

The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd
Board Meeting January 12, 2010
Lower Merion Academy Building

Board Attendees: Casey O'Bannon, Deedee Litvin, Ellen Wertheimer, Anne Greenhalgh, Merle Zucker, Patty Smith, Katherine Foy, Bob Zimmerman, David Haas, John Grugan, Meredith Toole, Phyllis Faber Kelley, Roger Moog, Jerry Skillings, Michael Taichman-Robins, Mark Kocent, Amara Briggs, and Maxine Goldberg

Officials Attending: Commissioners Bruce D. Reed and George Manos; LM Police Officer McCormick

Excused: Eric Foster and Dan Russoniello

Call to order:

President Greenhalgh called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

LMPD

LM Officer McCormick reported residential burglaries in the area (Union and Elmwood Avenues), as well as thefts from vehicles at the Bala Cynwyd Shopping Center and elsewhere.

President's Announcements

President Greenhalgh announced

- Home composting and rain barrel education programs ~ For information and application forms, see:
<http://www.lowermerion.org/Index.aspx?page=50&recordid=998&returnURL=%2fIndex.aspx%3fpage%3d427>
- One book one Lower Merion events ~ For information and schedule, see
<http://www.lowermerion.org/index.aspx?recordid=554&page=50>

Minutes

Casey O'Bannon moved for adoption of minutes from the October, November and December meetings, as modified by George Manos' correction to the November minutes; the motion was seconded by Jerry Skillings and unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Amara Briggs reported that we are in the black on our funding/budget. Jerry Skillings moved for approval of the budget, the motion was seconded by Bob Zimmerman, and unanimously approval.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Bob Zimmerman had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

Commission Manos reported that Commissioner Reed was re-elected President of the Township Board of Commissioners and Mark Taylor of Penn Valley was elected vice-president.

A 2.75 percent tax increase was passed. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is now under discussion; it's a 5-year plan. BC library is part of the plan. Commissioner Manos will be chairing a committee on our community libraries. We are still in need of assistance with Community Watch; if Bala Cynwyd does not have a community representative there is no community watch coverage in our community.

West Laurel Hill Cemetery would like to come back to The NCBC to discuss additional thoughts on the creation of a Jewish cemetery. The plan calls for many trees to be removed and for them to be replaced; also many trees are being retained. Land Development Approval is necessary. Phyllis noted that the Shade Tree Commission should be contacted and would review the proposed plan, even though it does not have jurisdiction over private property. Commissioner Manos requested time for West Laurel Hill during our February meeting and President Greenhalgh agreed to tentatively plan on it.

TSAC – Formation of the Transportation Services Area Committee is on the Board agenda. David Haas expressed concerns about the scope of the committee's focus and about the assumptions that must be made in order for the committee to move forward with its work. There was additional discussion about the proposed membership of the committee, which is posted on the Township website, and about the NCBC's concerns about the process surrounding the proposed ordinance pertaining to zoning and development in the City Avenue Special Services District.

Farmer's Market – last night the Planning Commission decided not to recommend it based on concerns about having a commercial use in a residential area and urged evaluation of additional sites. The issue will now go before the Township Board.

2733 Old Lancaster Ave (proposed development) and the Mary Drexel Home – both will be impacted by the proposed amendment relating to density and associated parking requirements for assisted living facilities. The state regulations (Department of Public Welfare) that govern these facilities focus on the number of beds and the level of care and there are many variations and different terms, all different from the terms currently reflected in our zoning ordinances. The current parking requirements require more parking than is generally accepted to be necessary. However, doing a comprehensive reconciliation of the definitions in the code will take one to two years, so the proposed amendment would address the parking issue and, perhaps, the density issue.

The Township is also working on an affordable housing ordinance in an effort to ensure that we have affordable housing in the Township.

8:40 - 9:10 pm STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Zoning (30 minutes)

There was extended discussion about City Avenue development and the draft ordinance recently provided to The NCBC. There was discussion about the letter The NCBC sent to Commissioners Reed and Manos and everyone's views about the intent and significance of the letter, the process and communications to date, and about how to move forward in a productive way to ensure community awareness and meaningful participation in the process.

