

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERION CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
October 28, 2014

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merion Civic Association was held on Tuesday, October 28, 2014, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Merion Tribute House with President Scott Kalner presiding.

Directors present were Anderson, Browne, Feuer, Gordon, Greenberg, Hill, Kalner, Lam, Murphy, Potok, Quinn, Ross, Rutzel, and Seiden.

Directors absent and excused were Eisenberg, Ettelson, Flaks, Lavoritano, Marmon and Sinai.

Other Merion residents present included Dotty Brown, Lyne Raymond, Roz Seiden and Barbara Sylk.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Kalner, who called upon Kevin Murphy, chair of the Nominating Committee, to nominate the new Executive Committee for the new year, comprised of Michael Seiden, President, Les Greenberg, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Robert Marmon, Treasurer, and Helen Guy, Secretary. Mr. Murphy asked for a motion to approve the roster, which was seconded, and unanimously voted in favor. Mr. Kalner then turned the meeting over to the new president, Michael Seiden.

President Seiden's first act as the new president was to present Scott Kalner with a certificate of appreciation for his service to the Merion Civic Association and the community. Refreshments were enjoyed by all at the end of the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded and the September 23, 2014 minutes were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report** – In the absence of Bob Marmon, Dave Rutzel presented the Treasurer's report which consisted of the proposed budget for the year 2014-15. Mr. Rutzel focused primarily on the need of the Association to attract more funds in order to prevent a pattern of continuing financial diminishment of Association funds. By maintaining a healthy account balance, the Association will remain in a position to fund projects that are important to the Merion community. Mr. Rutzel reviewed in detail the number and type of Association memberships for the past year and proposed an increase in each dues category to bring in more funds: the Individual membership would increase from \$15 to \$25; Couple from \$25 to \$35; Family from \$35 to \$50; Business from \$50 to \$75; and Patron from \$100 to \$150. It was noted that Association dues have remained the same for decades, and the small increase proposed would help to balance the budget and replenish funds. Mr. Rutzel also announced that a fundraising activity will be organized to help increase funds. Mr. Rutzel called for a motion to approve the proposed budget, which was seconded and approved unanimously, and which approval includes the new category rates outlined above.

An open discussion followed the Treasurer's Report, with suggestions from Directors and Members on how to increase the number of paid members, which last year totaled 339. President Seiden would like to send out more frequent mailings to communicate with the neighborhood; George Ross reported that the new Mexican restaurant at the Wynnewood Shopping Center welcomes fundraisers, and he will pursue the idea of a Merion Civic event at the restaurant. Discussion included a definition of the mission of the Civic Association, which is

educational in focusing on helping the community understand its place in the larger Township community. At its founding, the Civic Association initiated and completed many projects of a more infrastructural nature, such as building sidewalks, installing street signs, paving roads, as well as projects that benefited the welfare of the residents, such as checking the safety of the milk supply for children; clearing sidewalks of snow; hiring police officers, and requesting its own Commissioner. The focus of the Association now is different as times have naturally changed, and the dues letter should reflect current concerns.

Brian Gordon, Commissioner, suggested that a committee of several members review past dues letters and contribute suggestions for the new letter, which will go out in November. Several members volunteered to work on the letter: George Ross, Barbara Sylk, Frances Quinn, Brian Gordon. President Seiden asked that all comments be submitted to him within one week.

**President's Report –** President Seiden's report consisted of some of his ideas about areas he would like to concentrate on during his tenure. He would like the Association Committees to become active, to be more accountable, to be organized and to have regular meetings where goals are discussed and planned for. Those committees include Membership, Historic, Social Programming, the Land Use, Website, Post Office and Grounds, Streets/Lights/Traffic, and three ad hoc committees focusing on St. Joe's, Barnes, and the revision of the By-laws.

President Seiden invited Directors to become involved in these committees. George Ross reported that the Idris Road planting project has not had diligent follow-through from the Township, and the idea of involving the Botanical Association in the maintenance was offered as a solution to keeping the area maintained. Scott Feuer offered to bring the issue to the next Botanical Board Meeting. In addition, the Merion Civic Association could offer assistance through the Station and Grounds Committee, which already maintains the plantings of flower boxes and other planted areas at the train station. Les Greenberg offered to speak to the new Township Manager on the same topic.

The timing of the Annual Meeting, held in October in compliance with the By-laws, was discussed. Various national sports events seem to coincide and may contribute to sparse attendance at the Annual Meeting. The Association will look into perhaps changing the date to some time in the Spring.

President Seiden suggested some areas of involvement for the Association will include: St. Charles Seminary development; traffic patterns on City Avenue; new building heights; protection of Merion in the midst of growing development on its borders; focusing on Township development.

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

Commissioner Brian Gordon began his report with an announcement that there are trees available from the Township for planting and it is looking for sites to place them. The Township will also maintain these trees. If anyone has a specific spot where they would like to see a tree planted, he/she should contact the Township.

The Township passed the plan put forth by the Botanical Association, which foresees a return of the park to its original look from decades ago when it was established.

The Cricket Avenue project, to be built by Dranoff, proposes a building 8 stories high. A protest rally is planned for next Saturday at 3 p.m. in front of the Township Building.

Commissioner Gordon posed a question to the Directors and members present about how to make community voices heard. He suggested attending Zoning Hearing Board meetings; writing Civic Association resolutions that can be presented at the Hearings; and sending resolutions to the Board of Commissioners; forming ad hoc issue groups; writing letters to the editors of the Main Line Times; voting Commissioners out of office; using the Federation of Civic Associations; and forming smaller neighborhood groups.

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

**Land Use, Zoning and Community Relations:** Les Greenberg reported on the Bala Village issue of the Wendy's restaurant project. There will be a Zoning Hearing Board meeting on the subject on November 6 at 7:15 p.m. at the Township Building, when zoning questions will have to be settled. In Bala Cynwyd, the Tarnopol Furs building has been purchased by Jewish Family Services, also a topic to be presented at the November 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, as there is inadequate parking for such an institution. Banners will be going up in the Merion/Cynwyd business district in the next couple of weeks.

Regarding St. Charles, the Seminary was granted all of the requests put forward to the Zoning Hearing Board with no concessions made to the neighbors on entrances, buffers and traffic along Wynnewood Road. The St. Charles neighborhood coalition plans to appeal the decision. St. Charles is responsible for scheduling the court date.

Les Greenberg reported that form-based zoning is part of the Comprehensive Plan, but questions whether or not the Commissioners will approve the concept.

**Old Business** – None

**New Business** – There being no new business, a motion was made and seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Merion Tribute House on Tuesday, November 25, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,  
Helen Guy, Secretary