

## Minutes from IHLNA Board Meeting, January 6, 2022

**Board members present:** Marie-Claire Leman, KC Smith, Jason Khan-Hohensee, Ceci Michelotti, Melissa Farley, Edward Reid, Doug Martin, Eli Wilkins-Malloy, Laura Dearman, Charlotte Stuart-Tilley, Charity Myers, and John Tomasino (who prepared the minutes)

**Board members absent:** Ashley Arrington, Katie Clark

**Other neighbors in attendance:** Ryan Alton Wilke, Gordon Magill, Edward Acoff, Midori and Mark Okasako, Michael Franklin, Grant Gelhardt, Ramona Abernathy-Payne, Tracie Priest, Nita Davis, Sonya Delacruz

The meeting began shortly after 7:00 p.m. We began with introductions of our new Board member, Laura Dearman. Her family moved to Tallahassee last summer, and she is excited to be here and enjoys being involved in various things. From there, others introduced themselves.

**Approval of the November General Meeting:** KC moved and Marie-Claire seconded the approval of the November minutes.

**Treasurer's report:** Melissa presented the Treasurer's Report. There has been no change since the last report. Melissa did have a question regarding sizable donations to the association. Grant provided that when he was president, he thanked them via a personal email. The second question regarded how to handle the donations that were earmarked for the Nene Fest. MC answered that Melissa should continue to earmark when donations are made specifically toward Nene Fest so that the funds can be used when it is next hosted.

**English Property Development:** Marie-Claire asked Grant if he could give an overview on the English Property Development. This issue came up around 6 months ago, but it is moving toward some major decisions by the city and the county. The English Property is the undeveloped land south of Rickards High School and Orange Avenue to Capital Circle and Tram Road. The English family has been here for many years. It's more than 1,000 acres, possibly more. When Southwood was developed, a master plan/sector plan was created for the southeastern part of Tallahassee. That plan was approved approximately 15 years ago. The agreement was to provide housing and business opportunities. English had a portion of the sector plan and created a PUD. The VA hospital was developed as part of their first PUD. The second was the Lullwood apartment complex. English doesn't want to be a developer. The area around the corners of Orange, Blirstone, and Paul Russell is of concern. There is a natural springhead in that location that never runs dry. It is part of a ravine system with dramatic slopes. Paul Russell Road was done around this springhead. Now that the hospital and apartments are there, English is seeking to amend his PUD. The original PUD was approximately 200 acres. The amended acreage is all of the land from Paul Russell Rd., behind Rickards, all the way to Tram Rd. The English family is amending the PUD to allow all of this to be developed with the exception of a carveout for his property. Grant reviewed the important issues. One issue is how the stormwater will be handled. Grant is also concerned about the

commercial and retail development along Blairstone Rd. Grant is worried it will have major impacts to the spring and ravine system. These systems are unique to Tallahassee and should be protected. Grant has been talking with Mark about options that can be taken to express views on this issue. This is the time to comment. The city planning department hasn't finalized the plan. The best time to suggest changes is now while we have the ability to discuss with the planning department and city officials. The property will be developed, but we can still be heard on our opinions. Grant will add his personal concerns and meeting information to the Facebook page.

Ramona has the entire planner file and can share that with Grant and other interested persons. Midori Okasako and Mark are holding a meeting on [month] 15 from 10:30 to noon. Anyone who is concerned is invited to attend. The meeting will be held at the Community Coop (the former New Leaf Market).

Sonya Delacruz, who lives in this area, is attempting to schedule another meeting at Jack McLean Park, and the date will be communicated later. Nita Davis was at the zoning commission back around 2012, when it was passed, the English property attorney never produced a hydrology report. The City Commission still passed a zoning change without this report.

Marie-Claire asked if a board member could attend the city meeting on January 13. Doug volunteered. Doug asked if perhaps the Board could take a position. Marie-Claire replied that she would need more time before.

Marie-Claire suggested continuing our discussion via email.

**Gordon and Ryan's Presentation on Native Trees:** Their mission is to help educate our neighbors on how to add much-needed new, young trees, with a goal of reestablishing our native tree forest canopy. They want to collaborate with the City's urban forest plan. They are doing a workshop later in January, with the assistance of Jody Walthall. Gordon urged the neighbors interested in this project to review the city's Urban Forestry website. The city's urban forester would be happy to meet with the board and neighbors to provide further education. Marie-Claire suggested sending the workshop flyer to the board email group to help promote the event. Ryan would also like to have a booth at Nene Fest.

**Pony Rides:** Do we want to dedicate some money from the budget for the rides and hold around Valentine's Day? Perhaps hold it on Saturday, February 12, or on Sunday. In addition to the Pony Rides, there is the animal petting zoo. Doug will try to set this up, but if he can't, Charity will back him up.

**Meet and Greet:** Invite all of the candidates and have a meet and greet at Optimist Park or via Zoom. We have some time, so for now we will table this item.

**Neighborhood Yard Sale:** The neighborhood yard sale is held at Optimist Park. In the past, it's been in early April. The board agreed to proceed with this event, especially so we can include the information in the newsletter. The date will be April 9.

**Nene Fest 2022:** Usually held the last Saturday in April or the first Saturday in May. We didn't host it the past two years because of covid. In the past, the festival coincided with the Nene Fest 5K Run. We don't have to do it with the race, but the race is going forward. Marie-Claire asked the board to share their feelings on holding the event this year. Edward leaned toward no. Charity expressed mixed feelings, but felt that after the Halloween event, we could pull it off, especially with some alterations to the normal plan. KC thought we could at least begin the planning so that we could go forward if the environment improves. John expressed concern about the time spent planning and then needing to cancel. Charity felt that we could still go forward with planning, and the conversations could proceed. Charity suggested that those who would like to be involved can begin the conversations now. Marie-Claire and the others present agreed.

**Vibrant Neighborhood Grant:** The grant application is just about ready to be submitted. We just received informal guidance from a city employee on a few updates we should consider. After incorporating those changes, the application will be submitted.

**Newsletter:** On January 28, KC will be reaching out on Facebook and email to ask folks to start thinking of any articles they would like to submit. The copy will be due a month later, around February 25. Some content ideas include candidate profiles, the news and notes, the fruit trees, growing loofas, Ramona's development update, Gordon's continuing series on plants and "bad" bugs, N3, perhaps an article on notable neighbors. KC will be submitting an application for a newsletter recognition award. Last time, *The Optimist* received an honorable mention.

The meeting concluded shortly after 8:40 p.m.