

General Meeting Minutes

East Passyunk Crossing Civic Association and Town Watch

Monday, 3/4/08

St. Agnes Continuing Care Center

1900 Broad Street, Philadelphia PA

Board Members Present: Sarah Ausprich, Kim Buckwalter, Melody Damis, Sean Doyle, Darren Fava, Joseph F. Marino, Patti Pitt, Robert Reilly, Robert Slack,

Board Members Absent: Roger Bruno, Jo Cardillo, Margaret Kalalian, Millie Ruffino Theresa Simmonds

Darren Fava called meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Tonight's meeting agenda (Betty DiFloria, Alice Gonglewski) and January meeting minutes approved with revisions stated by Joseph F Marino: remove one of the two F's as middle name, and property address in Officer Reports is 1940 (Charlie Gilbert, Betty DiFloria)

OFFICER REPORTS

Joseph F. Marino

- Met with Senator Fumo's realtor regarding office space. Various site visits to office space and discussions with sub-contractors. Main concern/focus is plumbing and sewer problem. Still optimistic that opening will be April 19th.
- Attended EPA BID General Membership meeting 2/21.
- Attended EPA BID Economic Development meeting 2/28.
- Attended WHY Y "Eden Lost/Found" Community meeting.
- Wrote Voices of Philadelphia article for Phila Next Great City newsletter.

- Pursued Wachovia Bank grant.
- Assisted at Ego Thrift auction fund-raiser, EPX earned \$15.50
- Meeting w/ Membership chair re: protocols/membership list.
- Wachovia Park meeting – there is an idea being explored (very long shot) that if Wachovia vacates the property at Broad & Passyunk that the land would be converted to gateway park to the Avenue
- Securing extra-large recycling cans for Newmann-Goretti High
- Sartain & Moore street cleaning issue.
- Chaka Fattah information report

Recording Sec’y Jo Cardillo: absent

Corresponding Sec’y Kim Buckwalter: Nothing to report.

Treasurer Millie Ruffino:

- Absent, report given by Darren Fava. Bank account currently at \$3,717.49 (not including grant money air marked for certain items).

Public Safety/Town Watch, Chair Melody Damis –

- \$500 Beneficial Grant was given to Town Watch
- Part of the grant will be used for a ‘night out’ to promote town watch and will include refreshments and an info table, tentatively planned for 4/22nd but it was pointed out that this was election day so it may be rescheduled
- Is also planning a night at the Phillies fundraiser for EPX where EPX

Clean ‘n’ Green Chair Sarah Ausprich:

- The next clean-up is Tasker Street this Saturday, March 8th at 10 AM (meet at Board and Tasker).
- Will be planning a clean-up of Broad Street the first Saturday in April
- Mayor Nutter is organizing a city-wide cleanup
- Will be attending the BID design committee meetings that will work on plans to clean-up and beautification of the Avenue

Membership Chair Patti Pitt

- There are no new members at the meeting tonight
- There is in attendance the minimum needed 18 voting members

Marketing/Events Committee – Darren Fava

- Looking at a March 21st newsletter deadline.
- The newsletter will include upcoming events, history or the organization, etc. and is especially intended to reach those who do not have Internet access. Working on pricing for the mailing to go to all houses in our boundaries

Announcement – Joseph F. Marino

- Margaret Kalalian has been appointed as a member of the Board

Zoning – Margaret Kalalina and Darren Fava for Theresa Simmonds

- 2022 Juniper: basically owner wants to get permits updated to reflect current usage. The committee approves.
- Also at the last meeting the committee heard about properties the Broad Street Association wrote letters of approval
- *Joseph F. Marino:* Has called many times about the property at 1915 Sartain and will continue to call about it
- *Meeting Attendee/Resident:* Concerned about the possibility of an oil tank/storage tank under the Fox Electric building and the possibility that it could leak she called the EPA to come out and inspect. They said they could not find anything and she was told to call L & I. *Darren Fava:* Will try to get in touch someone to find out more about this.

