



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD
COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE**

Thursday, December 8, 2011

7:00 p.m.

Town Hall, Audrey P. Beck Building

CONFERENCE ROOM B

MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Approval of November 10, 2011 Minutes
3. Opportunity for Public to Address the Committee
4. Chairperson's Report
5. Communications
6. Old Business
 - a) Revision of Committee Charge or Name Change
 - b) Review Action Plan
7. New Business
 - a) Review/Approval 2012 Regular Meeting Schedule
 - b) Selection of Chairman for 2012
8. Adjournment

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE

Thursday, November 10, 2011
Audrey Beck Municipal Building
Council chambers
7:00 PM

DRAFT Minutes

Present: C. Kueffner, R. Long, A. Moran, D. Morse, E. Paterson,
J. Riesen, J. Saddlemire

Staff: M. Hart, J. Hintz, M. Nintean

1) Call to Order/Roll Call.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

2) Appointment of Recording Secretary

M. Nintean agreed to serve as secretary.

3) Approval of October 13, 2011 Minutes

D. Morse moved to amend the minutes from the last meeting. The motion did not receive a second and the motion failed. The minutes were approved with 5 members in favor, 1 against and 1 abstention.

4) Opportunity for Public to Address the Committee

None present wishing to comment

5) Chairperson's Report

A. Moran spoke regarding the Town's interest in following fair hiring practice for construction of the Storrs Center project. The chair shared the contents of a memo provided by M. Hart regarding allegations of unfair labor practices by the contractor working on the project. She stated the Town would cooperate fully in any on going investigation. E. Paterson reiterated these comments. C. Kueffner stated it was his belief this matter was beyond the charge of the committee as set by the Town Council. D Morse disagreed with this view.

6) Communications

None

7) Old Business

- a) *ATV Ordinance* – M. Ninteanu briefed the committee regarding this issue. It was reported that the Resident Trooper believes the current enforcement tools provide enough options to address violations and that this issue should be tabled until next summer.
- b) *High Density Unit Projects Management Plan*- M. Ninteanu reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission's Regulatory Review committee is looking at this issue as part of a more global approach to future large scale residential development. M. Ninteanu suggested the committee wait until the PZC has completed their work prior to taking any action.
- c) *Nuisance Ordinance*- M. Ninteanu commented that this ordinance appears to be working well and has been a positive tool to aid in correcting problem behavior.
- d) *EDR*- No comments
- e) *Police Study*- M. Hart briefed the committee regarding the status of the police study. Matt stated that it appears three of the five options will be considered as a result of the study.
- f) *Review Action Plan*- The committee reviewed the Action Plan and it will be updated by staff and included in next month's packet.

8) New Business

- a) *Committee's Charge*- The committee discussed the necessity to clearly understand the charge of the committee and to perhaps either ask the Town Council to modify the charge or change the name to better reflect committee activities. This topic will be included on the next meetings agenda.

9) Adjournment

E. Paterson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM, seconded by R. Long. The motion passed unanimously.

David Morse
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5 December 2011

to: Mansfield Town Council
Committee on Community Quality of Life,

Dear Councilors and Committee members,

As the longest-serving member of Mansfield's Committee on Community Quality of Life representing the community at large. I hereby resign. I wish to tell you my reasons.

My decision is precipitated in part by the circumstances surrounding the serious injury of two workers at the Storrs Downtown building site. The accident make clear the extent to which Leyland Alliance and its general contractor, Erland Construction, are operating outside the public purview, with responsibility attenuated through numerous sub-contractors and sub-sub-contractors, most of whom appear to be concerned only with the bottom line.

I visited the work site on my own in early November and as a private citizen lodged a complaint with the state Labor Department. State inspectors visiting the site found apparently undocumented foreign workers, and irregularities including wages and hours that violate state labor laws and compromise safety.

When I aired my concerns at the November meeting of the Committee on Community Quality of Life, I pointed out that one of the selling points used to promote the Storrs Downtown project was the promise of local construction jobs. I was appalled to learn that the Town of Mansfield had included no Project Labor Agreement in its contracts for Storrs Downtown. This is a serious omission. Mansfield and surrounding towns have plenty of blue-collar workers who are looking for work. Their lives and their livelihoods are integral to our quality of life. I was told such matters were not part of the Committee's charge.

How narrowly or how broadly the committee should view its charge is of course a matter of interpretation. The Committee on Community Quality of Life was re-constituted, as stated in the Council's July 14, 2008 resolution, specifically to "evaluate quality of life issues within the community, particularly as these issues relate to off-campus student housing and behavior and neighborhood deterioration." More broadly, the resolution invites the Committee to consider "additional ordinances and regulations

designed to promote and protect community quality of life,” and to “make recommendations concerning quality of life issues within the community.”

For three years, I have served faithfully on the committee. When I agreed to serve I did so with the stipulation that I would serve only as long as I felt we were accomplishing something. And we did accomplish some things in our advisory role to the Council: we proposed and helped refine ordinances designed to ameliorate the impacts of student behavior on residential neighborhoods; we served as a sounding board for citizen complaints and suggestions; we weighed changes in police and fire responses; we encouraged better communication with UConn around responses to student misbehavior.

I am proud to have been a part of that process, and I have valued the opportunity to work with skilled professionals. But I kept hoping we would move beyond our narrowest agenda to other quality of life issues that are also pressing: water quality and sufficiency, noise and light pollution, historic preservation, care for the elderly, and public transportation. I was, remember, representing citizens at large, who have a keen stake in these matters – not the University’s and the Town’s interpenetrating power structures. My lone voice was increasingly marginalized. I found myself becoming more strident than I like to be.

After three years, I have no hope that the Committee will enlarge its compass. Vested interests, including corporate interests, will prevail. It’s time for me to turn my attention to some of the very real issues I’ve alluded to. I can be a stronger advocate from outside the Committee, especially since, as an April 19, 2010 policy memo from the Town Clerk to Advisory Committees reiterates, “it can be counter-productive to the Town’s overall interest to have multiple opinions communicated to individuals or agencies outside of the Town’s collective organization.”

I do ask you to either clarify the Committee’s charge or change its name if it is to continue. At best, the name is confusing to the public. (Early in my tenure, members of the public appeared frequently to address quality of life issues; the numbers tapered off considerably once the narrowness of the Committee’s agenda became known.) At worst, I’m sorry to say, the present name suggests that the Town of Mansfield is far more committed to actual quality of life issues than it is.

I thank you for the opportunity to lend my skills to the community, but I can’t lend my name to this committee any further.

Yours truly,

David Morse

cc: Citizens for Responsible Growth
Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association

Community Quality of Life Committee
ACTION PLAN

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Plan for Residential Housing at Storrs Center	EDR status update	3/12/2012
2	High Density Unit Projects Management Plan	Tabled	TBD
3	Neighborhood Visits	Pending	2/12/2012
4	Police Response Time	Police Study	TBD
5	Community Patrols	Police Study	TBD
6	Noise Enforcement	Police Study	TBD
7	Neighborhood Watch Groups	Police Study	TBD
8	Assembly Permits	Tabled	



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD
COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE**

2012 Meeting Schedule

Members shall meet regularly at **7:00 p.m. in Conference Room B** on the **2nd Thursday of each month** to evaluate and make recommendations to the Town Council concerning quality of life issues within the community in accordance with the following schedule:

January 12, 2012

February 9, 2012

March 8, 2012

April 12, 2012

May 10, 2012

June 14, 2012

July 12, 2012

August 9, 2012

September 13, 2012

October 11, 2012

November 8, 2012

December 13, 2012