

Minutes of Seminary Ridge Civic Association Board (SRCA) Meeting JUNE 25, 2020

In Attendance: Don Frahler, President; Paul Judge, First Vice President; Jeanne Jacob, Second Vice President; Maria Browne, Treasurer; Elizabeth McIntyre, Secretary; Mike Brookbank, Parliamentarian; Beth Chase, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School (SSSAS), CFO, and Sue Goodhart, former President.

1. Call to Order- Frahler: Called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

2. Report from City Arborist, John Marlin: Bradford pear trees started to be planted in the 1950's. We have learned that their large limbs are predisposed to failure, and it is an invasive species. These are not desirable trees. Last year, 40% of the City's emergency call-outs were due to Bradford pear trees. SR has 376 Bradford pear trees, and last year 16 of the City's emergency calls were for Bradford pear trees in SR. The City has proposed the removal of 58 (approximately 15% of 376) trees in SR that have a diameter of 24" or greater. They will replace these trees with a diverse mix of large stature, native shade trees.

2.1. Goodhart mentioned that two large Bradford pear limbs fell on a sunny but windy day not far from where children were playing and people were walking.

2.2 Jacob, chair of SRCA's Beautification Committee asked several questions, including whether the Bradford pears on Fort Williams Parkway will be among the first to be removed. Marlin stated that while unsightly, their removal is not a priority because they are not among the largest trees in the neighborhood.

2.2. Marlin agreed to meet separately with Jacob by Zoom to discuss her questions. He stated he is willing to speak with neighbors individually, and he can be reached at 703.795.2798.

3.0. Secretary's Report - McIntyre: The May 2020 minutes were distributed electronically before the meeting and were approved.

4.0. Treasurer's Report as of April 23, 2020 - Browne: Our current balance is \$16,219.31 after buying lunch for Alexandria' firefighters.

5.0. Directory Update – McIntyre: Stated that she believes we have reached critical mass on collecting information for the directory and has begun to proofread the excel spreadsheet.

6.0. Seminary Hill Associaton (SHA) Report - Judge:

- 6.1. SRCA is now a member of Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA).
- 6.2. SHA may have meetings this summer. SHA wants to proceed with its FOIA requests to the City and is discussing its options.
- 6.3. At the last meeting, a city employee gave a presentation on several environmental improvement projects, including Strawberry Run. The goal is to return these creek beds to their original state. There was a discussion of similar projects being awarded to the low bidders who have interpreted this goal as requiring the clear cutting of the areas and additional soil. The result is a small creek running through an arid landscape; however, this is not the original state of creeks in VA. The City has redone its budget due to COVID, but the Strawberry Run project has stayed in its budget due to its receipt of a grant from the State. Jacob stated that our Featherstone neighbors would like to meet with SRCA to discuss their research and concerns, which are similar to the above. Jacob will arrange a meeting with the neighbors, herself, Frahler and Judge on July 6, 7, or 8.

7.0 SSAS Update - Chase:

- 7.1. The school continues to monitor information from the CDC and the Governor. SSSAS is considering three scenarios for opening in the Fall: on-line learning, in-person with social distancing, or a hybrid of both.
- 7.2. The School is looking at opening a reduced summer program in mid-July. Also, its coaches and athletes will begin using the fields for training in accordance with social distancing standards, and this will require the use of more of the fields.
- 7.3. An in-person graduation ceremony is still tentatively scheduled for July 25, 2020 at 10 AM at the Seminary.

8.0. Annual Picnic/Meeting - Frahler and Jacob: The SRCA annual meeting is still tentatively scheduled for September 20, but it depends on the State's response to COVID and the current recovery phase. The Board discussed cancelling the picnic or having a scaled down picnic. Jacob stated that we cannot currently secure any games or moon bounces. If the picnic is cancelled, we may decide to hold the meeting outside, with the residents social distancing in the football field bleacher, especially since we usually have fewer than 100 people attend the annual meeting. Also discussed voting electronically.

9.0. Amending Constitution and Bylaws to allow virtual meetings - Brookbank: The Board discussed the proposal Brookbank submitted in response to a request from Frahler at the May meeting. The proposal was submitted prior to the meeting as was meant to serve as a basis for further discussion. No resolution was reached. There was a discussion on how

SHA has held its virtual meetings with a detailed roll call , by objection only voting, and single issue meetings.

10. Request for Community Committee approval of installation of in-ground pool -

Brookbank: The Board discussed the receipt of a request for approval of the installation of an in-ground pool. The Board agreed to a meeting of the Community Committee in one week (Thursday, July 2nd) to approve/disapprove the request. Brookbank agreed to meet walk the site and discuss possible concerns with the neighbors prior to the meeting. The Board decided that the voting can be achieved by electronic means via email.

11. Status of SRCA Board members - Goodhart: Ann Henshaw and Mary Doane are talking to individuals who have expressed an interest in being on the Board. They will provide a slate of candidates to the Board at the July meeting

12. Adjournment: Next meeting is scheduled for July 29, 2020 at 7 PM on Zoom. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.