

Chestnut Hill Community Association Board of Directors Meeting

Chestnut Hill Library
Thursday, August 27, 2015

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Liz Bales (VP Social Division), Jason Bissonette, Bob Boyer, Julie Byrne, George Coates, Dan Compton, Will Detweiler (President), Mark Keintz, Andy Kite, Joyce Lenhardt, Laura Lucas (VP Operations), Karl Martin, Larry McEwen (VP Physical Division), Jack McMeekin, Remy Pizzichini, Dan Pulka, Tony Reilly (Treasurer), Michelle Sage, Richard Snowden (CH Parking Foundation), and Jean Wedgwood (Secretary)

Board Members Absent: Patricia Cove, Sam Earle, Lisa Howe, Mary Lynskey (Jenks Academy), Jenny McHugh (Springside CH Academy), Drew Meschter, Arianna Neromiliotis, Marilyn Paucker, Christopher Plant, Bob Rossman, and Brien Tilley (Immediate Past President)

Attendance: 20 present and 11 absent = 31

Others Present: Kevin Dicciani (CH Local), John Falco (Attorney), Celeste Hardester (Community Manager), Larry Hochberger (Associate Publisher), and Caryl Johnston (Recorder)

President Will Detweiler called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM, and the roll call was conducted by Caryl Johnston. Will said he would like to hold the Treasurer's Report until later and to reverse the order of the next two items on the agenda. This was approved.

Residential Zoning Variance Request

Discussion began on the zoning variance request for 8514 Ardleigh Street. Larry McEwen briefly reviewed the project and said it was very well designed with minimal impact. He offered a motion to support the variance with no conditions. **A motion to recommend approval of the variance passed unanimously.**

ZBA Ruling on 210 E. Evergreen Avenue

An entirely different situation exists with 210 E. Evergreen Avenue. The homeowner wishes to cut the curb and put a parking space in the front yard. Larry McEwen spoke at some length of the worrisome precedent-setting nature of this request. If everyone did this, the historic character of Chestnut Hill would be deeply compromised and perhaps damaged beyond repair. A letter was sent to the Zoning Board with all of the signatures opposing, but apparently this was insufficient and the ZBA voted on August 3rd to approve the variance for a parking space.

Larry outlined the steps (and the expense) of filing an appeal; obtaining legal services for this matter might cost \$15K to \$20K. Unfortunately the owners have remained adamant in their desire for a parking space. There was considerable discussion and most of the Board members agreed with Richard Snowden when he said that this kind of situation can change the Historic District irrevocably and represents tremendous erosion of our ability to deal with the ZBA. In addition, we should make it clear to homeowners that parking spaces are not simply up for grabs and that it may be costly (e.g. \$50K to \$75K in legal fees). Also, the City will get the message that when they try to do something like this, they will be

beset with lawsuits. Larry McEwen said there is clearly more to be done in that there is a "disconnect" between our process and that of the ZBA. It may be that Board members will need to attend the ZBA hearings in person in order to make a pitch.

Liz Bales asked where the funds would come from, should we decide to appeal the ZBA's decision. Richard Snowden said this is a case in which we could go to the Community Fund. He expressed confidence that the money would be found.

Larry McEwen reviewed the factors of safety and aesthetics; Joyce Lenhardt said we have been opposing this request from the beginning. **A motion to approve the filing of an appeal to the Zoning Board, with the addition that the details of legal representation would be worked out by the Executive Committee, passed unanimously.**

Resolution of Condolence

Richard Snowden presented a motion for a resolution of condolence for the wife and children of Hugh McB. Johnston, recently deceased. The following motion passed unanimously:

"Whereas the directors of the Chestnut Hill Community Association Board are saddened by the recent death of Hugh McB. (Barney) Johnston; whereas Mr. Johnston was a long-time resident of Chestnut Hill and cared deeply for this community; whereas Mr. Johnston served ably and with distinction for many years as a trustee of the Chestnut Hill Community Fund; be it resolved that the Chestnut Hill Community Association send a copy of this resolution of condolence to Barney's wife, Louise, and their children."

Community Manager Search Committee Report

Jack McMeekin spoke briefly about the Search Committee's efforts to hire a replacement for Celeste Hardester, and reported that the Committee was meeting this Saturday morning with one applicant.

Approval of CHCA Bylaws to Implement 501(c)(3) Status

Will Detweiler stated that he hopes to bring this to a conclusion quickly and believes it's time for the Board to vote on the matter. Approval of the bylaws would then lead to the obligatory 30-day period prior to the vote by the general membership. Attorney John Falco spoke about the number of meetings, revisions, iterations, etc. that have been involved in keeping the bylaws of the two corporations as consistent as possible with the existing structures. Julie Byrne said that she had not seen the version of tracked changes to the bylaws that had been promised; Joyce Lenhardt also said that she never received the version with tracked changes. Mark Keintz noted that Board approval of the bylaws would require 16 votes in favor (a majority out of the 31-member Board).

Financial Reports for the CHCA and Local

Copies of financial reports for the CHCA and Local as of 7/31/15 were distributed along with a statement from Treasurer Tony Reilly expressing his concerns about the CHCA's financial situation and the need to implement 501(c)(3) status. Tony felt that this discussion would require going into executive session. This was voted upon, and subsequently Caryl Johnston, Kevin Dicciani, and another member of the audience left the room. After 15 minutes these individuals were called back into the room for a few more minutes of discussion. It was evident that a vote was not to be held tonight. George Coates offered a motion to conduct a special meeting of the Board on September 8th or September 14th (depending on the availability poll results). The Board vote would be held at this special meeting. An email list was circulated so that Board members could sign up to receive a copy of the bylaws with tracked changes.

New Business. Liz Bales said there was a need for readers at the Harry Potter Festival, and requested that anyone who's interested in volunteering should email her.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted on 9/11/15 by:

Jean Wedgwood
CHCA Secretary

Initial draft of minutes prepared by Caryl Johnston.

Approved by the Board of Directors without amendment on 9/14/15.