**Noble Neighbors community Meeting**

**Hosted by Bethel Church**

**2706 Noble Road**

**Cleveland Heights, OH**

**May 14, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

Cynthia Griggins opened. About 30 people attended.

1. **Announcements and Reports:**
2. **Welcome to newcomers.**

Description of how neighbors started coming together.

Question: ”How did you happen to come?”

* Most people responded that they either attended the meeting with council members on April 29th or they were personally invited by a neighbor.

Question: What is best day and week for future meetings?

* It was noted that school board meetings are 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of month.
* Tuesdays appeared to be a good day for most people.
* It was decided by consensus that future meetings would be held first Tuesday of each month.
1. **Judi Miles agreed to take notes.**
2. **Website update by Brenda May.**
* Website is www.nobleneighbors.com contains announcements, survey results and links to other important organizations, programs.
1. **Email update by Brenda May.** Email is nobleneighbors@gmail.com
2. **Note: US Together:** Mark Rodney, Employment Manager will be coming later.
3. **Pick up for Pride.** Jeanette provided update for clean-up day which is called **“Pick up for Pride.”** It will be held Saturday, June 7th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. People will convene in the CVS parking lot. Route will be from approximately Noble School to Woodview. CVS is providing trash bags, gloves and water.
* Rain date will be Saturday, June 14th.
* City will pick up trash from tree lawns.
* Participants are encouraged to bring their own tools.
* Flyers are available for neighbors to take and pass out.
* Organizers will talk to city about recycling glass and plastic.
	+ It is best to empty bottles first!
1. **Block Watches:**
* Montford has had two meetings so far.
	+ Wendy P. and Cynthia: This block watch group is honoring their Ken Walton mailman and start welcoming new residents.
* Cambridge and Northampton are meeting together. Next meeting is May 20th.
	+ Will gather at Maureen O.’s house @ corner of Cambridge and Northampton.

**Additional Item about logo designs. Barb gave update**

* If group decides to use a logo and wants to put it on t-shirts, Barb brought two design suggestions for group to consider. One design could be put on t-shirts. The other design could be put on a house window decal that could be used for block watch houses. The t-shirt vendor she offered provides “sweat-shop free” shirts.
	+ Cynthia suggested that we form a marketing group to consider logo design submissions
1. **Lake Erie Captains fundraiser:** Lake Erie Captains (Indians minor league team) Night for Heights Community Center scholarship fund will be held on August 12. See Cleveland Heights - Recreation website for details. Jeanette agreed to be contact person for the fundraiser.
	* Time: 7:00 p.m.
	* Cost: $10.00
	* Food Voucher: $6.00

 Debbie J. (Alston) suggested we plant flowers at different sites. Cynthia suggested she get involved with Beautification committee.

**Question from NEWCOMER:** How are we identifying our area? **Answer:** It is somewhat fluid, but roughly Belvoir to Taylor and Mayfield to the north border. This roughly includes the Noble, Oxford and Caledonia school district boundaries.

**Political Action activities:** 1) Diane Hallum presented ward selection petition. She has petition available for people to sign if they want to. 2) Debbie Jenkins (Alston Rd.) Ohio Bill of Rights petition. 382,000 signatures needed by June 2. The effort is supported by the League of Women Voters.

1. **Imagining our future.**
	1. **Introduction to “New Metropolis” documentary segment.**

Councilman Jeff Coryell: Councilwoman Melissa Yasinow wanted to attend but was unable to. Movie segment lasted about 10 minutes.

* 1. ***After the Movie Question: What can we apply to our neighborhood?***
* CHts did significant integration work in the 1970s.
* Current people issues may be less about race than about class, mindset and behavior.
* Devalued property is a huge problem. People cannot sell their homes for a reasonable price, if at all. Therefore, many people are choosing to become landlords, often renting to tenants who receive federal subsidies.
* Question: Whatever happened to “welcoming committee?”
	+ Janet Hoffman from Cleveland Heights Community Relations department replied that her department still does that work, both for owners and tenants.
1. **Focused Feedback from April 29th meeting. What should be our focus?**

**Councilman Coryell:**

* Staff is putting descriptions of Noble Rd. business area into the Relocation Guide.
* Staff is talking to realtors about how best to market the area and to get facts about market.
* Neighbors in area can make their own brochure about their neighbors.
* Neighborhood assets can be highlighted (gardens, Denison, playgrounds, housing stock).
* Notices about Community Center scholarships are going to be in next water bills and “Focus” magazine.
* The point was made that notices in water bills might not reach renters who often do not receive water bills.
* June 7th Pick up for Pride clean-up can be highlighted in a brochure.
* Once a month “Meet the Police” to be held at Police Academy.
* Street contacts will be contacted about activities and information.
* More attention will be paid to filling potholes along Noble Road.
* Council is questioning how best to use tax abatement as a tool to help in Noble Monticello area.
* Council’s goal is to have more community meetings.

Clarification of term “*street meeting.”* Janet Hoffman described purpose of a street meeting is usually just to meet with residents of a particular street. Often the catalyst is an unfortunate event or a crime. Sometimes police and a councilperson are present. Often a member of community relations staff is present.

**Councilman Jeff Coryell’s brainstorming and ideas: What about the following?**

* Immigrant community relations. Potential for home ownership. Tax abatement support?
* Reach out to artist community?
* Community development corporation?
* Forming a new board or commission?

**e. (resumed) US TOGETHER: Mark Rodney, Employment Services Manager.**

* Welcoming Heights Committee held an open meeting recently.
* Currently, most immigrants are ethnic Nepalese who had to flee Bhutan. Others are Iraqi, but all immigrants in the area are helped.
* A lot of help is needed. Housing is an on-going need. Many immigrants would like to buy duplexes giving them an opportunity for additional income (from renting half of the structure).
* Jobs, particularly those that pay more than minimum wage, are an on-going need. Prospective employers have to remember that many immigrants have limited English skills.
* Free translation services are available for employers or others who are working to help immigrants.
* Mentoring, grocery shopping, college and career planning.
* Some issues immigrants face is that while adult immigrants often have to walk, they don’t see a lot of adult neighbors walking around. They are looking for opportunities to connect with neighbors.
* There is a Welcoming Heights planning meeting scheduled for Tuesday May 20, 2014 at their offices on Noble Road.

**Brenda May:**

* Idea: What about supporting the immigrants that achieve citizenship? A July 4th parade might be a good way to celebrate citizenship.
* Tri-C might be able to help with English tutors.
* Diane Hallum: Culturally relevant celebrations.
* Bethel has helped with furniture and clothes.

***NOTE: There was a general consensus that it was okay that we were not going to complete the agenda items.***

1. **Action Groups**
* **Crime:** what about putting dummy cameras around as a deterrent to crime? Someone noted that the Eastern Star Home (by G.E.) may now be a detention facility. Coryell and others said they would investigate.
* **Housing:** Will work on forming action plans
* **Business:** Judi Miles noted that the group has not met outside of the meetings, but some members still plan to do an inventory and survey of neighborhood businesses.
* **Beautification:** Is spear-heading the Pick Up For Pride event
* ***Suggestion: There may be a need for a “research” small group in addition to a logo/marketing group suggested earlier***
1. **Reassemble for reports after Action Groups. Omitted from agenda.**

**Reminders:** Next meeting time and place: Tuesday, June 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. Location to be determined. *At Noble Road Presbyterian Church*

**Announcements and reminders:** Community garden plots are available next to Oxford School. Contact Judi Miles for more information.

Meeting ended shortly before 9:00 p.m.