

Westview Community Organization

June 1, 2020

Calvary United Methodist Church
1471 Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard

1. Call to Order – 7:07PM

2. Reflective Thoughts – Wesley Benjamin

- a. Wesley Benjamin provided words of encouragement in Rosalyn's absence.

3. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

- a. Motion to approve – Ann Bailey, 2nd by Orlando Hartwell & Doug Stine.

- i. Yay – 27
- ii. Nay – 0
- iii. Abs – 2

4. Public Safety Update

- a. Jason has advised that we have been in communication with Major Titus with some demands around increased police presence and monitoring of the Auto Zone strip mall. The owner is in agreement that the issues we have raised are valid and need to be addressed. Kimberly Scott NPU T chair is also aware and on board.
- b. Currently there are no plans for AutoZone to vacate the property as a result of the sale to a new owner. Potential plans may include adding 1 or 2 stories (long-term), update the existing property and bring in new tenants (short-term).

5. Treasurer's Report – provided and reviewed during meeting

ACCOUNT BALANCE: \$5185.24

EXPECTED INCOME:

~\$2000 CITY OF ATLANTA COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT

EXPECTED EXPENDITURES: -\$108 (WEBSITE \$50, EMAIL SYSTEM \$58)

- a. Motion to approve – a, 2nd by

- i. Yay – 25
- ii. Nay – 0
- iii. Abs – 0

6. Old Business

- a. 1156 Stokes Proposal <https://westviewatlanta.org/News/8946794>. Comp Analysis conducted by local neighborhood realtor and neighbor Orlando Hartwell provided with meeting documents available here (<https://westviewatlanta.org/News/8969752>). Additional background information regarding the land and neighborhood feedback and questions provided with meeting documents as well.
 - i. Orlando provided some insight and reasoning for the comp analysis. Jason provided a recap on the topic and read through the additional details that were

also provided via email.

- ii. Jess Arcelay inquired what UCDC was. University Community Development Corporation.
- iii. Sherry Bailey asked if we are still being taxed on the property as if there were a home there. Jason advised Jessica Grayson also posed the same question, and the answer we were provided is no. Sherry thinks the taxes seem high for a vacant lot, Jason advised that we are in agreement and looked into that as well but the research suggested the taxes were correct.
- iv. Jason advised that he has spoken w/ both neighbors on either side of the property. Jacinta Williams is in agreement to sell, Ms. Pippy is not in agreement to sell.
- v. Jason opened the floor for discussions:
 1. Sergio inquired about what the funds would be used for as the expected profit is a lot of money. Jason advised the idea would go to help pay for taxes on the land, other land owned by the community. Jason further explained that financially WCO is dependent on the donations of about 30 neighbors. Long term, especially given the unemployment numbers and effects of COVID-19, this current way of fundraising is no ideal long term.
 2. Jake Carpenter inquired if we had a 501c3 could these properties be considered tax-exempt? Jason confirmed. Jake would like to see us focus on gaining the 501c3 status so that way we could retain the land as a community without the burden. Also suggested to appeal the tax assessment as the lot is likely not buildable do to size / property lines and proposed that we as a community seek a variance(s) with regards to building on the lot. Jason advised that since mentioning this proposal last month, there has been several people who have reached out stating they would pay cash for the property if it goes for sell.
 3. Alyssa Ridderhoff inquired if we put a request for affordable housing would it decrease the value of the land? Alyssa would like to see a better plan before committing to something so big.
 4. Orlando Hartwell is not in agreement with affordable housing as we are just now getting rid of boarding houses and such in the neighborhood and questions if we want to incur the expense of obtaining a variance given the property has limited building possibilities. Jason believes this is a community conversation, and thinks we should make the decision as iron clad as possible.
 5. Sherry Bailey suggests that if the community is to have a say in what is built on the property, it would be beneficial to get variances and possibly get plans drawn up.
 6. Eric Singleton provided his thoughts (via FB text): These are my thoughts on a few of the connected conversations. (My mike is out)
 1. I think that our community takes far too long making decisions. Each time a proposal is put forth it seems to be kicked down the road for far too long.

2. I do think that the offering price of \$120K would be a great starting point. As our community is reaching capacity. The lot has a chance of exceeding expectations.

3. When selling anything be it land or retail. It is always better to stay on one side of a transaction.

7. Jess Areclay provided the following (via FB text): For those concerned Georgia Code 14-3-1202 covers the sale of assets by charities. Members can place conditions on the sale, such as the money must be placed in a trust to be managed by a 401c3 board that is governed by the WCO 501c4. Same as when you offer rezoning options, you can put conditions on the zoning laws.
 8. Kiyomi reminded the community that all of the initiatives we have are funded by the same, small group of members who continue to keep the community events afloat. She is concerned given the current climate, what finances look like going forward as currently we are in a cycle where we are fundraising for the sake of fundraising.
 9. Jake believes that there are cash buyers that would purchase the property as is and agrees with Sherry that getting setback variances would be beneficial.
 10. Candace Girod provided comments via email and posted on Facebook as well and provided a high-level overview for the group at large. She has a concern about how the money from the sell would be used. She also wonders once we have achieved 501c3 status, the fundraising aspect changes. She thinks we could be selling ourselves short by selling now versus later and getting more money. Candace does not believe there has been enough time, or outreach to make an informed decision. Jason advised that UCDC specializes in bulldozing dilapidated properties and selling them to investors. Jason has advised that we have maintained a consistent and, in most cases, increasing attendance and we have
 11. Jake Covington (via FB text) Are all the community members aware that if the nonprofit was established, the WCO could sell the property to the nonprofit for \$1 and the property taxes would disappear?
 12. Jessica Lowe advised that she feels torn as being virtual can feel disconnected/disjointed and rush. I don't know the right way, but I don't feel solid for the sale in such a short time. Is there a way to take more time?
 13. Eric Singleton says (via FB text) if we hold on to the land, it will never be any larger than it is today. The building possibilities will not change.
 14. Sherry Bailey advised (via Zoom chat) We will also have issues as we near election time. Real estate typically slows down to a near halt close to a presidential election as people are unsure of where we will be after the election.
- vi. Jason provided his closing arguments and asked the community to vote yes but strongly urged the community to vote their conscience. Vote to authorize the board to establish a process described in the Stokes Park proposal.

1. Yay – 28
2. Nay – 8
3. Abs – 2

7. New Business:

- a. N/A.

8. Community Concerns, Questions and Announcements

- a. Kyomi advised that The Ke'nekt will be hosting a social distancing food truck & farmers market event and sharing more details via Social Media.
- b. Jason urged reminded the community to vote and that absentee ballots should be arriving. Louis advised that you can also still vote in person, even if you mailed your absentee ballot application in, during Early voting which ends June 5th.

9. Adjournment – 8:19PM

Community Reminders

- **6/9 FULTON COUNTY PRIMARY ELECTIONS**
- **NPU T Meeting 6/10 7pm – Virtual via ZOOM**
 - **July WCO General Body Meeting TBA**