

**Penn Knox Neighborhood Association  
Germantown, 19144  
Community Zoom meeting November 2, 2021 Minutes**

**Attending: Adam Kaufman, Alison Weiss, Malcom, Andreana Barefield, Andy Lemons, Elijah Vasilets, Bethany Flood, Bonnie Soriano, Jake Miller, Deneene Brockington, Sue Gilfillian, Deborah James Vance, Grace Flisser, Maggie Manzer, Angela Steele, Anlin Wang, Sharrief Ali, Dian Pieri, Terese Vekteris**

1. Angela invited people to introduce themselves, so several did, including all the PKNA officers attending.

2. Old Business:

a. We have had no word on the Camera Program that Councilperson Cindy Bass offered us at our April 6, 2021 meeting, other than the possibility of gaining them through participation in a Community Leaders Caucus.

**Update:** George Stevenson from Cindy Bass' office has responded, making clearer that the camera program is part of a larger initiative that the office is running with the local wards and divisions, and that they don't seem to be willing to work with the entire neighborhood association for a similar program. However, George said he will follow up about speaking to us at a future group meeting to answer questions and give us more details about how each division/ward can engage with the Councilperson's office and start this process so that people can start taking action and becoming leaders for their blocks. We will keep you updated.

b. As a follow-up to the community zoom meeting with PPD Commissioner Outlaw in October, the Commissioner and other officers sent responses to some of the questions that they could not address at the meeting itself. These will be posted on our website, pennknox.com, along with the minutes, which reflect the discussion that was held. She committed to doing a walk-through our community, and we will follow up with her.

c. Adam noted that we trying to improve the reach of our newsletter delivery throughout PKNA and we're looking for a few volunteers to fill in a few blocks for us that aren't covered. We'll make the spreadsheet with the delivery assignments available to everyone so they can confirm their block assignments. He thanked all involved.

3. New Business:

Angela announced that we will hold an election for PKNA Officers on January 4, 2022, and that all are invited to submit nominees, including themselves if they wish, by December 7. In particular, we need to fill some current vacancies: PKNA Chair; Co-Chairs for our three Committees: the Quality of Life, Neighbor to Neighbor, and Neighborhood Conservation and Development Committees. Descriptions of these roles are in our by-laws, which are posted on the PKNA website, pennknox.com.

4. Presentation by Bonnie Soriano of Foundation for Health Equity, [www.f4he.org](http://www.f4he.org):

The Foundation is attempting to gather information by listening to community voices across parts of the Northwest/Germantown concerning what health needs need to be addressed locally.

Bethany Flood filled us in on some history of the Foundation.

Bonnie said the current focus is on seniors, children, and food insecurity, but they're making sure that other health needs aren't being ignored and trying to home in on where the needs are most urgent.

- Maggie said that our food fridges are very active and people seem to feel very comfortable in drawing on them and could use more support and funding.

- In response to Grace saying that her neighbor didn't seem to know where to get vaccinated, Bonnie said that Gayle from Keystone Care should be contacted and can get the vaccine to people, even in their homes.

- Maggie asked about the nature of the grants that the Foundation gives out, and whether they would go to larger umbrella groups with 501c3 non profit status. Such groups, Bonnie said, usually sign off on grants as a "fiscal sponsor" if more local groups are working on the grant (such as for an event) within the umbrella group's purview. Grants run from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

- In answer to Bonnie's question, "what prevents access to care services?" Angela answered - poverty and sub-standard housing.

- Deborah said that there's a need for culturally appropriate care, especially for mental health services for adults and children, and for dental care. She suggested that we de-stigmatize mental health services and bring high quality care to the neighborhood itself to a rec center, senior center, or school, where people feel comfortable.

- Deneene said that we need some grants focusing on violence prevention.

- Bonnie urged us to be in touch with the Foundation with other concerns or to stay connected and engaged. Eventually, they may provide training to those interested. Angela thanked Bonnie and Bethany and asked them to come back to keep us updated.

5. Presentation by Jake Miller on the "Walking Collage Germantown" digital project:

Jake, Department Chair of Theatre at Germantown Friends School, explained that this project began as a Covid-era assignment to connect the students to their neighborhood, but it has grown bigger, and he invites the neighborhood to collaborate with the project by adding our contribution to the "collage." To contribute, one chooses a location in the neighborhood that in some way resonates or is meaningful to the person, and creates some sort of "work of art," be it poetry, video, a monologue, a painting or artifact, and so on, that pertains to this location and could help a spectator connect to it. These individual contributions are collected on a website and anyone is invited to walk through the neighborhood and visit any and/or all of these sites and to view the digital artwork associated with them. Jake described some of the work appearing on the website, which span a huge range. Although the site consists only of student work right now, GFS hopes eventually not to be the "owner" of the project, but that instead a community of artists will take it over. We viewed the introductory video for the project, which was very inviting, and viewed a map of the sites.

