

Wagener Terrace Neighborhood Association

March 18, 2024

Minutes

[Hybrid Meeting at Mark Clark Hall and via Google Meet]

WTNA website address: www.wagenerterrace.org

The March meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by President Petar Lemajic. We had several new and returning attendees introduce themselves: Betsy Anderson from 51 Clemson St., Richard and Brenda Callari from 242 W Poplar St., Jessica and Kaius Rueger from 28 Wagener Ave., and Christopher Morgan from 128 St. Margaret St.

MINUTES: The previous month's minutes are posted on the WTNA website. Liz Bronneberg moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting as posted on the website. Gail Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the minutes were approved.

FINANCIALS: Former Treasurer Thomas informed us that we have \$6,150.58 in Checking. We have not yet received the \$5,000 donation from Lowndes Grove, so VP Jarett Nicholson will follow up to help coordinate that donation. We have \$22,511.50 in Savings, with \$17,500 of that set aside for the Oyster Roast.

CITY COUNCIL/CITADEL/POLICE: No representatives were present.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Richard Callari was present to discuss 51 Gordon Street, which is the old Tabernacle Church on the corner of Gordon St. and 12th Ave. Reverend Carolyn Edwards is the seller, and Mr. Callari is under contract to purchase it. He and his wife currently live at 242 W Poplar, and they would like to demolish 51 Gordon and build a new home. It is zoned as SR-2 (single-family only) and is 2 lots, so they would be building on one and selling the other to someone else to build. They do not yet have construction plans, as they are waiting for demolition approval first, but they anticipate the houses being 2.5 stories, 2100-3000 sf, and driveways for a minimum of 2 cars.

The Church can no longer use the building because it is in such severe disrepair. It is roughly 6,000 square feet, which would be very large for a home, and the roof is collapsing, the building is engulfed in black mold, and the floor has collapsed, so it is not possible to walk through most of the building. The congregation has not been able to safely use the building in years. The biggest issue is the basement, which is a solid poured concrete with rebar. Due to the very low elevation of the site, the basement has been filled with 1-3 feet of water for years, which has contributed significantly to the mold problem. This area of Gordon St. is an extremely high risk flooding zone, and given the extensive repairs needed to the building, they would be over the threshold of 50% renovation to necessitate elevation, but the basement makes it impossible to lift the building.

Mr. Callari has received support from the adjacent neighbor at 41 Gordon St., and Rev. Edwards thinks Mr. Callari's project is the right path to take. She said they have been doing outside ministry for the safety of their members, and their congregation needs the funds from the sale in order to progress and move forward as a Church because

the building is too far gone for them. They no longer have any insurance coverage for the building, and they do not have the money to handle the extensive repairs and mold remediation that would be required. Tim Jarosch proposed a plaque be placed at the site to commemorate the church. Mr. Callari said he would be open to doing that on the corner or sidewalk. He plans to help coordinate the removal and reuse of any church artifacts that remain in the building. Blake Scott expressed concern about us setting a precedent for allowing demolition of churches in the Holy City, but Mr. Callari said that this is an exceptional circumstance in that they are not seeking demolition due to the mold or structural integrity issues, but instead because the basement makes it impossible to elevate it to meet the flood zone requirements. Nathan Durfee moved that we write a letter of support for demolition, contingent on the verbal agreement that a plaque be placed to honor the church. VP Nicholson seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed, so the motion passed. President Lemajic will write a letter of support to submit to the BAR.

