

# The Ellendale Neighborhood Association

***Location: Abbott EMS, 2500 Abbott Place, St. Louis, Missouri***

## ***Call to Order 7:00 p.m.***

Matt Sisul, resident, welcomed the Assembly and thanked everyone for being there and for how far we've come.

Matt reminded the Assembly of the meeting schedule — the next meeting will be the second Monday of November and then every other month afterwards (January, March, May, etc.)

Matt mentioned that we have a few guest speakers tonight and will let them go first, and then we will have nominations and elections of our five new Officers.

Matt thanked Jacqi Kamp, resident, for getting the meetings all started again [back in May] and for getting us all excited about the Association again.

Matt also thanked Nancy Thompson from SLACO (St Louis Association of Community Organizations) who has helped us through the reorganization process.

Matt introduced Alderman Scott Ogilvie, who has been our Ward 24 Alderman since 2011.

## ***Ald. Ogilvie took the floor at approximately 7:10 p.m.***

Ald. Ogilvie thanked Matt and went straight into some City Hall items that happened over the Summer.

- 1) There was a bond issue on the ballot in August that did not pass — though it did get 61% of the vote. It needed a two-thirds vote to pass. Ald. Ogilvie thought the sales job on the bond issue [getting the word out] could have been better. His take away from the results was that most of the voters were in favor of the bond issue. Maybe another package can get put together and get on the ballot next Fall.
- 2) A minimum wage ordinance was passed for the City of St. Louis. The minimum wage for the state has been \$7.65 and this ordinance would make the City's minimum wage \$11.00 by 2018 and then tied to inflation going forward. Ald. Ogilvie stated that no one else in Missouri has a minimum wage higher than the state's minimum wage, and other large cities are looking into this. He also states that the law has already been challenged in the courts.

Ald. Ogilvie then opened the floor to questions.

***Question:*** Can you update us on the status of Wilkinson School and the Great Rivers Greenway project through Ellendale?

Ald. Ogilvie stated that the Wilkinson School is now listed for sale on the SLPS.org website. The primary interest in the property has been for apartments or senior apartments, but there is not an accepted offer yet. Mr. Ogilvie's personal opinion is that housing is a good fit, especially senior housing.

*[NOTE: As of meeting date, the SLPS Real Estate website (www.slps.org/realestate) still lists the building as "Not Actively on Market", however, the ENA Board has confirmed with SLPS Director of Real Estate, Walker Gaffney, that the website not being updated is an error which will be corrected and that the list price for Wilkinson School is \$602,000.]*

Ald. Ogilvie responded about the Great Rivers Greenway project (Greenway) by stating that they are through 60% of the engineering stages and are fully-funded. They should break ground in 2017. The work will consist of reconstructing Ellendale Avenue south of Canterbury to include the trail extended north from the Shrewsbury MetraLink station.

**Question:** Regarding the Greenway trail, is it going to stay along the street or be routed elsewhere?

Ald. Ogilvie relayed that the trail will stay along the west side of Ellendale.

**Question:** Matt Sisul asked Ald. Ogilvie to explain what the process is like for the sale of Wilkinson School and what input we as residents have.

Ald. Ogilvie explained that the St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) wants to sell the vacant properties, but not for something objectionable. The process is the properties are listed for a list price and a buyer can make an offer along with a development plan. SLPS has a special administrative board that reviews and approves the plan and offer. The administrative group has a committee of advisors to help them and they provide information to the Aldermen for community input, but the administrative group has the ultimate say in the final approval of the sale.

**Question:** Have they [SLPS] considered business use for the school?

Ald. Ogilvie stated that some people have come forth with ideas for mixed use — business and residential — but it comes down to which developer comes to SLPS with a plan and offer first.

**Question:** Is SLPS considering options for a charter school to develop the building?

Ald. Ogilvie explained that they would entertain a charter school buyer.

Ald. Ogilvie suggested tabling the discussion of the Wilkinson School for the November meeting.

**Question:** Going back to the bike trail, would Ellendale remain four lanes?

Ald. Ogilvie explained that during the reconstruction of Ellendale Avenue, the street would be reduced to three lanes — two northbound lanes and one southbound lane. He continued to explain that there has been three traffic studies completed (one before the Bridge over Wabash was redone, another study completed by the Greenways project, and another study completed by the Streets Department to double-check Greenways' results) and they feel that the reduction to three lanes should be able to handle the traffic.

**Question:** What about that large median going through there? Can that be removed or reduces to save the fourth lane?

Ald. Ogilvie states that the media will get skinnier with the reconstruction, but there will still only be three lanes.

