

**Village of Mariemont
Council Meeting
November 11, 2024**

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Mr. Ayer, Mr. Bartlett, Mrs. Brownknight, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Van Stone.

Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight, to excuse the absence of Mr. York. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Minutes:

Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer, to approve the minutes as written for the Council Meeting October 28, 2024. On roll call; four ayes, no nays. (Mr. Bartlett abstained due to his absence)

Communications:

*From Service Superintendent James: October 2024 Monthly Report. Mr. Van Stone said the Service Department did a good job working to get the new LED light installed. They look really good in the Old Town Center.

*From Tax Administrator Barlow: October 2024 Monthly Report

*From Building Official Holloway: October 2024 Monthly Report. Mr. Ayer asked if there was headway with the one principal apartment building owner who has yet to participate in rental inspections. Mr. Holloway said there was an incident resulting in a complaint from a renter. He believes it helped calibrate the situation on what the Village's expectations were. Permit applications were filed for patios and windows.

Permission to Address Council:

Ms. Mandi Beecroft, Mariemont Public Library, was granted permission to address Council. She said all month will be DiNovember which will hold a scavenger hunt and digging for dinosaurs. The Museum Center will be present. On November 16 they will hold a holiday card making event.

Mr. Biff Black, 1 Spring Knoll Drive, was granted permission to address Council. He is the current President of the Mariemont Preservation Foundation. At its Board Meeting on October 24, 2024 MPF passed the following motion: "The Mariemont Preservation Foundation opposes the proposed sidewalk from Chestnut Street to Wooster Pike regardless of its design or the materials that would be used. We believe such a sidewalk would be in conflict with the ideals presented in John Nolen's Master Plan for Mariemont's parks.

Ms. Maggie Kenner, 6603 Pleasant Street, was granted permission to address Council. She wanted to share her personal prospective and prospectives from MPPG (Mariemont Preschool Parents Group). MPPG was invited early on to submit input. They represent young families in the neighborhood. She thanked the leaders of the project. The approved plan is in alignment with MPPG goals including: improved safety of the park, maintaining natural aesthetics of the Tot Lot, and increasing accessibility to our facilities. From a personal perspective the loop trail is something she is really excited about and will enjoy with her family. She gathered 48 residents who are in favor of the loop trail plan as presented.

Mr. Rex Bevis, 4011 Miami Road, was granted permission to address Council. He asked that Ms. Kenner read her letter from the MPPG for inclusion in the minutes. Ms. Kenner read the following: "We are collectively writing to share our support for the Dogwood Park Centennial Improvement Project. These improvements increase accessibility, safety and functionality, while also adding enhancements to our beloved park. As members

of the community with young families, we support the loop trail component of the plan with several benefits, including: 1. Increasing accessibility to our fields. A loop trail provides a safe environment for families with young children to walk and improves the enjoyment for members needing stroller or wheelchair access. 2. Improving safety for our youngest community members accessing the park. The trail loop provides safer access to both the fields and the Tot Lot, minimizing the need for young children to cross Pleasant Street, Denny Place, Fieldhouse and multiple driveways. 3. Opportunity for increased use of the field. More community members may be encouraged to enjoy our beautiful fields with the addition of even grounds, providing increased opportunity for building community. We anticipate this improvement project will enable our beloved park and playground to enhance recreation and enjoyment for Mariemont families for many years ahead". It was submitted from 42 people.

Ms. Alicia Stock, 6501 Mariemont Avenue, was granted permission to address Council. She supports MPPG position on the proposed work at Dogwood Park, She thanked everyone who worked on this project. The plan is great from a safety perspective and ADA compliance.

Ms. Annie Greiwe, 3808 East Street, was granted permission to address Council. She saw the plan for the Connector planning. She was interested in traffic calming measures. She voiced that everyone uses East Street, not just Miami, as a cut through to avoid the light at the square. It is concerning when trying to cross Wooster Pike. She would like Council to investigate a traffic calming measure due to all the young children and excessive speeding when evaluating the Connector plans are considered. Mayor Brown said they will be studying the intersection where the trail crossed Miami. There has been a light erected but it not yet active. The pavement striping still needs to be done. The study will be an open meeting and he encouraged her to attend the meeting to voice her concerns.

