

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERION CIVIC ASSOCIATION
FEBRUARY 28, 2012

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merion Civic Association was held on Tuesday, February 28, 2012, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Merion Tribute House with President Kevin Murphy presiding.

Directors present were Blakeney, Browne, Eisenberg, Feuer, Flaks, Gordon, Greenberg, Hill, Kalner, Lam, Lapes, Murphy, Quinn, Rutzel, and Seiden.

Directors absent and excused were Bagley, Ettelson, Fratis, Lavoritano, Marmon, Potok and Wylonis.

Merion residents Darryl Boyle and David Feldman were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and the January Minutes were approved with corrections.

Treasurer's Report – Bob Marmon was not present.

President's Report – President Murphy reported that about 130 people attended the Chakah Fattah event at the Tribute House. There was a low turnout at the Neighbor-to-Neighbor lecture. The New Residents Reception is scheduled for March 11, 3-5 p.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arts and Education — Frances Quinn thanked all who attended the Neighbor-to-Neighbor lecture and the Flag Day Concert in June is in the planning stages. Frances then announced that she will be stepping down as chair of the Arts and Education Committee after 25 years of service.

Botanical — Judith Flaks announced the next meeting of the Botanical is scheduled for February 29, when the tribute to Marty Piltch will be discussed.

Commissioner — Commissioner Brian Gordon began his report with an update on taxes and spending, specifically regarding the \$6.9 million extra in tax revenues and how it should be spent: on proposed projects, paying down the debt or keeping taxes the same this year.

The next topic was the City Avenue District. At the workshop on February 27 amendments to the ordinance, which goes into effect on April 30, the Commissioners who are for the amendments were in favor of immediate passage. A discussion with developers followed about parking issues. Items also discussed included common areas to be set aside, pedestrian walkways and the funds to deal with the intersections. Some Commissioners agreed to include these items in the amendment.

A meeting regarding the Historic District was held at Tami Fratis' house. Commissioner Gordon circulated a petition for historic district support and got some signatures. The effort will include trying to prevent "tear-downs," trying to insure that institutional groups such as St. Joe's and the Barnes follow historic district guidelines, and control institutional development.

Commissioner Gordon was asked for information about the Township worker pension plans of forty (40) employees, which in the example of Doug Clelland, Township Manager, included hidden clauses which guarantee him compounded raises and longevity bonuses, for a total of

\$270,000. Executive pay needs to be looked at to assure transparency. There was a debate about who runs the Township. There seems to be a mix of elected officials and highly paid professional managers.

Community Action, Zoning & PR – Les Greenberg reported briefly on the City Avenue amendment meeting. The Bala Club’s view is that the developers should not get any incentives until the basic requirements are taken care of such as walkways, common space and intersection traffic improvements. A discussion by the Merion Civic Directors ensued regarding the MCA offering a resolution in support of the Bala Club. It was decided, due to timing issues requiring a decision by April 30, that the Executive Committee can meet and vote on something to be brought back to the Board meeting with a motion to the floor.

Federation of Civic Associations — President Murphy reported that at the February 13 meeting there was a discussion with Commissioners Rogan and Bernheim that the Federation is concerned that Board of Commissioners meetings stifle Commissioners who do not agree with the majority views of the Board. Commissioner Bernheim defended those actions by saying that in the interest of time, such discussions are not productive and use time that could be devoted to other issues. She suggested that speakers should be better prepared with presentations that are brief and to the point. There was a suggestion that having Commissioners at Large would guarantee equal time to all points of view. Commissioner Jenny Brown suggested that better agenda management would ensure time for all points of view and that Commissioner Rogan could consult with minority Commissioners on their agenda items before the agenda is made official.

Finance – Dave Rutzel announced the Finance Committee will meet on March 19.

History — No report. President Murphy distributed information about the benefits of creating a historic district in Merion.

Membership – Dolores Browne has composed an announcement to remind the community of the next Director meeting and encouraging all to attend. Included is a photo of the member button Dolores designed, which includes the MCA name and a photograph of Edward Bok. Helen Guy will distribute to the Directors a list of new resident phone numbers they should call to encourage attendance at the New Residents Reception on March 11.

Nominating -- No report.

Newsletter — Michael Seiden announced the theme of the Spring Newsletter issue will be “What We do for Merion” and asked all Directors to submit an article to him by early March.

School Board – No report.

Social – No report. All Directors are encouraged to attend the next New Residents Reception scheduled for March 11.

Station and Grounds, Postal Affairs — Scott Feuer announced the train station planting day will be on April 29 at 9:30 a.m.

Streets, Lights and Traffic – Merion resident Darryl Boyle reported that bagged leaves along Wynnewood Road between Bowman and Hazelhurst Avenues have still not been picked up by the Township and would like the MCA to assist in getting that done. Renee Hill will contact the Township. Scott Feuer asked that the bagged leaves on Hazelhurst near the train station also

need to be collected. Frances Quinn reported that the street sign at Hazelhurst and Wynnewood needs to be painted and repaired.

Website – Michael Seiden reported he updates the site once a week and drew special attention to the news and historic pages. The website continues to be an outstanding source of information to the community.

Barnes – Scott Feuer announced there will be another Merion Day on September 23. The Barnes Merion campus will open in September. Upcoming plans will include events sponsored by the Philadelphia Horticulture Society, classroom activities, a café, private programs, St. Joe's concerts and a Matisse Garden scheduled to open in May 2013.

Community Watch — President Murphy reported there is less crime in the area. Twenty-five (25) new Community Watch signs have been ordered to increase visibility.

Merion Community Coalition – St. Joseph's University Ad Hoc – No report.

Narberth Fire Company/Union Fire Company – President Murphy reported the Narberth company received 20 calls in January (3 in Narberth and 17 in Lower Merion); Union Fire received 25 calls in December.

St. Joe's – No report.

Ad Hoc Centennial Committee -- No report.

Old Business – No old business to discuss.

New Business – Scott Feuer announced the Overbrook Farms house tour is scheduled for May 6, 12-5 p.m.

There being no more new business, the meeting, on motion made and seconded, was unanimously adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Merion Tribute House on Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Guy, Secretary