



FOREST HILL HOME OWNERS
ANNUAL RESIDENTS' MEETING
Tuesday, November 11, 2014

The Annual Meeting of the Forest Hill Home Owners was held on Tuesday, November 11, 2014, at Hope Lutheran Church at Northvale and N. Taylor beginning at 7:18 p.m. There were about 110 residents in attendance including the following Executive Committee members: Hester Lewellen, President; Mary Rice, 2015 Senior Vice-President; Tony Rupcic, Treasurer; Joyce Rothenberger, Secretary; Dale Rothenberger & Dean Sieck, Co-Chairs of Standards; Kate Lewis, Membership V.P.; Sally Miller, Chair of Cottage & Grounds Committee; Jeff Dross, Newsletter Editor; Les Jones, Marketing Committee Chair; and Christopher Hubbert, Chair of Board of Trustees.

Hester called the meeting to order and gave a welcome to all attendees and thanked Pastor Don King for hosting our meeting. Because today is Veterans Day, she asked all veterans to stand and be acknowledged. Hester then introduced the Executive Board members.

Minutes of the November 12, 2013, Annual Residents' meeting had been handed out along with an agenda and packet of information. **A motion to approve the minutes was made by Howard Maier and supported by Dean Sieck. CONSENSUS**

A Financial report for the past 10 months was presented by Tony. We are at a surplus this year for the first time since 2009. In the past five years we have made major improvements to the Blue Cottage, which included: a new boiler, new air conditioner, shake roof restoration, public sidewalk leveled, electrical upgrades, the replacement of glass in several windows, plumbing upgrades, and the parking lot repaved. Also during this period Reilly Painting & Contracting donated to the Blue Cottage the complete painting of the outside and inside, and the hardwood floors refinished. Tony is expecting a positive balance at the end of the year of \$1,694.

Hester reminded all that our website is www.fhho.org and that the rules and regulations for FHHO, the list of contributors, Forest Hill homes that are for sale, and past minutes are posted there. She also encouraged everyone to join fhho.nextdoor.com, our private social network, nearing 300 members.

Standards report: Dale explained the background of the standards committee. It was derived from the creation of the Forest Hill community by the Rockefellers. Initially there were 81 French Norman homes built in the early '30s. The area was further developed after WWII, and covenants, which are part of all of our deeds, were written to maintain the character and quality

of our community (these are also on our website). Based on the covenants are “standards”, which operationalize the covenants. Exterior changes must be submitted to the standards committee and the respective city. These applications can now be downloaded from the fhho.org website. Dean said that three years ago standards enforcement had been comparatively lax. In 2011, Dale, Dean, Ted Howard, and Ron DeVito drove around all of Forest Hill and noted homes that were in non-compliance. This summer there were 39 houses not in compliance. By the end of October, 13 had complied and 26 still needed to do so. Marla Zwinggi reported that when her house needed renovations, they went to the Heritage Homes division of the Cleveland Restoration Society for a low interest loan. They offer loans to any home that is over 50 years old and the loans are not needs-based. Mary Ogle runs that program. Dean announced that phone messages to the Blue Cottage are picked up every Tuesday morning.

Membership report: Katie reported that in 2014 there have been 22 homes sold, 2 to investors. We also have 18 bank-owned houses. Katie thanked all of the trustees for doing their part in welcoming new residents.

Cottage & Grounds: Sally reported that FHHO owns 3 properties: the Blue Cottage, a lot at the corner of Mayfield and Burlington, and a lot on Mayfield. We have turned over the ownership of the Northvale/Forest Hills Triangle to East Cleveland, but continue to keep it mowed. We have seeded some of the bare spots. Ralph Harrison continues to do our yard work and snow plowing. Master Gardner Lois Rose offered a class on hedge trimming at the cottage and brought a hedge under control. Ted Howard helped cut down a hedge dividing the backyard. The cottage was professionally cleaned throughout the year thanks to a donation by Hattie Helms. Sally said she can always use help and welcomes all volunteers.

Publications: Jeff said the spring newsletter was mailed, but the fall newsletter was sent out by email as an experiment. He would like feedback on the emailed version.

Marketing report: Les reported that there has been no recent concerted effort to market FHHO, and he would like to change that. We should be a “destination” neighborhood; we need to get residents engaged; we need to take advantage of what we have. He feels we should market FHHO to greater Cleveland, and use email to get out more frequent newsletters and reach residents for major events. After being elected Marketing Chair in September he quickly made up a new FHHO brochure and has used it twice already.

Chair’s report: Chris thanked everyone for coming this evening. He explained the process of getting FHHO on the National Registry of Historic Places. Virtually all of the homes are 50 years old or more, which means we qualify for inclusion, although we still have to “make a case.” Being in NRHP does not restrict what homeowners can do to their homes. In addition to the original Rockefellers our homes are mid-century moderns, colonials, and a variety of other styles. The preliminary application has been presented to the Ohio Historical Society which is expected to okay our proceeding to the next stage. Jane Busch, Kara Hamley O’Donnell, and Deanna Bremer Fisher have all been helping with the application. Benefits to being on the registry are signs when entering the neighborhood, the honor of living in a historic area, and a positive brand for us, all of which should have a positive impact on the value of our homes. As the process moves on there will be an informational meeting and homeowners will be notified.

We will need to raise funds in excess of \$10,000 to finish the application, possibly through significant grant funds.

President's report: Hester expressed her gratitude to the officers, trustees, and Marla Zwinggi who headed up the huge garage sale and the Hawaiian party at the cottage.

New Business:

Election of Trustees for 2015: The list of nominated Trustees for 2015 was handed out. **A motion to accept the nominations for Trustees was made by Bonnie Bolitho and supported by Susan Lefferts. CONSENSUS**

Forest Hill Action Committee: Les is the chair of this newly formed committee. He reported that they have met 8 times. They built a “mind map” of what they want to do, scaled it down several times, and are starting now on the activities. He wanted all to know that they are not a separate organization, but a kind of subcommittee to FHHO. Five areas of focus are:

- Strengthening FHHO standards enforcement to help improve property values
- Building the Forest Hill area brand regionally to attract new residents
- Expanding community engagement utilizing social media tools
- Exploring investment and funding options to improve the Forest Hill area
- Coordinating with other local support groups that complement our vision

Each of these areas defines a new sub-committee for FHAC. If you are interested in becoming a member of any of these committees, please contact Les Jones at LJonesagn@sbcglobal.net.

The business part of the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Hester then introduced Howard Maier who introduced Chris Ronayne, President, University Circle, Inc. Chris gave a dynamic presentation, citing Cleveland's history of innovators, explaining the growth of University Circle, Inc. and showing how Forest Hill can be included as part of the next concentric circle surrounding UCI.

The evening ended at 9:18 p.m.

/s/ Joyce Rothenberger

Joyce Rothenberger, Secretary