

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of June 16, 2015

Members Present

____ Larry McEwen, Co-Chair*
✓ John Landis, Co-Chair
✓ John Haak, LUPZC
✓ Ned Mitinger, LUPZC
✓ Patricia Cove, HDAC

____ Deb Flynn, CH Business Association
____ TT&P
✓ Mark Keintz, CH Parking Foundation
✓ John Romano, Streetscape Committee
____ Larry McEwen, VP Physical Division
✓ Will Detweiler, CHCA President

Others Attending

Jonathan and Lindsay Berardino, owners 210 E. Evergreen Avenue
Neighbors of 210 E. Evergreen Avenue
Darin Gatti, Chief Engineer Streets Department
Michael Carroll, Deputy Commissioner of Transportation
Richard Montanez, Chief Traffic Engineer
Steve Lorenz, Roadway Engineer Streets
Sanitation Streets
Gary Fescine, owner 8010 Winston Road
John McDonald, owner, 8109 St. Martins Lane
*Larry McEwen, architect 8109 St. Martins Lane
Andy Barrios, architect 440 Rex Avenue
Melissa Nash, recorder

John Landis, co-chair, opened the meeting at 7:36 pm. He briefly explained the process.

210 E. Evergreen Avenue Parking Space and Curb Cut

•Reports: Jonathan Berardino summarized the request for a variance to allow parking in the front yard. A curb cut would be needed. It was noted that at the LUPZC there was good discussion presenting both support and opposition. One idea was to explore consolidating a driveway with the neighbors to allow access to the back yard. The committee did not support the application for the variance as submitted. P Cove stated that the HDAC also opposed the application for a variance as it looks for open space and green space. In general, it is not in support of front yard parking. The HDAC did suggest two rows of Belgian blocks or other pavers for parking. The applicants do not like that idea, nor do they want to park in the backyard.

•Discussion: J Berardino stated that parking along side of the house would be awkward. He asked how many of similar projects have been denied. There have been a couple in recent years that involve parking in front of the house. He also asked about what would constitute a true hardship. The most obvious is if a person in the house were handicapped. It would also be a hardship if there were truly no street parking. What would make this a successful project? There was varied discussion in response. J Berardino indicated that they will probably go forward to the ZBA and that the realtor told them that they could have a driveway. Elliot Rood, a neighbor, stated that the quality of life for everyone on the street was an important consideration. P Cove asked about changes to the proposal from the last meeting. The curb cut and parking space width has been reduced from 13' to 10' and a separate walkway is shown.

- Committee Action: Mark Keintz moved that the committee report to the CHCA Board that it does not support the request for a variance to allow a parking space and curb cut at 201 E. Evergreen Avenue. The motion was approved with 4 votes in support and none against.

Philadelphia Streets Department

- Introduction: Representatives from the Streets Department introduced themselves and indicated they were here to discuss street lighting, paving, speed cushions, East Bells Mill Road, trash collection and traffic. Mike Carroll is the Deputy Commissioner for Transportation. Richard Montanez is Chief Traffic Engineer and works with signals, signs, lighting, pavement marking, traffic calming including speed cushions. Darin Gatti is the Chief Engineer and oversees the City's plans, survey districts, design, federal funded programs construction units, resurfacing and bridges. Steve Lorenz is the Assistant Roadway engineer.

- Presentation: D Gatti stated that Streets has a program that rates the city's streets' conditions. This has been applied to approximately 50% of the city streets. The city has 2500 miles of streets; of these about 1900 miles are purely city streets. The city pays for repaving. There are three levels of streets: primary, many are PennDot streets; secondary, some both city and PennDot; and tertiary, mostly city. J Landis asked about the role of the community in setting priorities. D Gatti noted that when both PennDot and the city are involved there are problems with coordination. J Landis asked about the Winston Road/Mermaid Lane intersection. S Lorenz stated that this area does need work. The road surface was installed in the 1970s or 1980s and has not been maintained. He does not know where it stands in the priorities list. There would be three options: keep the design as is, stamped asphalt or a different style of cobblestones. M Carroll added that the state has a narrow list of materials that can be used. He noted that it is helpful to go through the councilperson's office for projects. R Montanez stated that properties touching Streets project are often distressed by the projects, especially something like speed cushions. The city should come to the community with project proposals. A neighbor asked about the status of the rating system. The system is under development; it will be made public when it is completed. There are also similar rating programs for speed calming. M Carroll stated that there is a backlog of project requests including speed calming. He noted that Streets should have come to the community before this speed-calming project. The Streets website describes the full range of calming measures. J Landis stated that there was a need for transparency and notice before projects are undertaken. Under the new system to review projects, a block can request a project such as speed cushion by petition with at least 75% of the residents in agreement. John Romano asked how the need for the speed cushions was established. M Lorenz stated the cushion rollout was not well handled. In response to an audience member's question, he stated that a master plan is not needed for projects like speed cushions. An audience member stated that there have been a number of failures by the Streets Department including failed crosswalk striping, the poor condition of Gravers Lane and the speed cushions. There is no sense to the projects and there was no feedback loop with the community. J Landis asked that there be an assurance of consultation with the community on Streets projects. Streets should serve all people not just the ones in the room; S Lorenz noted that West Gravers has had problems with water run off. The repaving will not solve all the problems but will help. East Gravers has not yet been repaved as the Water Department has a project scheduled. The street will be repaved after the project is completed. It was asked if Streets looks at the weight of traffic in paving streets, i.e., the types of vehicles – buses and trucks. An audience member asked the difference between repaving and reconstruction. A brief explanation was made.

