

Historic Brewers Hill Association (HBHA)  
Minutes of the General Neighborhood Meeting  
March 29, 2016

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mambu Rasch, HBHA Vice President, called the meeting to order at 6:33PM.

II. Treasurer's Report & Membership Report

Ms. Booth, HBHA Secretary, stated the balance for the General Fund is \$4,666.52 and the Signage Fund has \$2,964.65. Ms. Booth continued the HBHA currently has 69 paid households and that 33 households from 2015 have not yet renewed. She stated the HBHA Treasurer, Mr. Bishop, provided a reminder to these households on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

III. 2016 Calendar of Events

Ms. Mambu Rasch announced the 2016 Calendar of Events and stated the event calendar can be found on the HBHA website, [www.historicbrewershill.com](http://www.historicbrewershill.com):

General Meetings: January 26<sup>th</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup> Special Meeting, March 29<sup>th</sup>, April 26<sup>th</sup>, June 7<sup>th</sup>, September 27<sup>th</sup>, and November 8<sup>th</sup>.

Social Events:

- February 23<sup>rd</sup> - Around the Corner Preview Party
- March 19<sup>th</sup> – Easter Egg Hunt
- May 14<sup>th</sup> – Spring Cleanup
- July 19<sup>th</sup> – Historic Milwaukee, Inc. and HBHA Fundraiser at Sanger House Garden
- Patio Round Robin – August 6<sup>th</sup>
- Block Party – August 27<sup>th</sup>
- Halloween/Trick or Treating – October 31<sup>st</sup>

IV. Milwaukee County Elected Officials

Ms. Mambu Rasch introduced the agenda item stating the HBHA Board of Directors is always striving to better connect with neighborhoods and organizations around Historic Brewers Hill. She stated the HBHA has formed strong relationships with the City of Milwaukee, District 5 MPD, and Alderwoman Coggins but recognized a relationship was lacking with Milwaukee County. She continued that the intent of tonight's presentation by the County officials was to help form a stronger relationship with the County and open dialogue with the County to figure out how both organizations can better partner with each other moving forward. She stated dialogue with the County began 9-10 months ago with a meeting to discuss green space opportunities within the neighborhood and the dialogue has come full circle with being able to bring our elected County representatives to the neighborhood.

Ms. Mambu Rasch introduced Supervisor Willie Johnson. Supervisor Johnson began his presentation, stating many years ago he used to live in the neighborhood. He represents one of the largest district population wise, which was at 38,000 people when he was first elected but has now increased to 51,000. He heard the neighborhood has an interest in parks and when taken care of properly, Milwaukee County has one of the best park systems in the country. He also discussed his past achievements while a Supervisor, being an advocate for entrepreneurship and working with the Community Business Development Partners (CBDP) in establishing the Milwaukee County's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. He concluded his presentation by remarking that he enjoys communicating with constituents, particularly with problem solving issues, and is available to answer any questions we have.

Ms. Mambu Rasch introduced County Executive Chris Abele. County Executive Abele began his presentation by stating he's been involved with nonprofits for many years through his Argosy Foundation. He described such efforts, including jointly working with the City in obtaining approvals to remove the North Avenue dam and once removed, there has been an increase in green space, trails, cleaner water, and more species of fish. He stated Historic Brewers Hill is an interesting neighborhood, being a dense residential area so close to downtown. He explained the services provided by the County, including social services, parks, and adjudication system. He explained the County did not previously have an economic development department but since its formation, the County and City has interacted more effectively than in years past. He continued by discussing the Adjudication system, which includes the courts, incarceration, and public safety. He stated the County operates the House of Corrections in Franklin and that many changes are occurring at the facility, with an emphasis on education and treatment available to all inmates. In the last five years, the facility created 20 skilled certification programs, offers GED testing, healthier food options, recycling plant, and print shop. He encouraged nonprofits to consider the print shop as it provides affordably priced mailings and posters. He also discussed having over 1,000 inmates sign-up for the Affordable Care Act and by offering these programs can help create a positive impact on an individual's rehabilitation, to get individuals back on their feet and once completed with their sentence, to help connect them with programs offered by the City.

