



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

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 11th, 2024, 7:30pm

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

Attendees:

In person: Becca Geller-Puchalsky, Chris Bole, Julie Bush, Evan Johnstone, Tony West, Richard Moore, Nicole Gawel, Libby Rosof, Jenine Sanzari, Andrew Richman, Monica Calkins, Florence Fire, Violet Cutter, Steve Wagner, Ann Kreidle, Karen Falck, Milan Mahesh

Zoom: Barry Grossbach, others (I think someone took a screenshot for me)

Welcome and Introductions (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (May) – deferred

Speakers

- **Sergeant Hayward Curtain (check spelling) – have there been specific concerns?**
 - Vandalism directed at businesses – anyone noticed particular groups or individuals – protesters- at this time, the only thing we can do is to look at video cameras – to pinpoint when may have happened – definitely make it a point of interest, make sure to check blink or ring cams, anything can get from there will help substantially. There are a lot of juveniles who like to be mischievous, neighbors should watch out for each other, should report immediately. Can do face video recognition. Get a timeline between video recording and what time graffiti was put on property. All that can be offered. UPENN, PPD.
 - Personal property – different than protests
 - Car break ins – when it comes to your vehicle, they won't shop if you don't have anything in your car, if you can find a lit area to park, keep things out of your car, and of course, it goes without saying out to watch out for each other. They have been able to catch a few perpetrators. Drug issues. Need to try to get something, need a habit. At this point in time, a report will be needed. Don't touch your car if it is broken into, for investigative purposes, they can do print touch and get prints off the car. About 85% of victims reporting that they went into the car – so make sure you don't go into the car. Instead – call 911. Registration/insurance, do not leave into the car – don't leave it in your car unattended. Take it with you. Q: any extra patrols that can be done? A: a lot of cars parked behind a building where they have a police presence so it is a deterrent. In our jurisdiction – further out could be the same. Park where there is a lot of foot traffic, businesses. If where not, increases risk. Decrease risk of where you are parking. Cameras,

movement near your vehicle. Be advised when you see juveniles, especially in a group. Have a heightened sense for almost anything. All over the city and further out.

- Becca – thank you
- **Milan Mahesh – P.H.I.L.L.Y – medical student**
 - **Philadelphia Health Initiative: Learning for Locals and Youth – “improving healthcare access and education one day at a time”.**
 - **My local group – goal that I started with –**
 - Provide basic health education – HTN, diabetes
 - Connect various members of PHL communities with local and national initiatives that can help make health care more affordable. So people are aware of available resources. Walmart \$4 plan, can get a months supply at Walmart, years supply for \$40. Good RX = website where you can go and get different coupons that will take 80% off meds
 - So he is going around PHL trying to collect partners, and going forth from there
 - Youth education – educate PHL community about common health conditions – esp youth – about a fifth graduating from med school are graduating with no debt – family members. People coming from well off backgrounds. Want to help promote kids to make sure that they know that they can go into medicine. Form partnerships so can raise a small scholarship.
 - Always looking for partners within the community.
 - Have not yet included mental health, but thinks he should
 - Mtm368@drexel.edu (preferred) – 484-664-8528 phillyhealthinitiative.dorik.io
 - Could promote to our network in our neighborhood? That would be great. Right now, looking for places he can talk. Philadelphia has a lot of programs but not a lot of people know about them.
- Neighbor concerns regarding the hazards of turning left on Walnut street from side streets (St Marks Square, Melville, Buckingham Place) since recent repaving/restructuring to allow for buffered pike lines
 - St Marks Square (SMS)– Karen Falck – powerpoint presentation– since the repaving of Walnut street – the parking at the top of the street, where SMS enters Walnut, the parking arrangement has changed – the bike lane has been moved next to the curb, cars parked beyond the bike lane. At the same time, the spots that were X’d out previously, now are not, no visibility for drivers, exiting our block (intermediate street) to Walnut street. Since the repaving, no x’s and the cars are pushed out further. Making it very dangerous street – you cannot see – very difficult to see as making a left hand turn. Previously had a little bit of a buffer to inch out – that’s gone now. Unique to SMS, there is a hydrant, to the west, when the cars were parked along the curb, for the most part now people are parking in front of the hydrant – and that no parking zone with the hydrant – so could look. Very dangerous pulling out to the west. Since the fall. Close to a year living with this at the top of the street – have videos and photos . No parking zone designated to allow proper visibility – there is a no parking sign. It is very high. In the trees now. People can’t see it nor are they aware that they are there. Need at least 2+ car length to allow for proper visibility for drivers. Needs flex posts and bollards to block people from parking on Walnut in the x’d out spots– requesting that no parking zone be delineated. And to prevent cars from parking. The new position of the bike lane – people tend to pull up and go right through the bike lane – not sure how it can be addressed. Maybe yellow lines or caution. Maybe signage. Bollards and bike lane and extended space – just a diagonal. Until fixed or some solution is made – some temporary barriers to keep cars parked – temporarily until finally fixed.
 - Becca sharing the original plan – conflicts with what was actually done