- Bells Mill Road: N Mitinger asked about Bells Mill Road, which was advertised as part of the agenda. D Gatti stated that the project is not moving forward as presented. The project is being

cancelled, and then the money can be reused. This will probably be a simple resurfacing. An audience member noted that the road is a deathtrap. An audience member asked when the resurfacing will be completed on the streets underway. It should be done in the next week. P Cove said that the opinion of the group was that there should be modification, which would include removing the Jersey barriers, rather than cancellation. The project cannot be modified. Mark Keintz noted that there was to be another meeting about adapting the Bells Mill Road plan. The committee and neighbors would walk Bells Mill and talk about the road. This has not happened. D Gatti noted that problems with the survey were not problematic if the road is resurfaced rather than reconstructed. It was suggested that there had been a separate neighbor meeting. D Gatti stated re-allocation of funds could be made; there could be the same dollars or less but there needs to be some agreement about the issues. The project was \$4 million±; Streets would hope not to return any money. An audience member noted that drivers go very fast on W Evergreen and also go the wrong way. It was added that signage for the one-way street was inadequate. The process for Bells Mill would include looking at the issues: re-pave, Jersey barriers, and others. D Gatti stated that the money could be moved, there can be resurfacing and there could be some leeway. He noted there was a resistance to curbs. Other options can be explored, including what to do about the barriers. The new project would also need government approval.

- Ardleigh: This problem involves drop-off and pick-up at Jenks School. Neighbors reported speeding and passing on the street. Calming could help, as could enforcement, which is not in Street's purview. The street will be re-marked during the summer. There is a petition to change the street to one-way.

- Evergreen: An E Evergreen neighbor asked if speed cushions would be installed on E Evergreen. Another neighbor noted that the street was marked for the cushions. Streets announced that the speed cushions would not be installed on E Evergreen at this time. It was mentioned that a contact was needed for community relations. In answer to a question, Streets stated that curbs and sidewalks are the property owner's responsibility. If there are ponding situations on streets, the street needs to be evaluated. An E Evergreen neighbor noted that when the street was last paved there was a problem and special paving is needed. Would this be done when the street is re-paved?

- Trash Trucks: Gary Fescine stated the problem with idling trash trucks across from his house on Winston Road. The rep from Sanitation stated that trucks are not supposed to idle. He stated that the workers on this route should get on the trucks at the yard.

- General Comments: Will Detweiler, president of the CHCA, thanked Streets for coming to the meeting and encouraged them to maintain good communications with the community. P Cove stated that she is concerned about character – Belgian block and cobblestones need to be maintained. The crosswalk strips did not work. Lighting needs consistent standards. Chestnut Hill has poor and unsightly lighting. It was suggested that a grant be obtained through the Commerce Department for Streetscape for commercial corridors. It is necessary to talk to the councilperson. The city is moving to LEDs; there should be a sample lamp in Chestnut Hill.

8109 St. Martins Lane Garage

- Presentation: Larry McEwen, architect for the project, stated they have received the refusal. The project was refused due to height and being an accessory structure in the setback. The property is zoned RSD1, which allows 35% coverage. He noted that the LUPZC suggested the building could be taller than presented. The refusal does not address the second floor. The coverage is much less than 35%. The hardship is the narrow deep site. While it would be possible to build closer to the

main building, the site would be too broken up. There is a 65' right-of-way for SEPTA. The present garages cover 1085 sq ft. The proposed building covers 1848 sq ft. The house has 6500 sq ft. They have signatures of support from the closest 5 neighbors on the sides and across the street. Letters were sent to the full list supplied by Planning. There are plenty of car parking spaces on site in addition to the garage bays. J Haak noted that LUPZC supported the project. L McEwen stated there are schist piers and that more stone could be incorporated. Walls also have plaster like the rear of the house. Dormers will be copper clad. There is a balcony above the garage to animate the façade. There will be no Dryvit. P Cove reported that HDAC likes the stone reference to the house. The design is OK, although the size is a concern. There is no problem with height or use.

- Committee Action: It was moved that the committee recommend support of the application for the variance at 8109 St. Martins Lane. The motion was seconded. It was approved with 2 votes for, one abstention and none against. (Fewer votes as J Haak had to leave the meeting.)

440 Rex Avenue Addition

- Presentation: Andy Barrios of Albert Taus Architect, presented the project. The addition to the house will function as a kitchen entry/mudroom. It is 12'-0"x13'-8". A small portion of the space is in the setback. There will be a downspout to a storm drain.

- Committee Action: The project should be seen by the HDAC and LUPZC. The next presentations should include clearer plans, both floor plan and site plan, photographs for context, neighbor notifications and historic facts. LUPZC and HDAC are on July 2; DRC is on July 21, followed by the Board on July 23. The project has a ZBA appointment on August 4.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 pm.