



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

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 7:30pm

Meeting location: In Person at SHCA Center 257 S 45th St or remote via Zoom

Attendees: Zoom: Sgt. Cureton, Frank Chance, Barry Grossbach, Eric Santoro, Linda Cook, Andrew Cullen, Jenine Sanzari, Vincent Better, Sylvia Hamerman-Brown

In person: Sugirtha Stathis, Laura Line, Andrew Richman, Richard Guffanti, Chris Bole, Nicole Gawel, Libby Rosof, Bridget Lessner, Tony West, Evan Johnstone, Nate Hommel, Julie Bush, Vicky McGarvey, Richard Moore

Welcome and Introductions (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)

- Thank yous
 - Laura Line working with UC Green
 - Tony & Rich G. on basement flood & door fix
 - Jenine & Amy Lambert working on historic district, upcoming meetings
 - Vicky attending XTC
 - Julie & Sharon attending historic commission meeting
 - Tony keeping our feet to the fire on May Fair donor outreach
 - May Fair committee, etc.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (March) – motion to approve, none opposed, all in favor.

Speakers –

- **Sergeant Hayward Cureton (SHC) – Penn police**
 - 43rd st east – more patrols out to deal with new activity
 - Lot of extra traffic congestion due to construction
 - Extra pedestrian traffic due to transit issues
 - Question about vandalism of Milk Crate at 45th & Baltimore
 - Believe it's juveniles, not targeted
 - Nothing that "raises the antenna", just vandalism
 - Julie: Lots of car windows being broken, all over nbhd
 - SHC: It's getting warmer, normal opportunity crimes, could be juveniles, could be homeless
 - Targeting Hyundais & Hondas for resale value(?)

- Advise not leaving things in sight within vehicle, buy the club or similar (steering wheel rope, etc.)
- Question: Live on 44th between Spruce & Pine, neighbor had attempted break in from perpetrator climbing to 2nd floor window, similar attempted breakin with crowbar recently in adjacent property, police called, residents concerned about pattern
 - SHC: That's why we've stepped up units going to 43rd (western boundary of PP jurisdiction)
 - Also have unmarked car with tinted windows that patrols that area
- Question (TW): 43rd runs through middle of our community, and we've noticed slower response by Philly Police west of 43rd. Any insight into how 18th district is doing? Can we contact Penn Police to help work with 18th even for issues technically outside of jurisdiction?
 - SHC: If you're calling 911, response is being centrally coordinated by jurisdiction. Penn Police inherit jurisdiction when crossing east over 43rd, but otherwise can only assist.
- TW: Can you communicate with 18th more proactively?
 - SHC: Our upper ranks communicate with each other. I'm a street supervisor so I send information up the chain of command.
- Community members should focus on deterrent measures but let Penn Police know about anything that's going on.
- Question (Libby): Breakin on 4200 block of Pine.
 - SHC: More officers now in that area (direct patrol & unmarked vehicle)
- **Nate Hommel from University City District**
 - update on pedestrian plaza at 43rd & Spruce – running autoturn simulations to verify good flow, one more review pending from city
 - landscaping proposal along Chestnut, Barry Grossbach funding entirely
 - Existing intersection is developing “pedestrian island”
 - Goal to encourage more ownership over block by businesses, install planters to calm traffic
 - 40th down to 50th along chestnut (50th is UCD boundary)
 - Add 3 planters per side at ends of parking rows
 - 2 different-height planters
 - Planters bounce when hit, don't shatter like metal ones
 - Already installed at 48th & Baltimore
 - Hope is that it encourages more bike-riding by making bike lane appear safer
 - Plants are battle-tested in this environment, bee-friendly, etc., prefer perennials to annuals, self-watering adapters
 - Trees not allowed due to visibility concerns, especially if hide children from view
 - Watering is point of vulnerability – during hot months can't get to planters often enough to water. Hoping self-waterers will help
 - Next step is small fund to increase street trees, focusing first on 41st to 43rd
 - Already had great results on Baltimore
 - Questions
 - BGP: Who would carry this forward to expand?

- NH: The councilperson's office could take it to Cobbs Creek
 - ROM: What's the role of local businesses in growing this program?
 - NH: The hope is that they're encouraged to do planting
- BG: We need SHCA to approve this project
- Evan moved to approve the project, 2nd, unanimous approval