2. Jarett Nicholson has lived at 97 St. Margaret St. since 2017. He is getting married and would like to increase the home's footprint. It is currently a 2/1 floor plan, and they are trying to expand to a 4/2 by renovating their semi-finished attic. The house is currently 1156 sf, and he thinks this may add about 600 sf. He considered two designs and prefers one that changes the front of the house by adding gables and 2 dormer windows with a bridge in between. The expansion cannot happen on the back of the house because that is where the stairs are located. The roof line is not being changed, but he would essentially be creating a hole to expand out for the dormers, so his request has to go before the BAR because that kind of significant change is considered demolition of the roof. VP Nicholson will not be doing short term rental in his home. Neighbors expressed appreciation for the design and for him continuing past the first design to seek something more in keeping with the neighborhood. DonnaMarie Patten moved that we write a letter of support for his favored design. Gail seconded, and all were in favor, so the motion passed. President Lemajic will write a letter of support to submit to the BAR.

3. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Stewart were present to discuss plans for their home at 352 Grove St. The house was built in 1940, and they have lived there since 1986. They are submitting a request to place two dormers on the back of their home. It will not be seen from the front street view. Their grandson spends a lot of time with them, and he needs a stand-up shower. One dormer would allow for the shower, and the other will create more bedroom space. They are not changing the footprint or changing the roofline. Ms. Thomas moved that we write a letter of support for their request to add dormers, and Ms. Patten seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS/LOCAL ISSUES:

1. Kari Weaver was present to inform us about the Charleston Spring Wine Fest, which takes place on March 30 from 1-5pm at the Johnson Hagood Stadium. It is a ticketed 21-and-over event. There will be a band, silent disco, food options, and a lot of wine.

2. President Lemajic reiterated that we need a WT representative to attend Union Pier meetings and asked that anyone interested in volunteering reach out to him.

3. Blake Scott brought up the Peachtree Outfall Improvement Project, which has been approved and budgeted for by the City's Stormwater Department. The intent is to clear the drains of mud and marsh material that may be blocking the channels and preventing water from draining. This outfall drains about 100 acres in our neighborhood and in North Central. Mr. Scott thinks we need to be watchful of what mitigation efforts are in place to prevent chemical and run-off draining directly into the river. He also thinks this is a chance to express our desire for other

drainage projects in our area. Mr. Jarosch has already reached out to Matt Fountain, Director of Stormwater Management, to see if he or someone in his department can come speak to us about the project.

ONGOING BUSINESS:

President Lemajic reported that he sent a letter of support for Florence Crittenton's requests, which we discussed at last month's meeting. He also sent a letter to Mr. Tisdale and Cm Gregorie to ask for a wetlands marsh sign at 9th and Gordon, similar to the one at 3rd and Wagener.

COMMITTEES:

1. Yard of the Month – Congratulations to April's Yard of the Month, Betsy Anderson, at 51 Clemson St!
2. Publicity/Membership – Ms. Bronneberg reminded everyone that membership is \$10/person per year and can be paid via Zelle or in cash.
3. Environment - Mr. Jarosch has reached out to Dale Morris and Matt Fountain about coming to speak with us about resiliency and the stormwater project. He will try to get them to attend the next meeting.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT: Dominion will be doing reconductor overhead pole work between March 18 and April 22 from 8a-5p, so they have been approved for street blocking permits during those dates for the following areas: Grove St between 10th Ave and Rutledge Ave, St Margaret St between 10th Ave and Rutledge Ave, Rutledge St between Gordon St and Grove St, 11th Ave between Gordon St and Grove St, and 12th Ave between Gordon St and Grove St.

Ms. Thomas moved to close the meeting, and Ms. Bronneberg seconded. Meeting closed at 8:12 pm.

The next WTNA meeting will be April 15, 2024 at 7:00pm.

Handy Contacts:

Wagenerterrace@wagenerterrace.org

Police Dispatch (non-emergency) 843-743-7200

Lowndes Grove MOD 843-708-4314

Code/Livability 843-805-3226

Councilman Gregorie: 843-327-7900 (Mona Lisa), personal #: 843-819-6619

City of Charleston Citizen Services Desk 843-724-7311

BOD: Petar Lemajic, Jarrett Nicholson, DonnaMarie Patten, Jeanie Knowlton, Tyler Hueter, Susan Cale, Nancy Wilson, and Anna Turner