

At the annual Red Bridge Homeowners Association meeting 11/4/2023 at 10:30 am, at the Southpoint Church of Christ, there were four board members in attendance - Sharron Hill, Eric Strautman, Paul Blum, and Lynn Youngberg.

Refreshments of coffee, orange juice, donuts, cookies, and specialty popcorn were provided. Additionally, cookies and specialty popcorn.

HOA President Sharron Hill called the meeting to order at 10:42 am.

She announced that we had three guest speakers, **Officer Darren Carter, 6th District Councilman Duncan**, and **Brandon Buckley** of Lane4. She said that Brandon's available time was short, so she asked him to speak first.

Buckley recited a short history of the Red Bridge Shopping Center and the now vacant Sun Fresh, saying it was purchased by Lane4 in 2014 and that substantial remodeling has taken place.

Balls later purchased the grocery store from Lipari's, but it closed unexpectedly in January of 2023. Buckley said that Lane4 received numerous calls and emails about what the neighborhood wants for that space. Accordingly, Lane4 reached out to Aldi, Price Chopper, and Fairway Markets, but failed to get much interest from them.

He said Lane4 desired a grocer that would be less expensive than Price Chopper but one that would also have access to fresher meats and produce.

He said he expects a late April opening of **Red Bridge Farm Fresh Market**, operated by Kaw Valley Food Stores, an operator of several supermarkets and c-stores, but one who does not source their produce and meat from Associated Wholesale Grocers.

Lane4 is responsible for the parking lot and exterior of the building and plans to raise the profile of the building so that it can more readily be seen from Holmes.

He then took several questions from the audience.

What's going to become of the old library location? He said offices are most likely because the location is too hidden for successful retail.

Where did the Ripple Glass recycling container go? He said he didn't realize it was gone.

Other audience members suggested other nearby locations where these containers could be found.

What's taking so long for The Limit and the new Charcuterie business to open? He responded that both are due to open within a few weeks.

Officer Carter then spoke about the goals and structure of the Community Engagement Division of which he is a part.

He explained that the division is more about crime prevention than law enforcement. He said that deep conversations are had about domestic violence, homelessness, juvenile issues, at the source of those types of incidents. "Crime Prevention By Design" is a phrase he used, that he said was directed at improving the overall quality of life for all in the area.

He then recited some crime stats for our area, first talking about October versus September, and then comparing year-to-date to last year.

He then took questions from the audience.

What can be done about the empty apartment building on Oak Street? The person asking the question said she was concerned that if left vacant, it would attract homeless people and crime.

He said he'd look into that situation.

The homelessness topic took off at that point, with many people identifying a homeless camp south of the Minor Park Golf Course behind some boarded up homes along Holmes.

Councilman Duncan joined Officer Carter in addressing the questions about the homeless, or "the houseless" as he put it.

He explained that addressing the houseless situation is multifaceted because the people often have mental health issues or drug addiction issues that probably contributed to them being houseless in the first place.

He said that "closing" a homeless camp is a futile effort of "Whack-a-Mole" because the camp will simply move to a new location.

Should we give them food? He replied, "No. Instead you should contribute resources to existing organizations that already have the infrastructure in place to serve this population." He mentioned Harvesters as an example.

What's going on with the dispute that is keeping a project from going forward, regarding the boarded-up houses on Holmes? He said the dispute has been resolved and the project is moving forward.

One audience member cautioned that he is 99% certain that several of the "homeless" are actually scammers. He said he has seen nice cars drop these folks off at corners, he's seen \$300 bicycles and \$150 shoes.

Councilman Duncan then began his take, mentioning that he knocked on more than 8500 neighborhood doors in the district to get familiar with the area's needs and concerns. He said he was a combat veteran in 2021 and upon his return was incensed at the 3 month wait time for VA Hospital assistance. He said that KU Med had no mental health resources for him.

He said it was the local VFW hall that challenged him to admit he needed help and directed him toward resources. He mentioned this saying, "I'm proof that there is a thin line between the right resources and, crime and homelessness."

As a councilman, he is concerned with addressing the district's need for roads, sidewalks, affordable housing, and resources for the houseless.

He mentioned that the leading demographic for the growing houseless population is seniors, exacerbated by rising costs and underfunded programs.

He then shifted gears to talk about the reconstruction project for Red Bridge Road. He said he acknowledged that the City fumbled the ball. He said he lives at 60th and Kenwood, and that he'd be ticked off if he had to traverse the current mess on a daily basis.

He said the problem is basically one of multiple contractors not talking to each other and coordinating their efforts.

He announced that four lanes would be open by Thanksgiving this year. This caused the room to erupt with laughter and disbelief. He said that landscaping and statuary elements would come later, probably in 2024.

He then took questions from the audience.

Why are some roads repaved that don't need it, when roads that do need repaving go unpaved? He responded saying that Kansas City has twice the number of streets as Philadelphia, but half the population (Meaning there isn't enough tax revenue to do all that is necessary). He acknowledged that there are probably some issues about the proper priorities. He said he'd be willing to respond to specific situations.

Someone in the audience thanked him for the second fall leaf and brush pickup date, because the first was entirely too early. The trees still have 90% of their leaves.

Is the Holmes Road Expansion Project expired as reported in the Martin City Telegraph? He responded that the rumor is not true. The project is moving forward.

Do any of our property taxes benefit Jackson County? No. Jackson County gets nothing from them.

Sharron Hill then asked Lynn Youngberg to discuss the budget, noting that her available time was short.

Lynn began by highlighting several printed handouts that were made available to audience members which included the HOA Budget, Financials, Update on KC's new Airbnb short

term rental laws, information about Red Bridge Deed Restrictions and Common Code Violations.

Lynn explained that the HOA's major expense for the year, about \$90,000, has been the rehabilitation of 32 of the neighborhood's 35 markers (The stone and wood signage at multiple intersections along Holmes and Wornall). Sharron noted that the three remaining markers will soon be improved.

Lynn and Sharron explained that the urns atop the markers are another expense for the HOA, as several of them are cracked or otherwise compromised. Each urn can cost \$303 if we purchase Massarellis (we use one made by Van Liews for \$232 which looks identical) plus \$200 for delivery and setting, plus \$25 for mortar.

Sharron said that another upcoming expense is hiring big leaf trucks to suck up the leaves from the neighborhood's 18 islands.

Sharron then asked for the members to approve the minutes from the last annual meeting. Printed copies of the minutes had been made available to attendees to review. They'd also been posted for nearly a year on the HOA website at ha-kc.org. A motion was made to approve the minutes and the motion received a second. No one opposed approving the minutes.

Sharron then discussed an expense for removing a small dead tree from an island, and the trouble finding a contractor to take on the small job. She also mentioned that the board would consider replacing some asphalt curbing around some of the islands that slope, to enhance water, seeding and fertilizer retention.

Someone asked about an island at 109th and Virginia, saying that shrubs there had grown too high. and that it needs reseeding. Sharon said she was aware of the situation and that it would be addressed.

Someone suggested that yews are fast growing, and it is best to just rip them out.

Someone suggested that we ask Kansas City Art Institute students to devise a sculpture.

The random and unsolicited suggestions combined with the time being about 12:10 pm caused several audience members to fidget or leave. To keep the audience a bit longer, Sharron shifted to giving away our raffle items from area merchants. Items and gift cards from Blue Bicycle, Euston's, Made in KC, The Barrio and Cookies & Creamery were given to audience members holding tickets that corresponded to ones drawn randomly from a bowl.

Lastly, Sharron called several audience members to the front who had expressed interest in being a board member or otherwise helping the board. Each introduced themselves to the remaining audience members.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm.