



# SEMINARY RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

## MINUTES

### SRCA BOARD MEETING

August 3, 2023 – 7:00-8:00 PM by Zoom Conference Call

#### In attendance:

Richie Weiblinger, President; Jeanne Jacob, Immediate Past President; Karen Meade, Secretary; Scott Sutherland, Treasurer; David Pritzker, Parliamentarian; Mike Brookbank, Historian; Sergeant Tony Moore, Alexandria City Police Department (ACPD); Beth Chase, SSSAS Liaison; Jeremy Flachs, Beth El Liaison; Residents: Jay Bartol, Donald Alf, Lyn Allen, Paul Judge, Patricia Evans, Harriett McCune; Robert (last name unknown)

#### 1. Welcome and President's Report – Richie Weiblinger

**1.1. Welcome to SRCA Board Members and SR Residents Joining Meeting:** Weiblinger called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and welcomed those in attendance via Zoom.

**1.1.1. Questions/Concerns from SR Residents – “Open Mic”:** There are two different construction efforts happening in the neighborhood involving underground cables. Verizon is installing sizable boxes that are flush to the ground on the easements for fiber optic, and Comcast is installing large, elevated boxes. Jacob inquired about why they are so large and learned it's because they need to have air circulation around them. A discussion followed about what arrangements have been made with the City, and one Board member questioned whether they're removing older boxes that are no longer needed or just adding more.

#### 1.2. Priority Areas for Tonight's Meeting:

**1.2.1. Planning SRCA Board Positions for 2023 – 2024:** Weiblinger asked that we continue making calls for new volunteers to serve on the Board next year, and it would be particularly nice to get more involvement from some of the newer residents.

Via emails to the SRCA News email account, Resident Lyn Allen expressed interest

in being added to the Beautification Committee. Additionally, new resident, Shannon Whalen McDaniel, reached out indicating she is looking to get involved with our civic association. She has worked for Arlington County Government for several years and is familiar with all aspects of local government and Community engagement and would like to know how she can help.

**1.2.2. Requests to Approve Solar Panels:** The SRCA Board received an application from a resident requesting approval of solar panels. A discussion amongst the Board and the resident who submitted the application followed. Some concerns that were raised included the type of solar panels that were to be installed (large panels vs. the ones that look more like shingles), the number and placement of the shingles (South vs. North side), why a zoning variance was needed when the City approved both the structural and electrical components, and whether the installation of such panels can have a negative impact on the property value of the home (arguments for both sides were made). In the interest of time, Weiblinger asked the resident if he could obtain additional information from the solar panel installation company about the possibility of placing them all on the back of the house vs. the front, which he agreed to do. In return, resident asked that any other data points that might indicate how solar panels impact the property value of a home (negative or positive) be shared with him.

**1.2.3. Violations of SRCA's Deed of Restriction (i.e., parking of boats on SR streets):**

This topic was not discussed.

**1.3. Reports from SRCA's ACPD Liaison/Alexandria's Sheriff's Liaison:** Lt. Houston was unable to attend the meeting. Officer Moore had no new updates, but indicated crime data would be emailed to us next week so we can discuss it at the next meeting.

One Board member asked about the recent home break-in on Tupelo/Ft. Williams that we learned about via Nextdoor. Officer Moore has been out for training and other reasons the past month, so he agreed to find out more details and get back to us.

Another Board member asked about the car break-in on Colonel Ellis. In that case the juveniles involved tried to use one of the car owner's credit cards and put their full names in the database where they were trying to use the card, so the police were able to obtain their full names. Officer Moore reminded everyone to lock and secure personal items and noted juvenile crime has skyrocketed right now.

Officer Moore shared that there was also an incident on Duke St. and Donaldson involving three teenagers who were robbed of their property by five other teenagers. The police department is working with the City to arrest them and make sure they're accountable. They are also trying to find other avenues to help them stay out of trouble, such as finding employment as an example.

## **2. Secretary's Report – Karen Meade**

**2.1. Approve meeting minutes from the July 6, 2023 Board Meeting:** Meade received some minor edits from Pritzker and Poretz which were incorporated into the final version. Jacob moved to approve the July 6, 2023 meetings minutes as drafted, Weiblinger seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved as edited.

**2.2. SRCA Community Directory Updates:** No new updates.

**3. Treasurer's Report – Scott Sutherland**

**3.1. Status of Dues:** Very little financial activity in the last month. One deposit from one new resident; no withdrawals. Balance stands at \$14,010.49, and we have 141 paid members from the association to date.

**3.2. Updates on any Outstanding Reimbursements:** No new updates.

**4. First Vice President's Report – Key Updates from Partner Associations/Coalitions – Krista Poretz/Jeanne Jacob:** Poretz was unable to attend the meeting but provided the updates below via email.

**4.1. Seminary Hill Civic Association (SHA) Report:** SHA did not meet in July or August. Reconvening in September.

**4.2. West End Coalition (WEC) Report:** The next quarterly virtual meeting of the WEC will be Saturday, 23 September 23 at 10:00 AM. The WEC is inviting Mayor Wilson as the guest speaker.

**4.3. Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA) Report:** No updates.

**4.4. Douglas MacArthur Modernization Project:** Douglas MacArthur Elementary School (DMES) - Occupation Assessment planned for 7 August 23. No change to planned in-person first day of school on 21 August 23. I will keep the board informed if I hear otherwise or any other updates. No contingency plan has been communicated to parents/caregivers at this time.

**5. Second Vice President's Report – SRCA Events – Katie Dominick:** Dominick was unable to attend the meeting but provided the updates below via email.

