

Willo Neighborhood Association
Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2021

Officers present: Bob Cannon (President) Brad Brauer (Vice President), Opal Wagner (Secretary) and Linda Doescher (Treasurer)

Board Members present: Erika Gagnon, Jeremy Schachter, Aaron Montañó Searles, Charlene Gum, Patrice Wappel, Sandra Lefcovich Moreno and Ann Bommersbach (via Zoom)

Board Members absent: James Varela and Kush Govani

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Bob Cannon, President

Approval of Minutes: Opal Wagner made a motion to approve the September 2021 meeting minutes as previously presented to the Board. Jeremy Schachter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Linda Doescher presented the Willo Neighborhood Association May-September 2021 Statement of Financial Activity and Statement of Financial Position as of Sept. 30, 2021. Linda reported Willo's current financial position is "in the black" by \$6,000 due to Block Watch grant funds, Willo photo book sales, and vendors who have reserved spaces for Willo Home Tour 2022. Linda reported that, while we are not where we were last year at this time financially, the emergency cash fund totals \$28,000 and investments total \$98,592. The Block Watch grant will run from July 1st to June 30th. Linda reported she is doing the first quarterly report for the Block Watch grant program and that there are very specific provisions on what it must be spent for. She said she plans to apply again for the 2022-23 grant cycle because the grant has been a huge help for The Willo NA, especially considering the loss of revenue from the cancellation of Home Tour 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Brad Brauer made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Erika Gagnon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Luminarias – Bob Cannon reported that Chris Norton could not be here tonight because his mother passed away and we send our sympathies to Chris and his family. There is an article in the upcoming *Inside Willo* about Luminarias 2021. Luminaria nights will be Dec. 23, 24 and 25th. Roll out for luminaria set-up and block parties, if each street wants to do one, will be Dec. 23rd. Tear-down will be on the 26th.

Streets and Traffic Safety Committee Report – Opal Wagner reported as follows:

As of the Willo Neighborhood Association's Sept. 8, 2021, Board meeting, we had not received a reply to our August 3, 2021, letter to the Phoenix City Manager regarding our concerns with the "3rd and 5th Avenues North" project in Willo. The Board voted to allocate up to \$3,000 for

consulting or legal fees to ascertain our rights to enforce the Willo Conservation Plan's traffic mitigation provisions.

On or about Sept. 12, 2021, we received a reply to our August 3, 2021, letter to then Phoenix City Manager Ed Zuercher. Mr. Zuercher stated the 90% design meeting would be held in September or October 2021.

On Friday, October 8, 2021, Willo President Bob Cannon and Streets and Traffic Safety Committee Chairperson Opal Wagner had a conference call with Councilwoman Pastor's Chief of Staff, Michael Peterson-Incorvaia, to discuss the 3rd and 5th Avenue improvement project in Willo and related concerns.

Bob Cannon and Opal Wagner recapped the past 5-plus years of Willo's efforts to see the 3rd and 5th Avenues improvements in Willo come to fruition, but that momentum seems to have ground to a halt with the "90 percent design meeting" having been pushed several times (in Feb. 2021, we were told the meeting would be in July, 2021; In June, 2021 we were sent an email from Laurie Smith in the Streets Transportation Department indicating the meeting would be in mid-to-late August. In July 2021, after inquiring again, we were given an update stating the meeting would be in September 2021; after the Willo Board voted to send a letter to City Manager, Ed Zuercher, we received a reply in September that a 90% design meeting would be scheduled in September or October 2021 with the 100% completion set for November 2021. Since then, we've received no word of an October or November meeting being scheduled).

Bob Cannon stressed safety concerns, including numerous incidents of speeding and wrong-way driving being observed daily. He also spoke of the lack of articulation between 3rd and 5th Avenues north and south of McDowell Rd. and related driver confusion putting pedestrians at risk. He also stressed the need for consistency in the Sonoran Bikeway, which passes through Willo, citing the lack of articulation between the one-way bike paths in Willo and the two-way bike paths in Roosevelt, leading to confusion for bicyclists and compounding safety issues. He also directed Mr. Peterson-Incorvaia (who was unaware of the Willo Conservation Plan and Willo's status as a Special Conservation District) to the specific traffic mitigation goals and objectives set forth in the Willo Conservation Plan and how they are not being met.

Opal Wagner cited the need for paving of 3rd and 5th Avenues due to widespread patching of the asphalt from numerous recent digging projects for pipe repairs, fiberoptic cable installation, etc. in our area and inquired if the 3rd and 5th Aves. improvements could be funded as part of much-needed re-paving of these streets as an alternative means of obtaining funding for the construction portion of the project.

