

**VILLAGE OF GROSSE POINTE SHORES, A MICHIGAN CITY
MINUTES OF THE AMBASSADOR COMMITTEE MEETING
March 9, 2012**

A meeting of the Ambassador Committee of the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores, A Michigan City was held on Friday, March, 9 2012 in the Council Chambers of the Grosse Pointe Shores Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 1:35 PM

Present: DJ Boehm, Chair
Gloria Anton, Member
Alex Lucido, Member
Madeleine Phillips, Member
Kay Felt, Council Liaison

Absent: None

Also Present: None

All items pertinent to this meeting are either attached or placed on file.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

This was the first meeting of the Ambassador Committee, following approval by City Council.

DJ Boehm introduced and welcomed new members of the Committee, Kay Felt, Council Liaison and Alex Lucido.

WHAT SETS OUR COMMUNITY APART FROM THE REST?

A. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis

The draft brainstorming Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) document lists internal committee input about our community as we consider broadly what sets our community apart from the rest. Suggested additions to the draft document included:

- Add “Close proximity to world class hospitals” to the strengths list.
- A possible perceived weakness is that there are “too many elderly people.” The positive aspect of that is that this is a community to “aspire to.”
- **Action Item:** DJ Boehm will look up recent census data on actual age distribution in the community.
- Kay Felt stressed the importance of being a child friendly community. The committee

discussed making the case that Grosse Pointe Shores is a great place for families

- Strength: A good mix of people and houses was considered
- Weakness: The tennis courts need resurfacing. Fewer people use them because they are in poor shape. It is possible to fundraise for the tennis courts—through the Improvement Foundation or other initiative?
- Strength: The Park is good for swimming—a multitude of swim teams.
- **Action Item for All:** *If there are any further suggestions for the SWOT document, please email DJ Boehm. She will update the document.*

B. Resident Interview Process

Gloria Anton, DJ Boehm and Madeleine Phillips are interviewing residents and non-residents regarding their perceptions of Grosse Pointe Shores. This meeting included updates to check how the interview process is working:

- Gloria Anton left a sheet of questions with neighbor across the street but never heard from them. One respondent did mention the school district being a strong attractant. And the same resident prefers the quiet atmosphere.
- Madeleine Phillips noted that the elderly resident she contacted provided superior responses to the questions. A couple with two children are generally extremely happy in GPS. Their areas of concern were Parcels and Grosse Pointe North High School.
- DJ Boehm reported interviewing former residents and non-residents, in addition to resident interviews. The residents noted high satisfaction and enjoyed the tranquility. One non-resident had a perception that Grosse Pointe Shores was boring.
- **Action Item.** *DJ Boehm will tabulate the interview data and disseminate the report to the committee. The committee can then decide what further action to take.*

C. Open Discussion

- Kay Felt recommended that the Committee bring in the three department heads for 1. Parks and Recreation, 2. Police and 3. Public Works to make them aware of our committee and its goals.
- There was a recommendation that the City phone system ought to be changed because it is not state-of-the-art.
- It was mentioned that newly arrived neighbors felt “welcomed but not hustled” by their new neighbors - a positive.
- **Police Department**
 - It was noted that police are not able to call GPS residents because the telephone numbers are no longer available in the GPS offices. They have been transferred to the Grosse Pointe Farms’ call center.
 - **Personal positive testimonials regarding the police came from two committee members:**
 - A person who had just moved into the community received a telephone call from a policeman on patrol in the wee hours of the morning. The officer identified himself and

notified the resident that he noticed his garage door was open and that he might want to close it.

- Kay Felt reported that both the police and public works have looked out for her in the past and continue to do so. She told of a time when the police looked out for her home while a garage door was stuck open and she was at work.
- **Department of Public Works**
 - It was generally noted by committee members that the DPW provides extraordinary and personal service when it comes to rubbish collection.
- **Schools**
- This is one of the most important areas for the committee to address.
- **Action Item:** *DJ Boehm will contact the school superintendent to arrange a meeting with the committee.*

PLANNING - REALTOR CONVERSATIONS

Realtors are all working toward the same goal as our committee. Therefore, it is felt that they will be a good source of ideas and information for our committee and will be receptive to having conversations.

- **Action Item:** *Alex will organize a realtor offsite conversation, ideally over coffee. Committee members can email Alex suggested agenda items for the meeting. At the offsite, we will take notes but not minutes.*

Open Discussion:

- Alex is an expert on the Grosse Pointe Real Estate market. He is selling the community, restaurants, neighborhood, Village, parks, “walkability,” and so forth.
- *Hour* magazine will need to add several more restaurants to their Grosse Pointe roster.
- Two women co-run the Grosse Pointe Board of Realtors. We will ask for input on the strengths and weaknesses of our community and what can our committee do to promote the sale of homes?
- There is an ordinance that there may not be more than one sign on any one property. No “open” sign is allowed at the corner when a house is being shown on a Sunday. This may make it harder to sell homes.
- **Action Item.** *Kay Felt will check to see if the ordinance is still on the books. She will mention to Council the need for an exception on the days of open houses.*
- We may want to use video, brochures and/or DVD. Alex Lucido has a Grosse Pointe promotional video, converted to You Tube and imbedded on his website. Alex Lucido generously offered to let the committee “cherry pick” the visual images that we want to use.
- Alex received an email from Cathy Champion, President of the Real Estate Board and Chair of the Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce. She said she “can’t get on board” with this particular committee because the Chamber wants to promote all of the Pointes rather than just one. Jennifer Boettcher is the contact at the Grosse Pointe Board.
- **Action Items.** *Alex will share the email from Cathy Champion with DJ. DJ will meet with*

both Cathy Champion and Jenny Boettcher to discuss any concerns that the Chamber may have.

- The City website should be updated. It looks dated. It was suggested that interns be considered for the work.

MEETING DATE SCHEDULE

In keeping with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, we must establish a regular meeting schedule. Based on the committee's availability, the following time was selected for regular meetings:

**Ambassador Committee Scheduled Meetings
2nd Tuesday of the month, 10 – 11:30 AM, Council Chambers**

- Our next meeting will be April 10th.

ADJOURN

Our committee meeting adjourned at 2:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Madeleine Phillips
Committee Member