

Passyunk Square Civic Association  
General Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, September 3, 2019

President Sarah Anton began the General Membership Meeting of the Passyunk Square Civic Association (PSCA) at 6:32 PM in the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. Board members in attendance included Sarah Anton, Suzanne Tavani, Theresa Rose, Bill Gross, Andrew Stober, Christine Knapp, Monica Montiel, Alysea McDonald and Jeff Brown. Absent were: Patrick Pasquariello, Liz Moselle and Henry Sullivan.

Sarah indicated that there will not be a PSA-3 Police District update. She did mention that the Police are having a Community Day on September 7.

Committee updates:

Clean streets – Sarah stated that PSCAs biggest expense is a trash contract under which the contractor cleans all numbered streets every other Friday. She asked neighbors who feel that they are not getting their streets cleaned to let PSCA know by contacting [cleanstreets@passyunk.org](mailto:cleanstreets@passyunk.org).

Zoning – Suzanne reported that there is a Zoning Committee meeting every second Tuesday at 7:00 PM at St. Maron's Church Hall, 11<sup>th</sup> and Ellsworth Streets. This month there are two cases: 1031 Tasker Street and 1246 Ellsworth Street. The October and November committee meetings will be very busy. Suzanne said that all zoning cases can be found on PSCAs website.

Planning – Sarah named the Planning Committee co-chairs, Daryn Edwards and Karen Thompson and indicated that the next Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 16 at 7:00 PM at Capitolo Playground.

Sarah mentioned that a list of all PSCA committees is on the tables and invited anyone interested to get involved.

There will be a Happy Hour from 4:00 until 6:00 PM on September 29 at Bok, Sarah said. She announced the most recent winner of the Step of the Month contest, 623 Manton Street. They will receive a sticker and a certificate.

Home Tour – Alysea reported that PSCAs Home Tour is a long standing event and this year's will be held on October 19. People open their homes for the Tour to show them to neighbors. Alysea is still looking for additional homes to add to the Tour so people should contact her at [hometour@passyunk.org](mailto:hometour@passyunk.org) if they want to show their houses.

Sarah stated that within PSCA there are three schools and three parks. Renovation is or will be occurring at Capitolo and Columbus Playgrounds and Gold Star Park. A recent school supply drive that was very successful. She thanked all the neighbors who helped and said that neighbors should keep sending in any school supplies that they may have.

There was supposed to be a presentation from the South Philadelphia Stiebel but that was re-scheduled for the meeting next month.

Sarah got to the City's presentation of the restriping on 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Many neighbors attended the membership meeting as a result of this issue. Sarah said that she was very disappointed by the

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news coverage of the restriping. She explained that the City's Department of Transportation & Infrastructure Systems (OTIS) will make the presentation and then they will listen to comments and feedback from the neighbors. OTIS wanted to know what the neighbor's problems were and how to solve them. Councilman Squilla was also in attendance. Sarah asked the neighbors to be courteous during the presentation and not to shout or curse because if they do, they will be asked to leave. Mike Carroll, the Deputy Managing Director, OTIS began by saying that they will talk about the status of the project but they are not here to defend bike lanes. They will stick around after the meeting to speak to neighbors individually. He introduced Jeanette Bruger to give a background of the project. She had ten slides to display explaining the project. Jeanette mentioned that OTIS has received hundreds of emails on both sides of the restriping issue. She began by stating that the Project Good was that the City was looking for opportunities to make 11<sup>th</sup> Street safer. The trolley tracks were a safety hazard. Repaving – Jeanette showed the old street layout and its safety issues, which were reported to OTIS by many including crossing guards and civic associations. She explained that 11<sup>th</sup> Street is 70 feet wide while 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets are 26 feet wide. The 70 feet makes for a long pedestrian crossing. There is also truck and car loading in the roadway. OTIS didn't want to harm the businesses along the street. Jeanette mentioned that cars were parking in the crosswalks and gored areas. In addition, transit riders had to wait in the roadway for the bus. The bike lane and vehicles were obstructed. Project Goals – The most important goal OTIS representatives emphasized was to provide safety for everyone using 11<sup>th</sup> Street. They also wanted to provide a smooth roadway surface and increase comfort for pedestrians and people using transit. OTIS hoped to install a link in the City's high quality bike lane network. Jeanette stated that OTIS spoke to about 60 community members at a meeting in June 2018, and additional people at meetings on April 17 and July 16, 2019 for a total of around 130 people. They also spoke to crossing guards, people traveling along the street, civic associations, business owners and others. Some neighbors shouted from the audience that no one spoke to them. When Jeanette said that they distributed flyers in the neighborhood some people yelled that neither they nor their neighbors received any flyers. In response, Jeanette said that it was important for OTIS to get to neighbors' questions but she has to complete the presentation first. Rearranged – The project added an extra bike lane and back in angle parking. She admitted that about 20 parking spaces were lost. The Streets Department repaved the street, covered the trolley tracks and filled in the sink hole. They striped south of Carpenter Street and created three new loading zonings with four more coming. Businesses are able to receive deliveries. Some loading zones have been moved off 11<sup>th</sup> Street to side streets. OTIS will be installing flex posts as buffers between the parked cars and the bike lanes and expanding site lines to broad areas. Green paint will indicate conflict zones.

