

Spruce Hill Community Association
Minutes January 12, 2010

Attendance:

Members: Dan Thut, Judy Dawson-Jones, Barry Grossbach, Janet Finin, Matt Wolf, Anne Froehling, Laura Mazurkewicz, Pauline Borkon, Elaine Nelson, Al Madrid, Bill Magill, Ben Chuslek, Justin Kaplan, David Fenske, Steve McCoubry, Mark Young, Judy Dawson-Jones, Bob Behr, Brett Feldman

Officers: Mark Wagenveld, Ed Halligan, Marie McCullough, Judy Powers, Monica Ferguson

Excused: Jackie Waiters

Absent: Richard King

Guests: Sue Pringle, director of UC Green; Joe McNulty, UCD district community liaison; Mary Goldman, Chair Education Committee; Officer Stacy Livingston, Penn Police Dept.

The meeting began at 7:40 pm.

Sue Pringle spoke about UC Green, a non-profit community organization that relies largely on volunteers. Current ongoing projects include the Green Corp, pruning club, and UC Green gardeners.

She spoke about the Tree Vitalize program which has funding through the end of this year. It provides free trees to citizens and includes money to cut concrete for planting trees. It was initially open to everyone but logistically difficult to implement. The plan now is to target Spruce Hill, Deadline April 1st. Sue suggested going door to door speaking to neighbors about the program, if you encounter people who are reluctant to participate, consider asking UC Green to come out to talk to them.

Mark Wagenveld discussed reorganization of the SHCA committees and passed around a sign up sheet for each board member to indicate their first and second committee preferences.

Each committee member then introduced themselves and committee chairs discussed what their committee does.

Committee Reports

Safety – Ed Halligan. Hopes to coordinate safety agencies a little better. Thinks new DA may be helpful in this regard.

Education – Mary Goldman. \$2600 was raised by most recent mailing for Wilson School playground which brings total to ~\$25,000. She believes if enough money is not raised by August they will need to redistribute funds to another cause. Goal is at least \$55-60,000. It has been difficult to keep parents and other community groups to continue pushing this project. Other projects for the educational committee include planning for new West Philadelphia High School and calling parents of students who miss school there.

Block Grants – Steve McCoubry and Judy Dawson-Jones. The committee awards \$500 grants to blocks. Improvements can include front gardens, retaining walls, trash can enclosures, other streetscape projects, and does not have to strictly be used for landscaping.. Steve believes the application needs to be simplified. Previously there has been a deadline but going forward applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.

Operations Committee – Mark Wagenveld will continue to assist with the building and tenant needs.

Communications – Mary McCullough. Marie has been working on a “how-to” guide to all members, especially new members, which will be emailed to everyone soon. . The newsletter came out today. Marie asked for someone to step up and become a regular columnist for the newsletter and take over the community calendar. The newsletter comes out 4 times a year – January, April, July, and October. Please also email Marie about anything you would like to see in the newsletter even if you are not willing to write about it. The website needs updating, we are hoping for a breakthrough soon.

Finance – Judy Powers. Judy would like for a few member to work with her and become familiar for how things run, financial policies, etc.

Halloween Parade committee – Al Madrid. Will defer planning until later in the year.

May Fair committee – Organizing this was deferred to the next meeting. One available job is taking over coordinating the vendors. Pauline Borkin offered to assist in this role.

Membership – Mark Young and Justin Kaplan. New brochure is almost ready to go. Mark and Justin obtained a list of owner occupied residences in Spruce Hill. Plan is to coordinate distribution of the brochure based on where board members live. Other ideas include ways to improve name recognition by associating SHCA with what we do, such as labels on trees we’ve planted, trash cans we’ve placed, etc. Also discussed was a welcome packet that might include information about local restaurants. Another suggestion was to offer a free one year membership to people who move into the neighborhood.

Block captains – A map was distributed indicating where each board member lives. Please let Mark Young know if you know of someone who may be a good block captain. Barry added that there are still active block captains who SHCA needs to identify.

Zoning – Barry Grossbach. The former bank at 45th and Walnut is owned by the ACIP Mosque and may become a Lebanese bakery. Financing is unclear but the design appears to be tasteful. Mark expressed concerns about the lack of parking in the area if it becomes one. Barry also recommended the book *Fixing Broken Cities*, a new book by John Kroner, former planner to Rendell. The book has several chapters that describe Spruce Hill as a model.