

## **PKNA Minutes zoom community meeting, December 1, 2020**

**Attending:** Zarah Adams, Pat Albright, Birdie Busch, Grace Flisser, Ian Hagerty, Adam Kaufman, Russell Kleinbach, Maggie Manzer, Darisha Parker, Sue Patterson, Angela Steele, Terese Vekteris

1. Zarah said that GFS has masks to distribute and asked if we wanted to distribute them. The Germantown Community Fridge has a shelf for PPE.

2. Maggie announced that both Angela and Adam were nominated as Vice Chairs and have agreed to share the Vice-Chairship, and each spoke for a few minutes to introduce himself/herself. We will formally vote on this issue next month, in January.

3. Ian Hegarty, of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, made a presentation about the city planning for Penn-Knox. The following is a partial summation of his presentation:

City planning conceptualizes how to invest resources in public systems such transport, utilities, and parks, and zoning can help with such development. The Phila2035.org website (based on a plan from 2018) can show us how the Commission's plan is being enacted. There are helpful in-house videos: <https://bit.ly/dpdvideos>. Zoning's purpose is to protect communities by establishing rules for how land can be used and what kinds/size/shape of new buildings may be built in particular areas.

The plan includes city-wide vision is focused on mitigating greenhouse gases and assisting public transport. There are also district-specific recommendations for 17 geographic areas, including Germantown. The big picture for the upper NW, where we are, is to develop new jobs and housing on major avenues and to support transportation infrastructure, to rehabilitate and "infill" between rail lines and to limit growth at the district's periphery, along with preserving historic buildings where it's possible.

In Penn-Knox, the effort is to maintain single-family zoning on minor streets and to have the educational campuses develop master plans that will respect the communities around them as well as support their carefully planned changes. We need new housing, retail, employment, and dining on Wayne Avenue and on Germantown Avenue with neighborhood-scale mixed development that makes sense given the neighborhood context. This also pertains to some redevelopment at Queen and Greene. Community gardens will be protected by gaining park zoning since now, unfortunately, they still are zoned as housing areas. That's an illustration of corrective zoning that will help maintain what exists as well as plan for improvement. In addition, the Greene Street Artist Coop needs to be rezoned to "match" the fact that folks live as well as work there. The gas station, car lot, and carpet store also need corrective rezoning to match the facts on the ground. Wayne Avenue needs some corrective rezoning from single to multi-family housing. The church at Wayne and Queen needs corrective rezoning to "match" with single-family zoning around it, and to protect it, as well.

The Planning Commission is in the process of doing community outreach to draft zoning remapping bills neighborhood by neighborhood, in chunks. Once a bill is drafted, is it reviewed in City Council and then there's another Planning Commission Review.

Discussion:

Sue: Many “single-room occupancy” places exist on Wayne Avenue, which are essentially boarding houses, which operate under the radar and are not licensed or tracked. They are owned by organizations that purport to be non-profit, but they’re in it for the money. We need to protect the renters.

Ian: These places are good for stopping homelessness, though. We need a balance.

Emily/Birdie: What is going on at Trinity-Lutheran campus? They do have nice historic buildings, hope we can keep that.

Maggie: What will happen to empty lot on Germantown Avenue? - will there be an apartment building there “by-right”?

Ian: There’s no “overlay” that would require the developer to get input from the Planning Commission although the Commission doesn’t want out-of-hand development such as has occurred on Ridge Avenue. So, to head off this kind of development:

- Get consensus from PKNA that we don’t want unregulated growth. He can talk to us some more. Then we need to write a formal letter to the Director of the Planning Commission and to Councilwoman Cindy Bass, since “that’s worked in the past.”

Pat: We do’t want to displace people through gentrification.

Ian: The market often drives development, so we need to be vigilant in order to avoid that. If we want affordable housing here, we should mention that in our letter. In fact, in the long run, it’s not helpful to oppose all apartment buildings since people need housing! (Grace: we need a balance between careful development and preservation of what is.)

Sue: GFS has had a long-term plan. They might build connectors between their historic buildings. We trust them. We need flexibility and awareness. That’s what we’d like from PSD - a map of their master plan.

Ian will be in touch with Maggie about how to press them for this. The historic commission meets on January 20th to consider a historic designation for 156 W. Schoolhouse Lane. Darisha would like notice of this meeting.

Maggie: What will happen to the vacant lot on Hansberry and Knox? The owner doesn’t respond, lives in Roxborough.

Ian: It’s zoned incorrectly now as CMX2.5 but it should be RS-3, for single-family attached homes. The zoning is from maybe seventy years ago. We hope no one buys it and builds on it while it’s zoned incorrectly.

Darisha: What is the timeline? how can we speed up the zoning change? Can we make it into a garden?

Ian: You could try to push a sheriff’s sale and raise money from the neighborhood to purchase this lot.

Angela: The dumping has many sources. 311 is called all the time. The Knox Street sign on that corner has been gone for a while. We need to protect the home-owners.

Darisha is concerned about blight and squatters; would like to have L and I at a zoom meeting.

#### 4. Zoning Committee:

Maggie said there will be no meetings until early 2021.

We need to write letters of support in early July to the Historic Commission supporting the historic designation of 156 W. Schoolhouse Lane. The architectural committee of the Commission will discuss this property on Jan 20, 2021.

#### 5. By-laws Committee:

Adam said that the By-laws Committee looked at the feedback and tried to incorporate it into the revision of the bylaws. The committee was trying to simplify language clarify detail, update jobs of officers and their nominations, terms, and elections.

Sue: it reads well. The question of PKNA boundaries needs to be addressed since we should “have skin in the game” regarding the development on Chelton Avenue. We can be helpful.

Maggie moved that we vote on the by-laws, and Grace seconded. People voted in the chat either up or down, including their addresses so that we would know that they live within PKNA. All the votes were in favor of the new bylaws and none were opposed. However, the vote will continue online so that people not at the meeting can have a survey. They will receive a survey monkey that asks them to vote the new bylaws up or down.

#### 6. Finances:

Maggie: we had no expenses this month. The bank statement hasn't come in, but we should have the same amount in our account as we had last month unless more people have paid dues.

#### 7. Distributing the newsletters:

We need to have the next newsletter to Zarah by December 16th so that she can have time to xerox them for us (Thank you, Zarah and GFS!) since the last day of the term at GFS is the 18th..

Adam will pick these up from Zarah and distribute them to the volunteers on our list so that they can be put in individual mailboxes. Grace is still clarifying who is doing which blocks. We need to have more people distributing on Wayne Avenue - which is difficult because there are a number of apartment buildings without individual mailboxes. Maybe we can tack them up on message boards there.

#### 8. Open mike:

- Maggie: We have a new Instagram account that Birdie is in charge of, taking PKNA pics of people, events, gardens, architecture, etc.

- Sue: The Friends of Howell Park planted bulbs on Love Your Park Day in November. Sue still has gloves, masks, and bags if people need them. The Park group will carry on.

- Darisha is now the State Rep. She looks forward to community conversations that look for solutions. She's looking for grant money for environmental and historical projects and will partner with us. Call her.

- Grace: Mural Arts of Philadelphia is having an open community zoom meeting on December 17, 6:00-7:30, that all are invited to. Contact Kali Silverman at [kali.silverman@muralarts.org](mailto:kali.silverman@muralarts.org) for the zoom link. You can also ask her questions about or weigh in on the mural going up at Queen and Greene.

Maggie: We have a new RCO address through Jonathan at [phyla.gov](mailto:phyla.gov). It is [pennknox.germantown@gmail.com](mailto:pennknox.germantown@gmail.com)

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Submitted by Grace Flisser