

VILLAGE OF GROSSE POINTE SHORES, A MICHIGAN CITY
MINUTES OF THE AMBASSADOR COMMITTEE MEETING
July 10, 2012

A meeting of the Ambassador Committee of the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores, A Michigan City, was held on Tuesday, July 10, 2012 in the Council Chambers of the Grosse Pointe Shores Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM.

Present:

DJ Boehm, Chair
Gloria Anton, Member
Alex Lucido, Member
Madeleine Phillips, Member and Recording Secretary
Kay Felt, Council Liaison

Absent:

Chace Wakefield, Member

Invited Attendee: Mark Wollenweber, Acting City Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 12 Ambassador Committee Meeting were approved.

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Realtor Conversations

As follow-up to the realtor conversations, the following action items were discussed:

1. One Day Park Pass for Potential Residents

There was a very positive (“awesome”) response for the one day park pass for potential residents. Chace Wakefield presented the park pass format and process to the Board of Realtors who distributed the information on the same day for implementation. Chief Schulte will re-evaluate the program in thirty days.

2. Certificate of Occupancy (C of O)

The request for a C of O for rentals and sales was not well received at the June Council meeting. Some considered it “another tax.” Grosse Pointe Woods is extremely demanding about everything during an inspection. We’re suggesting that Grosse Pointe Shores have more “reasonable” inspection criteria. Who would do the inspection in Grosse Pointe Shores? Tom Krolcyk’s name was brought up; however, he may be too busy to take on yet another project. Inspector qualifications need to be defined. Alex pointed out that homes are selling well in all the Pointes and that the prices will

inevitably follow. Inspections are being held one month out because of busy schedules! Kay Felt reported that generally the Council feels things are at a good level, not overly intrusive. Serious discussion needs to ensue, but some individuals are adamantly opposed to requiring homes to provide a certificate of occupancy. The purpose of the Certificate of Occupancy is to ensure proper maintenance or upkeep for the minority of homes in need of work.

3. Vacant homes

Alex Lucido reported that there are ten vacant homes in the City for sale. Four vacant homes are not for sale. In the first 6 months of this year, over 30 or so homes sold and closed. In Grosse Pointe Shores, there are approximately 2,250 homes, 24-25 of which are currently for sale. This is considered low inventory.

Action Item: Alex Lucido will let Chief Schulte know the list of vacant homes.

4. Local Marina Pricing

Kay Felt raised a question for Mark Wollenweber to get an assessment expert to go with him to other marinas to obtain the proper level of cost data. The close proximity of the Shores marinas is a real plus.

5. Passport Concept

The “passport” concept is to give all Grosse Pointe residents a “passport” to visit all five of the Parks three to five times a year so that all Pointes residents may see the variety available.

Action Item: Alex Lucido will notify the Park and Harbor Committee regarding the concept to see if there is any interest in pursuing the concept with the Grosse Pointe intra-council.

6. Sign Ordinance

Realtor Open House signs on Sunday have a “public purpose.” That puts the Open House sign issue in a different category than garage sale signs, or other signs that don’t have a public purpose. Mark Wollenweber will add amending the sign ordinance on the Council agenda as soon as possible.

Action Item: Kay Felt will let the committee know the Council’s decision on the sign ordinance.

B. Current Realtor Perspective

Per Alex Lucido, there is a “positive vibe” now. People are becoming more positive about the housing market. Short sales are still happening but are being absorbed quickly. “Move-in ready” homes that are done nicely are “what’s hot” right now. Home owners are doing due diligence

before they put houses on the market. Buyers who are willing to purchase a “fixer-upper” will invest anywhere from \$125,000 to \$200,000.

C. Schools Update

The status of the school action items per DJ Boehm is:

1. Is there code of conduct as well as disciplinary guidelines publicly available for review? Yes. The Code of Conduct was previously sent to the committee.
2. Can we be on the list for updates for any “brag” sheets regarding the local schools? We can make sure that the realtors have the information. This request was sent to Rebecca Fannon. No response yet.
3. What are the official statistics on college attendance? This question was sent to Rebecca Fannon. No response yet.
4. What percentage of students are enrolled in public vs. private schools? This question was sent to Rebecca Fannon. No response yet.
5. Is there a dress code and enforcement? Yes. Both the Parcels and North Dress codes were forwarded to the committee.
6. Are there tutoring opportunities for which local residents could volunteer? This question was sent to Rebecca Fannon and Tom Harwood. - No response yet.

