

Wagener Terrace Neighborhood Association

September 18, 2023

Minutes

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

WTNA website address: www.wagenerterrace.org

The September meeting was called to order at 7 pm by President Petar Lemajic.

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

FINANCIALS: President Lemajic reported that we have \$5,990.58 in Checking, which is a \$30 increase due to 3 new memberships. We also have \$22,510.56 in Savings.

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

PRESENTATION: April Wood, who lives on Grove Street, was present to represent the Historic Charleston Foundation, and Anna-Catherine Carroll was present from the Preservation Society of Charleston. They collaborated to hire a team of interns to analyze the historic structures in our neighborhood and prepare a report to highlight the features that give the neighborhood its historic character. They hope this report may be a useful tool to residents as they make decisions about work at their houses. They said there is a joint recognition that Wagener Terrace is really special with a unique character, and it is both under-documented and under-protected compared to other neighborhoods on the peninsula. They hope this report can inform future conversations about long-term protection.

Rachel Fore and Paige Regna, interns for the Historic Charleston Foundation, and Kerry Campion, intern for the Preservation Society, were present to present their report. They noted that this type of report is referred to as an Area Character Appraisal and is intended to document the major architectural features of a neighborhood. Their report outlines a quick history of WT, including local landmarks such as Florence Crittenton, Lowndes Grove, the J.C. Long House, the George R. Brantley House, Greater St. Luke AME Church, and the old WTMA Radio Studio, which was the 2nd radio station in Charleston. They studied urban form and landscape, including public spaces, corridors, streetscapes and street patterns, setbacks and lot sizes, building footprints, and landscaping, including fencing, yard vegetations, and trees in the parkway. They looked at comparisons, historically and today, comparing fire maps from 1955 and 2023. They noted that there are still entire streets that have the same number of houses and same lot lines.

They then looked at key kinds of architecture, which are primarily multi-family and single family dwellings, and they noted that houses in WT range from single story to 2.5-story houses. They evaluated the architectural styles, noting when that style became popular, how it came to be there, and the character defining features of that style.

Craftsman architecture, typically built from 1905-1920s, is widespread throughout the neighborhood, but most concentrated on Ashley, Rutledge, Darlington, and Gordon. There are only a few examples of American Foursquare,

which was a popular style from 1895-1930s, and those are found almost exclusively along Rutledge Avenue. Tudor-Revival style houses, popular from 1920s-1930s, are less common but lie most often in the southern half of the neighborhood. Minimal Traditional houses were built following World War II, and they are found widely throughout the neighborhood, with concentrations located along Hester and Clemson. This style characterizes the most rapid growth in WT. There are also Ranch style houses, which was the dominant US building style in the 1950s-1960s, and those are most concentrated near the Ashley River.

Once they defined the architectural styles, they evaluated character defining features. These site features are what affect the aesthetic of property and include driveways, fences, gardens, roofs, exterior cladding, chimneys, windows, bays, porches or front stoops, and decorative details, including iron work, brick texture, and brick coloring. They consider the 3 main threats to our neighborhood to be Out of Character Modifications, Flooding, and Loss of Historic Materials. An out of character modification would include adding a second story which may completely change the roof line or adding an out-of-character addition to a house. Loss of historic materials includes changing the type of window, removing or elongating porches, painting brick, or removing chimneys. Their recommendations are to look at the character defining features list and make decisions based on similar materials guidelines. They want people to do the research to avoid form-altering additions, trendy updates, and uncraftsman-like repairs. They also provided additional resources related to historic materials, preservations, and flooding.

President Lemajic said that he would like to post the completed report on the WTNA website and try to spread this information, and he asked what more we can do as a neighborhood. Ms. Wood said that the neighborhood is mostly intact and it would be good to preserve, and she hopes that we can become more engaged with each other. She also said there are houses in WT that are eligible for the historic register.

James Bishop asked their thoughts on the revised BAR guidelines regarding window replacements north of Line Street. He appreciates it but thinks it is also a gray area and that people should be replacing like with like. The interns chimed in that the look of the house totally changes when windows go from 4-over-1 or 6-over-1 style to a 1-over-1 since the latter is a much more modern look. President Lemajic noted that WTNA is always looking for guidelines about how to decide whether to support BAR and BZA requests, and VP Nicholson said he thinks we should use this report to codify what our standards are and how far requests can deviate in issues related to historic character.

