



Merion Village Association

Meeting Minutes: February 3, 2016

DESCRIPTION: Monthly Association Meeting

LOCATION: 225 E Gates St, Columbus, OH 43206

MEETING DURATION: 7:25 PM – 8:35 PM

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

- PRESIDENT: Tony Roell (TRoell@MerionVillage.org)
- VICE PRESIDENT: Coda Bruce (CBruce@MerionVillage.org)
- TREASURER: Allison Willford (AWillford@MerionVillage.org)
- SECRETARY: Jessica Norman (JNorman@MerionVillage.org)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

- MEMBER-AT-LARGE: Nicholas Jenior (NJenior@MerionVillage.org)

TOPIC: Treasurer's Report (Presented by Allison Willford)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: The remaining funds from our business development grant and the grant as well as the grant we facilitated for PAMA came in. We also received some donations at the chili cook-off, sold t-shirts and registered a couple new members.

TOPIC: MVA Committees

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: The MVA board is making a big push to increase participating in our recent formed and revitalized committees. If you are a member but you have not signed up for a committee, you will be receiving an e-mail from us in the near future. We are going to focus on getting the committees up and running in the next couple months. We hope to have the structure of our new committees and initial reports available in March. The next pocket park meeting will be on February 24th.

TOPIC: United Way Grants

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: The board recently submitted two requests for grants from the United Way. One is for the pocket park and the other is to make improvements to a space for our meetings and small events. This space would be the current info. center if the members of the Association are interested in keeping it.

TOPIC: Changes to the MVA Constitution

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: The board has a few updates to propose to be made to the MVA Constitution. These proposed changes include:

- Voting Privileges: We are proposing changing the membership voting waiting period from 45 days to 21 days. The constitution already has a requirement that you must reside within MV to vote so this change would simply require a shorter waiting period before new members who live in Merion Village are able to vote.
- Absentee Voting: We have attempted to further define the absentee voting process per the request of a couple members. The change would require that any request for absentee voting be made by at least 10 members and at least 7 days prior to the date the meeting and vote would occur. An official process for requesting absentee voting would be established.
- Membership Dues: We would like the constitution to reflect that the board can allow special membership drives and initiatives during the months of July through September. These special occasions would allow new members to join the association to purchase a membership for the remaining year and the next year at the standard price of a year. We will circulate these proposed changes via e-mail blast to the membership prior to the next monthly meeting.

TOPIC: MVA Membership Renewal Reminder

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: 2015 MVA members have until the end of February to renew your membership in order to retain voting privileges without an additional waiting period. Registration after that point will be considered a new membership and you will incur the waiting period.



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TOPIC: Future of the Current MVA Info. Center on S. Fourth Street

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: We continue to lease the Information Center on Fourth street and sublet the space to Acupuncture and Wellness of Merion Village. Sarah, the owner of that business is actively looking for a new location and plans to move by June of 2016. The MVA board would like to know if members are interested in continuing to lease and maintain that space when our Sublessee has moved out. Phil B. commented that he really likes having a “home base” at the center which is very central to the neighborhood and near the farmer’s market, etc. Sarah R. commented that the center hasn’t been staffed for over 15 years and doesn’t really get used enough to justify keeping the location. Chris M. mentioned that the climate control in this space hasn’t been up to par and it can be incredibly hot in the summer. Anne S. commented that the arrangement with Sarah sharing the space came at a time where the MVA was seeing a reduction in attendance and struggled to pay the rent and utilities on its own. Now that our group has grown and is very active, this location provides a central space to use for meetings and events and to help store our materials. Coda B. commented that it’s important for us to understand why we aren’t using the space now and how we would use it with sole occupation. Allison W. commented that our month to month lease would allow us to try using the space and we could reevaluate our decision if we find it’s not being utilized. Another member asked if it made sense for us to find a space to buy instead of continuing to rent. Bob L. mentioned that we should consider the fact that the meeting spaces at the Library may be booked very quickly and Tony R. commented that we may not have the same freedoms for duration of meetings, snacks, etc. The Info. Center was originally established when the MVA had a federal grant of 2 million dollars to address several projects. Chris M. asked if we have inquired with St. Paul as to whether or not there is storage space available at the Church if we were going to continue to meet here. Mary C. asked if the meeting space at the Reeb center would be viable for us. Bob L. responded that the space at Reeb is not great for meetings and the SSAC plans to move to the library when it’s ready. The Reeb Center also closes strictly at 8:00 PM. Anne S. commented that there are several small volunteer groups in our neighborhood and she wonders if any of these groups would like to use the center for their meetings. Kit K. commented that she feels there are a lot of empty buildings in Merion Village and that we have lots of groups who would love to have access to a community space. A member who is new to the association commented that she was excited to hear that we have a center as she wasn’t aware. She feels we could do some incredible things with a space of our own. Rada K. commented that she is also excited about the space but feels that if we are going to use it, we need to make it bright, colorful and accessible.

