

MINUTES
THE ASPEN HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
14 January 2015

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Melissa Ryan at 7:05 P.M. in the Aspen Hill Library.

CALL OF THE ROLL

Present at the meeting were board members: Jamison Adcock, Steven Becker, Marna Cary, Pat Clarke, Robert Clarke, Joan Cohen, Steven Cohen, Sheila Convery, Gail Cooper, Sharon Dean, Susan Eisendrath, Rusty Embrey, Judy Fink, Sol Levy, Suzy Levy, JoAnna Nasios, Sam Nasios, Linda NeCastro-Pastel, Carol Petzold, Walter Petzold, Monica Reyes-Dame, Melissa Ryan, Michael Salay, Bill Shelton, Judy Tankersley and Kris Vaitkus

Absent from the meeting were board members: Don Becker, Patricia King, Jiri Malek, Alexandra Minckler, Selene Robinson, Roselia Rodriguez, and Carla Steinborn.

The board accepted the resignations of board members Marguerite Eimer and Dick Goodwin.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 2014 meeting taken by Sheila Convery were approved as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Steven Cohen presented the financial report for December summarized as follows:

Balance as of 1 December 2014: \$4,894.27
Income: \$24.00 from membership dues
Expenditures for December: \$0.00
Petty Cash: \$78.00
Balance as of 31 December 2014: \$4,996.27

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership chair Sheila Convery reported the current membership standing at 125 persons.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Code Enforcement - Sharon Dean Chair - no report

Environment - Gail Cooper Chair - Susan Eisendrath reporting.

Aspen Hill Civic Association Environmental Committee Meeting, 1/14/15. Present: Gail Cooper, Susan Eisendrath, Linda NeCatro-Pastel, Walter Petzold. We met from 10:00am-11:30am and discussed the following:

As we understand it, the purpose of our committee is to:

- 1) identify environmental issues that effect and impact Aspen Hill,
- 2) educate the residents of Aspen Hill about these issues;
- 3) advocate on behalf of Aspen Hill members to improve the environment of the neighborhood.

Issue areas that we discussed related to water, air quality, energy, transportation, and protection of natural resources.

We identified the following areas that we propose to work on in 2015:1) Educate residents about and encourage them to take advantage of the Department of Environment (DEP) Rainscapes Program that provides rebates for stormwater management such as installation of rain gardens and rain barrels. We propose having a speaker on the program at one of our general membership meetings. Walter will work on this. 2) Educate residents about the DEP Green Streets Program. Obtain updates from DEP and either provide a short update presentation at a general membership meeting and/or publish articles on the progress. Susan will work on this. 3) Educate and encourage residents to take advantage of PEPCO's energy efficiency incentive programs such as the Quick Home Energy Check Up which provides tailored advice on how to save energy and also gives out free energy saving devices such as LED bulbs. We propose having a speaker from PEPCO present at a general membership meeting and/or publish articles on this program. Susan will work on this. 4) Educate and provide information about how to

protect gardens and landscaping from deer by employing such practices as planting deer resistant native plants and fencing. We propose having a speaker from the Montgomery County Master Gardeners present at a general membership meeting or separate event, and/or publish articles. Linda will work on this. 5) Provide modest support for the Annual Stream Clean Up event (Sat. April 11, 2015). In previous years AHCA provided around \$50 for the purchase of granola bars and apples and also helped the purchase of permanent signs for the event. Susan will work on this. 6) If we have any special community events and it is appropriate, we would like to have information tables on environmental programs that could benefit the residents such as DEP's recycling program, Rainscapes, energy efficiency, solar power, etc. Full Committee will work on this. 7) Identify County issues/legislation that is/could impact Aspen Hill, research and provide information on the pros and cons of the issue and recommend support or opposition. Full Committee will work on this. 8) Identify State issues/legislation that is/could impact Aspen Hill, research and provide information on the pros and cons of the issue and recommend support or opposition. Walt will work on this.

(Note: We need guidance on the protocol for what information the Board and Membership needs to make a decision on an issue and what the process is for decision making.)

Issues to consider educating the membership about and take action on:

- Pesticide Bill: Susan is researching.
- Exelon and PEPCO Merger: Susan is researching.
- International Green Construction Code: Susan is researching.
- Stream Health Water Testing: Gail is researching.
- Not mentioned in the meeting, but an additional issue is the upcoming Tree Planting Program that DEP is launching sometime in 2015.

Fire and EMS - Judy Tankersley, chair, reported that the proposal to remove funds from the county Capital Budget supporting the refurbishment of the Glenmont Fire and EMS station did not pass.

Community Outreach - Monica Reyes-Dame, chair, no report

Library - Kris Vaitkus spoke in favor of listing all library programs and projects in the association newsletter. Carol Petzold mentioned that the Friends of the Library would be hosting a Chinese New Year celebration on Saturday 7 March and that they would also be sponsoring movies at the library on Sunday afternoons during February and March.

Membership - Sheila Convery chair. Jamison Adcock reported that the committee met last week and is working on compiling a comprehensive membership listing to identify former members who have not yet renewed so that they can be approached.