Committee Updates

- **Executive Committee (BGP)**
 - **May Fair (BGP, SS, EJ)**
 - Still 16 unclaimed jobs from planning doc
 - Becca will email jobs out
 - EJ: 1 band from Rock School, working on 2nd & 3rd
 - SS: In touch with DJ who can help
 - Raffle donations still looking for more people to pitch in, take a look at raffle donors that aren't yet claimed
 - After this weekend, TW will work on remaining unclaimed donor prospects
 - EJ: May Fair flyers available to post
 - RG: Posting signs all throughout nbhd
 - LL: Estimate for portapotties (same as always, with handwash stations) – send to EJ
 - Food trucks: EJ reached out, no responses yet. ROM reached out to 2, had one no. No fee, we block off street, all hands help with food trucks please. No guarantee of income
 - **Historical district committee (BGP)**
 - Two important upcoming meetings, 4/17 (9:30am) and 5/10 (9am)
 - 4/17 is more informational, reviewing technical details of submission, perhaps less important but still possible to express public opinion
 - 5/10 is meeting where vote is taken, binding opinion formed, most important for big turnout
 - BG: This meeting is a “mixed group” and poses biggest risk of negative opinions. Important to have local residents speaking in favor: Particularly 4200 block of Pine, 4200 block of Osage
 - See email from JS explaining meetings
 - Will have opportunities to speak (2 minute windows)
 - Personal anecdotes most effective as residents
 - Question (TW): Does it matter if you're not a resident?
 - Campus Apartments sent in letter in opposition, against breaking down into quadrants
 - BG: UCH will also be opposed, Penn will likely stay neutral
 - Ben Sirolli (sp?), councilperson's office, reached out to 4200 block of Osage soliciting opinions
 - EJ said he could provide an anecdote

- JB attended meeting, Amy Lambert & Kathy Dowdell spoke in favor of district. No opposition expressed.
 - BG: Developers killed this effort the last two times, we need strong resident voices to keep that from happening again
 - Question (TW): Can renters speak in favor?
 - BG: Yes, but we need strong turnout from homeowners, even just raising hands
 - Question (ES): Should people living outside the quadrant also show up?
 - BG: It's most important that people inside the quadrant show up.
 - Question (Andrew): Is the councilperson's position clear? If not, when will we know?
 - BG: CM Gauthier already suggested that she's in favor but she'll likely have political constraints that make neutrality the best we can hope for
 - Question (BGP): Should we flyer some houses in the quadrant?
 - BG: Dave Brubaker on 4200 block of Pine will be rallying the neighbors, and hopefully Jamie Vann will do something similar on 4200 Osage
 - BG: This quadrant is the toughest, with the biggest presence of opposing forces. If we can get through this one, the others will hopefully fall into place
 - JS: Provided information in zoom chat to be shared out about HC meetings. Will follow up to discuss flyering campaign between meetings
- **Zoning (BG)**
 - 3900 block of Pine, investment properties, many owned by UC Associates
 - Took some dilapidated houses & remodeled for long/short-term stay (parents of Penn students, etc.)
 - Approved based on location & serving important need and improvements provided by this renovation to surrounding area
 - Meeting with Andrew Goodman April 16 from CM Gauthier's office to talk about affordable housing fund paid into by developers
 - Monies were supposed to have come back into nbhd but haven't. Seems to be going into city budget,
 - CM Gauthier has bill in development, shopping around for community support
 - Ballot question in upcoming election: Should home rule charter be amended to provide protection/indemnification for RCOs
 - SHCA should VOTE YES and tell neighbors to do the same
 - BGP: Reached out to Carol Jenkins, who was very confident this would pass
 - BG: Some of Carol's associates have voted against because of bad-acting RCOs in the area
 - SHB: Some local individuals are generally opposed to home rule amendments (?)
 - **Safe Streets (EJ): No updates**
 - **Education Committee (BGP)**
 - Donation to PAS 5K
 - Met new principal of Paul Robeson, invited them to participate in various SHCA activities, working to connect with their HSA

- **Operations (TW)**
 - Flood in basement has been addressed, bill will be expensive
 - Asking any board members storing things in 1st floor or basement of SHCA to mark items with post-its
 - Starting next couple of weeks, will start discarding unclaimed items that appear useless
- **Spruce Up Committee (LL)**
 - Met with UC Green's Dominique London
 - Working with arborists in nbhd to develop greening plan, mostly planting trees – design charettes
 - Sometimes they need more substantial work done, concrete removal, etc., that needs resources
 - Can we use SHCA block grants for this?
 - Design charette for late April
 - Grants currently \$500 per block. Can we increase to \$1000 per block?
 - Discussion of history of budgeting for block grants. Probably fine to do them on case by case basis
 - Motion is to increase the single-block amount to “up to \$1000” and double-block amount to “up to \$2400”
 - Seconded by ROM, passed unanimously
 - Bird sanctuary needs new managers – Karen Redrobe and Paul can no longer do it
 - JB: Would be great to have manager on SHCA committee
- **Crosstown Coalition (VM)**
 - State Rep Jimmy Dillon spoke & took questions
 - Extended discussion about SLAPP legislation, encouraging us to get out the vote
 - Concerns that city law dept has oversight over implementation
 - Zoning and Airbnb's (other neighborhoods)

All Other Business

- **None**

Next Meeting Tuesday, May 14th, 2024

Meeting Adjourned: 9:15pm