Order of the Day: Presentation by Michelle Gambino Executive Director of the East Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement District (BID)

- Prior to coming to the BID work for the last 4 years the organizer of the Italian Market Festival
- In 2003 the City was looking for commercial corridors, and the East Passyunk businesses voted in 2003 to become a BID
- There is a sundown clause on the BID in 2009, the businesses will vote to stay a BID
- There are two main facets of a BID: merchants and a Board of Directors.
- East Passyunk Avenue has been designated a 1 of 7 Main Streets in Philadelphia. This means that there are volunteer based committees and a board of directors. There is an economic development committee, a design committee and two others – see the web site. There are also court-appointed volunteers for street cleaning. And annually she has to go to Harrisburg for training and report to the Department of Revenue.
- There is only a 8% vacancy rate on the Avenue and a lot of buildings have been renovated.
- Two campaign offices have opened – 1 for Christian DiCico on the 1600 block and 1 for Joug Dougherty in the 1900 block
- A variety of new businesses: Acri, a clothing store; Le Virtu, a restaurant, Donna's Designs, and Sweet Jane. Soon to come: Sticks & Stones and gastro-pub; and Adobe Grill, a southwester steak house. Also Passyunk Tavern is planning to expand.
- Re Broad and Snyder – there is nothing a BID/Main Street can do for these big box stores.

- The Cantina has purchased the corner lot outside of the restaurant. (through a straw purchase) and they have plans to have a café area outside.
- Visit www.visistpassyunk.com for a business directory and volunteer committee dates
- The farmers market will be back this year.
- The BID has a beat cop –currently 1 of 3 in the city. He is on duty Tues – Saturday from 10 AM to 6 PM
- Some businesses are a challenge: Passyunk and Juniper – The Wedge Rehab Center: there were complaints about clients loitering outside, but they were very responsive and worked with the BID to resolve the issues leading to the complaints and got a door guard and took other measures.
- Michelle’s Office is located at 1904 E. Passyunk.
- E. Passyunk is the safest BID zone in the city – at least in the last 60 days – the area includes Broad to 9th Street and McKean/Mifflin to Tasker.
- *Joseph F. Marino*: Mentioned that there is word that the Wachovia Branch and Broad and Passyunk may be closing. As a result he has talked to Michelle about a “dream” plan – A Gateway to the Avenue Park on that location.
- Michelle talked to the Wachovia property manager could not confirm that the bank branch would be closing.
- The BID will be hosing an East Egg Hunt on Saturday March 15th at the grassy lot at Le Virtu (1900 block of the avenue). Ages 4 to 9 are invited and will participate at staggered times. She passed out post card advertisements. Should anyone be willing to be the Easter Bunny please see Michelle.

- There will be a street festival in May – spread over 6 blocks of the Avenue – and will include rides and a sidewalk sale. More information to follow.

Old Business:

- PA State Tax Exemption has been applied for but the application is on hold; hasn't yet been processed.
- DCED Grant Application: Paperwork could be processed soon, but check could come up to 18 weeks later
- EPX Office Space: Gave an update
- Bylaws – Boundaries Vote: Board did their yearly review of the bylaws (see website) and decided to have the membership vote on expanding the boundaries.

It has been determined that there are 219 members and 28 active members. Twenty-five percent of active members (12) are needed for a vote.

New Business – Vote on Amended Bylaws and Expansion of Boundaries to 8th Street

Amend the Bylaws

- No discussion. Vote: in Favor = 24, Opposed = 0

Expand the Boundaries to 8th Street

- Background: EPX was approached by residents; historical boundaries
- Motion: Megan Walters, 2nd by Scott Collings
- A lot of discussion: Some concerns expressed, but most were positive comments in support
- Vote: In favor = 23; Opposed = 0; 1 = Abstain

Announcements:

- EPXtravaganza: Saturday May 10th – 10 AM to 3 PM Fair, Flea Market
 - Possibly a pancake breakfast
 - Fire Department Presence with Gentry the fire dog and a truck (may ask them to give out smoke alarms)
 - Flea market – tables are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door
 - Live music
 - Food (if not provided by the fire department)
 - Plant sale
 - Bake sale
 - Kids activities

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m., until Monday, 4/7/08.