

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, November 6, 2018

President Sarah Anton opened the General Membership Meeting of the Passyunk Square Civic Association (PSCA) at 6:38 PM in the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. Board members in attendance included Sarah Anton, Suzanne Tavani, Kristi Buchholz, Theresa Rose, Bill Gross, Henry Sullivan, Andrew Stober, Alysea McDonald, Christine Knapp and Jeff Brown. Absent was Monica Montiel.

President's Report

Sarah mentioned that voting was still going on and people should vote if they hadn't already. She said there was a lot on the agenda and asked the Board members to stand up to be recognized. Sarah then reported on upcoming events in the neighborhood. Saturday, November 10 at 10:00 AM is Love Your Park in which all four public parks in the neighborhood are participating. From noon until 4:00 PM on November 10 the annual PSCA Home Tour will take place. It is sponsored by Gen 3 Electric and includes a tour of the new Theater Exile building. The charge is \$20 on line but \$25 on the day of the tour. On Saturday, November 17 there will be a tree planting; 18 trees are being planted throughout the community. Sarah said the deadline to apply to get a street tree, which will be planted in the spring, is November 27. Sarah indicated that people should feel free to volunteer for these events. She pointed out that there is a list of PSCA projects and committees on the table and encouraged people to volunteer for them. The tables also included a copy of the PSCA Newsletter.

There are no cases currently scheduled for this month's Zoning Committee, Sarah reported; however, if any cases arise it will be posted on the website.

Neighborhood Slow Zones

Sarah introduced Aaron Bauman and Chris Shenley to discuss Neighborhood Slow Zones. Aaron explained that Neighborhood Slow Zones are part of the Mayor's Office's Connect program. The Neighborhood Slow Zone organizes resources and dollars from the City for traffic calming. It uses speed bumps, cleaning out corners and reducing speed to 20 MPH. Traffic calming is meant to support pedestrian walkers, bikers and public transit. Among the objections to it that Aaron has heard is the removal of parking spaces; however, cleaning out the corners of parking spaces primarily eliminates illegal parking. He asked anyone who has any concerns or is interested in signing up to contact him.

South Philly Market District

Sarah next explained that there will be a presentation about a South Philly Market District, a Business Improvement District (BID) on 9th Street. She mentioned the previous attempt at a 9th Street BID didn't make it. Vern Anastasio made the presentation with input from Eugene. Vern indicated that the BID will include property owners on 8th, 9th and 10th Streets. Preparing this BID is a voluntary effort by local people and it is built on the previous effort. The BID provides supplementary services that the City doesn't provide. It will have an independent board and levy fees to fund it. Eugene stated that BIDs exist in the more active commercial corridors of the city.

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, November 6, 2018

The South Philly Market BID will build on the rich immigrant history of the 9th Street market. There are also new grant opportunities that can be accessed for funding. Among the services provided by a BID are sweeping the streets, installing new trash cans with lids (which don't get dumped on as much), and façade improvements. This BID has revised priorities and at the top is improving façades. Vern indicated that the BID will be independently funded and operated. The board will be voted on by property owners within the boundaries with seats for owners of stands. It will not be part of the business association. The boundaries are 8th to 10th Streets from Palumbo to Capitolo playgrounds with some offshoots along Christian Street and Washington Avenue. This BID is basically the same one prepared in 2016 but rejected by the merchants. In order to make it successful they have contacted merchants who previously opposed the BID and asked what can be done to get their support. As a result, there were minor tweaks to the plan. Curb stands, which are a dying breed but cause concerns due to trash and litter, will be exempted from being assessed. They currently pay a fee to the City's Department of L&I to improve the streets. That fee will now go to the BID. Vern mentioned that the BID will provide money to improve properties. I will take \$75,000 and use it to eliminate blight. The BID can work with the Commerce Department to obtain matching funds. After dealing with blight, litter can be addressed. Vern appealed to neighbors for help in getting the BID approved. He mentioned that this is the last shot at getting approval. Councilman Squilla needs to introduce an ordinance to establish the BID and needs community support. Vern had posters available for neighbors to put in their windows to show support.

