

Allegheny West Civic Council, Inc.
Membership Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2025

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

Motions Passed:

1. Nominations – The membership approved the following awards and associated event proposed by the Nominating Committee:
 - a. Neighbor of the Year Award – Eleanor Coleman
 - b. Lifetime Achievement Award – Marth Helmreich
 - c. An awards dinner honoring the foregoing, perhaps in October.
2. The Executive Committee is authorized to spend up to \$2,500.00 for a security camera. (F. Barbush / S. Graubarth)
3. The Executive Committee is authorized to spend up to \$10,000.00 to hire an attorney, if advisable, to address the problems at Lefty’s bar on Western Avenue.
4. An appropriate letter of support should be issued on behalf of Keane and Megan George for their proposed development plans for 1103 Western Avenue, in accordance with the plans presented at the meeting.
5. The membership ratified the two letters of support approved by the Executive Committee for the benefit of the Pittsburgh Park Conservancy’s budget requests for Watson’s Cabin and the forestry team.
6. The treasurer’s draft budget was approved.

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

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

- a. There were four reports, including three arrests in our area.
- b. Five juveniles were checking automobile doors for entry and theft. Three of them were apprehended by police, but the district attorney could not confirm the identities of the youths, so no citations were issued.
- c. There were attempted thefts from vehicles on the 800 blocks of Western and Beech Avenues, and the 900 block of N. Lincoln Avenue. Nothing was taken.
- d. There will be more patrols after sunset coming up.

B. City of Pittsburgh Mayor’s Office (Lindsey Acquino-Robles)

- Ms. Robles did not attend the meeting.

C. Pennsylvania State Representative – Rep. Aerion Abney (Thomas Harnett)

- Mr. Harnett did not attend the meeting.

D. City Planning Department (Nazia Tarranum)

- Ms. Tarranum did not attend the meeting.

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

- The Davis Avenue bridge finally has reopened.
- The Department of Mobility & Infrastructure (“DOMI”) is modernizing streetlights. Light emitting diodes (“LEDs”) will replace the existing sodium arc lights.
- The Councilor is looking for neighborhood event submissions for his new newsletter.
- There was a press release on the Councilor’s land bank proposal. Funding for the land bank is set to run out in 2027.
- The membership then told Ms. Gilliard that we need historically appropriate street lighting in our neighborhood, and soft lighting for the wildlife in the Allegheny Commons.

- The Engage Page website is available, and citizens can respond to DOMI that way.

F. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (Erin Tobin)

- Ms. Tobin reiterated the reopening of the Davis Avenue bridge.
- Family Days are scheduled for June 29 in the Allegheny Commons, and July 27 in Riverview Park.

G. 1103 Western Avenue Proposal (Keane George and Megan George)

- Their proposed development is at the old Allegheny City warehouse in the Chateau neighborhood.
- It is a circa 1920s building that was once an automobile dealership. It became the Business Records Management facility, then Access Records Management's building.
- They have been to AWCC's Housing & Planning Committee and have also made a presentation to Manchester.
- The development would be residential, perhaps including a retail space on the first floor.
- They will be going to the city's Zoning Board of Adjustment ("ZBA"). They do not think they need any variances, but the ZBA staff thinks they may need one for the rear decks.

H. Buttercup Way

- A member then inquired about the street paving in Buttercup Way. The city's assessment is that the existing bricks are in very bad condition and need to be replaced with asphalt. The cost for paving with new bricks would be exorbitant.

II. Minutes

- The May 13, 2025 minutes were approved. (F. Barbush / H. Harris)

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

A. Communications – Sarah Cook

- Ms. Cook had nothing to report.

B. Treasurer's Report – Cathy Serventi

- Ms. Serventi presented a draft budget for the record. The members approved it. (F. Barbush / D. Kelly).

C. Friends of Allegheny West – Trish Burton

- The committee is still working on acquiring a wrought iron gateway sign to be placed in the parklet. They will try to set some scheduling milestones for completion.

D. Housing & Planning – Tom Cihil

- Mr. Cihil was unable to attend.
- The membership approved a letter of support for the 1103 Western Avenue proposed development, based on the plans as presented. (D. Kelly / S. Graubarth)
- Old A&P lot on Brighton Road – President Barbush and Tom Cihil intend to meet again with the developer, Mr. Costello to review the letter of support approved last month.
- Lefty's bar – President Barbush is still working with Ofr. Defeo on getting copies of 911 calls. Ms. Barbush spoke with the building's owner, Jeff Bull about the problems. The lease may terminate soon. J. Wallace suggested hiring a liquor lawyer. The PLCB wants neighborhoods to work with bar owners first. The membership then approved a motion to authorize the executive committee to spend up to \$10,000.00 to retain an attorney, if it feels that is appropriate.
- 1112 Galveston Avenue – The executive committee has been unable to find a developer to purchase the old chicken processing plant. We will keep working on it, and president Barbush will speak with City Planning.

E. Membership – Yulia Bhonsle

- The Independence Day block party will be held in the 900 block of Beech Avenue.

F. Ways & Means Committee – Carol Gomrick

- The committee is still looking for items to raffle at the upcoming Wine & Garden tour.

G. Property – Aaron Bryan

- Mr. Bryan is setting milestones for the work to be performed on 806 Western Avenue.

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

- **PPC Letters of Support** - Membership ratified the executive committee's issuance of two letters of support on behalf of PPC for Watson's Cabin and the forestry team. These are city budget requests. (T. Barbush / A. Garza)
- **Western Avenue Neighborhood Improvement District ("WANID")** – The committee will meet with Gloria Rayman, the former project manager.
- **Registered Community Organization ("RCO") status** – This is still pending with the city.
- **Tree Trimming** – nothing new to report.
- **Streetlight Repairs** – nothing new to report.
- **Finance Committee** – Ms. Serventi will be holding a committee meeting this summer.
- **Alleys, Axles, and Ales event** – nothing new to report.
- **Tree Planting** – Some residents are trying to determine the locations of memorial trees planted in the past. Ms. F. Barbush will try to find records on the subject. Ms. M. Callison once gave them to Ms. T. Burton, she thinks.
- **Steve Fatla's house on Western Avenue** – The stoop is being used by Lefty's patrons and is being heavily lettered. Someone placed a 311 call for possible health code violations.
- **Security camera on Western Avenue** – The membership approved a motion to authorize up to \$2,500.00 for the purchase of a security camera. (F. Barbush / S. Braubarth)
- **Summer Recess** – President Barbush reminded the members that they had authorized a summer interregnum. There will be no membership meetings in July or August. The executive committee is authorized act on behalf of membership for matters that cannot wait, and must report on its actions at the September membership meeting.

I. Nominating Committee – Sally Graubarth

- Ms. Graubarth presented the committee's nominations, to wit:
 - Neighbor of the Year Award – Eleanor Coleman
 - Lifetime Achievement Award – Marth Helmreich
- The committee also suggested that, in the absence yet again of an annual awards banquet by the Northside Leadership Conference, AWCC should hold its own event, perhaps in October
- The membership passed a motion to approve all the foregoing. (D. Adam / D. Kelly)

J. New Business

- **None**

Meeting adjourned (F. Barbush / T. Cihil).

— Bob Griewahn, secretary