



Spruce Hill Community Association
257 South 45th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 10, 2023, 7:30pm

Meeting Site for SHCA Board Members/Speakers ONLY: SHCA Center, 257 S 45th St

Virtual meeting site for all others:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83432394416?pwd=a1JVT0hsK2xlMzd5ajFqRXE1VnRoUT09>

Attendees: (hopefully someone grabbed the chat for me- will add the in person).

Welcome and Introductions (Eric Santoro)

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (October and November 2022)

Meeting minutes approved for both.

Speakers

- Vicki Riley, Philadelphia Department of Revenue
 - Collecting real estate (RE) taxes and water. Assessments this year.
 - Information – to share with families and others
 - Homestead exemption (HE)–
 - if anyone does not have this, it is easiest way to save money on real estate taxes. Only program that doesn't have income or age requirements. Own home and live there as primary residence. City will deduct certain amount for taxes.
 - If own another property – cannot get HE, can only get it on the one property in which you live (other program is a business)
 - Do not have to re-apply, in there for good as long as you live there
 - Childs name on deed? If that child has another home elsewhere then one of those homes will not qualify – one name, one home, one HE
 - Q – do not have to re-apply – if you want to check, property.phila.gov – put in address, scroll down, says whether or not your property has HE
 - Senior citizens tax freeze
 - 65 years or older
 - Income – single \$33,500 max income; married 41,500 max income
 - The year that applies and are accepted, taxes are frozen at that amount, as long as they live in that house – could be substantial because we don't know if OPA will do re-assessment in 2024. If you are a senior and qualify, taxes are frozen.
 - LOOP – longtime ownership occupant program. Lived in home for 10 years or more
 - At a certain point, your assessment will cap, and once cap, then RE taxes are capped – there is a calculation or formula that will determine that – she will tell us that. Taxes will have to increase by more than 50% from one year to the next? Go to website to determine whether you qualify. Can download the flyer and the

- application. Walk you through formula to determine whether you qualify. And also let you calculate your taxes, then calculate your taxes with HE.
- That cap may be years in the future. Pay higher tax now, in future will cap
 - Difference between HE or LOOP – cannot have both. LOOP is possibly future. HE is immediate.
 - Can decide which program works best for you.
- Installment program
 - Want to pay taxes on monthly basis rather than annually. There are no fees.
 - There are income guidelines, unless you are 65. If you are 65 or older you can do so no matter what.
 - Application is due March 31, 2023. revenue.phila.gov
 - OOPA – owner occupant payment plan – if cannot pay your taxes, stops that account from continuing to accrue fines/penalties/interests, and can make a payment. Can stop account from going to sheriffs sale. Do not ignore their correspondence!
 - Make sure that others know about this program.
 - Website – Eric will send email – she will send the flyers, and updating a slide presentation, and will send that, we will share with people in the area.
 - Water – two agencies in the city – Water Department and Water Revenue
 - Water Department – the pipes etc
 - Water Revenue – blue envelopes – these envelopes will be WHITE for the next couple months. There are programs to assist people with paying their water bills. Custom assistance program covers senior citizens, low income, debt forgiveness, get into an arrangement, portion of that debt.
 - Senior can have homestead exemption – water discount, all on one account
 - There is currently a water moratorium – but that will end either April or March? 1st (check the website).
 - Email Vicki with any questions. Vicki.riley@phila.gov
- Friends of Clark Park: 2024 Master Plan update for Clark Park (go to focp website: <https://www.friendsofclarkpark.org/>)
 - Speakers included Andy Bowers, Bryan Hanes (designed sister cities park among others)
 - Andy - Became involved in FOCP, got involved in clean ups, and now is President. There was a master plan, but a large part was never implemented. Information within the master plan remained, community wanted a bathroom, safe sidewalks, hard to get done, because the plan is out of date – hard to raise funds. In order to get the park gussied up, needed a masters plan. Parks&Rec – CP is not on their punch list. Provided a path forward that the Friends could lead. If you want to develop a master plan, go ahead, with partner like UCD. Started over 1.5 years ago.
 - RFP – lots of great responses.
 - Bryan Hanes Studio had re-designed Park A already.
 - Moving forward with creating a master plan.
 - Cosmopolitan canopy.
 - Bryan Hanes (from Studio Bryan Hanes)–
 - Survey #1 – online and spent a day in the park – 985 respondents, from 31 zipcodes. Also took a look at the canopy – 259 trees, 66.4% in good health, 26.6% are in fair health.
 - Then an event with concepts
 - Playground
 - New building – what about farmers market?
 - Took that collection of concepts and developed a number of different options
 - Survey asks how you feel about each component.

- Survey #2 – online – check out the 4 concepts online – spread the word, get it as far and wide as we can. This survey is open until January 25th, but the sooner the input the better.
- On January 25th – will follow up on survey #2 - series of drawings that everyone can look at. Will be available for 3 hours. Will be at Clarkville. 5-8pm.
- Woodland avenue – legacy communities – have they done outreach. Yes, trying to reach out to everyone.
- Physical presence in the park – want to make sure that they are reaching everyone
- Dogowner – bowl – dogs off leash – question about the survey wording? What is a main concern of survey respondents– other – 50% said off-leash dogs. Come to the meeting on the 25th.
- SHCA – should come up with an organized statement re: preferred set up for May Fair. Can come on the 25th.
- Food vendor? Café in the park.
- Rosenberger? Public property – leased by SJU – lease ends in 2025? Could that be a café. Remains city property. Right to have some say how that city land may be used. Did propose one option for a dog park in park C in plan D.
- Tony West’s point – the city owns all the property. We are only stewards.
- Development working in parallel process – public restroom – Lauren Hope something? MDOHFF – leading a pilot for a public restroom. Timing worked out well, since a major source of concern in the surveys were the lack of restrooms in CP. Funding is for installation, implementation, staff (f/t city employees) will have social work background, and do cleanings, every two hours. City website. Feedback for location. Then a 6 month delivery, late summer installation is the goal. Permanent public restroom – Portland Loo. Over 20 cities across the US have implemented. Connected to utilities. About the size of a parking stall. Handwashing station. Baby changing table. What is the cost? Project includes features . Budgeted in city budget. Q: After the 5 years, what happens? That is as far as the city budgets.

