

Center City Residents' Association

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors September 14, 2004

Present: Coffey, Mattern, Easton, McNamara, Reilly, Goldstein, Kung, Ascher, Baker, DiMaio, Donohue, Klenk, Lee, Levi, Levy, Miller, Murphy, Phillips, Stavrakos, Straub, Tissian, Wroblewski, Halpern, Weinberg, Millhollen, Krakower (Counsel,) Levin (Business Manager)

Absent: Mandel, Barnes, O'Brien, Saltz, Silverman

Excused: Seltzer, Gutman, Haider, Schneider

Ed Halpern moves approval of the minutes from the June, 2004 Board meeting. TJ seconds. MSC.

Coffey explains the problem CCRA faces with achieving a quorum since all past presidents are members of the board.

Accordingly, Ed Easton moves that we ratify all actions previously approved at the June board meeting. TJ seconds. 15 out of 23 vote for.

Scott Donahue moves approval of the August 3, 2004 special board meeting. Heather Asher seconds. 16 for, 3 nays.

Lou circulates new policy on attendance at developer presentations of major projects.

Discussion ensues with questions from Fran Levi and Stanley Krakower. No Board action taken. LC states that the policy will be implemented starting now.

Mariner project Special Meeting will be held on 9/22 @ 7pm at Trinity Lutheran Church, 21st/22nd and Chestnut Streets.

Symphony House – Carl Dranoff's project at Broad & Pine/Lombard. We'll have a Special Meeting to discuss this project on 9/21 @ 7pm at Trinity Lutheran Church, 21st/22nd and Chestnut Streets

Both special meetings will be combination general membership, special Board, special Executive Committee and special Zoning Committee meetings.

Center City Plan – Anish Kumar is heading up this effort. We intend to proceed with a three stage process culminating in a formal written plan. Budget will be \$159,000. We're looking for potential sources for funding including other neighborhood groups, our elected officials, foundations, law firms and regional businesses.

Lou further explains that this effort is directed at giving us a better plan for analyzing many of the projects that are presented to us. Right now our analysis of each project occurs on an ad hoc basis. It will also educate developers as to CCRA's vision for our part of Center City, before they conceptualize their development plans.

A stakeholder's committee will be formed with government, business, civic and cultural institutions to add more credibility to the plan.

Our insurance program is now available only to resident members. This restriction clashes with our new policy of extending many benefits of membership to other classes of members.

Ed Easton explains that very few people who are not resident members actually apply for the insurance program and in each case, our insurance brokerage (PLI) makes an exception and offers the insurance to the inquiring non-resident member. Discussion ensues with no action taken.

Norman Tissian explains that our Government Relations Committee is planning events for September and October. Attendance at September's event at the Pyramid Club is firm. October's board response has been light.

Jean Wroblewski describes that SEPTA is considering a study to run a trolley or a bus from 52nd and Lancaster to Fairmount, down Callowhill to 18th Street and ultimately over to the Convention Center. SEPTA's goal is to find a way to move people to the Parkway from the western part of the city. Martin McNamara adds that this new line will interact with the proposed Schuylkill Valley Metro.

We're watching the proposed SEPTA study and will report back. We became aware of this project after SEPTA sent us a questionnaire about the proposed project that required a response, very disappointingly, in just days.

TJ moves that Lou send a letter to SEPTA outlining the preliminary thoughts of several of our members in response to their proposed project. The letter will also indicate our thanks for being included and our desire to be included in the project's future. Jean Wroblewski seconded. MSC. 21 yeas, 0 nays.

Heather Asher reports that we've brought 50 inactive members back to active status. Heather also thanks the Executive Committee for purchasing a color printer for the committee's use. Due to Alan Levin's efforts, the printer was purchased for less than \$500. We're also putting up posters in an effort to raise our profile. We're also going to run advertisements in the City Paper and Philadelphia Weekly to try to raise our profile. We're also considering coordinating trick-or-treat routes for children in our neighborhoods. Heather also thanks Alan Levin for all his support over the last several months. Andrew Terhune, David Sobel, Jennifer Smith (PA Ballet), Kelley Gartner (Border's Books), Dick Levinson (Mutter Museum), Adam Travia (City Paper) are all members of the committee, in addition to co-chair, Peter Klenk.

Peter Klenk reminds the board that Tuesday is the night that the CCRA discount applies. Don't forget to use it!

TJ describes that we are "significantly ahead" of where we were last year. We've had a \$4000 increase in early responders to the Celebration of Center City Living.

TJ asks for a motion to permit Alan Levin to be an authorized check signer so that he can use an office credit card to be used by him. Moved by Heather Asher. Seconded by Norman Tissian. Ed Kung asks if Alan is bonded. Lou responds that he is. Pat is not sure. Goldstein objects to adding Alan as a signer and objects to getting an office credit card as he believes it is a poor internal control. Several other board members disagreed with Goldstein.

Ed Kung suggests that we need some written procedures for the use of the card. Lou Coffey suggests that Ed write such guidelines and Ed agrees.

Matter tabled until our next meeting.

Pro-bono legal audit – Fran Levi suggests that this kind of audit is not for us. We already have a ton of attorneys on our board, we retain counsel and we're not the target audience. The board generally agrees and no action is taken.

Schuylkill River Park – JT Straub asserts that the park is one of the biggest projects we've got in our neighborhood. In particular, our committee is very concerned about both grade crossings on the CSX railroad tracks and the parking of CSX trash trains on the tracks for days at a time. JT Straub got in touch with the right people at the DEP and CSX was cited for creating a public nuisance. Frequency of trash trains has markedly decreased since. The trains represent New York City's trash moving to dumps in Virginia through Philadelphia. They are now parking trains behind the Zoo. JT thinks that CSX will ultimately abandon this 2 mile set of tracks. JT further indicates that the Free the Schuylkill River Coalition is the best versed group on getting CSX to do what we want. In particular, JT points out that our efforts must be carefully coordinated because, for example, grade crossings will require trains to blow their whistles at all hours of the night and day.

Schuylkill River Development Coalition is planning a public meeting on 9/30 at the MarketPlace Design Center to discuss the plans for the park. More information to follow.

By-laws committee – Lou tells us that the committee has formed up and includes Jonathan Goldstein, Jean Wroblewski and Norman Tissian.

Zoning Committee - Fran Levi ran through the Zoning Committee report. No action taken.

Jean Wroblewski presents a petition asking for a city storm sewer at the NW corner of 21st and Locust Streets to ameliorate a flooding condition that occurs when rain falls. The flooding then becomes a health risk due to trash and vermin because of the way the wind flows and drives trash at that corner. Wroblewski moves. Lenore Millhollen seconds. 23 Yeas. 0 Nays.

Jean also discusses a handbook for non-profits written by former Attorney General Mike Fisher. The booklet was distributed to all board members to explain the duties of non-profit fiduciaries in Pennsylvania. Jean details the two primary duties of non-profit board members – to stay informed and to vote to support the good of the organization and its members, not our personal preferences.

Jean Wroblewski also invites each of us and a guest to a symposium at the Wilma on the media and the Iraq War on 9/27 from 7pm to 9pm. Former Annenberg School of Communications Dean Kathleen Hall Jamieson will moderate. David Swanson, a photo journalist for the Inquirer will attend, David Zuchino, a reporter with the L.A. Times, Adam Piore, the editor of Newsweek and the author of the book Blackhawk Down will be on the panel. We're invited free of charge.

Adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Goldstein
Assistant Secretary