Mr. Ogilvie's time was rung short so he passed the meeting back to Matt.

***Matt returned to the floor at approximately 7:22 p.m.***

Matt thanked Ald. Ogilvie for attending tonight and speaking.

Matt took a moment to speak about the Neighborhood Stabilization Team and the Neighborhood Stabilization Officer (also known as the Neighborhood Improvement Specialist (NIS)). Our NIS is Andrew Hernandez who could not attend the meeting tonight, but who always responsive when contacted.

Matt also took a moment to speak about the Citizen' Service Bureau (CSB), the customer service department for the City and a part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Team. Matt reviewed a handout explaining what types of things the CSB should be contacted for. This handout can also be found on the CSB's page of the City's website (<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/public-safety/neighborhood-stabilization-office/citizens-service-bureau/documents/upload/CSB-Flyer-622-93-front-and-back.pdf>)

Then Matt introduced two representatives from the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), Sean Hadley and Matt Bacon, who addressed questions regarding the construction work being completed on Southwest Avenue at McCausland.

***MSD took the floor at approximately 7:29 p.m.***

Sean Hadley addressed the Assembly and began by stating that Southwest Avenue will remain closed through January 2016. Since this portion of the project began back in July they have run into some unforeseen difficulties — a water main they had to move, a gas main they have to work around, and hard rock which (due to the unforeseen gas line) they cannot blast through so they have been slowed down considerably.

Mr. Hadley brought copies of a press release that was going out to media outlets Tuesday, but they wanted to share the information with the residents at the meeting.

Mr. Hadley stated they are moving through the rock at about eight feet per day.

Mr. Hadley explained that the current system is a single system where waste water and storm water are collected together. The volume of the two sources can cause the system to overflow and backup. The work being done is installing a pipeline that will collect storm water separately from waste water which will alleviate pressure on the system and ultimately basement backups.

Mr. Hadley showed the Assembly photographs of the current work being done to illustrate the amount of rock and obstacles they are working around.

Mr. Hadley passed the floor to Mr. Bacon and opened the discussion to questions.

Before Mr. Bacon took questions, he explained that the project is installing 18,000 feet of pipe that is going from 8 inches in diameter to 96 inches in diameter. The pipe being installed along Southwest is the larger of the pipes. Mr. Bacon also explained that the age of the streets dictates the pace they can work as well as the path they will take, noting that this route was chosen to avoid other gas lines and an AT&T hub that goes through the area, and that avoiding those utilities was saving 18 months over the entire project.

Mr. Hadley also added that by closing down Southwest Avenue they are saving a lot of additional time as opposed to having limited traffic during construction.

**Question:** Lowry has been poorly repaved after some construction of the project already, will that be fixed?

Mr. Bacon responded, explaining that the City of St. Louis is given an allowance to repave affected streets when the project is completed. *[NOTE: ENA Board will follow-up with City Streets Department as appropriate.]*

**Concerns** were brought up about Lanham and Hewitt areas with current one-way streets and street closures.

Mr. Bacon replied that he would address those concerns with the contractors.

Resident Statement: The water pressure isn't what it used to be.

Mr. Bacon said he would relay that to the City. *[NOTE: ENA Board will follow-up with City Water Department as appropriate.]*

**Question:** Matt Sisul asked the representative if they could provide an update on the results of the McCausland construction from the Spring and asked if it had anything to do with the problems on Odell?

Mr. Hadley responded that what happened on Odell was caused by a gate failure on the river and MSD has publicly stated what happened, he added for clarification that what happened there had nothing to do with the project construction on McCausland.

A discussion regarding the problems on Odell interrupted and many people were talking over each other and the discussion about the construction project were getting confused. Matt stepped into to steer the conversation a bit.

**Question:** Matt asked MSD what steps have you taken to fix the gate failure.

Mr. Hadley replayed that the gate has been fixed. If you have any further questions about those issues you can contact Mr. Hadley directly.

**Question:** What was the project 10 years ago?

Mr. Bacon responded that the project ten years ago was a tunnel to transport water from another part of the city to River Des Peres and noting to do with this current project.

Mr. Hadley expressed how MSD was prepared to discuss the current project on Southwest and didn't want the discussion to go off topic. If anyone has any further questions they can contact him directly. He and Mr. Bacon concluded the discussion by restating that Southwest Avenue will be closed through January 2016. They also stated that though the portion that is in place is taking in rainwater, the system as a whole is not connect and functioning yet and we are still on a single system *[not yet separate storm and sewer lines]*.

