



WILDWOOD

June 22, 2023

MEMORANDUM

To: Wildwood Historic Preservation Commission Members

From: Department of Planning and Parks

Re: June 2023 Update on Project for Westland Acres (**Ward Two**)

Cc: The Honorable James R. Bowlin, Mayor
Thomas Lee, Interim City Administrator
John A. Young, City Attorney
Rick Brown, P.E. and P.T.O.E., Director of Public Works
Melanie Rippetoe, Assistant Director of Planning and Parks
Robyn Keefe, AICP, Planner

PAST CONSIDERATIONS-ACTIONS >>> The Department would like to update and advise the Historic Preservation Commission of its efforts regarding the documentation of the Westland Acres Community, a project included on the 2023 Work Program. The March, April, and May updates in this regard are provided as an appendix to this Memorandum, along with the overall goals of this effort. Importantly, this current update does reflect progress in this regard.

JUNE UPDATE >>> The Department of Planning has prepared a draft letter to Pastor Fields to begin the dialogue with the community on this project. The draft is below for the Commission Members review and comments, before such would be forwarded to Pastor Fields.

Dear Pastor Fields:

Thank you for taking time several weeks ago to discuss Westland Acres with the Department. As was mentioned in our conversation, the City's Historic Preservation Commission has sought over the past several years to create a way to work with the community in protecting its heritage and ensuring its history is not lost to time. Previous efforts by others with this community have been successful in creating a proud record of its history and this offer by the Commission is intended to build upon that achievement.

Given these past efforts, the Commission is hoping to achieve the following considerations regarding this future partnership:

- a. The project should be viewed as an effort that started in the Westland Acre Community, not City Hall, to ensure a proper perspective on processes and products.
- b. The project must highlight the church's role and position in the community.
- c. The project should recognize the property rights of the owners regarding the future use of their lots for new development.
- d. The project must be complementary to the former recognition by the Mayor and City Council in their honoring this community.
- e. The project should be guided by the accepted principles and practices of recording historical communities including oral interviews.

These items noted herein are the parameters the Commission would offer to the community to use to ensure a successful partnership in this regard.

Per our telephone conversation, the Commission seeks first to identify the community leaders and begin the discussion of these items to understand their feelings on them. Then, if agreeable, how to proceed with this partnership within the Westland Acres Community. Once you have reviewed this information and talked with the community leaders, a small group of Commission Members would then like to meet with them to introduce themselves and begin these discussions.

If you should have questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (636) 458-0440. Thank you again for taking the time to discuss this partnership between this community and the City and, now, helping the Commission make the needed introductions with the leaders of it.

Respectfully,
CITY OF WILDWOOD
Department of Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION >>> If any of the Commission Members should have comments or questions in this regard, please feel free to contact the Department of Planning at (636) 458-0440. A presentation is planned on this item at tonight's Commission meeting. Thank you for your consideration of this information and comments on the same.

APPENDIXES **<<< GOALS AND SUBGOALS OF PROJECT >>>**

The goals (and sub-goals) of this project within Westland Acres Area are provided below:

1. Set forth the defining objectives of this effort to be first shared with the Westland Acres Community and City Council and Mayor Bowlin.
 - a. The project should be viewed as an effort that started in the Westland Acre Community, not City Hall, to ensure a proper perspective on processes and products.
 - b. The project must highlight the church's role and position in the community.
 - c. The project should recognize the property rights of the owners regarding the future use of their lots for new development.
 - d. The project must be complementary to the former recognition by the Mayor and City Council in their honoring this community.
 - e. The project should be guided by the accepted principles and practices of recording historical communities including oral interviews.
2. Seek grant funding for recording the history of the area, i.e. a Master Plan, including oral interviews with community and church members, particularly as part of the State of Missouri's Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, which allows the City preferential consideration of eligible projects. This grant program may have an August 2023 deadline for submittal.
3. Develop the Master Plan for the recording of the Westland Acres Community history that sets forth goals and policies for engagement of key parties, along with memorializing its residents, land, and history.
4. Define how best to recognize and preserve the key elements of this historic community, examples include interpretative signage, on-line information, etc., from development and changes relating to growth.
5. Complete a comprehensive pictorial and video history of the current land area in the community, while researching past representations of it, specifically photographs.
6. Consider a second Historic Community Marker in the Westland Acres Community, at Union Baptist Church and cemetery.

<<< MARCH 2023 UPDATE INFORMATION >>>

1. Contact community leaders first to explain the Commission's effort and the intended outcome of it. The Department would recommend contacting the Frazier and Westfall Families and the Pastor/leadership of Union Baptist Church.
2. Proceed, after these contacts, with an introductory mailing to all property owners in Westland Acres Community that would explain the program, its intended outcome, and then next steps.
3. Assess next steps after feedback from the community gained by these first two (2) steps noted herein.

<<< APRIL 2023 UPDATE INFORMATION >>>

1. Contact community leaders first to explain the Commission's effort and the intended outcome of it. The Department would recommend contacting the Frazier and Westfall Families and the Pastor/leadership of Union Baptist Church. The Department began the desired engagement process by contacting the former pastor of Union Baptist Church. Although that individual and the Department were unable to connect for a discussion of the Commission's project, the intent of this contact was to obtain an understanding of who would best represent the current group of property owners and residents of this community and about the best approach to contacting them for a future meeting. The Department hopes to have a discussion with Pastor Fields before the June meeting of the Commission, and then report back at that time.

<<< MAY 2023 UPDATE INFORMATION >>>

1. The Department spoke with Pastor Fields, who for many years, was the leader of Union Baptist Church. Pastor Fields was provided background on the Commission's Work Program, specifically this effort, and a grouping of the possible resources that are available to the City that it can share with the community in terms of providing another opportunity to record the history of this area.
2. The discussion led to a brief identification of possible participants from the community and who Pastor Fields believed could assist in this regard. The group, as mentioned by Pastor Fields, includes several residents/property owners of Westland Acres.
3. The conclusion of the discussion led to a question from Pastor Fields on the desired outcome of the City relative to this engagement. The Department explained the Historic Preservation Commission did not have a plan per se, but certainly did not seek to rewrite previous histories of this community, nor cover items that had been previously the subject of books, articles, and other publications. Pastor Field requested a few talking points regarding this effort and potential product(s) of it, so when he meets with community leaders, he can respond to questions that may be raised.
4. The Department will provide these items that have been requested to Pastor Fields and update the Historic Preservation Commission on the progress being made on this Work Program item in June.