

March 13, 2023 West End Neighborhood Meeting

Martinsville City Council toured the West End area on March 13, 2023 beginning at 5:30pm.

Those present for the tour were Council Member Kathy Lawson, City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Building Inspector Kris Bridges, Inspector Luis Rosas, Police Chief Rob Fincher, Officer Coretha Gravely, and Martinsville Bulletin Reporter Holly Kozelsky.

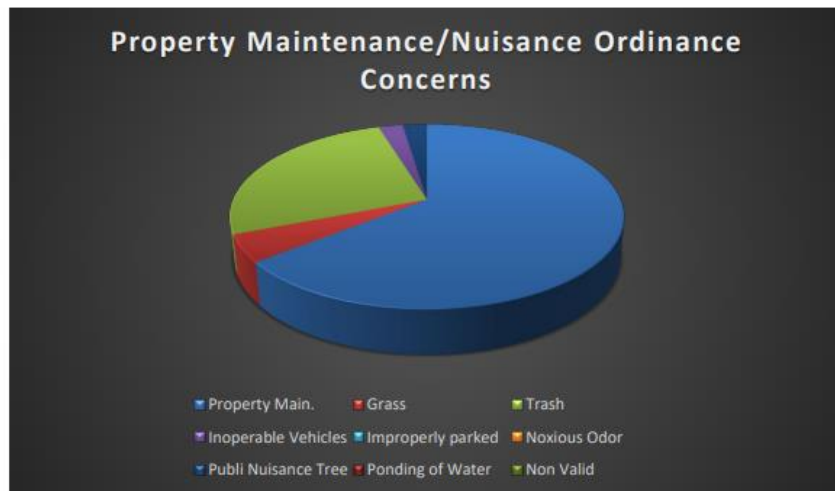
The tour traveled to Bridge Street, Market Street, then West Church Street where attendees briefly discussed the vacant V. M. Draper property. The tour resumed back to West Church, crossing Memorial Boulevard to Fayette Street, down First Street where they looked at a fire damaged structure, and discussed the condition of the Paradise Inn. Over to Roundabout Road, Pony Place, and Cardinal Lane where they briefly discussed West End Park. The tour continued back out to Pony Place to Fayette Street, then Pine Hall Road, Wray Street, Yorkshire Road, Maxine Road, Carver Court, the Top Street where attendees briefly discussed the PHR CDBG project. The tour continued back out to Fayette Street and Beaver Street, turned south on Memorial Boulevard to Katherine Street, Smith Street, Swanson Street, Armstead Avenue and then back to the Municipal Building where the tour concluded at approximately 6:30 pm. Along the route, attendees noticed a number of locations where houses had been demolished and a number of houses that had been posted and were scheduled for demolition. They observed an area at the end of Armstead Avenue where there was evidence of 4-wheelers traveling through the area to access Baldwin Park and discussed putting up posts or a barrier to prevent that from occurring. Attendees also observed several inoperative vehicles and a number of locations with basketball goals in the street. It was generally noted that most areas were clean and houses or properties that were observed with possible code violations were already be in the system.

Neighborhood Meeting, Monday, 7:00 pm, Albert Harris Elementary School, 711 Smith Road – Those who attended the neighborhood tour were present for the meeting along with Mayor LC Jones, Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls, Council Member Tammy Pearson, Public Information Officer Kendall Davis, Hannah Powell of Community Development, several PD officers, and approximately 20 residents from the area.

Mayor Jones opened the meeting at 7:00pm and welcomed attendees.

Mayor Jones called on City Manager Towarnicki to summarize the neighborhood tour from earlier in the evening and to also review issues brought up at the previous West End neighborhood meeting in May 2022.

Inspector Luis Rosas summarized the property maintenance report, stating that the Community Development office works diligently to address all resident concerns and shared contact information and the location of the office.



Property Maintenance - 27

Grass-2

Trash-11

Inoperable Vehicles-1

Improperly parked vehicle-0

Noxious Odor-0

Public Nuisance Tree-0

Ponding of Water-0

Non-Valid Complaints-0

#### Demolitions

1 Permit issued

Police Chief Rob Fincher updated residents on the crime report in the West End area and introduced several members of his staff.

Mayor Jones opened the floor to questions and comments from residents.

Lawrence Mitchell of Second Street asked questions about the cameras installed at various locations, stating that the cameras appear to look like surveillance cameras. Police Chief Rob Fincher responded and indicated the camera are license plate readers that only detect and read license plates, they are not used for surveillance.

Toolie Hairston of Terry Street commented about trash on lots beside of Hairston Funeral Home and High Street Baptist Church and about speeding on Armstead Avenue. Hairston noted that citizens need to be more active and work together to solve problems.

Charlie Holland of 114 Crestwood Court commented that playground equipment at West End Park was the same equipment that was there when he was a kid; the park needs attention, new equipment, and renovations. Holland also commented about the possibility of a dog park and walking trail. City Manager Towarnicki gave a summary of the park plan update process and noted that public meetings would be held in the near future and citizens should participate in those meetings to let their feelings be known about the parks, equipment, new usages, etc.)

Willa Mae Harris of 1010 D Street commented that she doesn't see police cars in the area anymore.

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Kenneth Mohammed of 209 Fayette Street commented about some of the street lights being out and not being replaced; Mohammed stated that the banners and new lights should not stop at Market Street and should continue down Fayette Street.

Malvester Dixon, also commented that the “Uptown” concept should be continued down Fayette Street to the 220 intersection.

May Ann Smith of 507 Second Street commented about the condition of the front of the Paradise Inn, specifically the broken awning and asked that it be removed. Smith also expressed concerns about speeding on Second Street.

Mr. Baker of Kings Way Road asked what could be done to attract new businesses to the community and said the area needs more youth and young adult activities.

Lawrence Mitchell of Second Street noted the handouts regarding the community meeting need to look a little less threatening and look more community friendly.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

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Karen Roberts  
Clerk of Council

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LC Jones  
Mayor