



Penn Knox Neighborhood Association

Meeting Sept. 4. 2018

143 W. Coulter St. 7-9 pm

Sue Patterson-Chair, Russ Kleinbach-Treasurer, Georgette Bartell-Secretary

Present: Sue Patterson, Georgette Bartell, Russ Kleinbach, Barry Levine, Connie Winters, Sue Gilfillan, Oscar Beisart, James Gilfillan, David Gilfillan, Maurice Bateman, Gloria Hicks, Daryl Hicks, Joe McCarthy, Pamela Bracey, Alison Weiss, Jeff Templeton, Tina LeCoff, Ruth Greenberg, Tony Garcia, Shanyah Wright, Isaiah Hammond, Yvette Starkes, Lynda White, Robin Holts, Liuda Sudaris, Elizabeth Green, Kathy Paulmier, Irving Vaughn, Steve Paul, Lynn Collins, Ben Huggett, Misha Wyllie, Jasmine Heiss, Autumn Nelson

Treasurer's report: \$786.99 checking, \$5 savings, \$1000 paid to lawyer in August, we still owe \$1600

Guest speaker – Steve Paul who near the Wissahickon Boys and Girls Club. He wants to re-elect Tom Wolf. Feels like the democratic party is taking everything for granted. No window signs or activity. The last Republican Governor cut education money causing 23 schools to close. Wants canvassers and phone bankers.

Connie Winters is Republican Ward Leader who is also in favor of good jobs and people need to pay taxes. She feels that politics should not be a part of PK meetings. Others agreed.

Tina LeCoff made a motion that we don't include political discussions in our meetings. Seconded by Connie. Mr. Vaughn suggested that politics does **affect** our community. Sue tabled this discussion.

The conclusion is that all people need to vote.

Update on Zoning Variance meeting results for 5250 Wayne Avenue. Purchased by developer who proposed 26 units, no parking. Rejected by RCO SoLo. Their next meeting for the new proposal is **Sept. 25, 6 pm, 5058 Wayne Ave.** It is historically designated. Feedback included need to reduce density, have a gym and

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play area. Underground parking is not feasible. Historical designation requires compliance for the outside only.

Boys and Girls Club Update:

- See Google drive started by Germantown United Community Development Corporation.
- Sue gave a brief history of our negotiations with the Boys and Girls Club for historic designation or a contract to preserve the façade while they update and renovate the building.
- Will we be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Historical Commission on Sept. 14.
- In addition, several people questioned the necessity to cut the trees in the park on the SE corner of Greene and Coulter. Speculation abounds, no answers.
- This issue is in the context of 2% of the properties in Germantown are historically designated

Nomination of Brandi Levine for Vice Chair - Barry Levine, Brandi's husband, read her statement. Her nomination was made by Connie Winter. Support from many neighbors and a special statement by Tina LeCoff. 10 votes in favor. Thank You, Brandi for filling this long vacant position!

Discussion of Boundary extension. Sue had initiated it because there was a deadline for the RCO boundaries. Following are statements made by those present.

- Should RCOs in Germantown meet?
- Germantown Ave should not be seen as a boundary but as a core
- Communication should have been made clearer.
- Ask people what they want to get out of the organization. People will be invested, add quality to their lives.
- Didn't attend meetings, because PKNA focus was narrow. Economic steps have stigma. Want to isolate yourselves from those in the other levels. He lives in an area with drug problems. Burglary rate is down. "If you want to deal with this, you have to step in to the mud."
- SoLo reached out to all the block captains asked them to come to their meetings which they are doing. SoLo excluded Penn Knox until Julie Baranauskas died. They are interested in areas that have no representation to provide a space to for concerns and to relate the city services needed and available.
- Some parts of Hansberry don't have block captains because of apathy.

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- Now that the RCO system has developed with some strong ones and some inactive. We need to be proactive on the historical buildings. Expanding ~~may be~~, counterproductive. Wants to identify all the properties in PK, ownership, vacancies, apartments. We need to re-apply for an historical district and this is the first step.
- Winona resident says she has followed PK all this time after living in PK a couple decades. Was the backbone of NW Neighbors Association which got the high-rise torn down. Admires PKNA for being active, protective of the community. At first felt that expansion was an opportunity to learn a lot, but why now, because PKNA has been exclusive. Our concerns are that development is here. We want a say, maybe partnership. Feels an overarching group will be more protective of the issues in the area.
- PKNA resident, first time at a meeting, says current PKNA residents should be stepping up, like him. Most important to fortify the foundation of PK, then when expanding, a better idea of what needs to be done.
- Woman from W. School House Lane doesn't come because the meetings conflict with weekly commitment. She says PK is elitist. Has grown children and her husband is a policeman who was shot and is retired. She sees this elitist attitude exhibited here tonight. Thinks PKNA has done a lot but...
- A resident was part of NW Neighbors, needs partnership. Is now retired and wants to know why PKNA wanted to expand boundaries now. She wants to strengthen it. She wants to know how will we integrate the people around us. Not looking for leadership, wants improvement in the neighborhood.
- What are some concrete examples of the torches we carry?
- We need flyers, block captains. 18 institutions in PKNA and none pay taxes. It's not just about history but zoning and thinks PKNA should stay small for zoning issues. We need to strengthen institutions we have now.
- Is there value to being an RCO in zoning decisions? Can Community benefits ~~agreements~~ be ~~obtained~~ by RCO ~~negotiations~~?
- Meetings of group leaders for communication, an umbrella org. it will have more power with a public official.
- Another resident said she also thought that PKNA was elitist. She lives here now and likes the idea of expanding boundaries, it will allow more people to be represented.
- PKNA is less organized by interest. Town watch committee was comprised of block captains. PKNA because less organized, is less effective. We need committees again. Things can become too diffuse.
- Why not stay in SoLo, it is already an RCO. Why not have one RCO?, because missions are the same but the concerns are local.
- Concerning the second meeting about 5200 Knox. People died, block captain is not involved. This resident goes to 39th district meetings. Fights with dealers. Loves historic preservation but she is dealing with a mess on her block.
- Why can't we work together, there is power in numbers.

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- Area is in no man's land. All organizations should be working together. Politicians chop us up. We need to stay in communication with each other. 50-60% are not homeowners. People buying them for section 8 housing.
- PK resident says that our concerns are different than yours. "You're different than we are." We need to think about the shared community
- Question, expanding PKNA as RCO boundaries or PK boundaries?

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Further discussion next meeting.

Open Mike – Any other news to discuss?

- PECO doesn't send out meter readers, unless you call. **So if people claiming to be meter readers knock on your door and ask to be let in, don't let them in.**
- Flea Market on Gilbert Stewart Park. With Baynton Hill Neighbors.

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Next meeting is Oct. 4, 2018

Minutes submitted by Georgette Bartell