

Passyunk Square Civic Association  
General Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, January 2, 2019

President Sarah Anton opened the General Membership Meeting of the Passyunk Square Civic Association (PSCA) at 6:33 PM in the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. Board members in attendance included Sarah Anton, Bill Gross, Monica Montiel, Theresa Rose and Jeff Brown. Absent were: Suzanne Tavani, Kristi Buchholz, Henry Sullivan, Andrew Stober, Alysea McDonald and Christine Knapp.

President's Report

Sarah asked the Board members present to introduce themselves, which they did. She then introduced committee chairs present including Sara Reckahn for Stoop of the Month, Karen Thompson, Planning, and Dave Goldfarb, a member of the Zoning Committee.

Monica reported that Saturday, Jan. 5 there will be a tree cycling event from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM at 13<sup>th</sup> and Reed Streets. Donations are \$5. Bartlett Tree Service can pick up a tree at someone's house for a fee of \$15. Sarah indicated that there is another tree event on Sunday.

Dave Goldfarb gave the Zoning Committee report. This month the Zoning Committee will hear cases at 1332 Reed Street, 1327 Dickinson Street and 1328 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The meeting will be on Tuesday, Jan. 8 at St. Maron's Hall.

Sarah mentioned that PSCA is going to have a Happy Hour, which Liz Dailey organized. Liz indicated that it will be on Wednesday, Jan. 16 at Devil's Den. There will be appetizers and happy hour prices for drinks. Neighbors are invited.

Sarah stated that PSCA has a Language Exchange with the Garces Foundation every third Thursday of the month. It is an English language training program for those who don't speak English but English speakers can also learn Spanish.

Sarah pointed out that PSCA is a voluntary organization and there are plenty of volunteer opportunities. We need someone to handle the Stoop of the Month and also fundraising. Sarah stated that we are beginning a trash contract, which is expensive so any donations are welcome.

Sarah turned the meeting over to the new 3<sup>rd</sup> Police District Lt., John Landis. He began on December 1 but has a lot of experience in South Philly. Lt. Landis indicated that there is a new Captain in the District, Captain Brian Hartzell. The District boundaries go from Broad to 6<sup>th</sup> Streets, Washington Avenue on south, according to Lt. Landis. He mentioned that Captain Hartzell holds a town hall meeting every second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM. Lt. Landis indicated that there is a Bonnie and Clyde couple robbing women in the neighborhood; a Black male and female. They either have a gun or are simulating one. Theft from auto is a big problem. The majority of thefts result from doors being unlocked. He asked neighbors to try not to leave any valuables in the car. Some burglaries have occurred as a result of someone pushing an air conditioner unit through the window. He recommended taking them out of the windows. Lt. Landis mentioned that the City has a Safe Cam Video program where you can register your video with the City. A ring doorbell is also good to have. There have been a couple of attempted rapes along the South Street corridor by a Black male, approximately 30 years old. He asked

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people not to walk wearing their ear phones. Lt. Landis mentioned that the police have some suspects for some of the robberies.

Lt. Landis introduced Officer Colman then opened the floor for any concerns. A resident asked about police patrolling small streets. He indicated that an alley off the 1200 block of Annin Street has become a lavatory for the homeless and a site for drug users. Lt. Landis said that he will have a grid car swing through to check it out. A resident mentioned loitering in the Annunciation parking lot by homeless people. Lt. Landis replied that the police must follow the City protocol regarding the homeless. They have to call City outreach and they try to encourage the homeless to go to shelters. Sarah mentioned that she has had success calling Project Home directly. Lt. Landis said to call Officer Ace Delgado at 215-686-3030 with problems. He is the police direct community representative and he will pass information on to Landis. Lt. Landis stated that he is trying to avoid the homeless setting up mattresses in a location. Another neighbor indicated that some homeless people are living behind Pep Boys around Juniper and Federal Streets, under a fire escape. Lt. Landis said that he will have someone check on that. A question arose about a body that was found a few months ago along with needles on the street. Landis mentioned the opioid epidemic and indicated that most police officers are trained with Narcan. Another neighbor mentioned that things are happening on the small streets and Lt. Landis said that he will inform the Tactical Squad to check them out. One resident mentioned that at Pat's and Geno's some guys are holding parking spaces and asking people to pay for them. Others are begging for money and using drugs. Lt. Landis indicated that he will drive by to check on it.

