

**VILLAGE OF GROSSE POINTE SHORES, A MICHIGAN CITY
MINUTES OF THE AMBASSADOR COMMITTEE MEETING
June 12, 2012**

A meeting of the Ambassador Committee of the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores, A Michigan City, was held on Tuesday, June 12, 2012 in the Council Chambers of the Grosse Pointe Shores Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 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

Also Present: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 8th Ambassador Committee Meeting and the May 9th Realtor Conversation Notes were both approved.

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Realtor Conversations Notes Debrief

During the May offsite, the realtors made several suggestions to either make Grosse Pointe Shores more attractive to buyers or to improve the home rental/acquisition process from the realtors' perspective. The Committee reviewed all of the realtors' suggestions:

- **Allow prospective residents to walk-through the Park.** Real estate prospects would identify themselves to the Grosse Pointe Shores Park Attendant, including the name of the real estate agent who recommended that they walk through the Park at their leisure.
Action Item: Kay Felt will verify if it would be acceptable for potential new residents to tour the Park by self identifying. If acceptable, then the committee would that information to realtors at a later date.
- **Consider requiring a Certificate of Occupancy for all Grosse Pointe Shores rentals.** Alex Lucido pointed out that the pursuit of a Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) can be overly

arduous depending on the inspection list. A reasonable C of O process would be desirable to ensure that homes stay in a good state of repair. Alex Lucido suggested that Tom Krolczyk in the City offices may be able to perform the inspections. In the Shores, the usual minimum rental agreement is drawn up for a six-month period. There are no month-to-month rentals. The real estate people prefer an annual rental agreement.

Action Item; Kay Felt will investigate the Certificate of Occupancy issue. Alex Lucido can advise on what is reasonable.

- **Vacant Homes.** The Grosse Pointe Shores Police are already diligent about monitoring conditions of vacant homes if they are aware of them.
Action Item: Alex Lucido will call Chief Schulte to notify him of any vacant homes.
- **Schools.** One of the realtors noted that schools and the “North Discount” are a real issue. The realtors felt that a dress code would enhance the images of both North High School and Parcels. The committee would like several additional questions asked of the schools:
Action Item: DJ Boehm will contact the schools Public Affairs contact, Rebecca Fannon and ask several questions on behalf of the committee:
 1. *Is there code of conduct as well as disciplinary guidelines publicly available for review?*
 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.*
 3. *What are the official statistics on college attendance?*
 4. *What percentage of students are enrolled in public vs. private schools?*
 5. *Is there a dress code and enforcement?*
 6. *Are there tutoring opportunities for which local residents could volunteer?**Note that this suggestion had a lot of support within the committee.*
- **“Buy a Home, Get a Well”** is perceived as a positive for some. Three or four home purchasers have used this incentive in their purchase. The state of the art harbor with its floating docks is a definite plus for the Shores. Is our Harbor may be more competitively priced than the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club? Or other Pointe marinas?
Action Item: Kay Felt will investigate pricing structures of the local marinas.
- **Should we consider a blog in the Grosse Pointe Patch?** The Committee felt that a blog should not be pursued at this time.
- **Grosse Pointe Passport.** The idea behind the “passport” is to allow residents of the other Pointes access to all of the Pointes’ parks, limited to three to five times per season. Alex Lucido said that the Shores park is the “best” and encouraged the idea of a passport as a way to show the benefit of the Shores Park. Decision making for this suggestion belongs to the Grosse Pointe intra-council group.
Action item: Kay Felt will follow up on the Passport concept with the intra-Council group.

Current Realtor Perspective: Alex Lucido noted that he's never been busier in his 27 years in the real estate business. The selling price of properties is beginning to level out. They have not begun to rise yet, but it is expected that they will soon. Realtors are receiving multiple offers on homes, which hasn't happened in a long time. The hottest part of the market is at the \$1M level.

B. School Conversation Scheduling Update

With the announced departure of Principal Tim Bearden from North High School to Detroit Country Day, the scheduling of the follow up meeting hasn't occurred. The committee felt that a small follow up meeting with the superintendent was appropriate.

Action Item. DJ Boehm will try to schedule a meeting with Kay Felt and Tom Harwood, Superintendent, later this summer. DJ Boehm will also offer suggestions on trust building..

