

# Center City Residents' Association

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NOVEMBER 10, 2005  
First Presbyterian Church  
201 South 21st Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

7:30 PM

### ATTENDANCE: SEE CHART BELOW

1. **ACTION:** Minutes of the October 10, 2005 meeting were unanimously approved upon motion by Fred Murphy and Joe DiMaio.
2. Real Estate Assessment – Fred Murphy discussed the issues involved in real estate reassessment and said that the city needs to be fair about the taxes and not have a closet tax increase. After some discussion, it was felt that we need to organize with other community organizations to study the issue of tax assessment. The President appointed Vivian Seltzer, Fred Murphy and Bill Faust to develop a plan on how this issue should be discussed by the Board as well as in discussions with other groups.
3. President's Report –
  - a. 1919 Market Street – TJ distributed a letter from Stephen N. Huntington which summarized the position of the Task Force after their meeting on October 18, 2005. Subsequently it was learned that the developer has another design that will address some of the concerns identified in the letter in regard to parking. It was agreed that no further discussion will be held until after the new design is completed and an open meeting with residents held
  - b. Discussion of the House Tour and Celebration will be held at the December Board meeting.
  - c. T.J. will attend the City Council meeting on Nov 17, 2005 where the Business Privilege Tax will be on the docket.
4. Treasurer's Report – Joe DiMaio reported on the discussions of the Finance Committee which recently met. He stated that income was a little low and that the data will be reviewed to see what the true numbers are after proper division of income and expenses in relation to Membership Dues, Celebration and the House Tour.
5. Resolution to Protect the Rights of all Philadelphia Residents to Advocate For Good Zoning Decisions – In a request from SCRUB, Lou Coffey presented the following resolution and upon motion by Lou Coffey and seconded by T.J. Reilly, the motion was passed:  
**ACTION:**
  - WHEREAS Philadelphia residents have a vested interest in their community and are vital to its economy, culture and civic character;
  - WHEREAS Philadelphia residents are interested in preserving their quality of life and the City's visual environment, and in assuring that laws protecting these assets are properly enforced;
  - WHEREAS Article 1 Section 27 of the Pennsylvania State Constitution entitles Philadelphia residents to "clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment";
  - WHEREAS Philadelphia Code section 14-1807(1) provides that: "Any person or person jointly or severally aggrieved by any decision of the Board, or any taxpayer, or any officer, department, board or bureau of the City, may appeal to the Court of Common Pleas" and thus grants Philadelphia residents broad standing to challenge decisions of administrative agencies by virtue of their status as taxpayers;

WHEREAS, the Philadelphia Code recognizes the importance of empowering Philadelphia residents to serve as watchdogs over the City in order to ensure that the decisions of its agencies are founded on the basis of applicable facts and laws and preserve the City's quality of life and visual environment;

WHEREAS the members of Philadelphia City Council have been elected by the residents of Philadelphia to protect the City's quality of life, visual environment and other interests through the enactment of zoning and land use legislation;

WHEREAS the General Assembly passed Act 193 of 2004 to increase the \$300 limit on fines, forfeitures and penalties imposed by the City and to expand City Council's ability to appeal decisions of the City's Boards, Commissions, and Agencies, and was not intended to limit the standing of individual taxpayers to challenge the decisions of administrative agencies;

a. WHEREAS this interpretation of Act 193 is supported by Pedro Ramos, Philadelphia's City Solicitor, who issued a formal written opinion on January 5, 2005 explaining that Act 193 of 2004 does not prohibit individual taxpayers and civic groups from seeking appellate review of decisions by the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment or other city agencies;

The Board of the Center City Residents Association hereby passes this resolution supporting the standing of individual taxpayers and civic groups as written in Philadelphia Code 14-1807(1), and as interpreted by the City Solicitor, and respectfully asks the Zoning Board of Adjustment to focus its hearings on the legal merits of cases presented to it rather than on challenges to taxpayer or civic group standing.

Lou Coffey and T.J. Reilly will attend the Zoning Board hearing on Dec. 2, 2005 where Act 193 will be discussed.

