

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERION CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
MAY 24, 2011

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merion Civic Association was held on Tuesday, May 24, 2011, beginning at 7:45 p.m. at the Merion Tribute House with President Kevin Murphy presiding.

Directors present were Blakeney, Browne, Eisenberg, Feuer, Flaks, Fratis, Gordon, Greenberg, Hill, Kalner, Lam, Lavoritano, Murphy, Mudrick, Piltch, Quinn, Seiden and Wylonis.

Directors absent and excused were Bagley, Ettelson, Lapes, Marmon, Potok and Stevenson.

Other attendees included Karla Moras.

The Meeting was called to order by President Murphy at 7:45 p.m. and the April minutes were unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report** -- Treasurer Bob Marmon reported.

**President's Report** – President Murphy introduced the first speaker of the evening, Officer Steven Solaro of the Lower Merion Police Department. Officer Solaro reported an increase in thefts, including at Lankenau Hospital, an attempted burglary at Cedar Grove and Holly Lane in Wynnewood, additional copper downspouts stolen. Targeted items in automobiles include GPS units.

President Murphy began his report by asking Directors to become more active in some of the community-related meetings regarding the Comprehensive Plan and City Avenue redevelopment project. Directors were asked to help update the Civic Association website with information about meetings they attend. The next item concerned the Directors who are not attending any meetings. The Association By-laws recommend termination of directors who miss three consecutive meetings. Scott Feuer suggested that President Murphy write to the two Directors who have not attended any meetings this year to find out if they wish to continue as Directors. The Executive Committee will consider the matter at its next meeting and make a decision.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Arts and Education** — Frances Quinn reported the Neighbor-to-Neighbor event was successful. The Flag Day Concert is coming up on June 9.

**Botanical** — Judith Flaks reported a tree has been planted in memory of Abe Freedman. The Freedman family will be gathering in June for a ceremony. Twenty-one new azaleas will be planted in the next few weeks.

**Commissioner** — Commissioner Brian Gordon spoke first on the relationship of the Merion Civic Association to St. Joe's. St. Joe's needs to care about the parking difficulties its students are creating by parking on the street instead of using the designated on-campus lots. In addition, St. Joe's needs to engage in open dialogue to resolve issues. Commissioner Gordon posed the question of how to handle St. Joe's feeling affronted by Civic Association's sometimes negative opinions and challenges to how St. Joe's conducts itself in neighbor relations.

Commissioner Gordon reported that the Commissioners and developers are moving forward with the redevelopment of the Palmer property, as well as historic preservation efforts.

The Comprehensive Plan meeting of May 23 focused on institutional district overlays across the township. Commissioner Gordon is opposed to establishing institutional district as it may lead to unwanted expansion.

Commissioner Gordon is concerned that the historic district status of Merion process is stalling.

**Community Action, Zoning & PR** – Les Greenberg reported that the Palmer site has been rezoned as a Class I historical designation site, which the developers are pleased about as they will get a tax break on their project.

President Murphy suggested that the Merion Civic Association meet with Commissioners regarding zoning and development issues. Michael Seiden and Carla Moras have attended numerous meetings in an effort to slow down the pace of the Comprehensive Plan implementation push. Marty Piltch commented that it will be two years before the Comprehensive Plan will be passed. The Commissioners are pushing projects that will be completed for revenue receipts. The Merion Civic must be vocal about limiting building heights. Karla Moras suggested a meeting be scheduled with Liz Rogan and Commissioner Gordon and meet with the Wynnewood Civic Association as well. Now is the time for the Civics to speak up, inform the Commissioners about community reaction to proposed plans, attend as many meetings as possible.

The Bala Cynwyd neighborhood club is very concerned about the impact the development will have, with the Rock Hill Road development leaving the community feeling encircled by development.

The Commissioners are pro-development because of the projected revenues to be drawn and have approved a grade “D” plan for the intersections along City Avenue that would be seriously impacted by the City Avenue development, which in effect means settling for a poor plan so that no money has to be budgeted for improvements. There is no transit plan component to the Comprehensive, which Merion Civic Directors describe as a 20<sup>th</sup> century plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Federation of Civic Associations** — President Murphy distributed the minutes of the Association. Agenda items at the May 9 meeting included the Riverbend Environmental Center, Community Watch, expansion of the Bala Cynwyd Library, township affairs (budget, zoning, City Ave. development); proposed Dunkin Donuts shop at the corner of E. Wynnewood and Penn Roads.

**Finance** – No report. The insurance premium has been paid according to Bob Marmon.

**History** — Lauren Wylonis reported that grassroots efforts concerning the historic designation are still being planned, but the Lower Merion Conservancy is busy with other projects, so there is not much activity.

**Membership** – Dolores Browne brought pins that will go on the Civic Association table at the Barnes Community Day event along with the poster she designed. Dolores is working on more ideas for increasing membership next year.

**Newsletter** — Marjorie Mudrick reported that the Newsletter went out on schedule and thanked all who worked to produce it.

**School Board** – President Murphy announced there will be a community meeting at Harriton High School on May 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Superintendent McGinley will host an informational presentation about the District.

**Social** – The June Directors picnic is being planned.

**Station and Grounds, Postal Affairs** — Scott Feuer announced he received a letter from SEPTA General Manager Casey in response to Scott's letter about excessive signage installed at the train station. SEPTA is willing to consider removal of at least one sign that was installed in the flower garden on the inbound side. The letter addressed installation of wooden platforms for easier boarding of the trains, as well as painting and repairs that are needed at the Merion Station.

**Streets, Lights and Traffic** – Renee Hill reported a pothole on Sycamore; Frances reported the street light is out at the top of the Merion Station steps going up to Idris Rd. The pothole and broken curb on Bowman Ave. have been repaired.

**Website** -- Michael Seiden continues to update the Civic Association website with the addition of the newsletter. There was discussion of adding the monthly minutes minus the financial information to the website.

**Barnes** – Scott Feuer reported that 450 neighbors have signed up to attend the June 5 Community Day. Speakers will cover topics such as the move of the art collection and the future of the Merion campus of the Barnes.

**Community Watch** — President Murphy announced new stickers have been designed and made to be posted at home.

**Merion Community Coalition** – Lauren Wylonis announced that Tami Fratis will be co-director of the Ad Hoc committee for the summer while Lauren is away. The MCC and the Ad Hoc committee are planning to meet to formulate goals in dealing with St. Joe's and a meeting with St. Joe's may be scheduled for the summer.

**Narberth Fire Company** – President Murphy reported the annual banquet was held. The alarm system at the old Narberth school has been repaired.

**St. Joe's** – No report.

**Old Business** – None.

**New Business** – None.

There being no more new business, the meeting, on motion made and seconded, was unanimously adjourned at 10:15 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Merion Tribute House on Tuesday, June 28, 2001 at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Guy, Secretary