

Allegheny West Civic Council, Inc.
Membership Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2025

7:36 PM Call to Order by Elizabeth Barbush, President. A quorum was achieved at the outset.

I. Reports of Elected Officials, City Departments, and Other Organizations

A. City of Pittsburgh Zone 1 Police (Ofr. Defeo)

- There were three arrests in our district. Ofr. Defeo said that one was a narcotics arrest at Brighton and Allegheny (those two streets run parallel, so the location must have been incorrect).
- President Barbush thanked Ofr. Defeo for his work.

B. City of Pittsburgh Mayor's Office (Lindsey Robles)

- No one appeared on behalf of the mayor's office.

C. Pennsylvania State Representative – Rep. Aerion Abney

- No one appeared on behalf of Rep. Abney.

D. City Planning Department (Nazia Tarranum)

- Ms. Tarranum did not attend the meeting. She did, however, send word that there is to be a January 30 meeting on the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- Additionally, there will be a series of community workshops.

E. Pittsburgh City Council District 1 – Clr. Bobby Wilson (Jordyn Gilliard)

- Clr. Wilson's office has a new aide, Morgan Martin.
- Norfolk-Southern has completed their designs. Construction will begin in 2025. The designs are on the Norfolk-Southern website.
- There is a zoning bill concerning parking. Public comments are welcome.

F. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (Erin Tobin)

- The pedestrian bridge in the Allegheny Commons is coming, now that Norfolk-Southern has completed the plans.
- The annual Lake Elizabeth cleanup will be held the second weekend of April. PPC is hoping that AWCC will again sponsor the event.
- The North Avenue Signals project for pedestrian safety is coming.
- PPC hopes to do something about re-planting the medians on North Avenue. The city has not maintained them properly. Plantscape is the city's contractor for this, and the median at Arch Street and W. North Avenue is dying.
- A resident then brought up the plantings at the fountain in the northeast corner of the Commons. Ms. Tobin assured the membership that the plantings are being taken care of properly. The fountain itself, however, was not properly maintained and did not function much of last year. It is hoped that the city will remedy that this year.
- Arbor Day is coming, and part of the park is to be designated an official arboretum.
- The pipe railings along the north boundary of the Commons are failing in places and need to be fixed.

- Applications for membership in the Friends of Riverview Park are available. The shelter in that park is being restored. There have been several landslides in the park lately.
- Garbage Olympics is coming up soon.

II. Minutes

- The minutes of the December meeting were approved. (C. Gomrick / T. Cihil)

III. Reports of Officers, Standing Committee Chairs, and Others

A. Treasurer's Report – Cathy Serventi

- The Treasurer gave the bank balances for both the Allegheny West Civic Council and Allegheny West Development Corp. accounts.

B. Communications – Sarah Cook

- There are new delivery routes for the Allegheny West Gazette.

C. Friends of Allegheny West – Trish Burton

- The committee held its first meeting of the year and discussed getting bids for landscaping.
- A representative of the city's Environmental Services Department will make a presentation at the February membership meeting.
- Flower baskets will be invoiced.
- The committee is getting an updated bid for the proposed gateway sign for the parklet at the corner of Brighton Road and Western Avenue.

D. Housing & Planning – Tom Cihil

- **Old A&P Lot** - The committee met with Nathan Hart, the architect for Costello Development, on the proposed townhouses to be built on the northwest corner of Brighton Road and W. North Avenue (the former A&P lot). Mr. Hart presented a site plan. The committee has five questions and concerns, which were sent to Mr. Hart after the meeting. There are three different townhouse designs, but the committee was shown only one. The design was a mix of traditional and modern styles, and the reaction was generally favorable. Mr. Hart accommodated most of the committee's prior suggestions. Each unit has a garage, and some units will have a guest space. Mr. Hart has not yet met with the city's Fire Department about access. There are concerns that Rope Way is not wide enough to accommodate fire trucks, garbage trucks, and other large vehicles. In addition, The committee still has concerns about short-term rentals, such as those done through Airbnb.

E. Membership – Yulia Bhonsle

- The Membership Chair announced there will be a neighborhood mixer on February 20.
- The committee is also looking for suggestions on other events for neighborhood residents.

F. Ways & Means Committee – Carol Gomrick

- The summer Wine Tour will be held on June 27 and 28. Planning for the tour will begin in February.
- Membership applauded Ms. Gomrick for her hard work on the December Christmas house tour.

- Tom Barbush reported that he and others would like to resurrect the Alleys, Axles & Ales automobile/garage tour. Tour proceeds would go to the Allegheny West Civic Council to be used as it sees fit. There followed a discussion on the proposed date and the amount of work and lead time needed. At this point, President Barbush formally appointed an ad hoc committee to explore the details of having this tour. She appointed Tom Barbush as chair of the committee.

G. Property – Aaron Bryan

- The Property Chair stated that his primary goal for 2025 is to get 806 Western Avenue in rentable shape again.

H. Executive Committee – President Elizabeth Barbush and Secretary Bob Griewahn

- The executive committee thinks it is time to do a neighborhood master plan update.
- ALCOSAN would like to make a presentation at next month's membership meeting on one of their Ohio River projects.

I. Northside Leadership Conference - Ann Gilligan

- There was nothing new to report.

J. Unfinished Business

- WANID – Some members of the committee met with most of the property owners in McIntosh Row concerning the streetlights. The committee told the owners that if an agreement cannot be reached by February 28 on relocating electrical service, the existing streetlights will remain.
- Trees – The city's Forestry department is now working on this issue. A resident reported that the city posted a "tree coming down" sign on one of the trees. The resident has called 311 several times. Ms. Tobin asked for the 311 report number because she meets with Forestry regularly. She also said that Forestry is way behind on tree removal.
- Beech Avenue sidewalk – Keane George's brick sidewalk work on Beech Avenue is still not completed, but the contractors have finally poured a concrete curb. There are concerns that it is too cold for the proper curing of the concrete. The building permit for the sidewalk expired on October 31. A resident reported, however, that the permit has now been renewed.
- 1112 Galveston Avenue (former Value-added Foods building) – Christ Furman has sued Hard Lofts, LLC. The Allegheny County sheriff served John Shedd, one of the principals. Reportedly, Mr. Shedd did not know that he was still an owner of the company.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM (T. Barbush / J. Engle).

— Bob Griewahn, secretary.