He concluded his presentation by discussing the Park East development, stating that while it will be challenging during the course of construction, the new development will create thousands of jobs, with a focus on creating jobs for residents of the 53206 zip code, and that positive development can ripple out to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Ms. Mambu Rasch opened the floor for questions. She asked that those with questions to state their name, address, and whether or not they are a paid member.

Mr. Woodtl, 112 E Vine and is a paid member, inquired if the existing roadways and transit systems can keep up with the increase in people/density occurring in the areas of the City

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experiencing a large number of new residential developments. He asked if there was vision to handle the increase in people.

County Executive Abele replied that while the County manages the transit system, the City manages the planning of transit routes. He continued that sound urban planning is needed to accommodate the increase in density as the current roadways are not terribly efficient. He cited an example of collaborative roadway and transit planning occurring with the reconfiguration of the Lakefront Gateway. He concluded by stating residents need to be direct and loudly call for changes in transit and roadways systems.

Mr. Holton, 1933 N 1<sup>st</sup> St and is a paid member, explained his parents have lived in the neighborhood since 2002 and he has lived in the neighborhood since 2014. From his experience, he stated public safety issues continue to persist in the neighborhood with respect to drug deals and inquired what policies are in place to address these matters.

Supervisor Johnson responded that the City, not the County, does the coordination but through the Executive Committee of the Justice Council, the County can provide input on policy decisions. County Executive Abele responded that the use of opiates and heroin, and the high rates of overdose, throughout Southeast Wisconsin is a serious issue. He elaborated that slight tweaks to policies could be done to better define arrest vs. charge, as being arrested does not necessarily mean one will be charged if the District Attorney determines not enough is present to prosecute.

Ms. Booth, 102 E Vine and is a paid member, inquired about the neighborhood's want for a pocket park internal to the neighborhood, and what is the best method for HBHA to pursue such a park. Supervisor Johnson suggested to contact the City as they have local control of vacant lots. County Executive Abele elaborated the County has hired a full-time employee to help groups, such as a neighborhood association, to develop a "Friends of" group. He continued a grant writer is also available who can provide assistance with grant applications if the association chooses to pursue any grants. He stated these County liaisons can offer advice and assistance on how to approach various options for parks and recreation opportunities.

Mr. Wroblewski, 208 E Reservoir and 306 E Brown and is a paid member, stated that while development has occurred along the outskirts/outer perimeter of the neighborhood, he asked how economic development come within the neighborhood. County Executive Abele responded that with increased density, this may drive more commercial opportunities, potentially first floor commercial.

As no other questions were asked, Ms. Mambu Rasch thanked both County officials for attending.

