

MEETING MINUTES

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

07/05/2011

1. First of all – a grateful thank you to June Risley of Advent Senior Housing. We arrived for the meeting at our normal meeting place, the Church of the Advent, only to find the doors locked and no one home. June happened to be there to attend the meeting and offered us the use of a meeting room at Advent Senior Housing, which worked out terrifically. June – you’re a friend indeed!
2. Steven Robinson, the Neighborhood liaison from the Mayor’s Office, attended the meeting - his first time at SBNA. He is the conduit to the mayor from neighborhood associations and can be reached at 443-984-1083 or steven.robinson@baltimorecity.gov. He related some facts regarding the new \$2.3 billion city budget. It was difficult getting down to that budget number but 311 services were not cut, taxes were not raised and swimming pools will be open through Labor Day. Reforms to the city pension program have upset city employees but will result in an \$800 million savings over the next 10 years.

Salaries of city employees are publically available at the “Open Baltimore” website. The city is obviously very concerned about the violent incidents at the Inner Harbor on July 4th. The number of tourists visiting the Inner Harbor this year is twice that of last year.

When asked what the mayor is doing to keep small businesses afloat, Steven responded that the Small Business Resource Center assists businesses with preparing business plans to optimize profits, the city prioritizes woman-owned businesses when contracting for services, and the city helps in obtaining funding for the Main Street program.

In response to another question regarding requirements for city employees to live in the city, he related that only Cabinet members are required to do so. 80% of the police department and 50% of the fire department live outside the city.

3. Councilman Bill Cole attended the meeting and participated in a discussion about high property taxes. In his opinion, the city needs to entice 100,000 more people to move into the city. A population of 750,000 to 800,000 is the “sweet spot” at which revenues can meet expenses. He believes in focusing on specific neighborhoods for revitalization efforts to attract new residents and supports the \$1 housing program that has been successful in the past.
4. Treasurer’s Report – Matt Eskridge.

Current account status: General Fund	= \$3,427.66
Heath St. Garden Fund	= \$3,220.46
Light St. Garden Fund	= \$ 2.13
Sitting Park Fund	= \$ 18.30
Teen Council Fund	= \$3,006.34
Tree Fund	= \$ <u>97.00</u>
Total	= \$9,771.89

5. Light Street Garden Status – Tom Bullock

Installation of the 16 garden plots is complete. Some of the plots are used by students of the Thomas Johnson School to grow vegetables for pizzas. The Garden is presently in the “red” and fundraising is underway. Tom of The Reserve has graciously agreed to donate \$10 cover charge proceeds from his 7/21/11 event to the Garden.

6. Area 30 Parking Repot – Cynthia Griffin

She is looking forward to receipt of Parking Surveys by 7/15/11. The Draft of the Mayoral Fellow Report which will relate the Survey results is due 8/1/11. The petition for angled parking on the block of 100 W. Fort Ave. has been approved by the city. Now residents need to take action, organize, and sign the petition if they are interested in pursuing this parking change.

Bill Cole mentioned that residents should be sure their parking stickers match the license plate and are on the correct car. Violations are receiving increased enforcement.

Amy Mutch reported that the city is studying methods of slowing traffic down on the 1700 and 1800 blocks of Hanover St. and is considering green painted bike lanes between the traffic lanes and the parking spaces. Widening of sidewalks has been deemed too expensive. Angled parking is not feasible on such a major thoroughfare. Bill Cole said he would check into the possibility of widening the sidewalks.

7. Design Review Committee Report – Justin Wilde

The Zoning Board hearing for the 127 W. Fort Ave project occurred today. Six neighbors testified and four others submitted letters. The decision was unknown at the time of this SBNA meeting.

Amy Mutch stated that the owners of the building on the NW corner of Light and Fort are planning on a building renovation and are asking for a letter of support from SBNA. They are proposing retail on the first floor and residential on the upper floors. Since we have not received

any specific information yet, no letter of support will be sent at this time. We will ask that they present their project at the August meeting.

8. Social Committee Report – Christie Blake

The June social at Delia Foley's was successful with good attendance. Thanks to Delia Foley's for their hospitality and appetizers.

9. Cailin McGough, liaison to Council President Jack Young, attended the meeting. Mr. Young is introducing a bill to increase the fine for illegal dumping to up to \$1,000. Cailin can be reached at 410-396-4699 or cailin.mcgough@baltimorecity.gov.

10. June Risley reported on the upcoming Peace Path event on 9/11/11. Residents will be organized to stand and wave flags to passing motorists from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM along Charles Street from Towson all the way to Wells Street at the southern end of our neighborhood. This is sponsored by "Women in Black." June can be reached at 410-528-1052 for those wishing to participate and to obtain more information.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Plouff
SBNA Secretary