

Queen Village Board Meeting minutes—April 2, 2009

Present: Don Ackerman, Jeff Rush, Bill Landy, Steve Schatz, Walt Lowthian, Kathy Dilonardo, Richard Wolk, Rick Cole, Ed Bell, Neville Vakharia, Mike Hauptman, Kathy Conroy (Emeritus)

Not Present: Andy Speizman, David O. Donnell

Zoning: We discussed the Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD). It is up for renewal this summer. We need to have a public meeting so we can get neighborhood input on its overall effectiveness and whether it should continue. The renewal process is a very cumbersome one. Councilman DiCicco is willing to introduce legislation to streamline that process. It would continue to include the ability to change the boundaries of the district if the neighborhood wanted to do so. The NCD is designed, in large measure, for areas where there are current structures to be rehabbed, so we need to determine if it should cover areas like Riverview Courtyard area and the 5th and Carpenter street area where there are many vacant lots and crumbling buildings. We need to determine if this area is a Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) and what the relationship is between a NCD and a NTI. Both developers and buyers of any new construction in that area want to include garages not only for convenience but for safety as well. However, this area is adjacent to neighborhoods of row homes that do not have garages. We need to seek the opinions of a wide range of neighbors in the area and determine what their thoughts are on this question. **Jeff will let the Councilman's office know that we are doing this and thank him for his help.**

Forgotten Blocks Committee: There was a meeting April 2, 2009 with L & I at 5th and Carpenter which Jeff attended. The recent shootings in the area are of concern. There are numerous properties in serious disrepair. L & I will take the necessary steps to tear down or board up properties as appropriate. Captain McDowell, 3rd District commander, was in attendance and feels these are important steps to take to reduce crime in the area.

Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Carla presented the report. The parking lot revenue is back on track. The PA. Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) gave Mario Lanza Park \$5000. **Carla will coordinate a joint letter between Friends of Mario Lanza Park and Queen Village Neighbors Association to thank Representative Mike O'Brien for his help in getting the state grant.** New fencing went up in Mario Lanza Park and there are plans to resod the grassy area.

Executive Report: There will be tree planting on April 25 at various locations in the neighborhood. **Don moved that we authorize Carla to spend \$150 for mulch and up to \$300 on pruning tools. Mike seconded it and the motion was passed.**

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania is creating an interactive web site ("PhilaPlace") to be launched in September. It will include overlays, map overlays by era and will be a useful tool for history buffs, educators, and students.

Open House will be Sunday, May 17. Residents of three houses have already volunteered. The annual art show will be held in Mario Lanza Park at the same time. Gail Chapman is organizing the art show. We need three to four more houses for the tour.

Carla is working with seniors on the paperwork for property tax rebate.

Carla attended a Litter Summit. Queen Village is part of the Keep America Beautiful program.

June 25 is the date for our first neighborhood story telling program. Marty Labb will be the first storyteller, describing a Queen Village of more than 50 years ago,

It is unclear what is happening with the twice monthly street cleaning. **Carla will call Nick Schmanek to get clarification.**

Jeff thanked Neville for all his hard work on the QVNA website including monthly updates.

Taxes: Councilman DiCicco spoke at our March General Membership meeting. There is confusion about what he said. **Jeff will ask the Councilman to clarify it.** Overall there is concern about the Mayor's tax plans and their impact on Queen Village. **Bill Landy will draft a letter from QVNA to the Mayor expressing our concerns.** The draft will be sent to all the Board members for comments. **Carla will check with Brian Abernathy in the Councilman DiCicco's office about the time frames we are dealing with.**

QV Dogs: Jeff attended the ILMAC meeting. PennDot said they will try to take care of the water leakage at the expansion joints on I-95 above the area that the Church prefers be used for the dog park (south end of Water Street). PennDot may also be able to resod the area beneath the leaks.

Walt will get in touch with QV Dogs.

Delaware River Waterfront Corporation: Mike said the first meeting will be April 24. CDAG (Community Development Advisory Group) and Penn Praxis will make presentations at the meeting. Members were asked to choose a committee and Mike chose the Planning Committee.

CDAG: Jeff attended a partial meeting of this group to look at temporary zoning overlays and discuss setbacks. There will be a council hearing April 21 to consider the overlay. CDAG will use this overlay and the Penn Praxis report as loose guidelines. Jeff asked where the Waterfront Development Council is on this.

Casinos: We discussed our position on the current Foxwoods proposal to move up to Market Street. The Governor is putting pressure on to get the casinos built. Councilman DiCicco is concerned about locations changing yet again. At this point we will wait and see what develops.

Clean-up: April 18 will be a clean-up day. Queen Village will participate. We authorized \$150 for supplies and refreshments for volunteers.

Grants: We agreed that we will put this at the **TOP** of the May meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Dilonardo
Recording Secretary