Ms. Karen Koetzle, 3865 Beech Street, was granted permission to address Council. She was made aware of the plans to put a sidewalk between Wooster Pike and Chestnut Street. She it against it and stated it is not necessary. She is tired of Council spending money when there are so many things in the Village that need to be fixed. We have trees falling on cars every autumn and those trees need to be looked at. She does not care if it is a grant. We do not need to spend money on a sidewalk that is not needed and will cost more with further maintenance requirements. It is a silly idea. Mayor Brown said more money is being allocated to the tree budget in the upcoming budget. Dr. Lewis said the Tree Board has worked on coming up with a comprehensive plan from pruning to planting trees. Ms. Koetzle said the Village is a Tree USA community and we need to maintain, trim and feed our trees.

Ms. Louise Schomburg, 3885 Oak Street, was granted permission to address Council. She does not see the need to have a crosswalk going through Chestnut to Wooster Pike through the lower field. Presently there are sidewalks and crosswalks which allow ways to get across Wooster Pike. She agrees there are other pressing needs, such as taking care of the sidewalks we already have which are in disrepair and pose tripping hazards.

Motion to Pay the Bills:

Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone to approve the bills. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Committee Reports:

The Public Works & Service Committee met on November 4, 2024, at 5:00 PM. In attendance were the Committee Chairperson Bob Van Stone, Committee Members Randy York and Rob Bartlett, Mayor Bill Brown and Village Engineer Chris Ertel. Also attending were Council members Matt Ayer, Susan Brownknight, Dr. Marcy Lewis and approximately 25 village residents. The sole agenda item was evaluation of the Choice One plans for the Dale Park sidewalk and making a decision on getting bids on the project. Mr. Van Stone summarized the Choice One plans to include the widths and

multiple switchbacks. Copies of the Choice One plans were distributed to the residents at the meeting. Mr. Van Stone also read Mr. Ertel's memo on potential changes to the bridge.

At that point, the meeting was opened up to public comment. A total of 13 different people spoke. The overwhelming opinion was that the sidewalk should not be constructed due to a variety of reasons including:

Why build the sidewalk?

No survey or requests from apartment tenants for the sidewalk

Apartment tenants do not walk through Dale Park

Wanting no change to the bridge

Loss of green space

Waste of money

Village parks are part of the National Historic Designation document and John Nolen did not want the green space divided by sidewalks and paved walkways. This may be a risk to Mariemont's Historical Designation.

Why have we not seen the plans until now?

One participant reminded the audience that rolling hills are not friendly to disabled children, but it was also noted that this particular sidewalk would not be a preferred path for disabled individuals with the slope down the hill and back up the hill and the multiple switchbacks.

During the discussion, Mr. York said that the purpose of the sidewalk is to connect the community which is a goal of SORTA. Mr. Ertel confirmed that the drawings being reviewed had only been created about 3 weeks prior to the meeting. The previous sketches were conceptual drawings created before the topological survey was completed by Choice One and did not show the number of switchbacks required to bring the slope into ADA compliance.

Mr. York moved the Committee should forward the plan to Council with no recommendation. Mr. Van Stone thought that the Committee should make a recommendation. Mr. Bartlett seconded the motion. The committee approved the motion. Mr. York and Mr. Bartlett were in favor and Mr. Van Stone voted no. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Mr. Bartlett said he understands the concerns residents have regarding the sidewalk. He referenced a meeting ARB approving the concrete work at Dale Park, including a large concrete apron. He struggles with the inconsistency of not putting in the sidewalk. Mayor Brown did not believe Mr. Bartlett was viewing is the final plan. The concrete planned for Dale Park has been scaled back due to financial cost.

Dr. Lewis said part of the reason it went before the ARB was not because of the sidewalk but due to the structure. There can be an improvement in the consistency in the process. There is some subject interpretation if a sidewalk is a structure. If we want consistency, we need to look at the code and see how we vet changes to our parks. Our job as Council members is to listen to the residents. She was questioned why the Committee did not make a recommendation, but kick the vote to Council when immediately following, the Health and Recreation Committee made many recommendations regarding Dogwood Park.

Mr. Ayer said the Public Works and Service Committee looked at SORTA grant opportunities. SORTA is in favor of making these types of connections. A sketch was made by our Village Engineer and the Public Works Committee unanimously decided to pursue this grant application which was awarded. There is not a sponsor for this project, or a group of people who want to see this sidewalk happen. He believes Mr. York and the Committee deserve tremendous credit for getting these funding opportunities. Residents have spoken out against it and Council should use this as a learning experience to look at all the details before applying for a grant.

