



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

### Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 11, 2023, 7:30pm

#### **Meeting Site:**

- SHCA Center, 257 S 45<sup>th</sup> St; or
- Virtual at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89786390765?pwd=VHpMUy9pb2VyK1VxbGpXODRmczNuQT09>

#### **Present:**

- In person: Evan Johnstone (EJ), Eric Santoro (ES), Julie Bush, Anthony West (AW), Sugirtha Stathis, Benjamin She (BS), Clay Sublett (CS), Yihong Hu, Chris Bole, Richard Moore (RM), Richard Guffanti (RG), Glenn Bryan (GB)
- Virtual: Vicki McGarvey (VM), Binh Applegate, Libby Rosof, Rebecca Geller-Puchalsky (RGP), Sylvia Hamerman-Brown (SHB), Laura Line (LL), Anne Thompson, Frank Chance, Barry Grossbach (BG), Jenine Sanzari (JS), Kelly Sawyer (Toole Design), Mike Lyons

#### **Welcome and Introductions** (Eric Santoro)

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes** (March 2023) – deferred to later in meeting due to lack of quorum

#### **Speakers:**

Glenn Bryan, Office of Government & Community Affairs, University of Pennsylvania

- Good to be back at SHCA, had a long term relationship
- OGCA works with many diff. constituents, from govt/federal to commonwealth
  - Biden Ctr in DC, office in Harrisburg, city relations (council, mayor, etc.)
- GB's role is community/local engagement/partnerships/collaboration
- During pandemic, tried to be responsive to Penn & local communities
- First Thursdays: still on Zoom, thinking about returning to in person in 2023/2024 AY
- New president Liz Magill: Tomorrow Together Campaign
  - Appointed John Jackson as new provost (prev. at Annenberg)
  - Amy Gutman Hall being designated on Chestnut St.
  - Reconstruction work on GSE & College Hall
- Thanks SHCA for connecting with Crosstown Coalition to set up mayoral forum
- Running Penn Leads the Vote again this year, student nonpartisan org funded by Netter Ctr

- Many polling places on campus
  - Most important election in Philly in quite some time
- Scott Philkin – Move-out project
  - Haven't done enough to address removal during moveout period
  - SP working with SHCA and Goodwill to remove clutter, discarded items
- Penn remains committed to PAS, Lea
  - Dean of GSE is leaving, search for new dean prioritizing experience in urban public ed
  - Superintendent Watlington interested in trying to reproduce Penn model around city
  - GSE has heat map, gse.upenn.edu, highlighting school engagement (with Netter Ctr)
- Three(?) different areas to enhance connectivity
  - Economic development & inclusion
    - Penn Medicine, jobs for underrepresented groups
    - HR – 3800 open jobs at Penn & Penn Med
    - Local health engagement – ctr for public health initiatives, nursing school, vet school, try to coordinate to have single public face
    - Working with local galleries, museum, Arthur Ross Gallery
- Upcoming events at Penn
  - Spring fling (major student event)
    - Looking at controlling noise pollution from event
  - Penn Relays, last weekend of April
  - Commencement & alumni weekend (May)
- Returning to election: very important for all of us
- Walnut St repaving being placed on hold until after commencement

### Q&A:

- AW: Has Penn seen drop in applications?
  - GB: No
- ES: Noticed that some of Penn's buildings have a fortress aspect, right on sidewalk, not adding to streetscape
  - GB: Amy Gutman Hall on Chestnut, working with a group to work on artwork & sculpture to open it up
  - Retail has been "beat up" by pandemic, but Penn is trying to make streetscape as interactive as possible, including retail
    - Anne Papageorge and Penn's trustees are very keen to have retail, but it's been difficult to recover from pandemic
      - Eg. Sansom has been very difficult, multiple shops going in and failing
  - ES: SHCA is planning a retail survey of neighborhood
    - GB: Great idea, please share with us
- BS: how do I join First Thursday meetings?
  - GB: Email me.
- AW: What about St. Joe's? Has Penn explored the possibility of development there?

- GB: Don't know. It's an obvious question that's come up. That's a trustee decision. Our expansion has been east (e.g., Pennovation). St. Joe's departure was unexpected.
- GB: Last comment: We're looking for ideas from SHCA, in terms of what's next.
  - Glad you raised the question of street-level retail.

