

**MINUTES**

**SRCA MEETING**

**July 14, 2022 – 7:30 PM by Zoom Conference Call**

**In attendance:**

Jeanne Jacob, President; Susan Clark-Sestak, Secretary; Maria Browne, Treasurer; David Pritzker, Parliamentarian; Don Frahler, SRCA Past President; Laura Plati, Chair SRCA Welcome Committee; Mike Brookbank, SRCA Historian; Paul Judge, Seminary Hill Association Liaison; Beth Chase, St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School (SSSAS) Liaison; Jeremy Flachs, Beth El Liaison; Lt. Lemuel Houston, Alexandria Sheriff’s Office Liaison; and Seminary Ridge residents: Antonio and Tere Longo, Harriet McCune, KC McIntyre on behalf of Steve Poron, Scott Sutherland, and Sandra (last name unknown).

1. **Welcome and President’s Report – Jacob**
   1. Jacob called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.
      1. Open mic session: There were no issues raised during the first open mic session.
   2. **Reports from SRCA’s ACPD Liaison/Alexandria’s Sheriff’s Liaison**
      1. Sgt. Moore was unable to attend the meeting.
      2. LT Houston reported that the Sheriff’s Office has met its target number for new hires, and half of them are now in training.

1. **Secretary’s Report – Clark-Sestak**

**Approval of 2 June 2022 Minutes**

Clark-Sestak noted that the latest version of the June meeting minutes had been sent to all prior to this meeting and no additional changes had been received. **Brookbank moved to approve the minutes; Frahler seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved**.

1. **Treasurer’s Report – Browne**

Browne stated that no dues payments had been received in June, and one check was cashed. The balance is $16,227.57. She prepared one check for $30, which was sent to the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations.

It was agreed to postpone until the August meeting a discussion about how dues for 2022-23 will be collected. Volunteers will be needed for getting the dues notices out. It was also suggested that next year’s dues should be sent directly to the Treasurer for 2022-23.

1. **SRCA Committee Chair Reports – Committee Chairs**
   1. **2022 Recent and Near-Term Events/Activities – Kate Hennigan**

Hennigan was unable to attend, but provided a written report. It, as well as discussion at the meeting are summarized below.

**Screen on the Green**: The first Screen on the Green on 17 June was attended by about 40 people and received positive feedback. There were some issues with volume (which, it was noted, was a problem in 2021 as well). Chase offered to contact SSSAS IT staff to determine what the problem might be. Hennigan noted for future Screen on the Greens that trash bags should be brought to ensure the area is left in pristine condition.

The second Screen on the Green will be held in August, likely 18 or 19, and will be sponsored by Kate Bertles Henningan, McEnearney Associates, to include provision of some type of munchie. The date and specific movie are still pending, but Hennigan has recommended either Encanto or Sing 2 and Chase confirmed that either 18 or 19 August will be fine from the school’s perspective. More information will be posted on Seminaryridge.net and sent in a newsletter as it becomes available.

**National Night Out**: Clark-Sestak mentioned that SRCA had been provided information of the annual National Night Out, to be held on Tuesday, 2 August. It was agreed not to create an SRCA event for this date, but rather – as was done last year – to encourage neighbors to have their outside lights on and perhaps have small gatherings on some of the streets in Seminary Ridge.

**Annual Meeting and Picnic**: The annual meeting and picnic will be held 18 September. For the picnic: Above all, volunteers are needed!! Those who signed up to volunteer will be contacted in the near future.

* Prior to the meeting, Clark-Sestak provided information on two suppliers and proposed menus for the box lunches: Mindy’s Catering and Panera. Given that Mindy’s Catering was $5 more per box, on average, and had not responded to several questions, Clark-Sestak recommended selecting Panera, which was unanimously approved. Any suggested changes to the proposed menu should be provided to Clark-Sestak by 30 July.
* Plati will order the games/activities from the same vendor as used last year. She noted that she would need volunteers to help in running the activities on the day of the picnic.
* Jacob will be responsible for setting up the registration table, but will need assistance in gathering proxies, ensuring a quorum has been established, etc.

For the annual meeting:

* Jacob noted that she, Browne, and Clark-Sestak will determine and prepare all the documents that will need to be included in the package of materials going to all residents.
* Nominating Committee: As head of the nominating committee, Frahler reported that he has been being assisted by Plati in contacting people. He expects the slate to be completed in early August, in time for the August SRCA meeting.
* Clark-Sestak noted that staff from Alicia Gaskins’ office had contacted the SRCA email account, asking for an opportunity to meet with residents. After discussion, it was agreed that SRCA will decide at the August meeting whether to invite Ms. Gaskins, as well as the new City Manager (Jim Parajon) to the September SRCA meeting as well as the annual meeting. Any other City Council members who contacts SRCA would be offered the same opportunity. It will also be determined at the August meeting whether any such representatives attending would be included on the agenda of the SRCA annual meeting.

**4.2 Homes Sales in Seminary Ridge**: Hennigan reported that there were 3 homes sold in the neighborhood in the last 30 days: 4115 N Garland, 5BR/3.5 BA, which sold in 7 days for $1,566,000; 4016 Featherstone Pl, 4BR/3BA, which sold in 9 days for $1,295,000; and 4013 Fort Worth Ave, 4BR/3.5BA, which sold in 21 days for $1,400,000. Hennigan noted that the market is still strong, although there has been a slight slow over the Summer due to interest rates, the time of year and overall market volatility.

* 1. **Seminary Hill Association (SHA) Liaison – Judge**

Judge was unable to attend the meeting.

* 1. **SSSAS (St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School) Liaison – Chase**

Chase noted that there are activities at SSSAS most every evening, Mondays through Thursdays.