The presentation was open for questions. A person asked why Pat's and Geno's were excluded from the BID and Vern mentioned they were already in the Passyunk Avenue BID. Would taxes go up for homeowners someone asked. Vern replied no, this is business oriented with no correlations between business and homeowners. However, as neighborhood values go up so does equity and eventually taxes. In response to another question, Vern said the cleaning crews look like PARC's cleaning crews. Vern stated that they want to get a legislative package to Councilman Squilla by December 13. If they make that deadline they can put the BID together to be ready for the spring of 2020. Vern reiterated that homeowners are not assessed; they receive all the benefits without being assessed. He also stated that the 9th Street merchants south of Washington Avenue are awesome.

Municipal Complex

Next Sarah introduced Tom Dalfo from the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) who was to walk us through the City's Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of the Municipal Complex, between 11th, Wharton, 12th and Reed Streets. Tom began by stating that as of now nothing is in stone. Although an RFP was submitted, the City is willing to work with the community. Tom explained that PIDC is a public/private partnership to spur development. It provides transactional support for the City. Tom manages PIDC's real estate services. Tom began by stating that Fleet Management moved out of the building on Reed Street and it became surplus property for the City. The City had received interest in the development of this site and wanted PIDC to find out if developers are seriously interested and, if so, what they are willing to do to develop it. On October 17 the RFP was put out and proposals are due by

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, November 6, 2018

December 14. PIDC will obtain community input and let developers know what the community wants to see on the site. The RFP asks developers for: a narrative of what they would do, their plans; a schedule, their timing for a proposed development; their experience, to determine if they have the experience to develop the site; their resources, to see if they have the resources to do the job; and the price they are willing to pay for it. Once the proposals are submitted they are reviewed to determine who complied with the requirements of the RFP. PIDC will be looking to see what use the developer is proposing. Tom mentioned that the site is being re-mapped IRMX, which permits residential and mixed use development. The current zoning does not permit residential use. PIDC wants developers to be compatible with the City Plan and zoning as well as with the desires of the surrounding community. Since he expects many developers to respond to the RFP, Tom thinks that they will work with the City to establish a short list of developers to choose from. After a developer goes through this process and is recommended, it must be approved by PIDC's board and, since it is City property, must obtain an ordinance from City Council in order to sell the site. Tom said that they will require the selected development team to meet with the community. Sarah mentioned that a Google form has been created to obtain comments and it will be available until November 15. Tom realized that there are issues with the site including but not limited to does the building get saved, street lighting, school overcrowding and senior housing.

Questions were taken from the neighbors. One person asked if Tom had any idea about density; what could the neighborhood handle in terms of population? The City Planning Commission (CPC) Area Planner, Nicole, replied saying the CPC supports directing higher density to where it's appropriate like to Washington Avenue and commercial corridors while the residential areas would have a lower density. Nicole felt the current neighborhood zoning is pretty good. She explained that zoning variances, however, can increase residential density. The proposed re-mapping to IRMX requires non-residential use along with residential. If the desire is for an all residential development the developer would have to obtain zoning variances. Nicole mentioned that there is no limit in the RFP to the number of residential units. She also indicated that there was community input in the preparation of the South Philadelphia plan and the CPC included it. Nicole said that there is a social impact piece to the RFP. She stated that the RFP does not include the entire Municipal Complex site; the Police and Fire buildings are not included. Nicole pointed out that no developers have responded to the RFP as of yet.

A resident stated that the neighborhood school is at capacity. She was concerned about the City selling the land for residential development which could increase the number of students in the neighborhood. Due to the local school being at capacity the students would have to go to a different school and not be able to attend their neighborhood school.

