

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, October 1, 2019

President Sarah Anton began the General Membership Meeting of the Passyunk Square Civic Association (PSCA) at 6:35 PM on October 1, 2019 in the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. Board members in attendance included Sarah Anton, Suzanne Tavani, Theresa Rose, Bill Gross, Andrew Stober, Alysea McDonald, Liz Moselle, Henry Sullivan and Jeff Brown. Absent were: Christine Knapp, Monica Montiel and Patrick Pasquariello.

Sarah welcomed everyone in attendance and mentioned that there was a sign in sheet on the tables for people to sign in. She introduced Police Officer Juan (Ace) Delgado who said the 3rd Police District had a Community Day on September 7. They are having a Halloween event on Saturday, Oct. 26 between 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM at Swanson and Snyder. The biggest problem in the area is car break-ins so neighbors should let the Police know if they see anything or have something on their cameras.

Sarah indicated that there is a list of PSCA committees on the tables if people are interested in volunteering. Next she had the board members present introduce themselves, which they did.

Committee updates:

Clean streets – Sarah explained that PSCA has a street sweeping contract which cleans numbered streets between 6th and 13th Streets every other Friday. It started in March and the next cleaning will be on Friday, October 4. Sarah asked neighbors to let PSCA know how the street cleaners are doing by contacting us and sending pictures to cleanstreets@passyunk.org. One neighbor asked if they clean the sidewalk and the street but Sarah replied they only clean the sidewalk. Another member said that the current crew of cleaners are doing a good job. Sarah also indicated that she has recycling bin stickers for neighbors who don't have City recycling bins. They can be put on regular trash cans to make them recycling cans. She received them from Buy Nothing Group. In addition, Sarah said that PSCA does have City recycling bins if neighbors want them.

Language Exchange – Sarah indicated that PSCA sponsors a language exchange along with the Garces Foundation. It meets the third Thursday of each month in a different restaurant. Spanish speaking neighbors go to help learn English while English speakers who want to learn Spanish attend.

Step of the Month – PSCA has this event, which honors well maintained and attractive street fronts. This month 623 Manton Street won. Sarah said if someone sees an attractive step and want to nominate it, contact stepofthemonth@passyunk.org. Liz Dailey asked if amazing Halloween street decorations can be nominated and Sarah replied yes.

Home Tour – Alysea explained that the annual Home Tour is one of PSEA's signature fund raising activities. She said they currently have four houses and are looking to get seven. So if anyone wants to show their house or knows of a house that can be shown, contact hometour@passyunk.org. Alysea said that the houses can be in all stages; they don't have to be rehabilitated. One neighbor mentioned that it is a positive experience. Alysea also said that tickets are for sale for the October 19 event.

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Park Renovation – Sarah mentioned that there are three parks in our neighborhood and they will be undergoing renovation. Columbus Square has begun and is closed off. Sarah is trying to coordinate with its Advisory Council and that of Gold Star Park, which will begin renovation in a few months. Discussion occurred regarding which trees will be removed as part of the Columbus renovation. An additional discussion took place concerning the proposed demolition of the Roundhouse. Even though architect Inga Saffron wrote about it and wanted it to be preserved, the Roundhouse will be demolished tomorrow.

9th Street Business Improvement District (BID) – Sarah indicated that people have been working for about one year on a BID along 9th Street. Public meetings have been held to explain it and one additional meeting is scheduled on October 9 at 7:00 PM in the Fleisher Institute. If it is okayed, legislation to establish it will be introduced.

Sarah introduced two people from state representative's offices. Ashton from ??? Katie Longo from State Representative's office was introduced and she mentioned that the Representative will be holding a Job Fair this Saturday, from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM.

Speakers:

Interfaith Philadelphia – Chelsea Jackson and Amika spoke. Interfaith Philadelphia is a neighborhood level initiative in neighborhoods experiencing inter-religious and inter-cultural tensions. They work with everyone to try to build mutual trust. They are trying to take a proactive approach and are currently focusing on three diverse neighborhoods, one of which is South Philadelphia. It is a three year project ending in June 2022 and has three components:

Community Listening Services – where community members participate in conversations with Interfaith Philadelphia staff to determine community interests, needs and concerns and identify what art/educational programs they would like to see.

Educational Programming – based on the information and feedback from listening, Interfaith Philadelphia will work to leverage community assets to meet the needs and concerns.

Art Project – Interfaith will work with the community and community-based art partners to identify art projects that appropriately reflect the community diversity. They want to work with community members to produce a high caliber art project/experience around June 2020.

If anyone is interested they should contact Interfaith Philadelphia.

Juntos – Nicole Banales and Elizabeth both spoke. Nicole explained that Juntos was founded around 18 years ago and now has an office at 6th and Washington. Initially it assisted Mexican immigrants looking for work. Around eight years ago it began focusing more on self-improvement. It helped with the establishment of the first sanctuary city and worked with Mayor Kenny to make Philadelphia a sanctuary city. Juntos also worked on ending a City contract that sent information on immigrants to ICE. It is currently working on municipal IDs that will be for all Philadelphia residents and will also provide discounts. Elizabeth explained that Juntos does training with community organizations to help them teach immigrants to know their rights. Juntos has flyers and a newsletter, which reports on their activities. Nicole indicated that Juntos

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is working with Fleisher and there will be art workshops every Monday in October. Juntos has also canvassed the neighborhood to inform immigrants of their rights. Jeff asked what PSCA or individuals could do to assist Juntos. Nicole replied that we can assist with know your rights training for immigrants and other neighbors so that they can explain them to immigrants.

HIAS – Rona Buchalter addressed the membership. She said that HIAS has been around since the 1880s. It was formed to assist Eastern European Jewish immigrants fleeing from pogroms. Now it is an international organization that helps whoever is coming through. Currently it conducts legal and social services work for immigrants in Philadelphia. It provides legal help to victims of crime and domestic violence. Rona opened it up for questions. Andrew asked how PSCA or individual neighbors can help. Rona replied that neighbors can help by supporting specific clients. They can volunteer in schools and donate furniture (beds, mattresses). Any pro bono legal assistance is welcome. Groups may act collectively to help different families. Liz Dailey asked what HIAS stood for and Rona said originally it was Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society but now it's just HIAS. They are located in 2100 Arch Street but will be moving soon. Rona also mentioned the Federal government has reduced the number of refugees allowed into the country to its lowest number and it is moving away from Federal to more state and local control. So communities can help by calling politicians to say that they support refugees.

Zoning – Suzanne reported that there is a Zoning Committee meeting every second Tuesday at 7:00 PM at St. Maron's Church Hall, 11th and Ellsworth Streets. This month the Zoning Committee will meet on the third Tuesday, October 15 due to Yom Kippur. There are four cases this month: 923 Federal Street (curb cut), 1145 S. 10th Street (2 family dwelling), 1211, 13, 15 Peters Street (realignment of lot lines) and 1248 Ellsworth Street (legalization of an apartment). Suzanne mentioned that a fifth case, 1328 S. 9th Street was removed from the agenda after the entire Zoning Committee opposed it. She stated if anyone has any questions regarding zoning contact zoning@passyunk.org.

Dates of Note:

10.9 – South Philly Market District Meeting

10/13 – Passyunk Gardens Clean Up

10/15 – PSCA Zoning Committee

10/19 – PSCA Home Tour

11/2 – Capitolo Flea Market

11/16 – Fall Tree Planting

11/18 – Planning Meeting

11/19 – PSCA Happy Hour

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM.

Submitted by Jeff Brown