

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERION CIVIC ASSOCIATION
JANUARY 24, 2012

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merion Civic Association was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2012, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Merion Tribute House with President Kevin Murphy presiding.

Directors present were Bagley, Browne, Eisenberg, Feuer, Flaks, Fratis, Gordon, Greenberg, Hill, Lapes, Lavoritano, Marmon, Murphy, Potok, Quinn, Rutzel, Seiden and Wylonis.

Directors absent and excused were Blakeley, Ettelson, Kalner, and Lam.

Merion resident Karla Moras was in attendance.

The Meeting was called to order by President Murphy at 7:30 p.m. President Murphy welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the speaker for the evening, Lower Merion Police Officer Pete Condon, who reported on the armed robbery on Idris Road, a house burglary on Merion Road, the robbery at Govberg Jewelers, the groper in Penn Valley. Officer Condon repeated the need to keep in touch with neighbors, be aware of any unusual activity and to call the police.

Treasurer's Report – Bob Marmon presented the November and December 2011 report.

President's Report – President Murphy asked for a motion to approve the November 2011 minutes. The motion was made and seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved with one correction. President Murphy announced that the Executive Committee had decided to purchase 18 trees at \$18.00 each to be planted in Israel in memory of Marty Piltch.

Upcoming Merion Civic Association events include the Neighbor-to-Neighbor lecture on February 22; an opportunity to meet Lower Merion United States House of Representatives member, The Honorable Chaka Fattah at the Merion Tribute House on February 9. The event is co-sponsored by area civic associations, Ard-Wood, Gladwyne, North Ardmore, Shortridge, Wynnewood and Merion. Representative Fattah will speak about the new district, civic issues facing Lower Merion and the 2nd Congressional District. As a result of recent redistricting, Lower Merion Township is no longer in the 6th District, but the 2nd. The New Resident Reception is scheduled for Sunday, March 11.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arts and Education — Frances Quinn announced that the Neighbor-to-Neighbor lecture is scheduled for February 22, 2012. The topic will be "Middle Kingdom: What We Learned Teaching English in China" by Cory and Page Wheeler.

Botanical — No report.

Commissioner — Commissioner Brian Gordon gave an update on the Comprehensive plan, with Lower Merion being the community most impacted.

Membership is needed on various Comprehensive Plan Committees -- Open Space Plan, Parks & Recreation, Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Community Facilities and Energy and Water Resources Conservation. An online sign-up option is offered at www.lowermerion.org, however, most of the meetings are during the day when most Directors are not available to participate.

Commissioner Gordon reported the green parking lot ordinance has been drafted, which includes slowing stormwater, creating green islands, rain gardens. The Township will encourage implementation of the ordinance.

Community Action, Zoning & PR – Les Greenberg reported that the Golden Slipper Senior Center was denied office space at the synagogue. Tami Fratis announced that the change in use of Wyndram Hall from residential to office space on the St. Joe's campus is a topic of discussion at the hearing on February 9. It is not clear what the master plan is for the campus and without any historical designation in place, small changes and developments seem harmless, but all the changes added together are part of a seemingly larger plan.

Michael Seiden announced a meeting to be held on January 28, 10:00 a.m. at the GSB building regarding the Official Map meeting.

Federation of Civic Associations — President Murphy reported that at the January 9 Federation meeting, it was announced that the Board of Commissioners adopted the three new zoning ordinances for the City Avenue area on December 14, 2011 despite opposition from all the civic associations. This disregard for community opinion sets a discouraging precedence. Karla Moras noted that 6 out of the 14 Commissioners were responsible for the approval of the ordinance.

President Murphy reported there is 6.9 million in “found money” in the Township budget. The Federation would like the money to go towards paying down the debt. There will be a workshop on January 25 to discuss how to use the funds.

Finance – No report. A meeting of the Finance Committee needs to be scheduled.

History — Tami Fratis announced the Lower Merion Conservancy will be sponsoring a meeting on January 31 at 7:30 p.m. at the Tribute House to get support for the Historic District and work to formulate a framework for the effort. St. Joe's refuses to participate in any designation of houses they own.

Membership – No report. The New Residents reception is scheduled for March 11. New residents from the last two years will be invited to attend.

Nominating -- Scott Feuer stated that new directors need to be recruited, with the impending move of Lauren Wylonis and Vivian Lapes away from Merion. Judith Flaks will be moving to Germantown but will continue to serve as a Director.

Newsletter — No report. The next issue of the newsletter will be the Spring/Summer edition.

School Board – Vivian Lapes reported that the Robbins Family has decided to drop their second webcam suite against the school system. She also announced that with the recent redistricting, Lower Merion students can attend either Harriton or Lower Merion high schools, which it was pointed out has always been a choice in the community. On May 22, Superintendent of Schools McGinley will be the guest speaker at the Merion Civic Association meeting with the Wynnewood Civic Association invited to attend as well.

Social – No report. The next New Residents Reception is scheduled for March 11.

Station and Grounds, Postal Affairs — Scott Feuer reported vandalism in the form of graffiti in the train tunnel, which was painted over by a Merion Civic member. The train station garden did not win the summer competition sponsored by the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society.

SEPTA has cooperated with Merion Civic Association requests to maintain the station by installing new steps to the tunnel on the outbound side and new platforms for boarding the trains, as well as repointing of brickwork.

Streets, Lights and Traffic – No report. Frances Quinn spoke about the speeding traffic along Wynnewood Road. The Hazelhurst street sign needs to be painted. The Berwick Street sign on City Avenue was knocked over and is now being held up by cinder blocks.

Website – Michael Seiden reported many very detailed updates to the website.

Barnes – Scott Feuer announced there will be a Board meeting on February 15. On March 20 tickets will go on sale for the Barnes museum downtown.

Community Watch — President Murphy announced there will be a reception for volunteers.

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

Narberth Fire Company/Union Fire Company – President Murphy reported 345 calls last year.

St. Joe’s – No report.

Ad Hoc Centennial Committee -- No report. President Murphy mentioned the refurbishment of the historic street light will go forward. He asked for a motion to approve the estimated \$1900 cost of restoration of the street lamp, which amount represents half of the total cost, with the Merion Civic Association contributing half of the required funds. The motion was made and seconded and approved unanimously.

Old Business – No old business to discuss.

New Business – No new business to discuss.

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, February 28, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Guy, Secretary