

Better Waverly Community Organization
Board Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015

Joe Stewart chaired the meeting. All present introduced themselves.

Baltimore City Police Department, Northern District

Officer O'Donnell announced that a Public Safety Meeting will take place at the Student Center at Morgan State University on March 30, 2015 from 6:00 to 9:00pm. Officer O'Donnell also shared brochures about the Law Enforcement Explorers Program, which gives young people the opportunity to explore careers in law enforcement. Officer O'Donnell also reported that the Northern District Police Department no longer has posts. Instead they have four sectors and assign officers to each sector to patrol during their ten hour shift. Phil asked if officers would now work the same amount of hours but less days. Officer O'Donnell confirmed this is the case. He also said more officers are on the street and he is hoping that this will result in a reduction in crime. Officer O'Donnell also expressed his hope that we can have some community walks this summer so we can get to know each other better and work to improve our community sanitation and safety.

Committee Reports

Housing, Safety, and Code Enforcement Committee

Josh Greenberg shared that Peter Duvall of GHCC is trying to collect addresses of trouble properties in the neighborhood. Josh is also working on this list. Joe suggested that Josh send a message to all the board members letting them know what he is trying to do, why, and a deadline for when he would like the information.

Josh also shared that he and Phil met with a group of investors, BRAND, who want to target neighborhoods like ours to fix up whole blocks or whole sections and sell them. They had reached out to Joe and Joe directed them to contact our co-chairs and Phil, as chair of the Land Use committee. They are working as a group to target neighborhoods, but are working as individuals to actually purchase the properties. The 8-9 investors are looking at both Waverly and Better Waverly and are looking to rehab around 30 properties. They are looking to make 20-30k on each property. They have been meeting with various community partners. They are currently looking into gap funding. Eleanor expressed some concern about how some neighbors might feel about increased rental or home value prices. Board members expressed a general consensus that we do not want vacant properties or run down properties in the neighborhood, but would like to ensure community support of any changes. These developers are not interested in doing rental properties. Phil shared his sense that these developers are not the type to come in and do development without any community input. Joe suggested that we invite the developers to a board meeting. He also expressed his concern about the use of the term "flip" given its negative connotations and shared that he believes we should be careful with our use of the word in our communications.

Activities and Events Committee

Abby did not have any updates because the committee has not yet had a meeting

Greening Committee

The Baltimore Orchard Project would like to meet Monday, March 23 at 6:30.

Finance Committee

Debra shared that she does not have a finance report at this time, but she will send a report when it is available.

Youth Committee

Debra shared a list of activities that the youth from 901 Arts have been involved in since the beginning of the year. Debra also shared that 901 Arts would like to enter into an agreement with GHCC in order to do payroll for Sarah as a full time employee. There were be a Memorandum of Agreement. We would pay in full for the fiscal year plus a prorated fee for the remainder of the year. Eleanor shared that they are not ready to ask for approval but wanted to run the idea by the board. Joe suggested that board members can direct questions to the Debra and that we put this on the agenda for the April Board Meeting. Debra shared that she and Eleanor would continue to be Sarah's supervisors. Debra clarified that GHCC would not hold us responsible for the funding if it did not continue; rather the program would end if the funding ended. Debra also shared that 901 Arts was told to reapply for the Adopt a Lot of the Sculpture Garden. The group/person who had adopted it has decided she no longer wants to adopt the space.

Land Use and Architectural Review Committee

Phil shared the following from the committee's meeting on February 25. 615 Homestead received approval to proceed with their plans. Phil contacted the architect and learned that they just received permits. The fence at the Waverly Family Center has still not been changed; however, the board of Zoning Appeals is requiring that they cannot do any further work until the issue is resolved. Mary Pat Clarke found a solution for Red Clover that will allow them to combine the property, but not change zoning to allow for a rooming house. The city will consider each side of the property its own unit. Phil shared that he presented some draft plans for the rehab of Waverly Town Hall, a project of Waverly Main Street. Eleanor asked if these plans are theoretical or in progress. Phil reported that the owner is an obstacle, but the idea is that HCPI would help purchase the property and transfer it to a developer who would rehabilitate the property. Joe reported that there is "guarded optimism" about the project moving forward. Phil also reported that he shared streetscaping plans at the committee meeting so that we can advocate for the best streetscaping possible and get ahead of their process so that we can have input in the process. Joe suggested that Phil bring the plans to the general meeting and share them with the community. Phil shared some background about a community member, Kim Francis, who had approached the city about purchasing the lots at the Sculpture Garden for a farm. Cathleen presented an alternative proposal for how we might use the lots. It seems that Kim might no longer be interested in the space. Joe suggested that we add this to the agenda for the April meeting. Phil proposed that if Kim gets back to him and would like to present that we give her the opportunity to do so. If she is no longer interested, Phil proposed that the Land Use, Greening, and Youth Committees meet to discuss a long term plan for the sustainability of the lot.

Safety Committee

Joe shared that Northern has a new commander, Robert Smith. The second in commander is Capt. Richard Gibson. Joe shared that there are now four sectors in the Northern District. Our sector is sector 1, south of 33rd. Waverly is part of sector 4. Officers will be assigned to sectors, rather than posts. Joe also shared some information about the 4 defendants in the recent car jackings and mugging crimes.

Fundraising Committee

Sonja shared that she has been in contact with M&T Bank Stadium to get a portion. School choir competition that may move to Better Waverly. She will know more by the general meeting.

General Meeting Planning

Sonja shared that her vision is that each committee chair will present what each committee is doing. She also shared that the chairs should be prepared to answer questions from the community. Debra will collect dues from the community. Joe asked if Sonja plans to ask the community to adopt the annual plan. She affirmed that she will. Phil volunteered to print the annual plan. Sonja shared that she would like to see the board members be more involved in the meeting so that the community knows that more people than just the co-chairs are involved in the decision making process. Joe suggested that the guests present after we present our annual plan. Representatives from BCPD, state's attorney, Waverly Main Street, Waverly Family Center, GEDCO, delegates, Mary Pat have been invited to attend. Sonja will do the food and Kevin Harris will volunteer.

Cathleen volunteered to be the Greening Committee Chair.

Announcements

Cathleen announced GHCC's Neighborhood Institute on April 18 at the Baltimore Design School from 9-3:30. Workshops in different tracks. \$15, breakfast and lunch provided.

Joe announced Baltimore History-Radical Women of Waverly on the third Thursday at 7pm at the Village Learning Place. It will be the Grace Darrin Lecture.

Sonja announced a follow up meeting to the Caribbean Festival. She will share the date as soon as she knows it.

Abby announced that she is currently recruiting for the community impact summer intern program.

Phil made a motion to adjourn. Members seconded.