

## Minutes from 6-7-11 PSCA General Meeting @ SPOAC

Attendance: Approximately 25 people. Board members: Knapp, Zenzola, Morris, Raezer, Emma.  
Absent: Taggert, Pohlig.

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **General Announcements**
  - a. Still Recruiting for Board positions.
  - b. No general membership meetings in July or August, resume in September. Look for other PSCA events to attend this summer.
3. **Committee Reports**
  - a. **Events**—Upcoming events include:
    - i. National Night Out and Phillies game viewing in Columbus Square—date TBD
    - ii. July happy hour—date TBD
    - iii. October House Tour—date TBD
    - iv. Possible flag day competition with other civics this summer—date TBD
  - b. **Beautification**—Capitolo mural dedication is June 25<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Always looking for volunteers to help with beautification projects, need to set up a schedule for greening projects.
  - c. **Trash and Recycling**—LRC contract signed and they are cleaning on Fridays, north-south streets one week, east-west the next. Schedule of cleanings is on the PSCA website's google calendar. Upcoming event this summer is hosting a "Weird Waste" recycling event for those items hard to recycle (electronics, etc). Anyone wanting a recycling bin, we have extras and just need to contact us.
  - d. **Town Watch**—Held 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month, meet at 11am in front of Police Station at 11<sup>th</sup> and Wharton for hour-long walk.
  - e. **Other:**
    - i. Results of membership survey are in and posted on website. 140 responses received, great return rate. Survey still open so folks can still fill out. Top reasons for living in the neighborhood are: affordable and close to Center City, followed by diversity, Passyunk Avenue, and sense of community. Top items we can improve are: cleaning, trees, schools, safety, boarded-up houses, and attracting new businesses. Top event folks are interested in is an art auction fundraiser with work of local artists. Still needed are volunteers who can assist with Asian languages (translation and meeting facilitation). Audience member suggested contacting SEMACC for such services.
    - ii. PSCA working with Phila Parking Authority to address safety issues in neighborhood related to parking violations. Meeting to be held June 14 at 6pm at SPOAC to discuss these issues.
  - f. **Zoning**—For the June meeting, the following cases will be heard:
    - i. 1332-36 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street—use and height variance to allow an auto repair shop on the first floor with residential above consisting of 4 units with addition of a third-story pilot house with 4 roof decks. Neither use permitted, nor height of proposed 42 feet (zoning allows 35 feet).
    - ii. Possible upcoming cases are:
      1. 1415 S. 13<sup>th</sup>—roof deck
      2. Corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Washington—sign variance
      3. 1131-37—multifamily case heard in May

#### 4. Guest Presenters:

- a. **Juliet Whelan from PHS** spoke about Washington Avenue Green, the new park at Washington Avenue and Columbus Boulevard, btwn the Coast Guard and Sheet Metal Workers Building (directly behind). This is a new passive eco-park by DRWC, part of the larger Central Delaware Riverfront revitalization. It includes restored wetlands, a pier (that is currently inaccessible but will be open soon), public art highlighting the buried streams under the asphalt, etc. There is a Friends of Washington Avenue Green group, which everyone is encouraged to join (also has a Facebook page), and the group hopes to have some events and exercise classes at the park.
- b. **John DiGiulio from PSCA Zoning Committee** spoke about the purpose of the Zoning Committee and how the Committee represents the community to the Zoning Board of Adjustments. He discussed the importance of citizens attending the ZBA hearings (held during the weekday) in support or opposition of individual cases. PSCA's Zoning Committee hears cases for variances and votes either in opposition or non-opposition, which is written up in a letter that is then sent to the ZBA for their information at the hearing. The Zoning Committee attempts to represent the interests of the community, and strike a balance btwn what is good for the immediate neighbors and the surrounding neighborhood, which is often difficult if the only community members to come out to ZC meetings are those in opposition. The ZBA has recently voted for some variances that PSCA Zoning opposed, and there is concern among South Philly civics that our opinions are not being considered, or that letters we write are not being filed properly once received by the ZBA. The combined South Philly civics group is going to work on this issue, to discuss with the ZBA.
  - i. Resident commented that Center City Residents Association, which has been around for 30 years, is well-respected (even feared) by the ZBA because of their strong stance at the ZBA meetings for or against a project. They have used their funds to hire a zoning attorney to represent them at ZBA hearings. In some cases immediate neighbors have even paid for the legal defense of their position at the ZBA. PSCA has yet to go this far, nor do we regularly send a committee member to every ZBA meeting, given that we are all volunteer and this is a large time commitment. Resident also asked whether PSCA has ever appealed a ZBA ruling, which we have not in recent memory.
  - ii. Resident commented that she is a zoning attorney and could assist us. She said that ZBA strongly considers resident and civic association opinions at the hearing. Also good to contact Councilperson in advance of ZBA hearing.

#### 5. General Comments

- a. Possible rise of gang-related graffiti in neighborhood—these have been reported to police and 311.
- b. Discussion of water hydrants being opened by neighbors even after locks have been installed by Water Dept—best recourse is to keep reporting it to 311 and police.

Meeting adjourned 8:00pm. Submitted by Karin Morris. 6/8/11.