Mr. Hadley and Mr. Bacon thanked the Assembly and turned the floor back over to Matt.

***Matt returned to the floor at approximately 7:53 p.m.***

Matt thanked Mr. Hadley and Mr. Bacon and the Assembly gave them a round of applause.

Matt took a moment to remind the Assembly that the Association is using social media outlets such as Facebook and Nextdoor.com to relay Association information. He took a moment to explain Nextdoor.com and how the City of St. Louis is using this particular social media site as their way to disseminate information to the public and how unlike Facebook, participation in Nextdoor.com is based on your verified street address.

Matt also shared an email message update he received from Andrew Hernandez. Items included:

A message will be going out to residents along Southwest and Magnolia about keeping alleys clear.

The City (not just Ellendale) has been having issues with residents putting bulk items out too early. Bulk items are picked up beginning the fourth Monday of the month and should not be put out until the prior evening. If bulk items are not picked up then you should call the CSB.

Matt concluded this segment by restating how nuisance issues can be address — by contact Mr. Hernandez directly, posting the issues on Nextdoor and Facebook for community discussion and assistance, or by contacting our newly appointed Communications Officer who we hope to elect shortly.

Matt switched topics to move on to the nominations and elections of Officers.

Matt referenced the previously approved bylaws (some copies were also passed among the Assembly) and he skipped to the section regarding Officers. He read the introduction and confirmed with everyone that all those present tonight would serve as the electing assembly and that for this election no dues were required.

Matt asked if anyone in the Assembly needed more time to review the bylaws that had been passed around. Seeing none, he read the duties of the President and then asked for nominations.

Jacqi Kamp nominated Matt Sisul for President.

Lesley Wilson nominated Jacqi Kamp for President.

Seeing no other nominations, Matt confirmed that if elected he would accept the position. Jacqi also confirmed that if elected she would accept the position.

Matt asked if anyone in the Assembly would take over the election at this time because of his nomination. Nancy Thompson volunteered.

Matt and Jacqi stepped into the hallway.

Nancy asked for those in favor of Matt to raise their hands. She counted 19 votes. Nancy then asked for those in favor of Jacqi to raise their hands. She counted 14 votes.

Matt and Jacqi were asked to come in from the hallway and Nancy announced that Matt was elected President.

Someone in the Assembly suggested that the runner up should become Vice President. Matt agreed with the suggestion and added how important he thought Jacqi was to getting the Association back on its feet. Jacqi was unanimously elected as Vice President.

Matt moved on to explain the Offices of Treasurer (in charge of the finances), Secretary (takes meeting minutes and posts notes), and Communications Officer (the main point of contact for information distribution).

Matt asked the Assembly if there was anyone interested in any of the remaining Offices.

Joe Nea nominated himself for Treasurer. Joe was elected Treasurer unanimously.

***Question from the Assembly:*** What are the duties of the Communications Officer?

Matt read the duties of the Communications Officer.

Numerous individuals nominated Angela Sebben for both Communications Officer and for Secretary. Angela was asked if she would accept either office if elected. Angela said she would. Angela was unanimously elected as Communication Officer.

Matt read the duties of Secretary.

No one was nominated for Secretary. Someone asked if the previous Secretary, Judy Holstein (not present) could be asked. Another responded that she had already declined in previous discussions. Further discussion went on about another member who could not attend the meeting tonight.

Matt asked the Assembly if they were okay with postponing the election of Secretary until the November meeting. All approved.

Matt asked the Assembly if there were other neighborhood concerns?

Topics of discussion ranged from no street sign at Odell and McCausland since MSD completed that construction; Magnolia has been made one-way and there is a big planter or something at the end of the street and it was questioned if there was some sort of beautification that could be done with it; overgrown vegetation over by Magnolia — Matt mentioned there are “orphaned” areas of the City and that may be one, however if it is private property that would be an issue for CSB; homeless concerns can be assisted by the Health Department; need a cautionary sign at Arsenal and McCausland; several other small discussion continued simultaneously.

***Charlie White motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. followed by several seconds to the motion.***

***Matt adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.***

***Mingling continued to almost 9:00 p.m. for some.***

The next Ellendale Neighborhood Association meeting  
will be held on **Monday, November 9, 2015, at 7:00p.m.**  
at Abbott EMS, 2500 Abbot Place, St. Louis.

***NOVEMBER 9, 2015:***

***THESE MEETING NOTES HAVE BEEN FORMALLY RECOGNIZED AND APPROVED BY ELLENDALE RESIDENTS AS THE OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES FOR THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2015.***