There has been about a one-month delay in work on the driveway at St Andrews Methodist Church due to the need for Dominion Energy authorization.

* 1. **BEHC Update – Flachs**

Flachs reported continuing issues with the developer of Karig Estates concerning promised removal of a dead tree. Because this is close to the playground area, Flachs cautions against use of the playground, which is open to SRCA residents as well.

Flachs noted there have been recent plantings in the Chapel in the Woods, but a tree has also fallen on the bridge, so anyone who goes to the area should use caution.

* 1. **SRCA Parliamentarian – David Pritzker**

Shortly after the June SRCA meeting, Pritzker sent proposed draft changes to the SRCA Bylaws and Constitution for review and feedback from the SRCA leadership. Jacob, Brookbank, and Clark-Sestak provided feedback and all proposed changes were sent by Jacob to everyone prior to the July meeting. All SRCA leadership is to review the proposed changes prior to the August meeting in order to reach agreement on what to present for a vote to SRCA residents – this information will be distributed to all SRCA covenant households at least 10 days prior to the annual meeting. Any changes require a two-thirds majority of all SRCA covenant households.

Pritzker noted that key issues were making reference to the SRCA “Board,” correcting typos and clarifying and/or updating terms, and spelling out the First and Second Vice Presidents duties. Any comments, including additional changes for consideration, are to be provided to Pritzker by 31 July.

**4.6 City of Alexandria Liaison – Richie Weiblinger**

Weiblinger was unable to attend the meeting.

**Seminary Road**: The City has been conducting an 18-month review of Seminary Road since the installation of the Road Diet. The status of that review is still unknown. Jacob reported there was another accident recently in front of the post office on Seminary Road.

**Duke Street:** Both Jacob and Sutherland attended the most recent meeting on Duke Street, held at Police Office headquarters on Wheeler Street. SRCA is represented in this effort by Erin Winograd, who is a member of Seminary Hill Association, and forwards relevant information to SRCA. SRCA was told that no decisions would be made at this recent meeting, and that the 2012 plan approved by City Council would be presented. However, what was presented does not conform with the publicly available 2012 plan; what was presented included bicycle lanes actually on Duke Street in the area between Jordan and Wheeler Streets. In 2012, the City stipulated that further study needed to be done to see if such lanes were feasible and to assess parallel routes in the meantime. The current plan definitely calls for bus rapid transit (BRT), for which the City has received grant money from the state, although the grant did not specify that there had to be dedicated bus lanes in both directions. At the meeting, a “guiding principle” was adopted that there would be dedicated bus lanes. It is still being determined whether bus lanes would be in the center or on the curb lanes. It was noted that the 2012 plans were developed long before the now-planned redevelopment of Landmark, which will house a state-of-the-art hospital, with all the attendant emergency traffic demands. Another “guiding principle” adopted at this meeting was to lower the speed limit on Duke Street, as another way of discouraging cars. There was no evidence on the task force of support for car use.

While a task force has been established (of which Winograd is a member), the question was raised as to whether this task force is largely to be a rubber stamp for the City’s T&ES plans and a way to undercut individual citizen’s inputs into the Duke Street reconfiguration. It was reported that the City will be doing outreach to civic associations, tentatively in September.

As a result of filing a FOIA request, Jacob noted that the consulting group’s report on **Strawberry Run** was finally received (at no cost to SRCA). The City appears to be changing its direction, no longer arguing that it needs to do work in Strawberry Run to obtain pollution credits, but now saying it’s necessary to “save the pedestrian bridge” (which shows no sign of being threatened). Jacob reported that the consulting group (facilitators) appear to be as frustrated as residents are with the City’s approach. She reiterated SRCA’s objectives with respect to Strawberry Run:

* To save as many trees as possible
* To do the least amount of damage to Strawberry Run and the park
* To restore one person’s property that has been damaged (at the lower end of the stream)
* To remember that Natural Channel Design (NCD) was done once already in this stream and failed and there is no evidence that another NCD design is necessary or will work.
  1. **Welcome Committee for New Residents – Plati**

Plati noted plans to drop off welcome packages in the next week or so to two new households at 4013 Fort Worth Avenue and 4016 Featherstone Place.

* 1. **Communications – Susan Clark-Sestak**

Clark-Sestak noted that MailChimp provides a monthly summary of messages delivered and opened. For the most recent reporting period, 748 had been delivered, of which 675 were opened.

* 1. **SRCA Historian – Mike Brookbank**

Brookbank offered to provide a quarterly 2005 SSSAS report to Chase, who will pass this along to the SSSAS archivist.

1. **Old Business – Jacob**

There was no old business to report.

1. **New Business – Jacob**

Among new business items reported:

* Following the annual meeting, it is planned to reprint the SRCA Bylaws and Constitution and have an updated addendum to the Directory to reflect all new residents in the neighborhood. These will be distributed to everyone, to inserted into the 2021 Directory to avoid having to republish the Directory in its entirety.
* Street lights on the upper section of Fort Williams Parkway have been repaired.
* There have been counters installed on Fort Williams Parkway, Colonel Ellis, and Trinity. When we learn the reason for them, we will pass that information along.

**The next SRCA Meeting will be Thursday, 4 August 2022 at 7:30 pm on Zoom.** Due to the Labor Day holiday, the September SRCA meeting will be held on 8 September.

1. **Open Mic Session – Jacob**

During the closing open mic session, the Longos expressed appreciation for all SRCA has been doing, both in organizing activities and providing news updates. They also noted their concern, echoed by many others, about the way the Duke Street project is evolving.

1. **Adjournment of SRCA Meeting – Jacob**

**Clark-Sestak moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 pm; it was seconded by Brookbank and unanimously approved.**