**5.1. Screen on the Green "The Sandlot" – Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> (make-up date) at 7pm at SSSAS Upper Field:** Dominick was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following update via email: The SRCA Movie Night at SSSAS is rescheduled for Aug. 19th. I will make sure that everything is good to go the Monday before the event with the school and with Kate Hennigan for snacks, but we should be in good shape as long as the weather holds up.

**5.2. SRCA Annual Picnic October 1<sup>st</sup> at SSSAS upper field:** Dominick was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following update via email: For the annual picnic, I'll start planning after the movie night, but the date is confirmed with SSSAS. I'll arrange for catering as well as the bounce houses, games, etc. for the kids. We might want to ask the group if we'd like it to be more of a buffet this year as it has been in years past or if everyone liked the boxed lunches.

Feedback was mixed as to whether buffet-style food or boxed lunches are preferred. One board member asked if the buffet style meal entailed cooking hot dogs and hamburgers or if it was catered by Rockalnds or some other restaurant? Another Board member pointed out that the boxed lunches increased membership and the number of folks who provided us with updated information for the directory because the pre-ordered food generated more foot traffic. And finally, one Board member asked what the cost difference was because he thought the boxed meals were considerably more expensive. We'll circle back with Dominick to obtain this information before making a decision.

**6. Communications Report – Stephanie Karner:** Karner was unable to attend the meeting.

**7. City of Alexandria Projects – Scott Sutherland/ Krista Poretz/Jeanne Jacob**

**7.1. Duke Street-in-Motion Updates – Scott Sutherland:** We likely won't hear much more on this topic for some time since the design phase of the project will take quite a while.

**7.2. Inova Hospital Project Updates – Krista Poretz:** No new updates.

**7.2.1. Strawberry Run Updates – Jeanne Jacob:** Jacob shared the following update that she received from resident Lyn Allen, who was on the Strawberry Run Advisory Committee: Allen was surprised that the Mayor and City Council decided not to do anything about Strawberry run right now, but she and other Strawberry Run Committee leaders were encouraged and will continue to keep the pressure on so the City can't surprise us without giving us an opportunity to provide feedback. The SR Committee doesn't want the City to do unnecessary work that could affect the SR tree canopy.

**8. Parliamentarian Report – David Pritzker**

**8.1. SRCA Constitution and Bylaws Update:** No new updates.

**9. St. Stephens & St. Agnes School (SSSAS) Liaison – Beth Chase**

**9.1. SSSAS Construction project underway:** A lot of activity is happening. Demolition of the building will be finished by August 4, but there's still a lot of dirt to haul out. One Board member alerted SSSAS of some dump truck drivers going the wrong way, so the trucking company will be taking action as necessary. Chase reiterated that if you send an email to [Construction@sssas.org](mailto:Construction@sssas.org), to please provide as many specifics about the vehicle as possible. She'll be on vacation for the next two weeks but will still be checking emails. Generators were delivered; should start running electricity to the classrooms next week in prep for students. The two generators will run as necessary, so in the evening they're hoping they'll only be running one and not two. The noise level is rated lower than 80, which is the sound of a large dining hall when you go out to a restaurant, so the hope is that they won't be too loud during the evenings; during the daytime they may need to go up more. There's also a webcam available for the construction: go to [SSSAS.org](http://SSSAS.org) and watch it in real time.

SSSAS is looking forward to welcoming students back soon. Staff will be starting on August 21.

**10. Beth El Hebrew Congregation (BEHC) Update – Jeremy Flachs:** Beth El hired a new Religious School Director.

Regarding Karig Estates, Flachs hasn't heard much new information. There were some issues with the tree falling down, crushing the playground and some of the plantings on Beth El's property, but they have been addressed. Flachs believes more trees will be coming down but isn't sure when. About six trees were undermined when they dug the road, so Flachs was surprised the City didn't push that road further away from the Beth El property. A second home has been sold and building has begun. Karig Estates homes are outside of SRCA's jurisdiction, but Jacob noted that if those residents want to join, they could join as non-covenant members.

As far as Taylor Run/Strawberry Run/Lucky Run, Flachs sat on the Taylor Run Building Group, and as he understands it, Taylor Run is the only run out of the three that was placed on the schedule where the city was to follow the recommendations of the citizens. He doesn't believe there will be any stream restoration with heavy equipment or cutting down of trees, which is good news from the perspective of the vast majority of citizens who sat on the committee. There will be some minor structural work that will be completed to make sure it doesn't fail, but so far, they haven't done anything. The Building Group is supposed to be notified once the City comes up with more specific plans.

As shared earlier in the meeting, Strawberry Run was put on hold with no action to be taken, with the possible exception of some areas where erosion was affecting private property.

In an effort to fix Lucky Run, they bulldozed the stream and cut down tons of trees, which is the very thing they didn't want to have happen at Strawberry Run.

**11. Home Sales in Seminary Ridge – Kate Hennigan:** Hennigan was not able to attend the meeting. Jacob shared that there are two houses currently on the market on Ft. Williams Parkway across the street from one another. One has a contract on it, and the other on Ft. Worth will be coming on the market September 15.

**12. Welcome Committee for New Residents – Kate Hennigan:** Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting.

**13. SRCA Historian – Mike Brookbank:** No new updates.

**14. Old Business – Richie Weiblinger:** No old business to discuss.

**15. New Business – Richie Weiblinger**

**15.1. Next SRCA Board Meeting – Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 7:00 pm**

**15.2. SRCA Board Position for 2023 – 2024 term:** Weiblinger reminded folks that we'd really like to continue to get feedback about interest in serving on the SRCA Board, particularly from new members in the community.

**16. Continued "Open Mic" for SRCA Community – Richie Weiblinger**

**17. Adjournment of SRCA Board Meeting – Richie Weiblinger:** Weiblinger moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm; it was seconded by Jacob and unanimously approved.