

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERION CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
May 27, 2014

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merion Civic Association was held on Tuesday, May 27, 2014, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Merion Tribute House with President Scott Kalner presiding.

Directors present were Browne, Copeland, Eisenberg, Feuer, Gordon, Greenberg, Kalner, Lam, Murphy, Quinn, Ross, Rutzel, and Sinai.

Directors absent and excused were Anderson, Ettelson, Flaks, Hill, Lavoritano, Marmon, Potok and Seiden.

Other Merion residents present included Lyne Raymond, Bill Katz, Marisa Fusaro, Tom West, Karla Moras, Hyman Myers, Melanie Schafmeister and Susan Guthrie.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by President Kalner. A motion was made and seconded and the April 22, 2014 minutes were approved unanimously with corrections.

**Guest Speaker:** President Kalner introduced Ilene Westerman, Chairman of Lower Merion Human Relations Commission. Ms. Westerman spoke about the lack of state level civil rights protections for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community as the motivation for establishing the Human Relations Commission in Lower Merion Township. Protections cover issues such as housing and employment fairness. Meetings of the Commission began in the fall of 2011 and are intended to promote conversation, not litigation. Ms. Westerman distributed pamphlets and welcomed attendance and participation at upcoming events sponsored by the Human relations Commission.

The second speaker of the evening was Matt Peskin of Lower Merion Town Watch, who came to promote the 35-year-old organization, explained its function and spoke about its effectiveness in alerting the police department of suspicious behavior. The program operates with 350 trained volunteers in the Township. June 10 is the next training session for anyone who would like to qualify to participate.

**Treasurer's Report** – Dave Rutzel presented the Treasurer's report for April 2014. A motion was made and seconded and the Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously.

**President's Report** – President Kalner began his report by thanking Michael Seiden for having presided at the previous meeting. President Kalner reported first on the St. Charles Borromeo Special Exception hearing process, stating that a 2-hour meeting was held on May 15 to discuss the special exceptions requested by the Seminary, including changed a new entry from Wynnewood Road, changed traffic patterns on the campus, new and consolidated parking and associated lighting. The next session of the Zoning Hearing Board is scheduled for June 10, will be dedicated solely to these issues and will be held at the Merion Fire Company firehouse in Ardmore on Greenfield Avenue.

President Kalner believes the special exception review process will be a lengthy one. A resolution regarding Merion Civic Association's support of the Coalition for Neighborhood

Character and Quality was distributed to directors. Les Greenberg offered a motion to approve, Kevin Murphy seconded, and the directors voted unanimously to approve. The resolution follows:

**Resolution in Support of the  
Coalition for Neighborhood Character and Quality**

**Whereas:**

1. The Coalition for Neighborhood Character and Quality (“CNCQ”) was formed by concerned residents in the area immediately adjacent to the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. Its membership is drawn from the neighborhoods of Merion Station, Indian Creek and Shortridge.
2. CNCQ recognizes and respects the economic value of the Seminary’s right to renovate the existing structures on its campus to support its mission and to develop its 71-acre tract as allowed under the current R-3 zoning in effect.
3. The St. Charles Borromeo Seminary has applied for a special exception to be granted by the Lower Merion Zoning Hearing Board to consolidate its existing operations on to the upper campus, an area comprised of approximately 31 acres, in advance to the sale or long-term lease of the balance of the existing 71 acre property for redevelopment.
4. CNCQ has expressed concern about the potential increase in density on the upper campus as well as adversely alter the long-standing traffic patterns on Wynnewood Road. The CNCQ has hired legal counsel to represent the organization before the Zoning Hearing Board to have these issues considered as part of the consideration of the special exception sought by the Seminary.

**Be It Resolved:**

1. The Merion Civic Association supports CNCQ’s stated purpose to preserve the quality of life, open space and character of the neighborhoods adjacent to the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary.
2. The Merion Civic Association will coordinate its own efforts with CNCQ to achieve the common goal to maintain the historical, architectural and aesthetic features of the Seminary property which also serves as the visual gateway to the Township.

The second annual beer tasting event is scheduled for Friday, June 13 at the Tribute House. Proceeds will be shared by the Civic Association and the Merion Cynwyd Business District. Volunteers are needed for set-up, raffle ticket sales and clean-up.

The annual Flag Day concert will be held at the Tribute House on June 11.

President Kalner spoke about increasing community membership and various ideas will be considered over the summer and directors will be asked to participate in helping increase the Civic Association membership.

Bill Katz, an attorney, and resident of Merion, is helping to revise the Civic Association By-laws. A draft will be readied before the June meeting and will be finalized for approval by the membership at the Annual Meeting in October.

### **Commissioner's Report:**

Commissioner Brian Gordon began his report with an update on the Merion/Cynwyd Business District and efforts being made to upgrade the design standards and attract businesses and new customers by planting new trees, widening sidewalks, narrowing traffic lanes to three, and consolidating parking lots behind retail businesses. Widening sidewalks that will allow trees to be planted is seen as a long-term project, so Long Stems, a florist on Montgomery Avenue, has provided a proposal for self-watering planters that will function as temporary landscaping to beautify the area.

Lane reconfiguration is an expensive project. Discussion followed regarding whether a mock-up of what the changes would be like or a traffic study would be a better way of studying the project. A mock-up might be too confusing to motorists and would likely not be able to incorporate and test all of the features of the proposed reconfiguration – including the dedicated left-turn traffic signal. There was a concern expressed that an incomplete simulation might work against approval of the overall plan. It was noted that traffic engineering modeling has become substantially more sophisticated in recent years, probably making a partial mock-up a less reliable method to test the performance of the proposed realignment.

A question was raised about the resolution passed several months ago by the Directors regarding the resolution requesting the first step in the lane reconfiguration – either a traffic study or a mock-up. President Kalner will re-read the resolution and let the directors know whether an amendment to that resolution may be required.

### **Committee/Representative Reports:**

**Federation of Civic Associations** -- Kevin Murphy reported that the new Township Manager will be attending the next Federation meeting to meet representatives of the Township's civic associations and learn about the purpose of the Association.

**Narberth and Union Fire Stations** -- Kevin Murphy reported that a very generous donation was made to the firehouses.

**Old Business** – None

**New Business** – There being no more new business, a motion was made and seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Merion Tribute House on Tuesday, June 24, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Helen Guy, Secretary