

Spruce Hill Community Association (SHCA) Board Meeting

January 9, 2018, 7:30 pm
257 South 45th Street

Board Attendance

Present: Alvarez, Veronica; Bush, Julie; Calkins, Monica; Carr, Tyree; Fayeze, Rana; Grossbach, Barry; Guffanti, Richard; Hamerman-Brown, Sylvia; Johnstone, Evan; Line, Laura; Medley, Leslie; Moore, Richard; Nally, Joe; Potter, John; Richman, Andrew; Rosof, Libby; Santoro, Craig; Santoro, Eric; Steif, Kenneth;

Absent: Bosse, Alexa; Gong, Bo; Lewis-McGarvey, Vicki; Liu, Roseann; Nelson, Elaine; Waiters, Jackie

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions - Monica Calkins

- Guest Speaker, Officer David Dager, Community Response Officer, University of Pennsylvania, Division of Public Safety
- Officer Dager listed the division's boundaries (Schuylkill River, 43rd Street, Baltimore Avenue, and Powelton Avenue) within which they handle 95% of police calls. His attendance is part of UCD outreach to community groups. He also noted that UCD can offer specialized talks with children's groups and schools on bike safety and other topics. When asked about crime stats for the neighborhood, Officer Dager offered to research, and make stats available to SHCA.

Committee Updates

Executive - Monica Calkins

- Monica noted that donation requests received by SHCA are handled by the Exec Committee up to \$300, above which they must be approved by the full Board. The Exec Committee approved a donation to Crossroads Music for \$250

May Fair – Monica Calkins

- The May Fair is scheduled for May 12, 2018, and the Exec Committee will begin preliminary planning prior to the February SHCA Board meeting. All Board members are welcome to take part in May Fair planning.

Block Improvement

- Monica requested a volunteer to serve as chair. This is an important committee that can offer grants up to \$1,500 for improvement projects that include repairs, greening efforts, tot lot, upgrades, tree planning, sidewalk repairs, tree pits, and brick walks.
- Barry Grossbach suggested that SHCA could identify blocks for improvement and approach the block to ask them to apply. Any recipient block must match the grant funds with equal funds and/or labor
- Rana Fayeze volunteered to chair this committee, and will contact Philadelphia More Beautiful about effort to organize block captains
- Julie Bush noted that the Streets Department keeps a list of block captains, and can do mailings of materials. They will not distribute contact information for the captains.

Zoning - Barry Grossbach

- Next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2018 to discuss pending cases
- The Zoning Committee recently had success in having part of the neighborhood re-zoned using a new map created by Julie Bush. The re-zoning was supported by our councilwoman, and passed by the city council in December 2017.

- Re-zoning means many homes now have protection as single-family or multi-family units, requiring building to come to community zoning boards for input/approval
- The re-zoning may be a rearguard path to historic preservation, and has the interest of the Preservation Alliance
- 17-19% of Spruce Hill houses are single-family, and the primary goal of the SHCA is to stop unwanted demolition
- It was noted that the councilwoman's office interpreted the re-zoning as an effort to prevent gentrification though some question whether down-zoning may have the opposite impact of limiting supply and therefore driving up prices
- Next targets for zoning protections may be the commercial corridors on Walnut, Chestnut, and Market Streets

Education - Sylvia Hamerman-Brown/Monica Calkins

- Kindergarten registration will take place January 16-February 9.
- Lottery results will be announced on February 23

PAS Playground - Laura Line

- The initiative to develop the outdoor space at PAS held a Request for Proposals which resulted in 3 finalists. Julie Bush's firm was selected to do the landscape design.
- Fundraising is still in process. The target for fundraising is \$23,000 and, to date, approximately half has been raised.
- Conceptual development period is scheduled to take place through May 2018, but may be extended through summer 2018

Operations – Veronica Alvarez/Andrew Richman

- As of September 2017, new tenants on 2nd floor of SHCA building
- Fire alarm systems have been installed
- Insurance premiums have gone down.
- Barry Grossbach noted that the Crosstown Coalition has proposed a collective insurance policy, and SHCA will look into the details of this proposal

Bird Sanctuary - Julie Bush

- One tree, a Norway maple, snapped and fell into a neighbors' yard which broke their fence.
- An arborist was consulted, and found it was a weak tree. They removed that tree plus another
- An arborist will be asked to visit the bird sanctuary once a year for a check on the trees.

Safety - Leslie Medley

- Alan Garry from UCD has been invited to serve as guest speaker at an upcoming Board meeting.
- Leslie Medley will be attending the monthly meetings with the 18th Police District

Guest Speaker Suggestions

- Rebecca Womack of Fair Districts PA
- Glen Bryant, Assistant VP or Community Relations, Office of Government and Community Affairs, UPenn

Adjournment