

Spruce Hill Community Association (SHCA)

January 14, 2020 - 7:30 pm

Board Attendance

Present: Evan Johnstone; Leslie Medley; Veronica Alvarez; Vicki McGarvey; Barry Grossbach; Abigail Su; Laura Line; Rich Guffanti; Libby Rosof; Sylvia Hamerman-Brown; Alexa Bosse; Emily Dowdall; Andrew Richman; Chris Bole; Rebecca Geller-Pulchalsky; Sugirtha Stathis; Al Suh; Jon Potter

Absent:

Guests: David Forde

Meeting Minutes

Guest Speaker: David Forde, VP Community Relations, University of Sciences

- David Forde proposed a collaboration that would involve SHCA with the community that neighbors USciences – West Shore (bound by 42nd Street, Woodland Avenue, 47th Street, and the Schuylkill River).
- West Shore residents meet regularly with USciences, and would be interested in partnering with SHCA on beautification projects
- The proposed collaboration would involve opening SHCA block grant eligibility to residents of West Shore
- Block grants are awarded in the amount of \$500 for a block project, and \$1,200 for two contiguous blocks
- David Forde would serve as a liaison to the neighborhood block captains
- Barry Grossbach noted that SHCA incorporated some of West Shore when absorbing USciences
- Unused funds in the SHCA Trust could be used for beautification projects: paint, flower planting, cement removal
- UC Green might also partner in planting projects
- David Forde was asked whether there would be a cost associated with USciences serving as a conduit for funds to the West Shore block captains. He responded that he was not sure, and would follow up with an answer on that.
- Rich Guffanti noted that it would help to ID the block captains, and connect them with Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee (PMBC)
- When asked how many West Shore neighborhood blocks would be involved, he responded that the number of blocks would depend on advertising the grants

Review and Approval of Minutes

The November 2019 minutes were approved with suggested edits received from Board members.

Committee Updates

Executive Committee

- Evan Johnston introduced the new SHCA Board members elected in November 2019, followed by introductions from all Board members
- The Executive Committee recently approved a \$250 donation to UCAL for their annual gala

Zoning Committee

- **West Catholic High School:** Blackwell requested a change to zoning-by-ordinance; there was a solid agreement that expanded the RCO boundaries; 10% of building to be devoted to affordable housing. This may be a precedent-setting agreement. The Archdiocese has not recorded the deed, however there is a signed contract and it will be recorded
- **4206 Chester:** prospective buyer wants to rehab 7 units @ \$900/month; Barry has asked the L&I be contacted to inspect wiring
- **Crosstown Coalition:** Mayor pocket-vetoed community benefit, a quid pro quo process whereby community can request benefits in exchange for approval; community benefits change will include appointees by

councilmembers. Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) is something SHCA has never done. RCOs are in need of oversight and overhaul.

- **Mill Creek Tavern:** new owners have run into a roadblock which has forced a stop on development – they will be forced to operate as a bar. It is the same owner that owns vegan bakery and coffee shop.

Education Committee

- Barry noted that there is a signed agreement, in the filing cabinet, which stipulates that the Philadelphia School District cannot take the land that PAS sits on. It was agreed that this document would be scanned and a digital copy saved for future reference.
- **PAS Playground:** there is an April 2020 start date for playground construction
- **Principal Search:** the Education Committee will request a status update on the search for a permanent replacement
- **Big banners:** the banners hanging at the playground entrance were donated by Al-Bustan

Operations Committee

- A new hot water heater was installed by Kenny, who would not accept payment for his work. SHCA will send a thank you note to Kenny.
- The storeroom is fully stocked
- The metal grate on the sidewalk at the front door has been replaced
- Next jobs include a paint job on the exterior, home inspection to assist with prioritizing projects (Kenny could be hired to do the home inspection); interior paint job

Engagement Committee

- Holiday Open House had 50 attendees and brought a few new members to SHCA
- Vicki will organize a block of tickets to a Phillies game for spring 2020. In 2019, SHCA bought 100 tickets and will purchase at least that many for this year.

Business Attraction Committee

- Renata's Kitchen will open a second location at the 40th Street Portal, in February 2020.

Block Improvement Committee

- Alexa will follow up on the traffic calming request made for Woodland Avenue crossing