LOCAL ISSUES

1. Blake Scott reported that 69 volunteers participated in WT's trash clean-up event done as part DNR's 34th Annual Beach/River Sweep. They started by Lowndes Grove and walked Dunneman, St. Margaret, and Grove Streets from the Ashley River to 10th Avenue. They picked up 173 glass bottles, 47 cigarette butts, and much more. Mr. Scott said they will continue to do litter clean-up efforts, and he hopes eventually this can be incorporated into the WTNA. He said Edmund's Oast is going to work on creating a beer in honor of the marsh. He also said he has been working with Ms. Carroll and the SC Department of Archives and History to have a marker approved for the Halsey Creek area on 10th Avenue. It goes to the Charleston Commission for public comment. He is also working on a public water access memo with VP Nicholson. Ms. Carroll said she thinks WT has been historically overlooked in terms of water public access, both from the perspective of view sheds and resiliency, and she asked him to let her know if it would be helpful for her to lend support to the letter. VP Nicholson wants there to be public confidence

in water access and then later focus on beautification and cleaning up the area by the Citadel. He has contacted Councilman Sakran and is looking to formalize the letter.

2. There is a run-off election tomorrow, September 19, between Wendell Gilliard and Deon Tedder for the Senate 42 seat.

3. There is a Coffee with the Mayor event September 20 at 11am-noon at Santi's (1303 Meeting Street) as part of Hispanic Heritage Month.

4. North Central Neighborhood Association is hosting a mayoral forum on October 11 at Redux (1056 King Street). All of the candidates will be there, so it will be a great time to hear what is important to them and ask questions. The event is free, but they are asking everyone to register for a ticket. The League of Women Voters is also hosting a mayoral forum on October 25 at 6:30pm at Greater St. Luke AME Church.

5. The Planning Division is starting a newsletter to engage residents in planning projects. Residents can subscribe to the email newsletter on the City of Charleston website.

6. The City of Charleston Planning Commission is hosting a Special Meeting on Phase 3 of Courier Square on October 5 at 4pm at 134 Columbus Street.

7. The Blood Connection is hosting a blood drive drive tomorrow, September 19, in Buyer Auditorium in the Citadel's Mark Clark Hall. They are offering all donors \$60 in e-gift cards plus a \$10 gift card to Chick-fil-A.

COMMITTEES

1. Yard of the Month – Congratulations to our September Yard of the Month, Gordon (Flash) Smalls at 16 Clemson Street! Ms. Bronneberg nominated Lyn Smith to chair this committee, and Mr. Scott seconded. All were in favor. Mrs. Smith will take the lead on deciding the winner each month, and Ms. Bronneberg and VP Nicholson will continue to assist with social media and placement of the YOM sign.

2. Sunshine – Susan Cale asked everyone to let her know if someone falls ill or has a baby so she can send a card. Tyler Hueter's wife Margaret was diagnosed with cancer 2 months ago, and Mrs. Cale brought a card for people to sign. She will also be accepting donations for a gift card to send them.

3. Environment – Tim Jarosch is hoping to post Doug Darcy's powerpoint from last week because he cut some things out due to lack of time, but it may still be educational for people to be able to read and review. He also offered to discuss solar panels in a future meeting, and President Lemajic suggested that he give a mini presentation.

4. Publicity/Membership – Nothing to report.

5. Zoning – Mr. Bishop said there is one WT item on the BZA agenda for the September 19 meeting. The owners of the house at 118 Dunneman Avenue and 8th Avenue are requesting a special exception to add a 1-story and 2-story addition that extends a non-conforming 6.2-ft rear setback (25-ft required), a special exception to allow a 1-story addition that extends a non-conforming 18.6-ft rear setback (25-ft required), and a variance to allow a 2-story addition with a 3.9-ft side setback (9-ft required). A neighbor said that we should be consistent in requiring everyone to present to us, so that we are applying the same standard to everyone. Mr. Bishop moved that we write

a letter of opposition because the project was not presented and we do not have enough information. Anna Mcallister seconded. Unanimous support in favor of writing a letter. Another neighbor said that in the future an opposition letter should be automatic and without discussion whenever a project is not presented.

6. Oyster Roast - VP Nicholson said that one of the biggest features of the Oyster Roast is having it at Lowndes Grove, but they cannot host us again this year because of more construction. He was hoping we could have it again at Rose Pavilion, but it requires too many rentals and too much work, so we are not going to have the Oyster Roast this year. We are going to keep the \$5K donation from Patrick Properties and use it for other purposes. President Lemajic said that he is open to other events that could bring the neighborhood together if anyone has any ideas.

VP Nicholson moved to close the meeting, and Mr. Bishop seconded. Meeting closed at 8:04 pm.

The next WTNA Meeting will be October 16, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

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

Councilman Sakran (District 3) 843-819-0507

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