- Melville – Steve Wagner/Monica Calkins – we have the same issues as SMS, and agree entirely with the hazards and possible solutions (currently there are painted X's in the western most parking spot just east of Melville, but people routinely park there). We have had the added issue that people driving up Walnut travel at a high rate of speed attempting to make the light at 46th, and often are changing to the left lane as they approach or pass Melville to position to make a left turn onto 46th. Because we have no visibility onto Walnut attempting to make a left turn, we have to nose out into the left westbound lane on Walnut, a collision waiting to happen.
- Mark Washington – PHL streets department – believes there are supposed to be additional x's in the parking space – that they may be longer in the – the X's – as much as 40 feet – double car spaces – he will follow up. There have been requests in other areas of the corridor. Double x in the box. The city put together the markings – penndot still in progress – is asking when they come and do the other locations. Monica – the X is there but people park there anyway, there must be bollards or physical deterrants to prevent people from parking. He will look at Melville street. Delineators – not sure why they are not there, will also look at the signage that is out there. Will see if the signs can be relocated. Send him a copy of the power point presentation. Becca will send via email. Mark.washington@phila.gov. Take the requests and take it to change the signage. Karen – before anything is delineated and signs posted, can the residents review it? The signs will be done by another unit. The signage done by traffic engineers. These are steps going on before the work goes in. Karen – can we be informed – should be 40 foot. If someone is coming out, there needed to be 40 feet of clearance.
- Becca – losing parking is not the primary concern.
- Karen – anything temporary until everything is done? Mark – quickest thing may be the signage. Penndot still has the contractor on the clock. The delineators then the paint goes. Flexposts – faster – than jersey barriers – delineators will be quicker. Signage – whoever is parked there should be getting tickets. Once the signs are up – either parking.
- Andrew Cullen – what can we expect as far as timeline – 4-6 weeks – penndot doing the installation – had this situation and asked to bring the contractor back to do extra x in the boxes.
- Becca will follow up with email.

Committee Updates

- Executive Committee (Becca Geller-Puchalsky)
 - Gave CineSpeak - \$300
 - Shakespeare in Clark Park – 1,500 in the past – we currently have less in the bank than we did last year. Our biggest new expense – do we want to contribute the same amount. Do we have a budget break down from them? Will get more info from them.
- Historical Preservation Committee (Jenine Sanzari)
 - The last meeting with the committee, ran out of time. There is a continued discussion. There are critical dates on our website. Wed June 19th 6-7:30pm; Wed June 26th, 9:30 AM; Friday July 12 9am
 - Mill Creek Tavern spoke up about being non-contributing to that historic district, there is a chance for folks to speak up about their own properties.
 - Jenine – happy hour wed next week – resurrection church annex – help to fund raise.
 - A few parents were discussing at the PAS equity circle opposing the historic commission – hard to find a date. Small group – hard to know how representative their perspectives are. Becca – we should be part of the process. Outlined concerns – have not taken into account the socioeconomic impact – they have some data. Jenine there is no concrete

evidence of impact of historic district on gentrification – it's hard to know the direction of causality