Julie Bush + representatives from OTIS (Benjamin She, Clay Sublett)

- Two-phase timeline for crossing
  - Short term (by end of 2023)
    - Keep bike lanes on both sides, restripe, add flex posts
    - Improve sidewalks
    - Speed cushions close to Woodland crossing, traffic signals at crossing
    - Some parking removed from Woodland up to VA hosp, also on garden side
    - Meeting with Woodland Terr. end of April to discuss
  - Long term (2025)
    - More costly, more engineering
    - Bike lanes both on south side at sidewalk level
    - North sidewalk widened & more trees
    - Bus layby
    - City still fundraising for this part
  - Discussed stakeholder engagement, survey results
- Three options for 41<sup>st</sup> Street triangular area
  - Light touch – put up bollards at either end of 41<sup>st</sup>, install “fun” seating and plants
  - Heavier touch – bollards and curbs blocking off that section of 41<sup>st</sup>
  - Heaviest touch – Veg. garden, planting, seating, changing road into wider sidewalk
  - Q: How would veg garden work? Public?
    - A: Don't know but good question for Woodland Terr. & UCD
  - Q: Could we phase in the plan, starting with light touch and adding more?
    - A: Yes, can build over time
  - Observation: Without knowing what St. Joe's plan is for that area, it's hard to know how much effort to invest. Argument for starting with light touch and building more as appropriate.
- Two alternatives for Woodland crossing road/sidewalk improvements:
  - Alternative A has mixed-use (bike & pedestrian) on south sidewalk, 6.5 feet wide
  - Alternative B has full two-way bike lane on south side with parking removed to accommodate
- Discussion of parking implications, discussion with VA over parking, potential bike use of that route (planned to plug into longer bike route from Univ. City to Bartram's)
- Q: Plans for improved lighting? It's currently poor there.

- A: Yes, the light poles need to be moved anyway for the work so opportunity to improve
- Q: Will brick lane be improved in Alternative B?
  - A: Yes, existing brick would be salvaged, ripped up for reapplication of concrete & relaid
- Q: Possibility for speed cushion at light to stop red light runners?
  - A: Yes, can be considered

### **Quorum reached, March meeting minutes passed**

#### **Exec Report**

- Nothing to report

#### **Historical Preservation (Jenine Sanzari)**

- We have contracted with consultant
- Shared plan, need SHCA board support for fundraising
  - UCHS is doing home tours but funds go to UCHS
  - Start talking about this with neighbors, direct to FAQ
  - JS will talk to RG to make more visible on website
  - May Fair will be opportunity to get word out but need more ideas
  - SHB: Is there a letter we can circulate?
    - JS: It's a good idea. Would be good to have letter to point out where donations go
    - BG: This is the biggest project that SHCA has taken on in its history, going back to the 80's
      - Need to step up & raise money, have obligation to preserve housing stock
      - Get letter out, get 100% financial contributions from board, etc.
      - Phone list of individuals we know are committed
      - Community has to have skin in game, need to be able to say community supported when going in front of historical commission
    - ES: Roxborough got their application in quickly to get the moratorium on demolitions, then started community engagement campaign. Should we consider the sequencing?
    - BG: We need to use May Fair to get word out, can't waste time, use SHCA booth with UCHS right next to it
      - We're committed to total bill of about \$30K, and we'll need more
      - Critically important that we put money into this to boost fundraising from community
    - JB: Powelton decided to be transparent rather than going for the moratorium. Suggests we take advantage of slow market for developers to get word out rather than race to moratorium
    - Make checks to Spruce Hill Community Trust, with "historical district nomination" in line

- Need to work with SHC Trust
- Sugirtha: How do we coordinate May Fair letter with historical district nomination letter

### **May Fair (Evan)**

- Need help in:
  - Onsite management of vendors (Frank has volunteered but need more)
    - Share link with any block listservs
  - Raffle items
    - AW: Need more board members to step up & canvas for items
  - Music
    - We have 2 acts & sound system
    - Gap between performances
    - Sugirtha has DJ on speed dial, aim for roughly 1:30-4:30
    - AW: West Philly Orchestra?
      - EJ: Pretty booked up
- Envelope-stuffing party this Thursday
- LL: Port-a-potties: 2 standard + handicap, washstation: charging \$1K
  - Can we do 1 standard + 1 handicap? But Leslie needs to communicate any changes with city if she has already submitted paperwork
  - Need to mark on photo where they should be set up in park
  - Maybe zoo has their own handwashing station?
- Food trucks: people aren't responding
  - Pound cake woman booked for another event
  - Don Memo taco will be there but will just show up
  - Philadelphia Gyro/Halal very interested but not clear they'll fill out form

### **Zoning (Julie)**

- 45<sup>th</sup> st between kingsessing & woodland
  - Torn down houses & put up 3 units that are 5-br each, not within zoning code
  - Trying to rent out rooms
  - SHCA will deny request

### **Safe Streets (ES & EJ)**

- Retail survey coming soon

### **Education (RGP)**

- Got in touch with Peter Decarolis, Safe Routes Philly, works on quick infrastructure fixes
  - Will come to PAS on Friday to walk around

### **Community Engagement (VM)**

- Sugirtha working on new brochure for community engagement

### **Spruce Up (LL)**

- Nothing to report

**Crosstown Coalition (ES & RM)**

- Code protects you if a common wall neighbor is going to demolish
  - Access agreement
- SLAPP lawsuits a concern for RCOs

**Meeting Adjourned**

**Next meeting: Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 7:30pm, 257 S. 45<sup>th</sup> St. (hybrid)**