Michael Peterson-Incorvaia said he would talk with the appropriate parties in the Streets Transportation Department and other city departments to get all our questions answered. He sent a follow-up email asking Bob Cannon to list our top 5 priorities, to which Bob has replied.

Willo Kids Club - Valerie Gentz reported on plans for Willo Kids Club's participation in the Celebrate Willo event on October 30th, including decorating Walton Park with balloons and Halloween decorations the kids have made, etc.

Celebrate Willo Event - Erika Gagnon said she hopes everyone will come out for the Celebrate Willo event on Sat. October 30th from 5-7pm at Walton Park. There will be prizes for best Halloween decorations for yards and there will also be prizes for the best costume – everyone is invited to come in costume. Food trucks for the event will include Greek food and a churro truck. Arrangements have been made to close the streets around Walton Park and the committee is working on seating. The committee will be meeting this Sunday, Oct. 17th to finalize more of the details.

Willo Photo Book - Diana Herman reported 157 books have been pre-sold so far, bringing in about \$7800. She said the book is at the publisher right now, and once she gets the first draft back the committee has a team of proofreaders to make sure the book is perfect. Diana said this has been a 2-year project for the committee. She said the publisher has been great, the book is on schedule, and it will be ready in time for Home Tour. The committee plans to have a booth to sell the books at Willo Home Tour.

Social Committee – Bob Cannon provided an update for Nikki Armstrong. He reported October's Happy Hour was well attended and a lot of fun with many new neighbors in attendance. He thanked Carl Schurtz for doing a great job with welcoming new neighbors. The next Willo Happy Hour will be November 12, 2021, from 5:30-7:30p.m. at 518 W. Cypress.

Social Sites/Communication – Jeremy Schachter reported Willo's Facebook page is growing and has lots of new members. He said he has been kicking off spammers. He said he will be pre-posting neighborhood events multiple times to ensure everyone sees the posts. He has pre-posted the Kids Club Halloween event.

Block Watch – Brad Brauer introduced Officer Ben Harris, CAO. Officer Harris reported Crime Stats catching a trend of someone activating home alarms in Willo. There doesn't appear to be a specific time, but it generally happens in midafternoon. One garage was broken into, along with another alarm activation. He said there have been several suspicious person calls. He said one person was caught by Phoenix P.D. because someone reported the subject was trying to steal their vehicle. Officers pursued the subject on foot down Windsor. The person was caught and booked into jail. There have been no reported catalytic converter thefts in the neighborhood. Officer Harris said 2 of 7 alarm activation calls were due to accidental activation. In the other 5 cases, there was no indication of forced entry attempted, all doors and window secure. That indicates it's a person trying doors or door handles. This usually indicates the onset of someone eventually breaking into a house.

Neighbors expressed concern about a suspicious person roaming the neighborhood under the pretext of distributing Scientology literature who walked into the Home Tour Chairperson's back

yard during a meeting. Frustration was expressed at the 45-minute wait time experienced in trying to report this person to Crime Stop. Officer Harris explained calls such as, "Someone is breaking into my home" are prioritized over suspicious persons. Neighbors shared concerns with Officer Harris over ongoing heavy equipment parked in the front yard at 78 W. Cypress, along with welding, metal fabrication and other business activities being carried out in the front yard beginning as early as 6:00 a.m. Lots of homeless people have been walking up and down the street on Edgemont yelling, etc. making it scary for residents to walk there, and the bus stop on Thomas is being used as an "apartment". Officer Harris said Phoenix Cares is handling calls regarding the homeless and he will follow up on residents' concerns.

Inside Willo - Sandra Lefcovich Moreno reported the November issue of *Inside Willo* will have a comprehensive explanation of the Willo Luminarias for all our new neighbors. She said the Kids Club had submitted a beautiful article and Home Tour 2022 will be given a lot of coverage.

Home Tour 2022 – Bob Cannon announced that since Brad Brauer is getting more heavily involved with Block Watch duties and is needed on 3rd and 5th Avenues and Zoning issues, Jamie Cowgill will be taking on the role of Home Tour 2022 co-chair. Bob thanked Jamie Cowgill and Teresa Fontana for all their work on Willo Home Tour 2022.

