

## **Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail**

### ***Minutes of the Meeting on November 17, 2015***

**Clerk, George Hart - roll call:** members present: Joe Camilleri, Mark Cressotti, Joe Giffune, George Hart, Jeff LaValley, Sally Memole, Bob Pac, Eric Hall, John Tassinari, Sandy Sorel, Alice Flyte

Jeff L read open meeting laws.

#### **Acceptance of Minutes/October**

Motion to approve October meeting minutes: (no one had received them) – Jeff L said he'd resend/resubmit

#### **Reports of City Officers / Mark Cressotti, City Engineer**

Westfield River Levee Esplanade is proceeding; meeting deadlines with MA DOT; advertising for north section; determined we didn't need to conduct an environmental audit so can advertise; funding for '17 for central section with 5 bridges, biggest bottleneck is the 5 bridges by DOT but time frames are being met, out to bid from October, 2016 to October, 2017, \$2.3M for north bridge and mentioned assorted added items regarding that section

Joe G asked about permission to installation of signs and Mark C said, "better to ask forgiveness than permission" and Jeff L said we need to ask the mayor; Mark C asked if we were interested in talking on Western Ave. – he said Ward 4 Councilor (along with neighborhood) is unwilling to change but is willing to try expanding bike accessibility and any change is a problem; Joe C asked what FOCG role can play, Mark C said issues are involved and in time the Rail Trail will add value and Alice F said we should play a supporting role, and Mark C noted the large number of people attending the 3 meetings and said he looks forward to FOCG involvement; he asked if any thoughts on East-West connector and Jeff L said he'd send us a link to it.

#### **WPD/Community Police**

Sgt. Eric Hall – noted Rail Trail high traffic; assorted people occurrences and the need for ordinances; Jeff L said he'd reach out to counselor Ralph Figy, and Eric H said there is no law regarding law mentioned by Bob P; email WPD if we see snowmobiles (and note colors, etc. and same with vehicles now)

#### **Public Participation**

None

#### **Reports of Chairs**

Jeff L – none, except a meeting of the executive committee and the minutes will be emailed by Jeff to George H, and mentioned assorted questions and comments; motion made for us to authorize an email...[Jeff L has the rest]; motion made, seconded, vote passed.

Moved ahead to new business –

Jeff L. said pedestrian crosswalk safety issues because the city had done poor maintenance and we need to improve education and city needs to improve enforcement; he also said this falls within our mission. Eric H. said "the Police Dept. is doing what we can." Proposal made to encourage the Bike and Pedestrian Committee to support these issues.

Joe G. suggested we should create a sub-committee to address Western Ave. infrastructure. Motion was made, seconded and vote passed. He then asked for those who want to be a member of the sub-committee.

***Motion by Joe G/Second by Joe C. to authorize an email blast to encourage FOCGR to contact Mayor and/or City Councilor to support a Western Avenue design that supports increased bike/ped use. Approved Unanimously.***

***Motion to Create a subcommittee to address Western Avenue infrastructure (JG/JC). Approved Unanimously.***

Vice Chair – Joe G.: none except for another item later

Treasurer – Joe G.: all on a handout and Jeff L will email us later “so I can include some numbers”

Dir. of Education & Research: more on bike racks later

Sally M – emailed regarding she had sent to Westfield Fairgrounds who said to call back after the holidays – this is all regarding food truck festival.

Report of Bylaws committee – Jeff L: no new bylaws now, but will email them to us and will vote on them in December.

Sandy Sorel – re new board members: chair – Joe G., vice chair – open, clerk – Carla Gesek, director of planning & development - MJ Bull, Denise Begley - treasurer – she is from Westfield Bank.

### **Old Business:**

1. Joe G – Chamber Round Table on Saturday was attended by FOCG and office staff/Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce, no one else; requested a motion for board approval, but was told it was not needed, and we’ll do a workshop next Spring.
2. Joe C – Bike racks: he asked if we should offer options, if businesses are interested, give them more options. Bob P noted the need for racks; Jeff L mentioned Dan Kotowitz’s donation of 2 racks and then requested donations for racks to go downtown, but this was tabled to get back to later.

### **New Business:**

We need to purchase a new, very low cost, lap top so we can use quick books. John T said we have an offer of a donation from an anonymous donor. – ***Motion to Accept donation of a laptop from & to authorize purchase of supporting software up to \$300 (JG/JC/SS) – approved unanimously.***

Membership plan: Alice F. listed all on a handout; asked to look at draft for discussion on the handout of Annual Membership Drive. This led to assorted questions and discussion. She asked if all are OK and all said they supported this. She said she’d proceed in January, but we should feel free to give her our input.

Participation in the Lantern Light Parade to the Christmas tree lighting.

Demetrios not here, but said we will do the Shortstop Bar and Grill fundraiser for us twice – bike week meet/greet and the Tuesday before the golf tournament (6/18/16).

Board retreat and Strategic Planning session on half a Saturday in March; discussion of the need to plan and use.

Notification of golf tourney signage: flyers, WSU, vendor fairs.

Bob P suggested we address communication with Mayor Sullivan.

John C regarding the memorial bricks: discussed at a walk thru; have a pile of bricks ready, need to properly install (this is on the shoulders of the city), Jeff L said after sales to do an install two times a year and suggested to sell at vendor fair on 12/4/15 (\$100.00 per brick and only a \$12.00 cost for engraving), noted board members sell 3-5 each.

Jeff L asked if there are any requests for budget items, to email them to him.

Joe G asked regarding the golf tourney aad, to ask first so treasurer knows what a bill is for!

Motion made to adjourn, seconded, vote passed.

Next meeting 12/15/15