Mrs. Brownknight asked if there would be any implications to not going forward with the grant. Mr. Ayer said there are some unknowns, but because we received a grant is not enough of a reason to do the project. The funding for the other sidewalk projects will not be in jeopardy. Our score in the future will be reduced, but the Village will not be blacklisted from applying. Engineer Ertel does not believe the Village will be injuring the ability for funding in the future. Metro Transit Infrastructure Fund grant program will fund project three quarters of a mile of a bus route. Essentially any street in the Village is eligible for funding for roadway, sidewalks and curbs.

Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett that Council does not move forward with Dale Park Project and thus use this project as a learning opportunity for future grant applications. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Miscellaneous:

- Leaf Season will run through the end of 2024. As a reminder, please do NOT rake leaves into the street and do not put pumpkins in the stack of leaves.
- Village Offices will be closed Thursday and Friday November 28th and 29th, 2024 in Observation of Thanksgiving.
- Luminaria will be Saturday December 7th from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 with Santa, carriage rides and cookies. Luminaria kits will be available for sale at the Scout Christmas Tree stand.
- December Council Meeting will be held Monday December 16, 2024, beginning immediately after the end of the Capital Improvement Meeting which starts at 5:30 p.m. Monday December 16, 2024.
- Village Offices will be closed Wednesday and Thursday December 25th and 26th in Observation of Christmas.
- Village Offices will be closed Wednesday January 1, 2025, in Observation of New Year's Day.

Resolutions:

“To Appoint Scott Remer as a Non-Voting Member of the Tree Advisory Board for the Calendar Year 2025” had a third reading. Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Ayer to adopt the Resolution. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Resolution No. R-74-24 was adopted.

“To Appoint Marsha Lindner as a Non-Voting Member of the Tree Advisory Board for the Calendar Year 2025” had a second reading.

“To Appoint Kim Beach as a Member of the Mariemont Racquet Club Board for the Calendar Year 2025” had a second reading.

“To Accept Bid of Rumpke of Ohio, Inc. for Collection and Disposal of Solid Waste, Yard Waste and Recyclables; To Authorize Contract and Pay for Services” had a first reading.

“A Resolution Authorizing the Village to Apply for a 2024 Saving America's Treasures Federal Grant for the Family Statuary Project; and To Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mrs. Brownknight to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third readings. On roll call; three ayes, two nays. (Mr. Ayer and Dr. Lewis dissenting). The Resolution had a second reading. Mr. Ayer said he is in favor of the project but does not have enough information to move forward. He would like to approve this on emergency at the next meeting. He would like to know how much we are applying for, is there a promissory note coming from MPF and who will administer the grant, reports etc. Mr. Black (MPF) said he will provide the information for the next meeting and reminded Council the grant deadline is December 12, 2024. Mrs. Brownknight suggested a list be prepared of questions to be answered. Mr. Ayer moved, seconded by Dr. Lewis to table the Resolution until the next Council meeting pending additional information. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

Ordinances:

“To Amend Section 78, Schedule I, of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances to Remove Stop Sign Located at Hiawatha and Petoskey and TO Install New Three-Way Stop Sign at the Intersection of Pocahontas Avenue and Hiawatha Avenue; and To Declare Emergency” had a first reading. Mrs. Brownknight moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to suspend the rules to allow for the second and third reading. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. The Ordinance had a second reading. Mayor Brown said presently there is a three-way stop at on Hiawatha and Petoskey. It is proposed to make a three-way stop at Pocahontas and Hiawatha. It is difficult to see those coming from upper Pocahontas turning on to Hiawatha. The control of the right-of-way is supported by the Traffic Engineers, Police Chief Hines and the design group of the Mariemont Connector. The new traffic pattern sign by Ted Brown is most beneficial. The Ordinance had a third reading. Mr. Bartlett moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone to adopt the Ordinance. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Mr. Van Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Bartlett to invoke the Emergency Clause. On roll call; five ayes, no nays. Ordinance No. O-17-24 was adopted.

Mayor Brown referred to the Rules and Law Committee the recodification of the Mariemont Code of Ordinances.

Mayor Brown referred to the Finance Committee the Waste Collection Fee and the Salary Ordinance.

Mr. Bartlett recommended the Tree Board Plan should be moved to the Safety Committee from the Public Works and Service Committee due to the storm damage. Mr. Van Stone said the Committee is going to meet later in the month on the subject. Mr. Bartlett said it needs to be addressed as the Fiscal Officer needs to move forward with preparing the budget.

It was agreed to strike from the agenda – Committee of the Whole prioritizing Capital Improvement Projects, and to change in the Safety Committee the line-item Old Town Center Lighting (Parking Lot) to stand alone.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

William A. Brown, Mayor

Kelly I. Rankin, Fiscal Officer