Teresa Fontana said she had sent a full report to Bob Cannon to share and reported she had a great Home Tour meeting at her home last night with 24 people attending. She said the key chair roles for the Home Tour Subcommittees have now been filled. Bob Herman has vendors lined up. The homeowners and committee members are engaged and excited. Teresa said the committee is prepared to "roll with whatever happens" in Feb. and said she has had a lot of support from the Board and volunteers. She said, "We're always looking for people to sign up for subcommittees, and people for day of tour." Meetings are posted on willophx.com and Facebook. There are now 8 confirmed homes plus the firehouse. They are working on securing another 4 or 5 homes plus gardens and possibly some studios. New technology will include being able to scan a QR code and watch a video of interesting things in the neighborhood. Teresa said there will be some revisions this year, such as eliminating the brunch and cocktail party, with more time spent engaging with and helping homeowners to feel prepared and not overwhelmed and keeping Home Tour fun for all involved.

Kleen Streets and Yard Sale - Patrice Wappel thanked the Social Sites/Communication committee for putting ads for the Willo Yard Sale on social media and thanked Darren Leek for taking the signs down. She announced the next yard sale will be on April 9, 2022. Patrice reported 7th Ave. got a cleanup last week.

Zoning Committee – Tom Doescher reported the owner of the former Duke's Photography building has not yet gotten back to him with a proposal for what will go there, but Raising Cane's is out.

The request for a zoning variance for a 5-foot pool fence in the front yard at 78 W. Cypress has been continued to Dec. 23rd because the Applicant didn't notify the neighbors correctly.

The King's Beer and Wine sign on Central and Thomas was installed without obtaining the required variance. They obtained a variance after the fact. When the permit was issued, neither brightness nor color temp. were addressed and the City permitted them to use 7100 K LED lights, but they require a dimmer to reduce the brightness level by 50% at 10:30 p.m. Tom notified Phoenix DNA, Tapestry and other neighborhood associations who have worked on the sign brightness issue of the City's decision. There will be a meeting in the future between David Williams, sign coordinator for the City, and the neighborhoods to again discuss the sign brightness issue.

309 W. Monte Vista – There was a Historic Preservation hearing last week on the application to construct a 2-story structure in the rear yard. The hearing officer granted the application to permit a 20-foot, 2-story building which would be a garage on the first floor and a personal space/yoga studio on the second floor with a possible walkway connecting the roof deck to the existing home. The Willo Zoning Committee did not receive the staff report from the City until the Sunday before the Tuesday hearing. We had to ask the City for drawings. The Committee agreed to oppose the application based on the Willo Conservation Plan and the guidelines that Historic Preservation Office is supposed to follow that require an outbuilding to be subordinate to the existing historic home. After the Hearing Officer's decision, which had to be appealed within five calendar days, the Committee then met and voted to appeal the decision which was then submitted timely to the Historic Preservation Office. We are now asking the Board for their support to oppose the building of 2-story structure in the back yard at 309 W. Monte Vista.

Opal Wagner said that in recent history, the Historic Preservation Office had opposed 2-story additions and outbuildings in Willo, and this was an unexpected outcome that could set a bad precedent for Willo. Opal presented the following motion: I move that the Willo Neighborhood Association authorize its President, Dr. Robert Cannon, to send a letter to the City of Phoenix in support of the appeal of HPCA 2100117 and in opposition to the construction of a 2-story garage/yoga studio at 309 W. Monte Vista in the Willo Historic District. We believe this project would set a bad precedent that is not in keeping with the Willo Conservation Plan's stated goal of preserving the unique character of the Willo neighborhood. Aaron Montañó Searles seconded the motion.

Bruce MacArthur and Jennifer Hunter, homeowners/applicants of 309 W. Monte Vista spoke in favor of their proposal for a 2-story outbuilding stating they understood there is room for disagreement, and that they believed there was historic precedent within the Broadmoor subdivision. They related they were not going to put in windows that are intrusive, etc. They said, "We're not going to budge" on the building's height, but said they wanted to come to the meeting for the opportunity to "talk it over."

After discussion, Bob Cannon called for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Tom Doescher said the appeal was scheduled to go before the Historic Preservation Commission on October 18th (this coming Monday) and reminded neighbors they needed to register in advance if they wanted to speak at the hearing. Tom said he would have the information about the hearing published on willophx.com.

Bruce MacArthur said he had asked that the appeal be continued, so it may not be heard until November.

Old Business - Bob Cannon said he continues to meet with the other 4-Corners Historic Districts presidents monthly. He said Encanto-Palmcroft's Home Tour will be the month after ours. Roosevelt is busy with traffic and parking issues. FQ Story's Holiday Home Tour is a "no" for this year.

New Business - None.

Brad Brauer made a motion to adjourn. Patrice Wappel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.