

Chestnut Hill Community Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, June 23, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom

Attending CHCA Board Members: Lucie Daigle, Kathi Clayton, Lindsey Toconita, Laura Lucas, Keith Kunz, Susan Bray, Larry McEwen, Anne Standish, Hillary O'Carroll, Lindsey Toconita, Brad Wells, Alex Burns, Karl Martin, Keith Kunz, Cathy Brzozowski

Staff present: Anne McNiff, Executive Director

Community Members attending: David Caulk, Harry Cooke, Ian Toner, Judy Berkman, Kathy May, Graciela Vargas, Richard Corkery

1. President's Welcome (Approval of May minutes) - Kathi Clayton welcomed everyone and called for a motion and second to approve the May minutes. Minutes were approved.

2. Physical Division: Larry McEwen presented the following recommendations from the DRC:

***540 W. Moreland Ave. request for a variance to sub-divide the current lot into 2 lots.***

*The Development Review Committee recommends that the CHCA **oppose** the granting of this variance for the following reasons:*

*1. Despite repeated requests, the applicant has been unwilling to provide any information as to how the newly-created lot will be used, or how any new structures will be located on the lot. This makes it impossible to assess the potential impacts of subsequent new development on the existing historic structure and viewshed, adjacent properties, the neighborhood, or the Chestnut Hill community.*

*2. Despite repeated requests, the applicant has been unwilling to provide information or assurances as to how the existing historically-designated structure will be reused or maintained in good condition until it can be reused.*

*3. Despite repeated requests, the applicant has been unwilling to address the concerns of adjacent and near neighbors as to how the proposed subdivision (and subsequent development) will physically or materially affect their properties.*

*4. The applicant has not responded to questions and concerns raised about how the proposed subdivision and subsequent development might adversely affect views of the historic property, potentially reducing its value.*

*5. The applicant has been unable to provide any documentation as to how the current property configuration and ownership form creates a physical or financial hardship; or how their proposal meets the "minimum necessary alteration" prerequisite for granting a variance.*

*These deficiencies notwithstanding, if and when the applicant can provide the necessary information, the CHCA would welcome further discussions between the applicant and the neighbors as to how the current property can be preserved and enhanced.*

The attorney for the applicant, Harry Cooke, spoke on behalf of the applicant saying the variance was being sought in order to sub-divide the lot and because the building that is there creates a hardship. The board asked for clarification on several things. Judy Berkman, a near neighbor, expressed her opposition to the variance citing a bad precedent would be set and it could adversely affect her property values.

A motion was made to accept the DRC recommendation to **OPPOSE** the request for a variance. It was seconded and the motion passed unanimously

**215 E. Evergreen Ave – Variance request for erection of semi-detached single home on existing lot**  
*The Development Review Committee recommends that the CHCA Board of Directors approve the granting of a variance for the erection of a semi-detached single home on an existing lot with the following provisos suggested by the LUPZ Committee and endorsed by the Historic District Advisory Committee:*

1. *No short-term rentals less than 6 months*
  2. *No permanent parking space will be assigned to the unit.*
- The DRC thanked the homeowners for their care and diligence.*

The Board asked several questions. Kathy May, a near neighbor spoke in support of the recommendation to support the variance. A motion was made to support the recommendation. The Board voted unanimously to **Approve** the recommendation of the DRC to support this variance request.

### 3. Membership Report – Anne McNiff

We currently have over 1300 active members (paid). To date we have 96 new members. We are launching several initiatives to encourage new memberships and are continuing members only events throughout the summer.

### 4. Social Division - Brad Wells

- Pastorius Park Concert Series – As previously reported we are going to do a shortened concert this year, starting on July 14<sup>th</sup> for 4 Wednesdays. Bands have been finalized. Thanks to our sponsors Merrill Lynch, 501 @ Mattison Estates, Elfant Wissahickon and Chestnut Hill Hospital .
- Member/Community dinner at the Cricket Club – The CHCA will be hosting a Summer Solstice dinner tomorrow Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. The event is sold out with 128 attendees.

7. Annual Membership Meeting – July 22, We are looking for an appropriate and safe space to have the meeting in person. Laura suggested the Friends Meeting House. Anne will contact the office to get information on cost and availability.

### 8. Community Partner reports –

#### Chestnut Hill Hospital

Kathy Brzozowski reported that the Hospital is doing well and is currently full. Their covid-19 cases are at an all time low. They anticipated an announcement regarding a transition to possible new ownership in Mid-July.

Watertown Rec Center – Keith Kunz reported that the shed was broken into, and several things stolen. They are currently \$2,900 short of goal to replace it. Keith is also looking into the feasibility of a skateboard park and will be meeting with skateboard notables in the community. Summer camp is 90% full. The fields are currently being used

Woodmere Art Museum – Anne Standish reported that Woodmere’s Annual Artists exhibit is now open and runs until Labor Day. Jazz is happening outside. The plan to acquire St. Michael’s Hall is ongoing.

### 9. New Business

Hillary O’Carroll requested Board approval for the development of a seasonal photo contest to bring attention to the CHCA and increase our online presence. She will outline a plan, solicit prizes and meet with CHCA staff to discuss.