V. Royal Capital Group LLC Update

Ms. Mambu Rasch introduced the next agenda item, explaining Royal Capital Group had presented at the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and they had offered to present revisions or address questions they had received at the last meeting. Mr. Kevin Newell, owner of Royal Capital Group LLC, began by recapping the questions that arose from the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, which included site activation, streetscape, parking, and building height, and they were present at tonight's meeting to provide a project update. He continued they had re-examined street activation on Blocks A and B, explaining that common in new construction development is one level of at-grade parking and parking above grade but this type of parking design creates an unappealing blank wall. He stated the at-grade parking design was slated for Block A, creating a blank wall effect along Reservoir. He continued that their plans continue to propose ground level walk-up units to activate the streetscape along Hubbard and they re-examined this concept along Reservoir. He stated there are hard slopes in the site's topography with the site sloping west to east, they will be burying the at-grade parking to allow walk-up units along Reservoir to activate the street facing the residential north of Reservoir. He also addressed the previous site plan for Building A proposing vehicular ingress/egress off Palmer and the updated site plan has removed ingress/egress off Palmer and relocated to Reservoir for a cleaner approach into the building. He stated no changes are proposed to building heights. A question was asked from the audience as to why building height was not lowered. Mr. Newell explained they examined the building height but what they are proposing is still lower than the previously approved 2004 development plan and is lower than allowed by zoning code. For Block B, he continued there was not much discussion regarding at-grade parking but to activate the street-side façades, the two buildings will have walk-ups. Mr. Newell moved on to discuss parking, providing data on the number of spaces per units for nearby multi-family residential developments. He explained the proposed development will have a majority of one bedrooms whereas some of the developments examined may have a higher average bedroom count per unit, and when looking at parking the number of bedrooms can impact the parking requirements. Mr. Newell concluded his presentation by stating they have not submitted plans to the City for their review nor have they finalized exterior elevations, therefore, they are not presenting exterior elevations at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Booth introduced the City of Milwaukee Department of City Development staff in attendance, Greg Patin and Kristin O'Connell. Mr. Patin and Ms. O'Connell briefly described the development process in terms of how the project review process operates, meeting notice requirements, and what was approved under the previous development plan from 2004.

Ms. Mambu Rasch opened up the floor for audience questions. She explained that for audience members to ask a question to please state their name, address, and indicate if they are a HBHA member. Mr. Booth followed up with asking audience members to keep questions succinct and a microphone will be handed out for those who wish to ask questions.

Mr. Van Gompel, 220 E Reservoir and is not yet a paid member, asked about the revised driveway alignment of Building A and if the driveway will be aligned with the Cobblers Loft driveway located on the north side of Reservoir. Mr. Newell responded that he is not sure about the exact alignment location but he will double-check the plans.

Ms. Eastwood, 1824 N 2<sup>nd</sup> and is a paid member, stated she has not seen any exterior drawings and materials. She stated the buildings' exteriors are real important part of the development especially being located near historic districts. Mr. Newell responded they hope to provide drawings at next meeting. He elaborated that renderings are expensive to draw and before time is spent on the finalizing the renderings, they want the overall site plan finalized first.

Mr. Booth asked if the price points and units have changed since last meeting. Mr. Newell responded no.

A question from the audience was directed towards the City DCD staff in attendance regarding meeting noticed requirements and what past approvals allowed for at the subject site. Ms. O'Connell responded that the development plan for the subject site was approved over a decade ago and if Royal Capital Group wanted to, they could pull a building permit and develop those plans without further approvals. She continued that because they are proposing changes to the approved development plan, the development plan must be amended and must obtain approval from the City. She continued that DCD uses previous approvals as a baseline in terms of density, building height, and building materials. She also stated that zoning does not dictate ownership type. She explained the official City process for such an amendment, which typically takes about three months to complete. The process begins with plans being submitted to DCD and being reviewed by the development review team and once finalized the plans move forward to the respective committees and commissions for review and recommendation, followed by City Council for authorization. She stated the submittal deadlines for Plan Commission meetings are 2 weeks and 1 day prior to scheduled meeting, and once on an agenda, project plans are uploaded to the City website. She finished by stating the noticing requirements for such a development plan amendment is to all property owners within 200 feet.

Ms. Mambu Rasch added that HBHA Board does their best to keep neighbors apprised of development hearings and that residents can be notified of City meetings by signing up for meeting notifications through the City's website.

Mr. Patin added that DCD works with developers on the details of sites and if there are any issues, DCD prefers these issues are buttoned up before the project moves forward through the various committees and commissions. He continued that development review typically takes time and just because a project is submitted to the City does not mean it be immediately noticed for a meeting.

Mr. Terrell Walker, Royal Capital Group, stated they previously communicated at the previous meeting they would be open and transparent with the HBHA Board and they will continue to do so.