Kate Mundie made a presentation regarding Neighborhood Slow Zones. She said that she and Aaron Bauman have been working to get the neighborhood to participate in this City program. Aaron made a presentation at the November membership meeting. Kate said the City is looking to have try two Neighborhood Slow Zones in the entire City. The zones are generally residential areas bounded by commercial streets. They are an attempt to have drivers slow down while driving through the neighborhoods; an attempt to alter driving behavior without police ticketing. Slow Zones will help drivers see pedestrians and vice versa. The City will make changes to the street that should make neighbors change their driving behavior. If an area is approved, the City will study it, make suggestions but revise them based on neighbors' recommendations. The Slow Zones need to be in place for five years. Kate showed a map, which proposed two Slow Zones for our neighborhood. She indicated that there is a petition to sign in order to support a Slow Zone. A question was raised about using inexpensive little mirrors to help see at intersections. Kate felt that if a Slow Zone is chosen the City would decide what was best to reduce driving speed and accidents. She said that her job was to educate people about the Slow Zones. Sarah stated that there will be community meetings to continue discussing the Slow Zones. The specifics can be tweaked.

A question was asked about prohibiting parking 20' from the corner. Kate indicated that was a safety issue to ensure that drivers and pedestrians can see at intersections. However, that will not occur on every corner. There will be room for neighbors to negotiate with the City. A question was raised asking how many accidents there have been on the corners in the neighborhood.

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Aaron indicated that he extracted accident data compiled by the state so he didn't have a lot of specific data. Sarah stated that PSCA will post this information on Facebook and next week the Board will vote on whether or not to support the petition. A neighbor asked how many spaces, both illegal and legal, will be removed as a result of the Slow Zone. Kate replied that no legal spaces will be eliminated. The neighbor stated that in South Philly illegal parking in a crosswalk is not enforced. Kate did not have data on how many illegal spaces will go. The neighbor believed that PSCA was being asked to take a position that eliminates dozens of corner parking spaces and it puts PSCA in a bad spot with residents. Sarah felt that when a Slow Zone is implemented things will rise up but the Board is supportive of it. The neighbor felt that the presentation was sliding over the fact that parking spaces will be reduced. Sarah agreed that some parking spaces will be eliminated but it is unclear how many. Other community groups are applying for Slow Zones. The President of EPX was in attendance and said that EPX will be having the same discussion next week. Kate mentioned that Queen Village, Bella Vista, Gerard Estates and other groups are pursuing this. Kate reiterated that the Slow Zones are being proposed in order to make the streets safer.

Sarah mentioned that the City wants PSCA to sign a form letter. It may do so with an addendum. She asked residents to let PSCA know how they feel about the Slow Zone. A neighbor mentioned that a major problem at 7<sup>th</sup> and Tasker is not parking close to the intersection but parking far from the curb. Kate stated when a Slow Zone is approved and the City prepares a plan, there will be a better idea of the treatment for the neighborhood. In response to a question, Aaron stated that there will be an engagement process of at least one year and Slow Zones may be implemented within two years at the earliest.

John DiGulio of the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) spoke next. He indicated that Wharton Street is currently closed and being worked on between Broad and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets. After the collapsed water main, Dickinson and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets has reopened faster than expected. Cross Street is almost complete. The next construction will occur on the sewer at 10<sup>th</sup> Street between Dickinson and Tasker. It should take three to four months to complete. A question was asked regarding the age of the oldest water and sewer mains. John mentioned that throughout Philadelphia, the oldest mains were built in the late 1800s and early 1900s but that doesn't mean that they will all be replaced. Sixty five percent of the mains in the city are made of cast iron, which is not flexible and does break. The City is looking to replace all the cast iron mains with newer, more flexible material. In response to another question, Joe indicated that PWD uses nine contractors. Some are very good but they have to ensure that others do what their supposed to.

Sarah briefly mentioned that the RFP for the Municipal Complex at 11<sup>th</sup> and Wharton Streets has been extended for one month. PSCA collected suggestions from neighbors and forwarded them to the City.

Ayse Unver was introduced as the new South District Planner. She mentioned that the City has prepared a City-wide vision for Philadelphia 2035. In 2014 and 2015 the CPC obtained community input for the South District Plan, which is part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The district plans are for ten years and they are only recommendations, not law. Ayse explained some of the things that the CPC does. It creates zoning ordinances and maps; drafts documents

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for Capital programming and budgets and submits them to City Council; makes recommendations regarding street changes; prepares land use plans; and prepares neighborhood plans for each area of the City. Since the district plans were drafted the CPC is now proceeding to the implementation stage; however, there is no funding for these plans yet. The plans are on CPC's website. She will be back to discuss CPC recommendations to the implementation of the South District plan.

One final question arose about Herbology. Sarah replied that they complied with the law and made presentations at the PSCA membership meetings. She heard that some neighbor were concerned about the loading and unloading and use of armed guards due to the required cash transactions.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8:05 PM.

Submitted by Jeff Brown