TOPIC: Merion Village Pocket Park at Morrill and Bruck

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: We had a meeting to discuss the pocket park and how neighbors would like it to be handled. We will be having another meeting later this month. Some of the ideas for this space include adding additional lawn or community beds to reduce the planted spaces which need to be maintained. There was also a discussion to install a sign so people are aware that it is a pocket park. Tony will apply for additional pocket park grants before the end of the month. A member thanked the board for the time we invest in applying for various grants to improve the neighborhood.

TOPIC: The Parsons Avenue Improvement Project

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: The Parsons Avenue Improvement Project is moving forward and will present the final plans at an upcoming meeting. This project has been discussed for several years and is planned to proceed this Summer. They intend to install a left hand turn lane from Livingston to 104. This change will cause a loss in on-street parking on Parsons. Erin S. commented that the public service group she chairs has provided input in this project and they were able to save the stoplight near the new library from being removed. While this is a final plan, if you have major concerns, voice them to the City. The lights at Sycamore, Hanford, Innis and Hosack are being removed. There are no lights between Livingston and Whittier which means there are no crosswalks. Anne suggested that people take their concerns to Councilman Stinziano as well. There will be an event on February 11th at Barak Recreation Center with realtors volunteering in the community.



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TOPIC: Scheduled Events and Activities

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: Anne S. will be organizing our first community cleanup in April. She is looking for comments from residents about areas they would like the volunteers to target. The cleanup will be on April 23rd from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

DATE (TIME)	EVENT DESCRIPTION	COORDINATOR(S)
March 10 th (6:00 PM - 8:00 PM)	Neighborhood Appreciation Event	Nick J.
LOCATION: Hey Hey Bar & Grill (361 E Whittier St, Columbus, OH 43206)		
April 23 rd (10:00 AM - 2:00 PM)	Merion Village Spring Community Clean-Up	Anne S.
LOCATION: Merion Village Neighborhood		
May 7 th (9:00 AM - 3:00 PM)	Merion Village Spring Community Yard Sale	Jessica N.
LOCATION: Merion Village Neighborhood (Location Map Will be Available)		
July 9 th (10:00 AM - 3:00 PM)	Annual Merion Village Garden Tour	Garden Tour Committee
LOCATION: Merion Village Neighborhood (Location Map Will be Available)		
August 27 th (TBD)	Annual Merion Village Summer Festival	Festival Committee
LOCATION: Moeller Park (261 Hanford St, Columbus, OH 43206)		
September (TBD)	Merion Village Autumn Community Clean-Up	TBD
LOCATION: Merion Village Neighborhood		
October (TBD)	Merion Village Autumn Community Yard Sale	Jessica N.
LOCATION: Merion Village Neighborhood (Location Map Will be Available)		
December (TBD)	Annual Merion Village Potluck & Bake Sale	TBD
LOCATION: TBD		

TOPIC: Southside Area Commission Report (Presented by Chris M. Erin S. and Anne S.)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: The House Sweet It Is event is coming up. This will be hosted at Tatoheads this coming weekend and will have a silent auction benefiting Plant Pride on Parsons. The MVA will have a table at this event. There will be shuttles running to take attendees on tour of some of the rehabilitated houses near Children’s Hospital. The Southbend proposal had no opponents at the recent SSAC meeting. They are providing a “certificate of appropriateness” which is not required but is requested from the City. The Kerry Garnes Awards are looking for each civic association to nominate someone who has been very committed to outreach in the community. Chris N. recommended Erin Synk for our nomination.

GENERAL REMINDERS:

- ✓ Community Rewards: The board would like to remind members and residents of the reward programs which help support the MVA. Visit our website for instructions to sign up for the 4 community reward programs in which we currently participate, including AmazonSmile, GoodSearch, GoodShop and Kroger Community Rewards.
- ✓ Report non-emergency crime to the Columbus Police Department by calling 614-645-4545.
- ✓ Report potholes, code violations, broken dumpsters and other requests for City services through the 311 Program. Call 311 from your telephone or visit www.311.columbus.gov

NEXT MONTHLY ASSOCIATION MEETING: Wednesday, March 2, 2016 in the basement of St. Paul UCC (225 E Gates St, Columbus, OH 43206) beginning promptly at 7:15 PM.