

Queen Village Board Meeting minutes—March 5, 2009

Present: Jeff Rush, David O'Donnell, Bill Landy, Steve Schatz, Walt Lowthian, Kathy Dilonardo, Richard Wolk, Andy Speizman, Rick Cole, Ed Bell, Neville Vakharia, Kathy Conroy (Emeritus)

Not Present: Don Ackerman

Delaware River Waterfront Corporation: Jeff announced that Mike Hauptman is on this new board. This is the result of Mayor Nutter restructuring the Penn's Landing Corporation, and removing many of the politicians. The Mayor had a press conference on Sunday, March 1, 2009 to announce the William Penn Foundation has given a \$1 million grant for the first project implementing the Penn Praxis Plan—turning Pier 11 into a public park. The Request for Proposals is going out momentarily. The first section of the bike path from Penn Treaty Park to South Philadelphia will be completed in July (That portion is Penn's' Landing to Mifflin Street.) Mike and the other new board members were taken on a bus tour of what's covered by the new corporation which runs from Oregon Avenue to Alleghany Ave. Mike noted that the complexity of ownership along the river presents challenges. Ownership is not only private but also includes all levels of government. The new board is charged with implementing the Penn Praxis concept and developing a Master Plan for the land. A Zoning overlay is being developed primarily along the east side of Delaware Avenue so if development opportunities come along river setbacks, easements for the bike path and the prohibition of gated communities will already be established.

Minutes: David moved the minutes be approved and Jeff seconded; they were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Mike moved to accept the report and Steve seconded it; it was approved.

Executive Director's Report: Carla said tennis players were asking for a new net—the bottom of the current one is very tattered. Richard moved that we purchase one and Ed seconded it; the motion was approved.

It was also noted that dogs were using the tennis court again. Carla asked QV Dogs to remind their email list that no dogs are allowed on the court and to remind anyone they see using it with their dogs that it is for tennis only. Carla also asked the mini-station to check it out occasionally.

Jeff will talk to the lieutenant about it.

Open House Tours: Society Hill is organizing an open house tour. Martha Levine is chairing it and asked if we would like to partner with them. Carla had followed up on the question of insurance raised during our last discussion of the open house tour and has determined that there is none. Tour participants sign a waiver form. Society Hill has said they will design the brochure and include us so that both tours get wide publicity. Our share of printing costs would be no more than \$500. The question came up about the possibility of the brochure having advertisements that would pay for it (and maybe even make money.) **Carla will talk to Martha about it.** Society Hill's tour date is May 31 and Queen Village's tour date will be May 16.

Weccacoe Playground Repair List: Carla submitted a list which we discussed. We also noted that the west wall in the main room needs to be evaluated due to water damage and there are

cracks in the west wall and the south wall we would also like to have examined/evaluated. **Carla will call Amy Rivera to see if she is available to do the evaluation.** It was also suggested that fans be added to the list of needs. **Carla will get an estimate on the installation of one or two fans in the main room.**

Forgotten Blocks Committee (5th Street Corridor): The committee recently completed a list of properties with violations and long-standing problems. They asked QVNA to sign on to their letter of identified properties and we said we would do so. Carla heard back from Washington Steaks who said in answer to our letter that they were willing to work with neighbors to clear up problems with their business and property.

Zoning: It has been very slow. There was one request for an outdoor café at 6th and Christian.

Clean Streets: Citizens Alliance told Carla they don't have a street sweeper anymore, so we can't use that to clean our streets. Carla said three more people had signed up to be Block captains for their blocks. **We asked Carla to publish the list of numbers to call for various problems on the streets.**

Welcoming Committee: David reported that the committee is deciding on the details and process for donations and distribution. He said there would be no more than two welcome baskets given out each week so merchants weren't overwhelmed. It was suggested that merchants want to get new neighbors into their businesses so more might be appropriate. David said they were using Society Hill, which had had a program for years, as a model. **Board members should let him know when new neighbors move in.** They need to approach more businesses to get them to participate so if board members know a business person well, and are willing to approach them, let David know so he can be sure they haven't already been approached and then we can follow-through with the offer/opportunity for that merchant to introduce his store and services to new residents.

Public Safety: Video cameras, tied into the police department will be installed at some key sites in Queen Village.

Liquor Licenses: No requests reported. There will be a meeting in two weeks.

QV Dogs: Walt reported continuing work with QV Dogs on the dog park proposed for Water Street. Grass is not a sustainable surface so QV Dogs is looking for a substitute. QV Dogs has a possible line on \$15,000. ILMAC says once we have an agreement with QV Dogs then we can all work to get PennDOT to repair the drainage problems on I95 which currently send water cascading down into the proposed dog park area. **Walt thinks that some of the steps in the process need to be resequenced and will work on that.** If we want to take anything regarding the dog area to the next ILMAC meeting, it is March 24 and then not again until June.

South Street Alliance/Headhouse: Paul Levy is spearheading improvements in the 2nd street, South to Lombard block. A café that includes outdoor seating will be added to the south end of the parking lot in the center of the 2nd street, trees added the length of the parking area, parking places converted to tree pits will be added back into the mix in the block from Pine to Lombard

on both sides. Rental income from the café will be used for upkeep of the area. An outdoor café should bring life to the area that will then hopefully spill over into other nearby businesses.

Casinos: At this point, we don't know anything new. We discussed the request by the chair of the Casino committee of Society Hill Civic Association who asked us to consider voting to support the position the majority of their board took in February—"Consistent with our previously expressed position, SHCA continues to oppose casinos near residential neighborhoods and, accordingly, opposes casinos at Market East." The board discussed the request and determined that we did not want to change our current position which is to wait and see what happens with Foxwoods.

Transportation: The Transportation committee had studied the issue of fast moving traffic on Christian Street and had submitted a series of recommendations to the board. The board had approved those recommendations. Several months ago, committee members met with Councilman DiCicco, but there has not been any action on the recommendations. **Jeff will talk to the Councilman's office.**

Taxes: Due to the city's budget deficit, the tax issue is currently a monumental problem in the city. Our next General membership meeting will be a Town Hall meeting on taxes. The mayor was invited but will not be coming. Councilman DiCicco will attend. **Jeff and David will put together some basic questions for the Councilman and we agreed that Carla should ask the City Comptroller, Alan Butkowitz to attend too.**

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Dilonardo
Recording Secretary