Committee Updates

- Executive Committee (Eric Santoro)
 - Email today from Scott Philken at Penn – office of social equity and community – students throw trash – fact finding mission. What are the concerns and what they can do to make it better. Volunteer to be a liaison? Vicki!
 - Zoom here to stay, we will modernize the center– wifi, lock on the closet door, basic equipment. Projection. Motion to get estimate – two different options, exec will pursue and come back. Eric will talk to Chris B.
 - Next scheduled meeting is scheduled for Valentine’s Day. Move to February 7th (Julie B’s birthday!)
 - May Fair Committee – make sure it is on everyone’s radar. May 13th! Volunteer for May Fair. Leslie working on permits? Invite – on people’s calendars!
- Historical Preservation Committee (Jenine Sanzari)
 - See slide
 - November 1st community meeting
 - Since worked with Amy Lambert – to talk through the technical pieces. Hiring a consultant in a project manager position. This consultant would have to refine the statement of significance, first drafted in Justin McDaniel for 2002 HD nomination (which was not approved), leveraging that statement, just needs some refinement. Have also plug ins – 4 plug-ins based on the 4 quadrant strategy that are submitting – are submitting 4 separate nominations. Suggestion by the

Philadelphia HC due to their capability to review max 500 properties at a time. Each quad requires a plug in which speaks to the historical and architectural significance of each quadrant. Also take photos of the 500 properties in the first quadrant. Also inventory sheets for each of these properties. Amy, issued an RFP, have narrowed it down to two teams. Evan and Tony volunteered to help review the proposals, two teams are very different. Budget and proposals are very similar. Total budget is about 30k. We don't have the 30K in hand. From now to may, consultants will work with us to prepare the submission.

- Between now and June also have the responsibility to engage the community. Fundraising. WHYY has volunteered student photographers.
- Map of the quadrants. Starting with the lower right hand green quadrant. Almost 200 properties already on the register, still need to include those in the submission. Start with that for 30K. Additional photographs. Why this one? Had to choose one – already some approved, also not as controversial.
- Goes to 45th, but neighborhood goes to 46th.
- Funding available to put forward? Motion for 2,000 donation. Monica seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.
- Safe Streets & Commercial Corridors (Evan Johnstone)
 - Brady Santoro developing a retail preference survey
- Potential Neighborhood Slow Zone (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)
 - Screen share – see slides (Becca can you please share slides?)
 - Program tries to get community to apply for an entire section of traffic calming measures, city works with neighborhood to develop traffic calming measures
 - Speed zone lowered throughout the zone to 20mph. then other measures as well – corner bump outs, forces cars to take wider turns, speed cushions.
 - Mined some data to map what the city requires. Cannot go across a two lane road, so can't cross spruce. To 47th (couldn't go to 48th).
 - Scoring criteria – 50% crash history, vision zero website listing high injury networks, pendot data base of crashes. Equity component – 40% households with children under 18 or population over age of 60, households with annual income below poverty of line, BIPOC. Prioritizes individuals most vulnerable.
 - Community places – 5% and community support – 5%
 - Becca – letter of support – have support from GCCA, PAS SAC, FOCP, Resurrection Church, Gauthier's office
 - Application has happened once or twice before – winner was Willard elementary, Cedar Park. So not sure what are chances are of winning this.
 - Minimally can bring attention to concerns.
 - Eric – Exec conversation on this – some split views. General view that everybody would like to see things – but concern that something transformational for whole neighborhood, removing parking spaces, will make neighborhood look different, feel different, especially while considering that the application only comes up every 4 years. Typically would consult the community on something like this, there are meetings etc. but it may set the ball rolling.
 - Walnut Hill – also has a parallel application – includes PAS and Lea. From 42nd to 48th – also going to be in the application pool. Support from Lea and PAS.
 - Alexa – do we know how many they are going to fund?
 - When would it be approved – March or April or May. Process after approved? Community engagement and brainstorming? Community engagement – is there a consultant hired from the city – OTIS – and the community applicant.
 - Vicki – within that big zone, how many corners/blocks would be selected? Our zone has so many road miles that would have to spread it pretty thin.
 - Julie - OTIS and consultants build consensus –
 - Sylvia – Woodland – is moving forward.
 - Alexa – it is a set budget.

- There is a concern that we will have the opportunity
- Motion to support a letter in support. All in favor. No opposed. Motion passes.
- Operations (Chris Bole) – nothing
- Community Engagement (Vicki McGarvey/Alexa Bosse) – something fun at May Fair.
- Education (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)
 - Gave some \$ to Lea book fair
 - Lea SAC meeting – intruder on campus. Not secure property. The person was not actually in the building, but experience was very scary.
 - Paul Robeson was visited by Gov Tom Wolf. To mark their achievements throughout the years
 - PAS SAC – inclusion – how under-represented students are feeling at the school.
 - Day of service at Lea on MLK day – no need for pre-registration
 - PAS kindergarten registration opens up on January 16th.
- Spruce Up Committee (Laura Line) – nothing tonight
- Crosstown Coalition (Richard Moore) – nothing much to report
- Zoning (Barry Grossbach)

Next Meeting: Currently Scheduled for Tuesday, February 7, 2023

All Other Business – none

Meeting adjourned – 9:22pm