



Federal Hill Neighborhood Association (FHNA)
 General Membership Meeting
 Meeting Minutes for February 18, 2014

Date: February 18, 2014	Start Time: 7:00 pm	Chair: Eric Costello
Location: Christ Lutheran Church	End Time: 9 pm	Secretary: Jessica Damen
Board Members Present: Eric Costello, Jody Martin, Bob Merbler, Bob O'Donoghue, Acting Board Members Present: Jessica Damen, Walt Ettinger		
Board Members Not Present: Claire Bogdanski, Gayle McClure Acting Board Members Not Present: Aimee Sanfilippo		
Members in Attendance: approximately 50		
Adoption of Minutes from January 21st – so moved, seconded and approved unanimously.		
Treasurer's Report – read by Eric Costello. There is approximately \$16,400 in FHNA's bank accounts. More information is available on the FHNA website at: http://federalhillbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/treasury_report_03032014.pdf		
Remembering Richard Kaminski - Walt Saxon and Rich Polan spoke of Mr. Kaminski's neighborhood activism and accomplishment. A moment of silence was observed by the membership.		
Upcoming Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thu, Feb 20, 7pm – Southern District Police & Community Relations Council Mtg – 10 Cherry Hill Road • Thu, Feb 27, 7pm – C.O.P. Walk – Porters (corner of Riverside and Cross) • Sat, Mar 01, 1:30pm – Casino Local Development Council Mtg – Leadenhall Baptist Church • Tue, Mar 18, 7pm – FHNA General Membership Mtg – Christ Lutheran Church 		
Officer Kevin Vaught ("Butterbean") – Crime Report and SD Explorers Trip - Butterbean was welcomed by the membership with applause. Officer Vaught presented a police report. Questions and answers ensued regarding a burglary and other items from his report. Officer Vaught also presented information about Explorers Post 9449 Venture Crew. He requested donations, and the membership expressed support in contributing. For more information and to make a donation go to this web site: www.bcsdexplorers.webs.com		



Pastor Ruth Travis of Ebenezer AME Church - This church has been in continuous existence and in the same location in FH for 177 years old. Pastor Travis welcomed all to worship with AME Ebenezer Church. Church congregation is 90% elderly therefore needing canes, walkers etc. Parking is tight and she apologized for any car/parking conflicts that may arise during church's services. She informed the membership that there are two church security persons available at all times who will help with any block cars.

Jodi, a FH neighbor of the church has always gone to the church's door and blocked car is always moved promptly. Discussion ensued about increasing possible joint activities with AME Ebenezer Church and Historic Sharp-Leadenhall Neighborhood.

Walt Saxon - Robert Baker Park Update – With \$1500 many repairs and planting were completed in the park. Ask Block Captains if they would do Fall and Spring clean up at the Robert Baker Park.

FHNA Special Election - Jessica Damen – Acting Secretary; Acting At-Large Director – Walt Ettinger and Acting At-Large Director – Aimee Sanfilippo. Jessica Damen and Walt Ettinger each spoke briefly regarding their involvement within the community and Kelly Sheehan spoke on behalf of Aimee. Lane Berk moved to elect the three members. Seconded by Lynn Halperin. The membership voted unanimously to elect all three.

Vote - Does FHNA wish to send a letter to the Mayor requesting the creation of a local Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) district? - Kelly Sheehan moved and Walt Saxon seconded it. The motion carried with 27 in favor, 15 opposed. Prior to the motion questions were raised about building restrictions, property values, taxes, application to commercial / residential properties.



Vote on Cross Bar Beer Garden proposal and proposed MOU with SBNA. The vote will be: “Does FHNA wish to support the SBNA MOU with Cross Bar Beer Garden, with the above conditions, at BMZA and BLLC; and commit to not further challenge the validity at the February 20 BLLC hearing and agree to not pursue validity in Circuit Court for Baltimore City”?

The FHNA Liquor Advisory Committee (LAC) voted last week (12 in favor, 3 opposed) to recommend support of the revised CrossBar Beer Garden proposal. This recommendation was contingent upon FHNA being added as an equal signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the following three conditions:

1. The listed capacity of 155 would be posted to the BMZA filing as an additional enforcement mechanism;
2. A “noise arc” would be installed on the north wall, with FHNA input provided to a sound consultant hired by the operator, to ensure adequate sound mitigation;
3. The closing time for the outdoor area on Fridays and Saturdays would be 11:30pm instead of midnight.

The operators have agreed to these conditions and since memorialized them in an executed MOU with South Baltimore Neighborhood Association (SBNA) and FHNA (if FHNA agrees to the MOU). In addition, the operators agreed to add FHNA as an equal signatory with a vote of support from FHNA on February 18. Members of the LAC: Keenan Dworak-Fisher, Rufus Lusk, and Bob Merbler presented their rationale LAC position on the motion. Diana Sugg, Co-Chair of the Committee, presented opposition to the LAC’s vote. A spirited discussion ensued for approximately 45 minutes regarding the pro and cons of signing the MOU. At approximately 8:45pm a motion was made and seconded to end debate and passed 37 to 6.

Vince Mettle, a neighbor who lives directly behind the proposed Cross Bar Beer Garden was allowed to speak after the motion to end debate as it was the consensus of the membership and board members present that given Vince’s close proximity to the proposed project, his voice needed to be heard.

Then Joe Halperin made a motion, for a secret ballot on proposed vote. Rose McCabe seconded it. The motion failed with 21 opposed and 18 in favor.

A hand vote was taken on the following motion: **“Does FHNA wish to support the SBNA MOU with Cross Bar Beer Garden, with the above conditions, at BMZA and BLLC; and commit to not further challenge the validity at the February 20 BLLC hearing and agree to not pursue validity in Circuit Court for Baltimore City”?**

The count was done twice and 21 members opposed the motion and 10 approved the motion. The motion failed.

A motion was made to support the revised Cross Bar MOU, which was previously executed with SBNA. It was seconded. The motion was not carried, with 31 opposed and 10 in support.



BMZA Appeal – Cross Bar has a hearing at the Board of Municipal Zoning and Appeals (BMZA), scheduled for February 25th, regarding the Crossbar’s request for variances (see relevant Membership meeting minutes of January 21, 2014 where the membership opposed the operator’s variance requests by a vote of 42 to 4).

A motion was proposed by Keenan Dwork-Fisher and seconded by Rosalie McCabe to oppose at BMZA, the zoning variances as requested by the operators of the Cross Bar Beer Garden. The motion carried with 35 votes in favor, 11 against.

New Business - Rufus Lusk encouraged neighborhood participation in the Digital Harbor Digi-Ball. For more information go to: <http://www.dhhsalliance.org/digiball/>

Meeting Adjourned at 9:20 pm – carried, unanimously.

Minutes Approved On: March 18, 2014

Minutes Approved By: Vote of membership, unanimous.