Mr. Armstrong, 224 E Lloyd and is a member, stated in the perspective of a big project, the developers are young and have lots of energy. He continued this available area present a whole opportunity in front of the neighborhood as long as it's done right. He inquired if they have ability to get this project done from a financing perspective and questioned if the total number of units proposed, 179, could be staggered. Mr. Newell replied with the background of Royal Capital and their development portfolio, citing a 248-unit development in Madison. He explained they pay attention to all details of a development, from lighting to materials, and they take best practices from other development groups and apply to their projects. He continued they surround themselves with teammates and have units 70% leased before beginning construction. He stated Royal Capital has done \$80 million in investments for 2015-2016 and may have opportunity to top that number up to \$100 by the end of 2016. He stated that each block will take approximately 18 months to construct and they will build & lease each building before moving onto the next building. He stated a change from the previous meeting is that Block B will be constructed first as opposed to beginning with Block A. He finished by stating Block C is still planned for 10 units of townhomes for an ownership opportunity but timing will be dependent on the home ownership market. He ended by stating they are working with Vetter Dank on the townhome design.

Mr. Roffers, 2023 N Palmer St and is a member, stated he is concerned with the large quantity of one bedrooms being proposed and the consequences of having smaller apartment units over the years. He stated he feels our neighborhood is more of a neighborhood-feel and the proposed development's density count seems high. Mr. Newell responded the unit count was determined based on investment science and the buildings will be efficiently designed and well throughout.

Ms. Current, 1843 N 2<sup>nd</sup> and is a member, stated she feels its short sided looking at just the current housing market demand. She stated this is a family-type neighborhood and the proposed buildings are not to scale or are not appropriate density-wise. She concluded by stating that she resides next to an apartment building and feels apartments offer more anonymity, as opposed to home ownership, and potentially more safety issues.

Mr. McGuire, 1924 N Hubbard and is a member, stated he frequently walks the neighborhood. He asked if market research is protecting this neighborhood as the same research is saying the same thing for the Commerce St developments. Mr. Newell responded he loves this neighborhood but this is a tough group. He understands the neighborhood cares about its community and if Royal Capital is able to develop in the neighborhood, he knows their development will speak for themselves.

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Mr. Shortridge, 124 W Vine St and is a lapsed paid member, stated a traffic study was recently completed in conjunction with HBHA and Community Design Solutions. He encouraged the developers to review the study and hopes both the City and developers will get on board with recommendations made by this study to calm traffic at various intersections and blocks, some in vicinity of the proposed development.

Mr. Wroblewski, 208 E Reservoir and 306 E Brown and is a paid member, stated he owns units across from both Blocks A and B. He questioned if the City's perspective finds so many apartments in a home ownership environment concerning but also stated how to balance an ugly vacant land with new development. He urged the developers to consider utilizing multi-height building model similar to the building interaction of Cobblers townhomes and Shoeworks Lofts.

An audience member stated they reside in the townhomes across from the proposed Building A and they recognize their property values are higher due to their unit having a skyline view. They continued the City's amount in property taxes will likely be reduced if their skyline view is lost and this view is an amenity they willing accepted to pay more for in property taxes. Mr. Newell responded they are coming to the neighborhood for feedback on the proposed development before submitting plans to the City. He continued that they pride themselves on being able to execute developments and want neighborhoods to support their projects rather than be adversarial. He elaborated that with new development not everyone will be happy, but they are designing something for new residents to be safe and to have opportunity to enjoy the neighborhood. He concluded by stating they will be transparent, communicative, and have taken a lot of time to work with the neighborhood's questions and concerns.

Mr. Bialk, 1823 block of N Palmer St and unsure of member status, asked what building height will be along Reservoir. He also asked if they are taking into account the scale and setback of existing homes along Palmer, which will be below the proposed Building A building. He stated the building could be started lower then go increase in height as topography slopes downhill. Mr. Newell responded the building will be between 45 to 50 feet tall along Reservoir.

VI. Adjournment

Ms. Mambu Rasch asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:26PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Molly Booth  
HBHA Secretary