Newsletter - no report

Police and Crime - no report

Recycling and Trash - no report

Schools - Jamison Adcock reported regarding the Lucy Barnsley Elementary School proposed expansion. It currently has 10 trailers on site because the school has a population twice its capacity. Money has been budgeted for the expansion design work but nothing has been designated for the actual construction. The PTA meeting to discuss this was snowed out and will be rescheduled.

Senior Services - Judy Fink, chair, reported that the civic association will be sponsoring a homeowners property tax credit workshop, free and open to the community, on Tuesday afternoon 17 February 2015 from 1:30 to 3:30 at the Aspen Hill Library. The presenter will be Richard Gottfried, CPA, M.A. in Taxation. The purpose is to inform those with a household income of less than \$64,000 a year about the new Montgomery County tax laws impacting homeowners and senior citizens. For more information contact Judy at 301-871-2712 or jfink1231@hotmail.com The cost to association for room rental was \$40.00.

Traffic and Streets - no report

Utilities - Joan Cohen, chair, spoke with WSSC about repairing the large bump in Chadwick Lane and they reported that it had been fixed. Carol Petzold said that it did not seem to be the case. Joan Cohen said she would investigate the matter further. Joan went on to say that the large water main repairs at Veirs Mill Village are scheduled to be completed by the end of this month and the access road reopened at that time.

Website - Carla Steinborn chair. It was reported that Carla has made several changes and that it continues to be a work in progress.

OLD BUSINESS

1. President Ryan presented the results of the recent membership survey regarding the school board proposal to relocate the Ewing Center Alternative Education Programs to the former English Manor site and the county planning board proposal to rezone the former Vitro/BAE site to NR. A summation of the important results follows:

Do you support, oppose or have no opinion on the AEP's move to the former English Manor Elementary?

Oppose - 81%

Support - 3%

Do you support, oppose or have no opinion on the AHCA Board of Director's request for the former English Manor Elementary to be reopened to alleviate the tremendous overcrowding at adjacent elementary schools?

Oppose - 12%

Support - 66%

Do you support, oppose or have no opinion regarding the rezoning of the former Vitro/BAE site as NR [up to 5 stories and up to 218,000 square feet to be used by a single or multiple retailers]

Oppose - 75%

Support - 15%

Do you support, oppose or have no opinion for the rezoning as CRT instead of as NR? [CRT is the same as NR except that it calls for further approvals to build a single large building for a single retailer]

Oppose - 51%

Support - 29%

Would you support, oppose or have no opinion regarding a CRN designation. [It would allow retail use but not by a single store over 50,000 square feet unless it is a grocery store]

Oppose - 18%

Support - 65%

2. Jamison Adcock updated the board with the following information regarding the proposed move of the Ewing Center AEP to former English Manor Elementary site:

There has been much media coverage of the proposal.

The MCPS plans to put 370 school buses on the 15 acre site where the Ewing Center is currently located [the former Mark Twain School on Avery Road] after the destruction of the perfectly useful school facility worth tens of millions located there. He has toured the facility and said it fully functional for middle and high school students.

This move is necessitated because the County Council has sold the former school bus depot to developers for \$100 million and required the school board to relocate its bus depot. The school board elected to place the depot at the Avery Road location.

Jamison said he feels that there is a strong under-current among the powers that be to make this happen but he still has scheduled face-to-face meetings with 7 of the 9 County Council members in an attempt to dissuade them. He requested support from board members in this endeavor and Carol Petzold indicated she would be willing to attend the meetings with him. He also requested that board members lobby the County Council members by contacting them with their concerns at:

county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov

or at

The Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 5th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

There is to be an open community meeting about this matter on 15 January at 7:00 PM at the Berman Academy [former Peary High School]. Council member Katz will

attend as well as staff members from some of the other council members.

Jamison also mentioned that he contacted the mayor of Rockville, Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton, who was unaware of the school bus depot relocation within the city limits.

Judy Tankersley complimented Jamison on his testimony at the CIP hearing on Tuesday 13 January. She also suggested contacting the state highway department since route 28 [Norbeck Road] was a state road and would be heavily used by school buses at the proposed relocation.

3. Sol Levy moved the following:

The Aspen Hill Civic Association Board of Directors send letters to the Montgomery County Council, the Montgomery County School Board and the Maryland State Board of Education representing the strong opposition of the Board of Directors and of the general membership of the association to the relocation of the Ewing Center to the former English Manor Elementary site.

The motion was unanimously adopted.

4. President Ryan announced that the Aspen Hill Homeowners Group was sponsoring a meeting on Thursday 22 January at 7:30 PM at the Aspen Hill Library regarding the proposed NR rezoning of the former Vitro/BAE site. She also said that the County Council will be holding an open forum on this matter on Tuesday 3 February. A discussion followed resulting in the following motion by Sam Nasios:

That a letter be sent to the members of the Montgomery County Council regarding the former Vitro/BAE site which states that: The Board of Directors and the membership of the Aspen Hill Civic Association supports waiting for the complete Aspen Hill Master Plan Review scheduled to begin the summer of 2015, but if that is not possible, that the community would then only support a CRN rezoning designation for that site.

The motion passed, 25 in favor, with one abstention.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:23 PM, because of the late hour, the motion to adjourn was made and passed.
The February meeting is scheduled for Wednesday the 11th at 7:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert Clarke
Recording Secretary