

Penn Knox Neighborhood Association community zoom meeting April 6, 2021, 7 pm

Attending: Irving Vaughn, Angela Steele, Adam Kaufman, Maggie Manzer, Terese Vekteris, Grace Flisser, Pat Albright, Sue Patterson, Elizabeth Greene, Deneene Brockington, Aneesha Shabazz, Charles Richardson (from State Representative Darisha Parker's office), Ted Stones, Lois Volta, Emily Busch, Alison Weiss, Rieginald Hall, Phileasa Patrick, Javier Luch, Jennifer Laverty, Cory Budden, Janice ??, Andreana Barefield (Community Liaison for D.A.) , Kevin Zuber, Michael Daniels (from Councilperson Bass's office), Zarah Adams, Laura Smith, Seth Lyons, Philadelphia Councilperson Cindy Bass, Joseph Mortimer(Lieutenant, 14th Police District)

1. Responses to recent neighborhood crime:

Irving Vaughn referenced the shooting in our neighborhood two weeks ago, a peeping tom who is threatening people, and other criminal activity, saying that we're looking for ideas to shore us up.

Cindy Bass stated that her office can provide camera systems (ring cameras), and also lights. She said we need to position the lights and cameras around our blocks to provide more coverage. Michael Daniels, her "constituent services" representative is our contact at michael.e.daniels@phila.gov

Lois Volta, who lives at the Meeting Cottage at Germantown Friends School, recounted several times that the same peeping tom has harassed and threatened her house, touching windows, filming her and making obscene gestures; police came four times but could not find fingerprints. The same person apparently has tried to enter other residences as well, has been caught on camera.

Joseph Mortimer said that police noted this activity on 2/20, 2/225, 3/9, and 3/11 and that he will coordinate with the 39th district about this matter. He will circulate the camera footage once he receives it through email, and will check around the neighborhood on a regular basis. He mentioned touching base with Special Victims and NW Detectives, and said to send him an email if 911 doesn't respond to a call, and then he signed off the zoom.

Cindy Bass said that police must use their resources proactively to catch this peeping tom.

Terese pointed out that the footage has been posted on at least two neighborhood Facebook sites, PKNA, and Changing Germantown. She will resend them to the PKNA listserv.

Andreana Barefield (215-206-7913), the Community engagement liaison from the D.A.'s office, said that she's happy to work on public safety with us and with Cindy Bass, and that we should reach out to her if we want. She said that "The Gun Crimes Prevention Intervention Initiative" consists of 12 Assistant D.A.'s "housed" with detectives to make investigative and prosecutorial processes more efficient, such that the police can work D.A. units to move things forward.

Cindy Bass told us about trainings that her office provides out of a sense of urgency, to build a "Community Leadership Caucus," which we can find out about at 685-9182.

Cindy Bass, Ted Stone, Deneene Brockington are "working on" the crime issue at the corner store and Knox and Hansberry.

Angela Steele said that we need to address the issues that have been raised and clarify the next

steps needed to stop the decades-long drug market and numbers running in our neighborhood. She suggested that we survey which businesses facilitate drug trafficking and other crime since the neighbors know a lot.

Cindy Bass responded that we 1. should organize a community leadership caucus for PKNA (see above). Michael Daniels and George Stevenson are contact people; 2. should communicate the urgency of our situation to the police - maybe by having Commissioner Outlaw and the D.A. at a meeting, and maybe the former 14th Police District community liaison.

It was pointed out that the 39th District was contacted with an address of a drug house, but they did nothing.

Cindy Bass said that her office turns information over to the police, giving examples of action taken on a drug house in Logan and a smoke shop on Wayne Avenue. The office tries to follow up as much as possible.

Pat Albright asked what role the City Council Action Plan on Poverty should play in reducing crime. Cindy Bass said this Plan does help in giving people employment, but that gang violence is very old and spills out into the community. Michael Daniels mentioned that the young man (from Haynes St.) who was killed almost as soon as he stepped out of the prison doors was a victim of gang violence.

Reginald Hall of Town Watch said that his organization trains people to be the eyes and ears of the block, or else how to patrol the blocks - but they need a place to train people. Lois said that maybe GFS could host a Town Watch training.

Deneene said that the 12th ward, 17th district, is offering such a training.

We need to get to know our neighbors.

Deneene announced a behavioral health-oriented meeting designed to help people debrief after violent episodes such as the recent shootings: It will be held on April 8, 6-8 pm, called "Network of Neighbors Responding to Violence." Call Deneene at 267-570-3767, or email at philly1217cp@gmail.com for information.

Irving said that getting to know the neighbors is working on his block, and he thanked Cindy Bass and Reginald Hall.

2. Quality of Life Committee:

Angela Steele said that the committee has established some priorities, including the Penn Knox Litter-Free Blocks Initiative. Their goal is to bring the litter index of Penn Knox streets under 1.5.

The Initiative's first phase will include the 100 block of Maplewood Mall and 5200 Knox, the 100 block of Hansberry; The second phase is aimed at the 5300-5500 blocks of Wayne Avenue. Through collective action, from 9-11 on the second Saturday of every month, the group can have an impact, building momentum, community investment, and pride in where we live. They will determine what's needed for various blocks, such as Big Bellies, or to work with apartment building management, and so on.

The Spring Clean-up on Sat, April 11 in NW Philly coincides with the Initiative's first litter clean-up - which will meet at Knox and Hansberry Street at 9 am.

Maggie added that she also has supplies for the clean-up, which she will distribute at the

Community Garden at Penn and Green Streets at 9 am.

3. Neighborhood Development and Conservation Committee

Maggie said that 156 W. School House Lane had been granted historic preservation by the Philadelphia Historic Commission by a vote of 11-2. Sue mentioned that the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, which owns the property, will have to go through the regular zoning process if they want to build in the back of that building.

Maggie said that the Historic Commission meets this Friday, the 9th, at 9 am to discuss historic designation for the Joseph Pearson House, c. 1857, at 5139 Wayne Avenue, just outside the PKNA boundary. We can write letters of support for its preservation and send them to allyson.mehley@phila.gov by Thursday, April 8. [The PKNA Board has sent in a letter of support.] You can search the Philadelphia Historic Commission to find the zoom link on their page.

Denise asked if we can ask developers to give jobs to local PKNA individuals. Maggie answered that 5139 zoning is "by right," so we can't officially ask, but when neighbors themselves have a voice in zoning issues, then yes, we can certainly ask that local neighbors be hired for jobs in developing properties.

4. Neighbor to Neighbor Committee

Grace said that we should consider having a community event in September at Howell Park - possibly on Saturday, September 11, after the Clean-up scheduled for that day. That idea is a possibility.

Sue said that Mural Arts Porchlight will have an event at Howell Park in May in conjunction with the mural going up at Queen and Greene Streets. Sue will email us information.

5. Treasurer's Report

Maggie said that we have just about \$1800.00 in our account after a recent \$50 donation.

Our next meeting is on May 4.

Open Mike:

Pat Albright announced an event including legal clinics at a new location - her organization is moving into a new building. (I missed most of this!!!)

Submitted by Grace Flisser