In response to another question, Tom said that the parcel is about 1.3 acres. He indicated that the RFP includes the former Fleet Management building and its parking area along with the public parking area. The City included an option to develop the Fire station; however, it will required that a developer find a new location for the Fire station and build it.

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, November 6, 2018

Tom reiterated that the community must communicate what it would like to see to the Councilman. Councilman Squilla added that it should contact the developer as well since he is going to have to do so.

A question was asked regarding if a developer can significantly change its proposal. Tom replied that a developer can't make significant changes but changes do occur. Another person inquired if residential height and parking requirements were included in the RFP. Nicole reiterated that the remapping of the site to IRMX is proposed but the RFP encourages a developer to use the existing building. If developers build new residential structures the height limit would be 60' while new industrial height limit is 72'. It also requires three parking spaces for every ten residential units. Other questions and statements from the neighbors raised a concern about parking. Nicole explained that the current zoning, ICMX, doesn't allow any residential use, which is why there is a proposal to remap the site.

A neighbor asked what would be the first approval of a developer. Tom answered that it depends on how many developers respond to the RFP. Then the City selection committee would have to determine how many developers should be included on a short list. They would then make a recommendation to the Commissioner of the Department of Public Property.

Sarah explained that PSCA wants to make sure that the neighbors' concerns are expressed and addressed. Councilman Squilla would have to introduce legislation for whatever project is approved. If there are major changes to the proposal it would have to go back for new legislation.

Another questioner asked if PIDC had worked with the School District on projects of this type before. Tom answered no. However, PIDC has helped sell school properties. Nicole mentioned that there is no zoning category for schools.

Can the RFP be more specific to include what the City wants, a neighbor questioned. In a discussion after the meeting, Tom mentioned that the City doesn't make the RFPs too specific because that limits developer flexibility. In response to another question Tom said that the RFP doesn't include the parking lot across Reed Street.

A neighbor said that a few years ago there was discussion regarding the existing municipal parking lot and asked if more parking for the community was possible. Tom wanted to know if neighbors park in the municipal lot currently or if only Police and Fire Department personnel do. The response was the neighbors do park in the lot and they will lose their parking under this RFP. Tom agreed that the municipal parking lot will go away with this RFP. Someone mentioned that if there is a new multi-level building built on the parking lot it could triple the amount of parking provided. Councilman Squilla stated that community parking should be part of the project. It was pointed out that in the morning, Police and Fire Department employees park on the sidewalk. Tom said that would have to be taken into consideration.

Another person asked if there was any accommodation for affordable housing in the RFP and if any environmental testing required. Tom responded there wasn't either. However, if developers apply for funding the financial institutions would require environmental testing.

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, November 6, 2018

Tom indicated that a developer must make a presentation to the community and if the community doesn't like it they should let PIDC know. A neighbor mentioned that the community has just been burned by the developer at 9th and Washington, who changed the development from one the community had approved. Tom said that PIDC won't sell the property if the community is not satisfied.

Was there any chance for single family homes in the development someone asked. Tom didn't know if developers will submit proposals for the demolition of the existing building and he didn't know if IRMX permits single family housing. Another neighbor inquired if the City can replace the public parking. Tom reiterated that parking is a significant issue. A neighbor felt that whatever is developed should be additive to park experience across the street.

Sarah mentioned that neighbors can go online to make comments about the development at passyunk.org/municipalcomplex. She said that PSCA will compile the comments and work with a planning group and will make sure that neighbors are responded to.

A neighbor said that no one in the room wants to pin everything in the development on the requirement for parking. He felt the plans must take into consideration mass transit as well.

That ended the discussion regarding the development of the Municipal Complex. Sarah reminded the meeting that there will be a special meeting tomorrow evening, November 7, regarding the proposed development at 9th Street and Washington Avenue, beginning at 7:00 PM at the Capitolo Playground.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7:56 PM.

Submitted by Jeff Brown