The project can be found at [germantownfriends.org/arts/theatre/walking-collage-germantown](http://germantownfriends.org/arts/theatre/walking-collage-germantown).

Jake also asked for further sites and ideas and other ways that we could make the project more meaningful and accessible to the community, so that it takes on a "life of its own".

- Deneene mentioned that there have been gun deaths in her area on Knox between Queen and Hansberry and the idea emerged that art or music could be created that is associated with specific corners where people died so that there emerges "energy that addresses people's fear." Jake urged Deneene to be in touch with him to think about this idea further and enact it so that corners can be "transformed"

-Angela suggested that this project be brought to schools and to kids; she also urged that parameters for the art be established so that people can contribute to it constructively. Zarah might have contacts to bring this to area schools

-Sue suggested that there be walks conducted around these sites, which might help people to get out of their houses in this post-Covid era.

-Jake has met with the Germantown Historical Society and will continue to connect with them in service of Project website: [germantownfriends.org/arts/theatre/walking-collage-germantown](http://germantownfriends.org/arts/theatre/walking-collage-germantown); Jake's contact information: [jmiller@germantownfriends.org](mailto:jmiller@germantownfriends.org)

## 6. Quality of Life Committee:

a. Angela reminded us of the Litter-Free Initiative, which meets in order to clean some of our neighborhood blocks every second Saturday of the month. The next effort will be on November 13th, from 9-11:00; meet either on the corner of Hansberry and Knox or on Maplewood and Greene. The following meeting will be on December 11.

b. Angela reminded us of the Streets Improvements letter campaign that we urge everyone to participate in. The many actions we hope will be made in our community are reconducting a traffic study on the 100's Maplewood Avenue; making repairs at Marion and Hansberry; installing a traffic light at Queen and Greene; conducting a traffic study of the 100's block of Queen Lane; center lane markers on 5300 block of Greene; a crosswalk at Queen Lane and Knox Street.

We hope that someone from the Streets Department will attend our February PKNA meeting.

-Sue added a concern about parking on our block corners, which is also a traffic concern. Also, she was concerned about criminal activity at the Hansberry and Knox corner store.

-Deneene said that we need a balance; we don't want to shut it down since people depend on the store for groceries and food, but that the store should improve its conditions to make the neighborhood safer, and maybe a police presence might help.

Angela acknowledged the concerns and said that she'd keep us posted.

## 7. Neighborhood Conservation and Development Committee

a. Maggie reported that we will have an RCO zoning variance (ZP 2021-007910) vote at our December 7 meeting in response to a request to change the zoning for 147 W. School House Lane. We will have more information about the request 5 days before the meeting and we will circulate this. The request is to change the zoning to three two-bedroom apartments; one near neighbor already supports this.

b. On December 14 at 6 pm, there will be a Zoom community meeting held by Ted Stones of the 12th Ward Democratic Committee for a variance request at 20 W Queen Lane (ZP 2021-00975220) to legalize a multi-unit building on Queen Lane across from the Trinity Lutheran Church, to allow for 3 apartments.

c. PSD (the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf) has demolished two small accessory buildings on their back lot; they will likely build on it.

## 9. Treasurer's Report

a. The PKNA bank balance is \$1,738.92; we paid \$161.89 for our zoom subscription. Please pay dues to offset our expenses and fund our activities; we request \$10 for individuals and \$25 per household per year; you can pay online at [pennknox.germantown@gmail.com](http://pennknox.germantown@gmail.com) or email Maggie

to drop off a check .

-Angela suggested that we set up a reminder for dues; Adam and Maggie agreed that that was a great idea.

8. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday December 7 at 7:00.

OPEN MIKE:

a. Kevin said that Representative Parker and Councilperson Bass have been involved in trying to correct a neighborhood danger associated with Victor's Tavern at Wayne and Maplewood Avenues, where there have been shootings. Possibilities include revoking the Tavern's lease or liquor license. Sharieff Ali said that we would be updated.

b. Maggie reported that a Weavers Way Coop store may be opening in Germantown and that we could email its manager, John Roesser, through Weavers Way Coop with any ideas we have for food justice issues that could help to anchor the store's mission.

c. Thomas, from the Office of Councilperson Oh identified himself and said that Councilperson Oh had arranged for a greater police presence and awareness at the IGA grocery store on Wayne Avenue in response to drug activity there.

d. We can circulate a newsletter regarding a School Board bill that would give voters a voice in picking the individuals for the School Board.

e. Grace mentioned that a. the Joseph Coleman Library at Greene and Chelton is holding a Job Fair and Career Launch on November 9 from 1:00-4:00; rain date is November 10. b. the Germantown Espresso Bar is having an open mike on November 11; sign up at 6:30, perform at 7:00.

Submitted by Grace Flisser, PKNA Recording Secretary