

Spruce Hill Community Association
Minutes April 13, 2010

Attendance:

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

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

Excused: Monica Ferguson

Absent: Richard King

Guests: David Kinsey of the RecycleBank

David Kinsey explained the City of Philadelphia has launched a new recycling incentive program called RecycleBank. When you sign up with RecycleBank and put a sticker on your recycling container, you will earn RecycleBank Points for your recycling efforts and trash reduction. These points can be redeemed for rewards like groceries, gift cards and much more at national and local retailers like Shop Rite, Reading Terminal Market, The Constitution Center and many others. Businesses also can sign up to be a rewards partner and get free advertising by offering discounts to local residents who participate in RecycleBank. Learn more, sign up, download the info sheet or set up your account by going to www.recyclebank.com/philly or calling 888-769-7960.

Committee Reports

Block Grants – Steve McCoubrey is working on improvements for the 500 Block of Melville Street including cement work.

Education – Mary Goldman. The search continues for funding for the Wilson School playground. The Philadelphia School District introduced its Renaissance Schools initiative in January. The program, which includes West Philadelphia High, is intended to revamp failing schools by allowing third parties to manage school operations. These third parties could include charter schools and education management organizations. Two organizations are eligible to manage West Philadelphia High: Mastery Charter and Diplomas Now by Johns Hopkins University. Some fears are that under the charter school, the work of community building by current Principal Saliyah Cruz would be undermined. Three years ago, West Philadelphia High went into meltdown when students began starting fires and even assaulting teachers. Additional measures under the Renaissance Program would include the requirement that all teachers currently employed by a Renaissance School resign and reapply for their jobs. No more than half are allowed back. Next meeting at school is April 20th at 5:30, looking for mentors.

Safety – Ed Halligan. There has been a shooting at the basketball court in Clark Park. Ed spoke with the police chief at the 18th District. Details: At about 3:15 p.m. Saturday, four unknown males attacked a 25-year-old man on the Clark Park basketball courts. According to Philadelphia Police, the victim was sitting on a bench located inside the court when a group of males approached him from behind and struck him on the back of his head with a gun. One of the assailants shot the victim in the right knee before fleeing on foot with the others. The victim was admitted to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania to receive treatment for the knee wound and is now in stable condition. No arrests have been made thus far.

Operations Committee – Nothing to report.

Communications – Nothing to report.

Zoning – Barry Grossbach. Report made to newsletter. Extended Stay Hotel slated for Walnut Street, zoning is working with city council and had a meeting with neighbors.

New Business

- Work day at SHCA-owned lot also known as the bird sanctuary. The clean up is scheduled for May 15, more to follow.
- Penn Alexander School and the neighborhood were highlighted in a glowing article in the Sunday Inquirer.
- The legality of Copabanana sidewalk café was brought up.
- UCD Vacant / Nuisance Properties - vacant and derelict properties can be magnets for drug use, crime, and trash. If you know of such a property, UCD can work with you to address the problem: Contact UCD by 215-243-0555

May Fair planning

The board then discussed plans for the annual May Fair and adjourned.

-- Mark Young, Acting Secretary