

QUEEN VILLAGE NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 4, 2014

Present: Jeff Hornstein, Ben Schindler, Amy Shelanski, Cindy Elliott, Kathy Dilonardo, Sean Edwards, Amy Grant, Eleanor Ingersoll, Lauren Leonard, Peter Ross, Jonathan Rubin, Duncan Spencer, Carla Puppini (Executive Director), Cathy Conway (emeritus)

Not present: Maria Roberts

1. State of QVNA

a. The Board reviewed the goals it set from the last retreat and noted that it accomplished the following:

New By-laws were prepared and presented to the membership. There is one point of controversy that remains to be resolved before the by-laws are presented for a vote of the membership.

A fundraising campaign was launched and QVNA has received twice the donations it has received in past years, but we have not reached our goal of \$20,000 general funds.

Arrangements to open the second half of the parking lot are going smoothly,

An updated Mission Statement and slogan were formally adopted by the Board.

A lower financial reserve balance was established.

A functioning Finance Committee was established.

Communications with the membership were modernized, with the establishment of an improved website, a weekly electronic newsletter was established and *The Crier* was replaced with a full-color magazine.

Membership participation in QVNA increased by about half of our goal.

A Transportation Committee was established, chaired by Frank Tavani, which has pushed back on the ill-conceived plan to re-stripe Washington Avenue and has conducted a transportation survey that received 300 responses and helped create an incredibly intelligent argument for one-seat bus service between Queen Village and Center City.

b. The Board then reviewed those goals for which it come up short and why.

By-laws: We need to resolve the main impediment to ratification, which is addition of a class of non-resident members. Cathy Conway noted that this proposition has been met with a negative response in the past. Kathy Dilonardo noted that businesses haven't been agitating for it, so we are not likely to alienate them if we drop it. Jeff Hornstein suggested there are two

possible responses – pull out the controversial piece or engage in further dialogue with community via article in the magazine. Peter Ross noted that one issue was the potential for fundraising opportunities. Ben Schindler proposed that we pull that provision out at this time, based on community feedback, but note that we will continue to explore ways to engage businesses in our community endeavors.

Education Committee: With the departure of Leslie Patterson-Tyler from the Board, we need to make sure we support Eleanor Ingersoll in working with the neighborhood children and schools.

Financials: Ben and Carla Puppin reported that subscriptions for the second lot are significant, although it is not yet full. As a result, the reserve has gone from \$25,000 - \$30,000. There are 155 lot subscriptions currently and they continue to grow steadily. Zip Car has taken two spots. Jeff asked that the Board talk later about possibility of short term parking use.

2. Business Meeting

a. The board reviewed the minutes from the June meeting and necessary revisions and additions were noted.

***Amy Shelanski moved that the minutes be approved as revised, Ben Schindler seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.**

b. Financials – Ben reported that there have been no extraordinary or unanticipated expenses recently, although we will owe ILMC three months rent when the lease is finally executed.

***Kathy Dilonardo moved that the financial statements be approved as presented, Amy Grant seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.**

c. Presidents Report

i. Weccacoe Playground Renovation update: Councilman Squilla has tried to push Administration to have an answer by end of summer, but Deputy Mayor Everett Gillison hasn't been very communicative. Jeff and Duncan Spencer have discussed the park renovation status with Rev. Mark Tyler of Mother Bethel AME and there are very few people who object to renovating the existing community building. Rosalyn McPherson released a final report that implied strongly that building should be retained, renovated and used a centerpiece to educate the public about the Mother Bethel Burying Ground beneath part of the community building. Mr. Gillison is reportedly arranging a meeting next week between the City Administration, Parks and Recreation, Councilman Squilla, and maybe QVNA. Eleanor Ingersoll suggested that the Board use Back to School Night – 3rd - 4th week of September – to enlist the Membership to engage in a campaign to encourage the Administration to move forward with the playground renovations.