Mike reiterated that the main thing the City wanted was to avoid people being involved in crashes. In order to do that they are willing to sacrifice other things. This is part of the City's strategic plan, which the Mayor ran for election on. The restriping removed bikes away from moving vehicles. It also took away parking spaces that were right by the corner. Twenty four legal parking spaces along with illegal spaces were removed as part of this project. The project intends to keep people out of crashes. If a car approaches an intersection and another car is

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parked next to that intersection the on-coming car can't see if anyone else is coming. Mike stated that one hundred people a year die in crashes in Philadelphia and the City wants to put a stop to it. He stated that if people feel that additional legal spaces could be provided he will look at it. The City is also speaking to businesses about using their lots for additional parking. However, they will create barriers to keep people from parking illegally.

Next Steps – Jeanette wanted neighbors to take a closer look at the plan and also wanted to speak to neighbors one on one. In response to shouting from the audience, Sarah asked who lives within one block of 11<sup>th</sup> Street. A majority of those in attendance raised their hands. Sarah then opened up the floor for questions, which resulted in many hands and voices being raised.

Suzanne asked what metrics were used for the site lines. Mike explained that OTIS took the national standard and reduced it for South Philadelphia in order to preserve as much parking as possible. Suzanne said that she wouldn't feel safe with cars backing up. Jeanette replied that it is not yet complete. The plan is being layered. First the paving was done, then the white lines. Then durable flexible plastic barriers will be installed between the parked cars and the bike lane. Jeanette said that it was back in angle car parking.

Sarah began taking questions from the audience.

Neighbor, it is impossible to angle park, you have to back up into traffic. I pay for parking; \$35 for the first car. Cyclists do not follow the same rules that cars must. They don't have to pay for registration. She asked what revenues cyclists provide to the City. Mike answered that this project is not intended raise revenue.

Neighbor, plastic barriers won't stop cars. Cars that are angled parked unload packages and kids and they must cross the bike lanes to get to the sidewalk. They can be hit by a biker who then takes off and you never see them again. Due to the restriping and reduction of traffic lanes, Sanitation trucks stopping to pick up trash recently caused a two and one half block back up. In addition, some bikes are not using the bike lanes but using the traffic lanes. There should be one bike lane each way, just like the car lanes. The City spent \$200 million last year for bike lanes. Mike answered that the City did not spend that much. He explained that this project isn't finished. They are willing to consider concrete barriers.

Neighbor, are there plans for a modification of parking and bike rules? Jeanette responded that 11<sup>th</sup> Street was under signed. They are putting up new and very clear signage. She emphasized that everyone needs to obey the rules of the road, pedestrians, bikers and vehicles.

Neighbor, what happens to bikes not in the bike lanes? Jeanette explained that state law allows bikers to cross a vehicle lane to make a turn.

Neighbor, safety questions were raised. Bike lanes should be in the center of the street. The two current bike lanes on the west side of 11<sup>th</sup> Street look like an express bike lane. Bikes will go faster and it will be dangerous closer to the curb. It will take a while for neighbors to get used to two bike lanes on one side of the street. However, people from other parts of the City and from

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elsewhere will not realize that there are two bike lanes on one side, which is dangerous. The City is creating islands where people park and they now must cross two bike lanes to get to the curb. The vast majority of cyclists don't stop at stop signs. The redesign favors able bodied people as opposed to younger, older and disabled people.

Neighbor, where do you propose we park? Mike asked the woman to come speak to him because he did not know where she lived or goes. She said that she lives at 11<sup>th</sup> and Latona Streets.

Neighbor, what happens when first responders can't get down the street? Jeanette indicated that the traffic lanes are 21 feet wide, 11 feet north bound and 10 feet south bound. Twenty one feet is enough for two cars and a bus to get by.

Neighbor, what happens when your parked car sticks out into the traffic lane? Bike lanes should be in front of the parked cars. Mike said that the angled parking spaces are 19 feet deep, designed for the largest vehicle such as a suburban.

Neighbor, as she was pulling out of a parking space, a bike in the traffic lane was too impatient to wait until she pulled all the way out. He almost hit her, gave her the finger and rode on. If he did hit her, who will pay for her insurance?

Neighbor, I've almost been hit around 11th and Wharton because cars were parked too close to the corner and they couldn't see me crossing the street. Jeanette reiterated that one of the goals is there be no parking right up to the corner; safety is the number one goal.

Neighbor, if flyers were sent out neither I nor my neighbors saw them. There was no outreach. Jeanette answered that the City reached out to the civic associations and the Councilman. OTIS followed their lead and held public meetings in April and July. They notified neighbors with flyers along 11<sup>th</sup> Street and with emails.

Neighbor, how come flyers were put on 11<sup>th</sup> Street but not in other parts of the neighborhood? Jeanette replied that they distributed about 200 flyers before the meetings. Sarah stated that PSCA has an email list and notified people about the public meeting. She acknowledged that PSCA should have distributed flyers on the side streets along 11<sup>th</sup> Street. There is a problem notifying block captains since the City will not make them known publicly.

Neighbor, with the new development there will be another 150 apartments and where will parking be? Sarah replied that is another issue which we will deal with at another meeting.

Neighbor, Coming down Wharton Street and turning on to 11<sup>th</sup> Street, how do you turn without hitting a parked car? Mike answered that they will do outreach. The City is speaking to ACME about letting neighbors park in their lot at night.

Neighbor, asked for a round of applause to OTIS for being here and PSCA for having the meeting on this issue. He said that he doesn't have a car and appreciates the changes including the bike lanes in both directions.

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Neighbor, how do we deal with bikers who don't stop at stop signs? She asked if bikes are cars or pedestrians and mentioned that she was almost hit by a bike several times. Jeanette replied that pedestrian safety is the top priority. Bikes should obey traffic rules like everyone else she said.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM and representatives of OTIS met with neighbors to discuss their issues individually.

Submitted by Jeff Brown