chang introduced himself as the principle of the future KIPP STRIVE Academy. He informed residents he is working with the Atlanta Public School Board on a long-term lease agreement to be able to place his new charter middle school in the building of the former JC Harris elementary school. The project would involve a \$2 million renovation. The school is set to open for the 2009/2010 school year with around 85 5th graders and will continue to grow through 8th grade. The KIPP program focuses on college preparation and prides itself of having 95% of its alumni attending college.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNITY CONCERNS

HouseProud – HouseProud will be teaming up with the University Community Development Corporation to work on some houses on South Gordon St.

Former Neighbor – Oscar, a former resident from Stokes Ave, wanted to check in on the happenings at the neighborhood meeting and announced his house is for rent if anyone is interested.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned with a prayer by Assistant Chaplain Raymond Gambrell at 8:10pm. Assistant Treasurer Martha Robinson collected \$12.00 of monthly dues.

Submitted by Steffi Langer-Berry, Assistant Secretary