

Chestnut Hill Community Association

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

Attending CHCA Board Members: Cathy Brzozowski, Andy Kite, Anne McNiff, Lucie Daigle, Kathi Clayton, Bradley Wells, Michael Harding, Lindsey Toconita, Laura Lucas, Keith Kunz, Susan Bray, Larry McEwen, Lynn Schroeder, Tony Banks, Karl Martin, Alex Burns, Richard Snowden, Jason Bissonette, Craig Hosay

Community Members attending: John Cacciamani, R Caserio, Cynthia Brey, Janet Potter, Ann Williams, dial in participant 267-977-6739

1. President's Welcome - The February meeting minutes and March meeting agenda were approved.
2. Presentation by Chestnut Hill Hospital CEO
 - a. Dr. John Cacciamani, CEO of Chestnut Hill Hospital gave a "state of the hospital" talk about the challenges that CH Hospital is experiencing. The hospital's parent company Tower Health is under pressure from its bond holders. Some of the recent history that is contributing to their struggles: Tower Health acquired St. Christopher's, COVID closed elective outpatient business, probably grown too fast.
3. Physical Division
 - a. 10 E Bethlehem Pike update – We learned on March 9th that the Developer had submitted an application to the city for a zoning permit with the plan that they believe is by-right. We updated the Summit St. neighbors group and have since participated on a call with Cindy Bass to inform her of the plans and solicit her help. She did agree that the plans presented did not appear to be appropriate for that property. Her office was able to confirm that the Philadelphia Planning Commission had approved it as a by-right plan and as of yesterday we don't know if L&I did the same. At the March 18th Executive Committee meeting, the committee approved the CHCA working with the Summit St. neighbor group to engage an attorney to consult on what specific options are available and optimal to appeal the application. Anne has spoken with several zoning attorneys and has narrowed down the list to one attorney who has been used by the CHCA in the past. We will keep the board updated as this matter proceeds.
 - b. 30 W Highland Ave update – As has previously been reported a subcommittee has been formed (made up of LUPZ members, CH Conservancy representatives, and representatives of the neighbors) to continue discussions with owner and architect with the goal to come to an agreement on the particular aspects of the project. On March 16, preliminary plan changes were made to the DRC and the applicant and his architect heard comments from DRC members and neighbors. The project will come to the Board at the April 22 board meeting.
 - c. 8612-14 Germantown Ave update - At the last board meeting a motion passed authorizing the CHCA Executive Committee to review the outcome of the mediation between the applicant and some near neighbors after the March 16 DRC meeting and render the CHCA recommendation to the ZBA. At the March 18th meeting the CHCA

heard from the applicant and neighbors and voted to support the following motion: The CHCA Board of Directors supports the application for a variance for 8612-14 Germantown Ave. subject to the applicant's agreement to the performance provisos agreed to in the agreement by all parties. This along with the first motion passed in February: The CHCA's board voted to support of the application for a variance for the project for a sit down and takeout restaurant with the provisos that any changes to the building, including signage, lighting and installation of a ramp, be reviewed, and that the variance is limited to any future non-conforming tenants including restaurants, was sent to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

- d. 102 E Mermaid Ln – former Blossom property update – The Goldenberg Group presented a proposed plan for the development of a large apartment building on the former Blossom site to an Executive Session of the LUPZC. After hearing previously from the neighbors the strong concerns about the plan that were echoed by the LUPZ, it was agreed that a process would be developed that would include representatives of stakeholder groups including CHCA, CH Conservancy and the near neighbors on Mermaid Ln. An initial document outlining terms of how the process would work was sent to the Goldenberg group. The document included points that were agreed to by all stakeholder groups. We are now continuing to communicate with the Goldenberg group about the process and continue to hope that there will be a collaborative process to come to an agreement on this project. Keith Kunz added that Cindy Bass indicated that she will not support a spot zoning change and that any plan presented must have the support of the community and the near neighbors. Some recent Goldenberg Group activity at the site includes police K9 training, an aerial survey of the property and an arborist to come out and create site plan.
 - e. Community member Cynthia Brey asked about the CHCA's perspective or stance on rezoning. Anne and Larry spoke to the fact that re-zoning requires the sponsorship of a city council person and that the Planning Commission has an approved zoning map of the city. Richard reminded Cynthia that without the community's input and agreement, changes in zoning do not generally happen.
4. Executive Director Updates
 - a. Membership report – Anne McNiff indicated that the CHCA has 1271 active (paid dues) members, in the past 30 days we have renewed 90 and had 14 new members join. We have 117 more members than we did in the same period in 2019 (since 2020 was not a typical year).
 5. Membership Committee Updates
 - a. Member only events – Lynn Schroeder announced that on April 21, the CHCA will offer a members-only on home design and décor by Starr Osborne of Tailored Home and that in May, the members-only event will be a walkthrough of the new Hilltop Bookstore opened by the Friends of the Chestnut Hill Library.
 - b. Membership Ambassadors – Lynn informed the Board that the plan to target specific streets for focused membership efforts will start with Ardleigh Street.
 6. Social Division Updates
 - a. St. Patrick's Community Music – Bradley Wells informed the Board that the St. Patrick's event was a success, enjoyed by a good group of attendees.

- b. Possible PPC Concert – Brad indicated that the city has lifted the ban on large outdoor events and will be accepting applications for them on April 15th, so it appears we will may be able to hold some of our long-cherished summer events.
- 7. Annual Appeal
 - a. Match opportunity – Kathi Clayton announced that we have raised \$9,000 toward the \$10,000 challenge grant with one week remaining.
- 8. New business
 - a. Richard Snowden brought up the article in the Chestnut Hill local regarding Woodmere’s desire to purchase St. Michael’s Hall to use as an expansion space for the museum. St. Michael’s Hall is the 27,500 square foot Victorian mansion owned and used by the Sisters of St. Joseph as their convent. The price of the property is \$4 million and he asked the community to support the purchase. The funding must be secured by April 24th.
- 9. Community Partner Updates
 - a. Water Tower – Keith Kunz reported on the volunteer spring cleanup of the War Memorial area which attracted 30 volunteers. The next clean-up day is 10:30 a.m. on April 24th to tie in with Earth Day. The rec center is currently open from 4 to 8:30 for the basketball and gymnastics programs (official permit holders). More graffiti has occurred and kids partying in the woods is happening more aggressively.
 - b. Chestnut Hill Business Association – Cathy Brzozowski reported that the Spring Festival will take place on Saturday May 2 in an expanded footprint to allow for social distancing. The plans for Mermaid Park are coming along to make it a nice place to be as well as a nice entrance to the neighborhood. A new spa business will be coming into the former 3000 BC space and Busy Bee is opening a bookstore. New light poles along Germantown Ave will be installed soon and designs for wayfinding signs are being considered.
- 10. Members/Community Comments
 - a. Greenspace Committee – Laura Lucas reported that the CHCA’s Greenspace Initiative funded three grants – the 1st of which provided the funding for the Mermaid Park efforts, the 2nd one provided matching funds for the Friends of Pastorius Park effort along Roanoke Street and the 3rd one is for greening efforts at the Highland Avenue train station.