

**Minutes of the West Norwalk Association Board
December 7, 2015**

Board Members Present: Anthony Carrano, Ken D'Arinzo, Brian Forschino, Kristin Clemens & Rob Notley. Isabelle Hargrove was not in attendance.

Ted Stepanoff, Stephen Galyas, and Peggy Holton & John Moeling of the Norwalk Land Trust attended as guests.

Anthony called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Norwalk Land Trust Update - The Trust currently has 19 Board Members and more than 400 dues paying members. The goal of the Trust is to maintain the natural state of West Norwalk for the benefit of its residents. John Moeling, the current President of the Norwalk Land Trust, provided a brief update on services provided by the Trust. John noted that the trust provides a natural science update to 4th grade students at Fox Run every May and that they provide a Farm Creek Nature Preserve field trip for 11 out of 12 elementary schools in Norwalk. John also noted that Superstorm Sandy took down a significant number of old Oak Trees at the Preserve and the Trust was looking to help replace them.

John then provided the Board with an update on the current status of the potential building of Habitat for Humanity properties in McGrath Park. The Park is a 10 acre area next to Norwalk Community College which was supposed to be a buffer zone for the residents of West Norwalk but unfortunately this was never formally documented. Some proof of the promise was found, including discussions with former Mayor William Collins. After a meeting of the Land Use Committee approximately 9 months ago, the City approached Habitat for Humanity to inquire about the possibility of building 3 homes on the land before discussing it with the residents of West Norwalk.

The Trust has been successful in obtaining conservation easements for certain pieces of property with the stipulation that the easement will be maintained in its natural state. The underlying land for McGrath Park current remains owned by the original owner. John indicated that at a recent Common Council Meeting, the Council agreed to leave the land as it currently stands however, there is no formal agreement between the City and the Norwalk Land Trust, the West Norwalk Association or the residents of West Norwalk.

Ken suggested speaking to Tom Livingston and John Ignieri who are members of the Common Council. Tom is already working on other West Norwalk issues such as the Community College Overpass and the Proposed Senior Center. The Board unanimously agreed to provide any support we can.

Anthony offered to put a link to the Norwalk Land Trust website on the West Norwalk Association web page.

Treasurers Update - As a result of the Holiday Party, Ken deposited \$1,547 of cash with an additional \$1,610 of checks to be deposited for total proceeds from the party of \$3,157. The proceeds came from the 50/50 (\$267), dues payments (\$1,600) and entrance fees (\$1,290). The total cost of the party was \$3,936.58 (cost for 140 attendees).

Current balance in the checking account is \$4,366.49 with \$1,610 still to be deposited and \$2,234.42 to be paid to Dolce.

Holiday Party Update - The Board agreed that the Holiday Party was a remarkable success with more than 140 paying guest and numerous children. Many of the guests stayed after the party ended, joining the Board Members in the Dolce bar upstairs. The Board discussed the possibility of changing the time from 6 - 9 to 7 - 10 to allow people time to get home from work. The Board also discussed starting the 50/50 right from the beginning of the Party.

Although the scholarship fund collected only \$5, The food drive did collect a significant amount of food. Anthony and Tammy Carrano delivered the food to the Open Door Shelter on Saturday after the Party.

Spring Wine Tasting Update - Anthony suggested having Dolce host and suggested speaking with Bob Mazerkowitz, a wine distributor known by many of the Board Members. The Board also discussed the possibility of using the wine room at Grapes or the wine room at Total Wine

Kristin suggested setting up a cocktail hour at a local establishment to give West Norwalk residents the opportunity to meet and talk with neighbors and other West Norwalk residents. The cocktail would not be paid for by the West Norwalk Association but the Board discussed speaking with local bars and restaurants to try to negotiate for reduced priced food and drinks.

Other Business - Bob Duff's Facebook Page had a twitter post applauding the overpass. Ken sent a response to Bob asking him to contact Tom and John, describing that West Norwalk residents have significant concerns about the overpass. The City is moving forward without discussing the issue with the neighbors. Anthony is concerned with enforcement. The West Norwalk Association wants to be included in discussions and be made aware of public hearings. This will be further discussed at the January Board meeting.

Rob raised the possibility of the West Norwalk Association out an advertisement in the Ponus Pidge Middle School Playbill.

Anthony closed the meeting at 8:38.