

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERION CIVIC ASSOCIATION
SEPTEMBER 28, 2010

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merion Civic Association was held on Tuesday, September 28, 2010, beginning at 7:45 p.m. at the Merion Tribute House with President Scott Feuer presiding.

Directors present were Bagley, Blakeney, Eisenberg, Feuer, Flaks, Gordon, Hill, Lam, Lavoritano, Marmon, Murphy, Piltch, Potok and Seiden.

Directors absent and excused were Ettelson, Kalner, Mudrick, Quinn, Stevenson, Tompkins and Wylonis.

Other attendees included Dolores Browne, Les Greenberg, Vivian Lapes, Karla Moras, and guest speaker Brian Martinelli.

The Meeting was called to order by President Feuer at 7:45 p.m. and the June minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer Bob Marmon presented reports from June, July and August.

There was a motion to approve the Treasurer's report; it was seconded, there was no discussion and none opposed for unanimous approval.

President's Report – President Feuer welcomed back all present from the summer break as the new year begins for the Merion Civic Association. President Feuer reported that the fall 2010 Newsletter has gone to press and will be mailed out to Merion residents within the next two weeks. He thanked all who contributed articles and praised Marjorie Mudrick for soliciting and editing articles. Michael Seiden and Helen Guy helped with proofreading. The 12-page edition included the President's Message, articles on the new Lower Merion High School, the proposed City Avenue Zoning Ordinance, historical notes about Merion, the Commissioner's Report, Public Access Television, the ordinance for sexual orientation, the Township Comprehensive Plan.

President Feuer announced the resignation of Peter Gardner, Director and chair of the Zoning Committee, effective upon receipt of his letter in September.

President Feuer introduced the guest speaker for the evening, Brian Martinelli from SmartLink for T-Mobile will speak about the application to locate new cell phone antennas on the roof of 199 City Avenue.

Mr. Martinelli explained the need for more antennas to upgrade the capacity for an increasing number of cell phones. The application for (90) 4 foot antennas would be configured to receive 911 calls and the capacity would be shared with other carriers. The application is also for a height variance, as the Township code stipulates a building to be used for antennas needs to be 35 feet high, while the building at 199 City Avenue is only 34 feet high.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Art and Education — No report.

Botanical — Judith Flak reminded the Directors that the fall clean-up in the park is scheduled for October 3, 9:30-12:00 noon. The rain date is October 10.

Commissioner — Commissioner Brian Gordon began his report with a note about the property at 234 Orchard Way. The existing house is a “tear-down” and two new houses will replace it -- one will be occupied by the owner, the other kept as an investment property. Commissioner Gordon sees this new construction as a positive development in Merion, a sign of the community’s continued desirability. Commissioner Gordon added that it is very encouraging that Merion is still being maintained, is still thriving, houses are being restored. His comments reflect a concern among property owners that the major changes going on in the Latch’s Lane neighborhood will eventually cause a devaluation of properties.

Commissioner Gordon turned to the subject of the City Avenue redevelopment project, which he noted could be a positive direction for the area, but the outcome is not guaranteed to be optimal. Merion residents are concerned about the encroachment of further development in its back yard, and the additional traffic to an already congested area. Commissioner Gordon reported that the Zoning Ordinance, as a result of community and civic association push-back, is being revised and encouraged all to attend meetings and create a presence. Marty Piltch commented that Merion is a “bedroom” community and we do not want it to become an overly commercial zone.

Commissioner Gordon reported that there was good turnout for the meeting he organized at the Tribute House during the summer to address residents’ concerns about the high number of burglaries in the neighborhood and distributed a summary of suggestions made by the Lower Merion police officers about crime patterns and prevention.

Lastly, Commissioner Gordon reported that there is no budget forecast yet for the Township, but that the factors in determining the budget remain the same. What do residents want: cuts in services, higher taxes, deterioration of the community?

Community Action – Bob Marmon reported that the Merion Community Coalition (MCC) efforts to stop St. Joe’s from achieving its usage plans for the Maguire fields have been halted. It is not clear what actions or steps will be taken by Merion neighbors or the Zoning Board going forward regarding development and use of the Maguire playing fields, which includes sound systems, the 25 foot baseball fence on Latch’s Lane, 400 bleachers and astro turf.

Federation of Civic Associations — Marty Piltch attended the meeting in September and reported that most of the meeting was spent discussing a zoning issue. There was also discussion of one of the by-laws which requires that each Federation representative be instructed by his/her civic association on how to vote on issues that come up for vote, versus the representative voting on a very personal basis according to his/her conscience.

Finance – Marty Piltch reported that the Finance Committee met on September 27 to outline the budget for the coming year. Marty’s detailed report included all items that were included in the budget, how much was budgeted for the current year, how much was actually spent and what is projected for next year. Overall, the Finance Committee was satisfied that the budget is conservative, with no plans to overspend on any item -- to the contrary, the plan is to cut back wherever possible to maintain a solid fiscal environment. Careful use of funds has assured that the Civic Association continues to

function through difficult economic times and that the future of the Association depends on careful planning and use of resources.

History — Lauren Wylonis was excused. Michael Seiden reported that Lauren is interested in designated historical zones in Merion. Michael also reminded the group that it needs to begin thinking about how to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Merion Civic Association. One idea regarding the marking of the centennial is to publish a year book, modeled after the original yearbooks of the early 1900's. The yearbooks of old were a summary of the Civic Association activities in Merion for the year just past and the planned projects for the coming year, all at the service of establishing the quality of life in Merion for the residents long ago, and for future generations. The same purpose would produce a new yearbook.

Newsletter — Marjorie Mudrick was absent and excused.

Nominating – No report.

Post Office — Michael Seiden periodically asks Anita Hill at the post office about the rumors circulating that the post office will be closing. She has denied that this is true. Neighbors have heard that the trucks and delivery mail will be directed to the Bala Cynwyd and that the post office window and boxes will remain in operation.

School Board – No report.

Social -- President Feuer reminded the Directors of the Annual Meeting on October 24, 4-7 p.m. The speaker will be Dr. Christopher McGinley, Superintendent of Lower Merion School District. A postcard is being printed and will be mailed out to the Merion community.

Station and Grounds — President Feuer announced that Fall Clean-up at the train station is scheduled for Sunday, October 17, 9:00-12:00 noon. Please bring your gloves, pruners, brooms.

Streets, Lights and Traffic — No report.

Website -- Michael Seiden would like to add School Board issues to the website and asked the Directors to email him information, announcements, events of interest to the community, which he will post to the website.

Zoning — President Feuer announced that Peter Gardner, chair of the Zoning Committee has resigned from the Civic Association. A new chair needs to be recruited. There was no report.

Barnes – President Feuer announced the Alumni Association weekend at Barnes, called “Renew Your Connection” on October 2, 3:00-7:00 p.m. and October 3, 1:00-5:00 p.m. There will be speakers, garden tours, and sharing experiences. The event contact is Mark Mills (mmills@barnesfoundation.org) or call (610) 667-0290.

Community Watch — No report.

Merion Community Coalition – No report.

Narberth Fire Company -- No report.

St. Joe's – No report.

Old Business -- None.

New Business – President Feuer announced that the Annual Meeting date of October 24, as it does not fall on the 3rd Sunday of the month as required in the By-laws, must be approved by a vote. A motion to change the date was made, seconded, there was no discussion, none opposed, and the motion was passed.

There being no more new business, the meeting, on motion made and seconded, was unanimously adjourned at 7:25 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at the Merion Tribute House on Tuesday, October 26, 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Guy, Secretary