Action Item: DJ Boehm will follow up with Rebecca Fannon and Tom Harwood.

- **Residency.** A letter to the editor of the Grosse Pointe News regarding residency issue was discussed. The author, Kim Valice, wants Alex to push the agenda to rail against the “no money for an enforcer” concept. The money to enforce the residency requirement could easily be raised in the community. Those who violate residency issues should not be tolerated. Kim will come to our committee to give a presentation on her perspective.

Action Item: Gloria Anton will invite Kim Valice to our next Ambassador meeting.

Residency applications may be online for the schools. Because document manipulation is more easily accomplished if completed on line, an attempt must be employed to find a middle ground. The question was brought up as to whether residency is an issue for this committee. The committee believes we should stay in the conversation. Eventually we may make a recommendation to the School Board.

D. Park Enhancement Update

1. Tennis Courts

Mark Wollenweber engaged engineers, at no cost, to analyze the tennis court sub-soil. Over the years, the soil has solidified, a good development. Two firms submitted bids for resurfacing the three tennis courts and a pickle ball court of \$30,000 and \$18,000 respectively. For the tennis courts, the contractor will need four days to complete.

Mark took Karl Kratz of the GPSIF on a tour of the Park, Farms and Shores. Bob

Barrette is building good relations with those communities. Following the tour, Karl sent out a very positive email supporting the tennis court project and indicated that he hoped the Improvement Foundation would support the tennis court project.

2. Splash Pad

The Splash Pad project cost is approximately \$120,000 for the entire project. Mothers question if the water will be from the lake. The water will not be from the lake.

Another suggestion to raise money for the Improvement Foundation would be a Donor Wall to be erected at the Shores Park. The City may agree to match what is raised by the Improvement Foundation. They could extend the donor concept to benches with signage.

E. Ford House DSO Promotion Update

The bookmark will be printed by the end of this week with 5,000 copies printed as a first-run.

The Detroit Symphony has scheduled two concerts for Friday and Saturday, July 13 and 14 at the Ford House. Ambassador Committee volunteers are scheduled to stuff the bookmarks into the Symphony programs. The audience is expected to be a total of 3,000 for both concerts.

Other locations where the bookmarks will be distributed: Grosse Pointe Yacht Club, Chamber of Commerce, and to the realtors through the Board of Realtors.

F. Advertising and Promotion Discussion

1. Mayor's Book Concept

The Mayor has suggested the idea of creating a book about Grosse Pointe Shores. The book will likely be a 128 page Arcadia Press fixed format, soft cover book with pictures. The book will be sold at Bommarito's and possibly other retail locations throughout the Pointes. A call will go out to the Community to submit pictures for this project.

Kay Felt showed another concept for a small book called "Nook Farm." This concept is in narrative form with stories and pictures instead of pictures with descriptions.

Mark estimates that an Arcadia Press book will cost less than \$3,000 (price obtained from Arcadia Printing). No upfront money will be required.

The book could be used as a realtor gift at the closing as well as a "leave behind" when talking with potential residents.

2. Pewabic (or other) Tile

Mark Wollenweber is considering a Pewabic (or other) tile for Grosse Pointe Shores. All of the other Pointes have a tile. The tile could be used as a gift to those who are new

purchasers. It could be used as a giveaway with executives or other potential residents. The Improvement Foundation could sell it. It's possible that Grosse Pointe Shores may hire a local potter to design and/or produce. The concept of the tile met with overwhelming support from the Committee.

3. Grosse Pointe Shores Website

The website lawsuit between the city and the website developer has been settled and the access codes have been returned to the City. Tech Resources was hired (used by other municipalities in the area) and a signed contract with Tech Resources is forthcoming. Tech Resources is currently working with the Grosse Pointe Academy, the Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce and others.

Our committee would like to interview the Mayor and other officials. The video interviews would be posted on the web site. Fall is the projected time for the new Shores web site to "go live."

Due to lack of meeting time, the remaining agenda items (Testimonials, Taglines, New Resident Opportunities) were postponed and will be moved to the August agenda.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Ambassador Committee will be Tuesday, August 14, at 10 AM in the Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Madeleine Phillips, Member and Recording Secretary