6. Zoning Committee Report – Adam Schneider highlighted the actions taken on items 5 and 6 of their meeting on October 25, 2005 which addressed the issues raised by neighbors. It was noted for the minutes that Stuart Seidman is moving and his departure will be a major loss for CCRA
7. Membership Committee – Heather Ascher joyfully informed the Board she has several new members added to her committee and they are actively at work developing programs to increase the membership of CCRA. She also reported on the progress of our new web site and distributed pictures of what it will look like.
8. Act 39 - The hearing examiner approved the take out licenses for the Latimer and Colney Delis, but City Council reversed the recommendation and refused approval for their take out license.
9. Champ Car Races – Even though there is an indirect effect to our area, it was felt it was important for us to have continued representation at these meetings as a way of providing support for community and other groups which are in opposition to the race.
  - a. **ACTION:** It was moved by Lou Coffey and seconded by Lenore Millhollen passed with one abstention to contribute \$250 for the further study of the Champ Car Race.
10. Misc. -
  - a. Pan Handling in our area was discussed and T.J. appointed a Task Force of Charles Robin, Michele Langer, George Brodie, and Peter Baker to meet with Capt. Cullen to discuss the situation and the steps needed to improve the situation.
  - b. Stanley Krakower expressed appreciation to the Board for their sympathy and thoughtfulness in remembering his mother's death.
  - c. Lou Coffey reported that Todd Pride agreed to coordinate the meetings with government and civic leaders.
11. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul S. Stavrakos  
Secretary

## ATTENDANCE

	Nov
<b><u>PRESIDENT</u></b>	
Thomas J. Reilly, Jr.	Present
<b><u>EXECUTIVE V.P</u></b>	
Vivian Seltzer	Present
<b><u>VICE PRESIDENTS</u></b>	
Heather Ascher	Present
JuHwon Lee	Excused
Frederic Murphy	Present
<b><u>SECRETARY</u></b>	
Paul S. Stavrakos	Present
<b><u>ASSISTANT SECRETARY</u></b>	
Charles Robin	Present
<b><u>TREASURER</u></b>	
Joseph J. DiMaio, Jr.	Present
<b><u>ASSISTANT TREASURER</u></b>	
Neil Gutman	Present
<b><u>DIRECTOR (Term ending)</u></b>	
07 Joshua Abbell	Excused
06 Peter W. Baker	Present
06 George Barnes	Excused
08 Lenora Berson	Excused
06 Scott Donahue	Present
06 Daniel Dougherty	Excused
08 William Faust	Present
08 John Gough	Absent
08 Jeffrey Hurok	Excused
07 Michele Langer	Present
06 Frances Levi	Present
08 Patricia Mattern	Present
07 Elizabeth Kay Miller	Present
07 Laurie Phillips	Excused
07 Todd Pride	Present
08 Maureen Sanders	Present
06 Adam Schneider *	Present
07 Susan Segal	Excused
06 David Skolnick	Excused
07 Vacant	
06 Jeanne Wroblewski	Present
<b><u>COUNSEL</u></b>	

Stanley R. Krakower	Present
<b>PAST PRESIDENTS</b>	
Lou Coffey	Present
Pamela Rosser Thistle	Absent
Lolly LaGreca	Absent
George R. Brodie, Jr.	Present
Eugene Dichter	Absent
Samuel Weinberg	Present
Wm. J. D. Jordan	Excused
Stephen Huntington	Present
Lenore Millhollen	Present
Francis W. Hoeber	Absent
Tama Williams	Absent
Edward Halpern	Present
Kristin Davidson	Absent
<b>CCRA OFFICE</b>	
Alan Levin	Present

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## **CENTER CITY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**7:30 PM, Thursday, November 10, 2005**

**First Presbyterian Church  
201 South 21st Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103**

1. Approval of Minutes of October Board Meeting (2 mins)
2. President's Report- T.J. Reilly Jr. (10 mins)
  - a. **1919 Market Street**
3. Treasurer's Report- Joseph Dimaio (10 mins)
4. Zoning Committee Report – Adam Schneider (10 mins)
5. Membership – Heather Ascher (10 mins)
6. Act 39 – Charles Robin (10 mins)
7. Real Estate Assessment – Fred Murphy (10 mins)
8. Champ Car Races – Charles Robin (10 mins)