- Zoning (Barry Grossbach)
 - Ask if there are questions from the table – if someone near the mike can repeat them.
 - Proposed development at 37th & Ludlow – an extremely congested area – the proposed development is 53 stories high, and behind the international house. This is behind it on Ludlow street, what is being proposed, out of nowhere – appeared in Inquirer last Wednesday – nothing was heard of it since.
 - Now a cause celeb among the institutions – among the political class – and the issues facing.
 - Alcohol and Drug rehab – actually drug rehab. 150-250 beds. Developer interviewed on why – a center that will serve the northeastern portion of the united states.
 - What to do with it – there is no zoning required, it is CMX-4, there is no RCO that is active and covers this territory. What do the entities do that surround this and what do they want to do about it. SHCA is the closest thing.
 - Barry was asked because on UCD board – chair – met yesterday – quarterly UCD meeting. The university's don't want to get directly involved. However likely are unfavorable. UCD board – will approach the council member – and the individual people who are involved. Did Councilperson Jamie Gauthier actually approve this in advance as claimed by the developer? Said he had a letter from her. Question is what do community associations want to say about this? For the city and for the mayor, who really wants to see this done, this could be an answer to what's going on in Kensington. Barry – cannot put a 53 story rehab and where are they going to go. Don't know if developer is serious.
 - Do we want to weigh in? Walnut Hill – 100% opposed. Saunders Park and West Saunders – vehemently opposed. They know what this means and face this daily. On the border and want this most closely. The communities further out – Garden Court, Cedar Park, mulling it over. Barry – those who are immediate neighbors and who will be most affected. We, Walnut hill, saunders park and west powelton.
 - Has a facility like this ever been built before?
 - This is not in any way against drug treatment.
 - Tony – stress that there is a big difference between supporting a drug treatment facility in the neighborhood – we may be the most sensible to put the facility. Has the size and scope and management?
 - Libby – what is the background of the developer and what is the connection of his dream with reality
 - Andrew Cullen – as crafting position on this – important to remember – there are other drug treatment facilities in this area. They operate and we don't really notice them. Why are we predicting this one will affect this neighborhood?
 - Name of developer – inquirer – “CSC” partner with a health care provider to run it. Have financiers committed to budget. Mirroring Acadia health care system. Do they really have the financing?
 - Richard M – this is transformative – mayor and governor are transformative – may have risks associated with it. Penn won't allow it – health care providers can run it. This will live or die based on penns point of view. If we want to be a compassionate community – we understand the needs – back the council person. Chris – agree. Right there at Penn – not going to turn into Kensington – that is the fear.
 - Barry – because there is no RCO – we are not going through a normal process. If there were an RCO, they would be convening a meeting, and all the immediate people affected would be invited. But there is no RCO, and being asked to react independently. That is a problem. Also, we haven't been contacted and asked to react at all. This is a project that we found out about through the newspaper.

- Andrew R – it is a lot to be developed – Ludlow – lack of information – and no process.
- Councilwoman deserves to get a letter saying just that. We have heard about this, and we know nothing about it.
- Tony – time has come to say something. Saying we are in favor of medical treatment of substance related disorders. Barry - Is this an appropriate scale and use for this building - facility like this in the middle - two pieces of incongruent information – what are they going to do with the rest of the building.
- The reality is that they don't need anything from the council person – if he gets the permit – he can build it. Don't know if he has applied for it.
- Would need lots and lots of work – would need drug and alcohol license for the facility.
- Becca will draft a letter saying we need more information – reasonable conclusion for now. And keep ears out and eyes out.
- Barry – question for the Board to address - are you okay with a drug rehabilitation center in the neighborhood? Monica – substance related disorders and their treatment are highly stigmatized, there are many programs that treat individuals with substance use disorder already in the vicinity, including at HUP Main, 3535 Market, the VA Medical Center, the Consortium, Horizon House to name a few. Barry - I suggest whatever position you take you address it to the council woman – that is for the board and officers to decide. Let Barry know.
- Becca will write a letter
- Safe Streets & Commercial Corridors (Evan Johnstone & Eric Santoro) –
 - Evan – Eric, Libby and he are getting together with Vincent Better
 - How did Penn move out go? It seemed to be much cleaner. This year not an absolute mess.
- Education (Becca Geller-Puchalsky) –
 - will share to list serve – summer ops – parks and recs.
- Operations (Tony) –
 - user groups have picked up a bit since last november – 10 regularly scheduled – 2 different hats – various events here over the past 6-8 months. Work as job coach – community integrated services – wants to run an event – adults with disabilities, artists with disabilities – help them sell their work. Running craft shows. Could be hosted here. Musician playing as well. Possibility of any funding to support that? Non-profit. CISworks. Org big ask is funding to support. Target amount? \$150. Potential ideas. Collective – historic film representation – from 1920 or something. Playing for someone to ask. Date or season. September 22nd.
 - Getting in touch with other groups – in order to be aware of when other groups are not availability – will reach out.
 - Basement – “bottom of this organization” - \$950 – basement repaired. Can be dried out. Have now moved half of this. If people have some time and a car – can volunteer to take some stuff. Becca – will send
- Community Engagement
- Spruce Up Committee (Laura Line) - will hold this until meet again in September – Karen and Paul have still not found anyone to be point of contact for bird sanctuary – or send out another email to the list serve.
- Crosstown Coalition – (Vicki) - see email –
 - Sound cameras – measuring decibels – takes a picture – and advocate to the city
 - RCO – ballot initiative that passed in May -

All Other Business

- none

Meeting adjourned: 9:40pm

Next Meeting Tuesday September 10, 2024