Commission Reed indicated that the draft ordinance will be introduced for purposes of discussion in February; the entire Board has not received the draft yet. It will take quite some time to solicit feedback from the various civics and business interests. After those reviews, the ordinance would go before the Planning Commission.

' Sub-Committee – John Grugan, David Haas, Mark Kocent, Roger Moog, and Bob Zimmerman will meet next Thursday at 7:30 at the American Legion on Route 23 with Commissioners Reed and Manos to discuss the draft ordinance and a proposed traffic study.

' Publicity/Newsletter/Website – Casey O'Bannon & Amara Briggs

Amara explained the budget projections relating to The NCBC's communication. This subcommittee suggests we adopt a 4-tiered membership structure, like the Gladwyne Civic Association utilizes. Modest assumptions suggest these changes could improve income by \$7,000. Other civics have higher memberships for businesses than we have, so the subcommittee recommended we have a 2-tiered membership for businesses (\$100 and \$250). Mark Kocent suggested we have 3 tiers of membership for individuals, \$30 (where we are now), \$50 and \$100.

With respect to the Newsletters, we publish four newsletters each year at a cost of roughly \$1360/newsletter for printing and approximately \$900 for postage (3,000 addresses) and another \$900 for administrative costs. Each newsletter costs more than \$3,000. The committee proposed we continue printing and mailing 2 newsletters and distribute 2 additional newsletters only by email to our distribution list.

In discussing the timing of the newsletters to be printed and mailed, the Board concluded that a Fall communication is important because people refocus on routines and community/school events in the Fall. Another issue is that some people leave for the winter so the January communication may not reach many residents.

President Greenhalgh proposed that we have 3 newsletters (printed and mailed) and that we encourage people to provide their email addresses, which would allow us to be more green

by delivering the newsletters electronically. We will proceed with the Winter Welcome, Summer and Fall newsletters.

Phyllis Faber Kelley noted that our by-laws require that we advertise our Board elections, which we do in our newsletter, and the beautification committee uses several newsletters to communicate its activities.

Michael Taichman-Robins moved to adopt a tiered membership structure for residents at \$30, \$50, and \$100, and businesses at \$100 and \$250 and also to proceed with 3 printed newsletters distributed by mail, Ellen Wertheimer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Financials (3 minutes)

' Insurance – John Grugan (D&O update)

We have received two quotes, but terms of draft policies have not been received.

Membership (3 minutes)

' Federation – Maxine Goldberg (Advisory body invitation)

Maxine reported that Federation developed a questionnaire it is asking each of the civic associations to complete regarding their communities and operations. Maxine gave the questionnaire to President Greenhalgh.

There is a proposed amendment to the existing noise ordinance and the proposed change would extend permission for construction noise to 7:30 am (now 8 am) and until 6:30 pm (now 6). As the ordinance stands, the restriction is defined in terms of decibel levels and there is some potential ambiguity about whether any activity is permitted on a construction site outside the defined timing. The proposed change would extend the time construction is permitted by 30 minutes in the morning and the evening and clearly would prohibit any construction activity outside those times, making enforcement more feasible. Federation has drafted a resolution opposing the proposed amendment and we need to determine how we would like Maxine to vote on it. John Grugan requested a copy of the ordinance, the proposed amendment, and the Federation resolution be circulated to the Board and we will vote by email. Maxine agreed to circulate the Federation resolution. The current noise ordinance is on the Township website and Commissioner Manos will circulate the proposed ordinance.

Gardens, Parks, Trails, and Open Space (3 minutes)

' Open Space – Mark Kocent (Cynwyd Trail day of service)

There is a MLK service event for the Cynwyd Trail.

The current plan is that there will be a 10-12 ft paved path and 8-10 foot gravel path, generally parallel and sometimes crossing. On January 26 there is a public meeting at the

West Laurel Hill Conservatory. The President of the Cynwyd Trail Friends group would like to come to the NCBC meeting in February.

9:05 pm NEW BUSINESS

9:15 pm Adjourn

David Haas moved to adjourn at 10:00, the motion was seconded by Jerry Skillings and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Deedee Litvin
Secretary