MOUNT WASHINGTON

Mt. Washington Community Council

May 21, 2025, 7pm
Mt. Washington Recreation Center

Welcome and Call to Order
Priscilla Elgersma called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call
Jack Diesel led us in the pledge of allegiance. Priscilla Elgersma made sure we had a quorum of board members present. All board members were present: Priscilla Elgersma, Margeaux Selig, Brian Zeschke, Jack Diesel, Julie Rimer, Gary Noll, Rick Meador, Jon Young and Teddy Morgan-Jablonski.

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes
Gary Noll made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2025 membership meeting, seconded by Barb Slater, and approved by all.

Approval of Agenda
Margeaux Selig made a motion to approve tonight's agenda, seconded by Jack Diesel, then approved by all.

Approval of Treasurer's Report
Jon Young gave the treasurer's report. Julie Rimer made a motion to approve it, seconded by Bob Wetterer, then approved by all.

Community Reports
First Responders: Neighborhood Liaison Officer, Officer Martin, stated we had one of the lower crime rates over the past month. There was a domestic violence strangulation, a motorcycle stolen from Ronaldson, a burglary on Mears, and only two thefts from autos. She cautioned all to lock your cars and keep everything out of sight. The Mt. Washington Neighborhood Crime Report can be found at this link:

https://cpdmobile.cincinnati-oh.gov/Neighborhoods/Reports/D2/MOUNT_WASHINGTON.pdf

Firehouse Station 7: no one could attend to give a report.

Schools: Mt. Washington School: Knight's Fest was fun and was a great success.

Sands Montessori: Tomorrow is the last day of school.

CRC (Cincinnati Recreation Center): Jason Richards stated the shorter rec center hours mean the MWCC June and August meetings will be at 6pm instead of 7pm. There is no meeting in July. The rec center is offering two new classes in the Mt. Washington rec center pool this summer: floating meditation from 8:30am to 9:30am on Mondays, and water aerobics from 8:30am to 9:30am on Wednesdays.

MWCURC (Community Urban Redevelopment Corp): Bob Wetterer thanked American Legion Post 484 for hosting so many of the past spaghetti dinners. The next spaghetti dinner will be held on 9/20 at the Mt. Washington United Methodist Church at 6365 Corbly Road. Going forward, the spaghetti dinners will all be held at the Mt. Washington United Methodist Church.

Bob Wetterer stated there will be a celebration of the lighting of the water tower on Flag Day, June 14. Recognition awards will be at 8:20pm, followed by a flag ceremony at 8:45pm, and the inaugural water tower lighting will occur at 9pm. Twelve trenches were dug to run electricity underground to the new spotlights. There will be ongoing expenses for the lighting because MWCURC pays for the electricity.

The Mt. Washington parade will be held the evening of July 3. Bob Wetterer said he needs volunteers and participants for the parade.

MWCDC (Community Development Corp): Jim Tucker stated the CDC applied for a grant to get funding to improve Tom Roth Place. He said the money would be spent on general beautification and the addition of small tables and chairs. Julie Rimer questioned whether there was room for any tables and chairs in Tom Roth Place. Jim said there are no new updates on the rehab of the former Mt. Washington Ice and Beer.

SPAC (Stanbery Park Advisory Council): The Easter egg hunt was a great success with more than seventy children participating. This Saturday, May 24, the Stanbery Park events start. Madcap puppets, Cool Critters and MyWhy Mobile Produce Market will be there. Tracy Walker will perform on Friday, June 6

American Legion Post 484: No news.

General Business:

Hyde Park petition: Guest Mary Lou Bolce talked about the citizen-led effort to collect signatures to put a referendum on the ballot this November. City Council passed a variance allowing an 85-foot-tall development on Hyde Park Square. That height is substantially above the 50-foot zoning maximum which was established to preserve the character of Hyde Park Square. The referendum will allow voters to decide if they approve of the height variance. If you are interested in signing the petition, please sign at the table that is set up outside of the rec center door where Mary Lou will be seated.

Priscilla Elgersma stated that Dunkin' has not applied for any permits yet for the 2057 Beechmont location. If they do, we will be discussing any proposed variances at upcoming meetings.

Hillside initiative: Julie Rimer attended a virtual meeting last night on the Hillside Initiative. The meeting was run by the City Planning director with members of the Dept. of Zoning and Buildings and Inspections in attendance. The departments are trying to determine which regulations for hillside development belong in the Zoning code and which ones belong in the Buildings and Inspections code.

How we develop our hillsides is very important because they comprise 19 percent of the city's incorporated area. Much of that 19% has already been developed. The remaining hillsides are under greater pressure than ever by developers because they comprise some of the only land left for development.

Eric Russo of the Hillside Trust gave a history of hillside development and told about the legislation that has passed over the years to guide hillside development. Even with that legislation, there have been many catastrophes: landslides, an entire parking lot that ran down a hillside, abandoned developments because the hillsides did not hold the first homes that were built of new hillside subdivisions. The most obvious one is the landslides along Columbia Parkway.

As it stands right now, the city has some Base Development Requirements for hillsides. However, there are enhanced engineering standards since that was written that are not in those standards. The city is using a geotechnical consultant to help determine what the standards should be (Civil Solutions). At the same time, the City acknowledged that there are not guidelines for soil and erosion control while a property is under construction, that they need to do more to minimize risk to existing properties and infrastructure. That is important to our neighbors who came with many questions that still have not been answered about the proposed Sieber Construction/CDC low-income senior housing development at 5455 Beechmont Avenue.

Eric Russo and residents stressed there need to be fines and the city needs to enforce those fines to stop developers from irresponsible hillside development. Ultimately, it has been taxpayers who pay for the problems that have resulted from hillside development.
The group will reconvene this fall or winter.

The City stressed the importance of residents taking a survey, especially if you have been affected or might be affected by hillside development. Here is the link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CincinnatiHillsideInitiative

Invest in Neighborhoods grant ideas: Priscilla Elgersma said there are funds available through Invest in Neighborhoods for projects that benefit the whole community. The MWCC welcomes ideas.

NSP Update – We are using new recording equipment at this meeting. The equipment cost $682.93 and was purchased with NSP funds. Rick Meador thanked Jacob Meyer for all his help in choosing the equipment and in training board members in its use. In time, we plan to have meetings available for viewing on YouTube so those who do not use Facebook can view the meetings. We will need fifty subscribers to get a You Tube channel. For now, you can continue to view the meetings on the Mt. Washington Community Council website.

The first round of the business district cleanup was completed, but Must Landscaping ran $346 over their estimate. Rick has notified Bob Wetterer to have Must offset that overrun in the remaining two business district cleanups.

Jim Tucker made five pieces of plywood artwork of native animals with students at Mt. Washington School. We have identified that the best place for the figures would be within the fenced area of the water tower because they would not be exposed to vandalism there. Julie Rimer will check with GCWW to see if this is possible.

Announcements/Upcoming Events
Margeaux Selig will be planning a Mt. Washington Cleanup event. We will have a dumpster for large item disposal. Margeaux will contact Keep Cincinnati Beautiful for supplies for the cleanup.

Good of the Order

Priscilla Elgersma gave a shoutout to Teddy Morgan Jablonski for receiving her masters in community planning. Rick Meador thanked Health Source and the police officers who helped collect seventy-five pounds of unwanted prescription medications during the April 26 DEA Rx Drug Take Back Event.

Adjournment
Jack Diesel made a motion to adjourn at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rimer
Secretary