ii. Chamber of Commerce: Joe Grace asked for a facility at which to hold its Roadmap for Growth initiative. On October 1st, QVNA will co-host with other area civics a meeting at Old

Swedes from 6:00pm -8:00pm. QVNA will pay \$150 for Old Swedes rent facility rental and the Chamber will pay the other half of the rental fee.

iii. General Meeting Format: Jeff would like to try a community social event again for the September general meeting, since the June event didn't have very good turn-out. The Sweetbriar Rose band will play. Jeff also suggested the Board consider changing the General Meeting format on a regular basis. He would like to build the October meeting around School Superintendant Hite or Lt. Gov. Cawley, and would really like someone from the School Reform Commission. The Board also considered the option of focusing on elections for the October meeting. Jeff could try to get representatives for gubernatorial candidates Tom Wolf and Tom Corbett to come to the October meeting, which may be done in combination with a number of other local civic groups. Carla reminded the Board that there are Board Elections coming up in November; Kathy Dilonardo, Lauren Leonard, Amy Grant and Eleanor Ingersoll would need to run. The December General Meeting is ordinarily the holiday party.

d. Committees.

i. Friends of Bainbridge Green: Lauren reported that FOBG is getting closer to actual design work and have hired Olin Partnership, a landscape architect. FOBG is in the early design phases and will start checking the design with other supporters for buy in. Jonathan reported that FOBG will close the south side of Bainbridge on October 21st for a fundraiser. Half of the street will be used for a sit down dinner to be provided by Southwark for \$125. The other half of space will be for vendors. He asked that we check out website and give him comments. FOBG will want to ask QVNA to donate something. Ben proposed that we pledge some amount by October and believes QVNA should be able to fund FOBG to some degree. The question was raised of whether this request goes through the grant committee or is it different? Jeff feels this is different, along the lines of being a sponsor of a fundraising event. Peter doesn't believe it's any different than any other funding request. Ben proposed that we wait until the next check from the parking lot is received, at which point the Board will be in a better position to determine what QVNA can afford. If there are available funds, he will send by email a request for a vote.

ii. Communications: The QVNA magazine in its new format goes to press next week.

iii. By-Laws: A proposal was made to pull out the provision on non-resident membership. Cindy Elliott will prepare a write up for the e-newsletter and the November/December issue of the magazine.

***Ben Schindler moved that the by-laws be revised to remove the provision on non-resident membership and resubmitted to the membership, Amy Grant seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.**

e. New Business. Eleanor said she knows a lot of people are concerned about L&I and Zoning issues and suggested the Board create a new committee that people can tap in to. Maybe it's a 311 committee for all local issues – zoning, streets, general grievances – with a liaison with City departments. Lauren suggested that QVNA provide basic information to people on the website, such as who to call for what. Duncan noted that we don't want to duplicate the

311 app and activities. Carla noted that we should remind the Membership to get a tracking number from 311 and keep a log of contacts and responses. Lauren offered to start working on a resource guide, but she doesn't want to take on entire committee herself.

f. Executive Director's Report. Carla has put together a grant request for \$51,000 of the \$61,000 overall QV Gateway Greening project costs. The group has a commitment for the other \$10,000, \$5,000 of which will come from QVNA. The group won't know whether it will receive the grant until end of year, but is considering hiring a landscaper and starting the design work using money that's already been committed by ILMC , Maria Roberts and Betty Borodiak.

Carla also noted that donated school supplies will be distributed on Monday, September 8th.

3. SWOT analysis. The remaining time was spent discussing a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of QVNA's activities.

The Board identified the following strengths:

Volunteer Talent on Board

Parking Lot Receipts

Great Community Projects to support

Great committees that solve people's everyday problems

The QVNA Magazine/website

The Board identified the following weaknesses:

Community Outreach

Publicity of Activities/Accomplishments

Limited receipts

Board isn't as racially diverse as the community

Having reached the end of the time allotted, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy A. Elliott, Esq.
Recording Secretary