



Spruce Hill Community Association
257 South 45th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 7:30pm

Meeting location: SHCA Center, 257 S 45th St or remote via Zoom

Attendees: see sign in sheet.

Welcome and Introductions (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (November) – **deferred to February**

Speakers

- Nate Hommel of University City District (UCD) to talk about a [Pedestrian Plaza](#) application at 43/Spruce
 - Been experimenting with this. On old UCD plazas, goal was for place for people to hang. Some of our other ones, materials and things that were used, 2012 – now 11 years old, still look pretty good. Utilities have had to take things up, and still had improvements.
 - Will try something they want to try to make it more sustainable from a maintenance standpoint – self-watering planters – that has advanced pretty far in the last couple years. All the things we have learned at UCD public spaces – use non-permanent rather than temporary or pop-up. Allows for flexibility.
 - Perfect is the enemy of done ☺
 - What is the thing we can do to reduce distances for pedestrians to cross – when they worked with OTIS – what are some of the things that handcuffed them
 - Simple things – 7 feet off the curb – not going to do too much – not going into drive aisle.
 - Bike lane still there
 - 20 feet off the crosswalk, hoping to replicate all over U City
 - **See plan below**– exactly the same as it was – OTIS said don't do anything near the SEPTA bus stop – but do have a couple things to give it elevation. Since it is just paint and planters (can't do boulders because need to be able to move them on short notice). Flexible delineator sticks. Flex posts.
 - The Field – Could have kids from the school do anything [as far as decorating] in there.
 - Planters – if a vehicle hits them – what happens? They bounce, they don't break. Things that bounce last a lot longer.
 - Safer than before.
 - 14 less feet than typically crossing – where potentially being impacted by a motor vehicle
 - Small planters are where a turning vehicle might encounter a small child

- Large planters are end caps – things that driver sees, signals to drivers that this is intersection they need to pay attention to
- Step in the right direction – candidacy for permits. If the neighbors like it, can keep it. If everyone loves it, then can aim for permanency. Can be improved over time.
- Cost – would be folded into maintenance. \$15-20K range. Community – paying for paint. From a numbers standpoint – had a private design firm – after that got it down to \$12K. Can come up with 5K
- This is a regulated program, UCD insurance would cover it. Can depend on UCD that going to keep going with this.
- Vision Zero – in line with what the city wants to do to help keep pedestrians getting hurt.
- Asks for SHCA:
 - Letter of support – actually letter of non-opposition
 - Fundraising – yes, UCD can put in up to 5K
 - Contribution?
 - Working with whomever want to work with?
- Safety walks – PAS, PIC, Penn – so may have other community partners
- Q&A
 - Community member – lives right in front – says there is a zip car parking space there? Also says we should slow down the traffic anyway. Planters good. Slowing down. Becca – School has promised speed bumps on spruce, 43rd, locust, blocks surrounding the school.
 - Eric – survey on retail in the neighborhood – looking for someone to partner. He is not the person for this, but Ryan Spak would do this.
 - Yoni – appreciates responsiveness to put this together, would be huge improvement of quality of life. Would like to see more. But on the opposite side, people will zoom around. Can do floating bus stations? Nate – yes, maybe – city has discussed partnering with UCD on this. Zero entrance bus? SEPTA bus is a limiting factor.
 - Trying to do little bits at a time.
 - How about at 43rd & Baltimore? Maybe – let Nate know.
 - Bridgette – would these be native plants? Yes, or sometimes use adapted plants – tough as nails and bees love it. Stays away from ornamental flowers.

Committee Updates

- Executive Committee (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)
 - Nothing from exec.
 - Comments about supporting the pedestrian plaza
 - Motion to approve pedestrian plaza – seconded and then approved
- Historical Preservation Committee (Jenine Sanzari)
 - Julie – Context Magazine – Julie is co-editing this – the topic is historic preservation. John Pullman and others to write. Spring 2024.
 - Jenine – current submission or application. No news from the historical commission – doesn't mean anything. But gauging the timeline.
 - There are two public meetings that need to take place
 - Public forum – every one, every resident in that first quadrant will be notified by a mailing, sent to the resident of the property owner – that is sent out by the historical commission. Constant Springs will be on the call.
 - That will be the final stamp of approval

- April agenda for that first meeting – if in an April timeframe for that meeting, then wont have a response until may or June of this year
 - Jenine – second question - \$ and budget – funding the subsequent quadrants will cost a total of \$45K. They would be ready to submit a quadrant per year, based on how fast we are fundraising
- Zoning (Barry Grossbach)
 - Zoning meeting is January 18th – not a lot of activity – because the council persons requirement of 10 units of affordable housing
- Safe Streets & Commercial Corridors (Evan Johnstone & Eric Santoro)
 - 7 attempted car jackings
 - Captain Nicole McCoy – from Penn police – no longer with the department
 - They haven't filled the position
 - Evan – part of our responsibility is to determine what can be done – what can we do.
 - Also 18th district PPD – get them to speak.
- Education (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)
 - Closing quite a few achievement gaps
 - Poverty rate is increasing at PAS
 - School has a 50% poverty rate – Becca has been looking at census data – from the managing directors office. In children in PHL in general.
 - A tiny piece to that – official – what they count as poverty and nonpoverty
- Operations (Tony)
 - Tidy up the paperwork
 - Glitch in the calendar – will figure out.
 - Tony wants to go through the building piece by piece. Rich G.
 - Renters – building is full
- Community Engagement – Vicki stepped down as chair– nothing to share – need a new chair
- Spruce Up Committee (Laura Line) – confirm if Laura still chairing
- Crosstown Coalition – (Vicki) – attended one meeting before Christmas, guest speaker was Cherelle Parker, no real meeting. There will be another meeting coming up. Looking for hosts for future meetings. She sat with reps from Cedar Park – who just joined. Thought they could co-host with them and Garden Court. Monday at 6:30 – provide a space, order some kind of local food. Eric – Resurrection would be perfect. Vicki – could offer Temple University CC venue. Rich G – what kind of lead time is needed to reserve a space – Vicki can reserve with just a couple days.

All Other Business

- none

Next Meeting Tuesday February 13, 2024



SPRUCE STREET
(2-Way Traffic)

43rd STREET
(Northbound Only)



Large Planter (typical)

Low Height Planter (typical)

Painted Area (typical)

Flex Posts (as-needed)

Phở & Café Saigon
Vietnamese • \$

Spruce House

43rd and Spruce Pedestrian Plaza

Not To Scale

Issue Date: 2023-12-8