C. Park Enhancement Ideas

Several suggestions to enhance the parks to make them more attractive to new residents previously raised by committee members. The committee discussed which ideas should be taken forward to other City committees for consideration:

- **Food Trucks.** The idea of food trucks or a concession stand in the Park was opposed by Gloria Anton because of the perceived potential for the park to become cluttered with litter from the park residents using the trucks. Kay Felt and Alex Lucido were more positive about providing concessions because of the practical need that many working parents don't have time to pack snacks. DJ Boehm noted that "Mark's Carts in Ann Arbor won "business of the year" and offers some healthier options <http://markscartsannarbor.com/> as something to consider.
Action Item: Kay Felt will ask Brett Smith regarding current thinking about a concession stand in the park.
- **Splash Pad.** In previous discussion, a splash pad similar to the one in the Farms Pier Park (\$35K in 2003) was the most requested item by realtors and residents. DJ Boehm provided sample web sites for Splash Pad manufacturers to Kay Felt.
- **Tennis Courts.** The poor condition of one of the tennis courts was discussed in previous meetings. Per Gloria Anton, a new hard court surface may cost approximately \$10,000. The option of converting one court to paddle tennis or platform tennis was also discussed (cost expected to be similar to resurfacing a hard court). A synthetic clay court surface called "Classic Clay" may be a possibility because it doesn't need watering. DJ Boehm provided background information regarding these items to Kay Felt.
- **Kayak dock.** The last park suggestion is a kayak dock with a grab bar to allow easier entry/exist from the water. The committee suggested that the kayak dock usage at the Farms and Park be reviewed.

Action Item: Kay Felt will pursue this committee's park enhancement ideas with the

appropriate committees.

D. Ford House Events

The Ford House Events Calendar that Madeleine Phillips obtained was reviewed. The committee agreed that we should promote Grosse Pointe Shores at the Ford House events, assuming that the Ford House is amenable. Chace Wakefield noted in an email that he would be willing to provide a “Homes for Sale” list for the Ford House. The committee discussed whether we should provide something specific for events or have a permanent display. Ideally, we would like to place promotional materials in the Ford House reception area and refurbish those as necessary. That said, the DSO event in mid-July deserves special attention. The committee will use the “Be Moved by Beauty” tagline used for the Show House sign for the July 13/14 Ford House DSO event because of the short time frame to prepare a new promotion for next month.

***Action Item:** Madeleine Phillips will check with the Ford House to see if any or all of these may be acceptable:*

- *Framed (possibly seasonal poster) featuring Grosse Pointe Shores*
- *2012 GPS Event Bookmarks (concept) for permanent daily display*
- *and or tri-fold publication (TBD - no concept in place yet, so this item won't be ready for the DSO concerts in July.)*
- *'Homes for Sale' listings*

***Action Item.** Madeleine Phillips will ask the DSO if they will have a program for the July 13/14 concerts at the Ford House.. If so, she will also ask expected attendance. We will provide a 2012 GPS Events Bookmark “stuffer” in the programs if possible.*

E. Advertising and Promotion Discussion

The discussion in advertising and promotion included:

- **Grosse Pointe Shores Cards.** DJ Boehm circulated a newly printed card created by the City (at our request) featuring the Grosse Pointe Shores seal on a white background. The card design was well received. The cards could be used as thank you notes or as hand written notes or invitations to potential new residents.
- **2012 GPS Events Bookmark Concept.** DJ Boehm circulated a concept draft mock up of a 2012 Grosse Pointe Shore Events Bookmark, an inexpensive, yet useful give away. The committee supported the concept of the bookmark. The committee suggested that all GPS social events, the Ford House public events and the public GPYC events be listed on the bookmark. Kay Felt will share the mock up with Mark Wollenweber for his reaction.

***Action Item:** Assuming there are no objections from Mark Wollenweber or others, DJ Boehm will finalize the events lists, mock up a more finished version of the bookmark to give to a typesetter, work with the city to obtain internal approvals and will arrange for a small run of the item using the “Be moved by beauty” tagline until the committee has an opportunity to suggest a more permanent tag line. Madeleine Phillips will assist with her “eagle editing eye” to ensure the copy is correct. Completion will be needed by July 13 for the Ford House DSO event.*

- **Taglines.** DJ Boehm redistributed the characteristics of a good tagline including: Identifiable, Memorable, Beneficial, Differentiation and Simple. She also distributed a list of her tagline ideas for Grosse Pointe Shores. Ideas from others are encouraged. “If you lived in Grosse Pointe, you’d be home now,” can’t be used because the Chamber of Commerce is considering using that slogan. Gloria Anton particularly liked “Treat yourself.”
Action Item: DJ Boehm will send the list of tag lines to Alex Lucido and Chace Wakefield for their comments and suggestions.

The committee will continue the discussion of taglines and promotions at the July meeting.

F. Potential New GPS Resident Client Opportunities

Due to lack of meeting time, this item wasn’t discussed and will be moved to the July agenda.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

NEXT MEETING

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

Respectfully submitted,

Madeleine Phillips, Member and Recording Secretary