

Federal Hill Neighborhood Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, October 20, 2020
(via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER:

Beth Whitmer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:

Middle Branch Project Update – South Baltimore Gateway Partnership Executive Director presented plans the Middle Branch Waterfront. The Middle Branch of the Patapsco River presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to spur economic development and deliver access to public parks, trails and water-based recreation. Plans for the Middle Branch Waterfront will transform this 11-mile stretch of shoreline into Baltimore’s next great destination.

Moreover, this development will give current residents access to their waterfront in a way that embraces environmental quality, resilience to future storm events and equity.

Fifty thousand people live within a 20- minute walk of the Middle Branch shoreline, which is currently a patchwork of vacant land, active industrial uses, long-fallow development sites, and underutilized parks that are disconnected from one another or the nearest neighborhoods. Much of the Gwynns Falls/Middle Branch and shoreline endures an unfortunate legacy of contamination, environmental degradation and neglect.

The new Middle Branch Waterfront will create a network of open spaces and connectivity that bring local residents and others from throughout the region to a new type of waterfront park system that is compatible with the native ecology of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The project will likewise connect the waterfront to upland parks and recreation centers in neighborhoods – a “recreation shed” – affording safe, equitable access for healthy activities and community cohesion.

Public Safety/Security Camera Project – Arch McKown of Patterson Park shared his ongoing initiative to reduce crime in the Patterson Park neighborhood. He has been very successful in reducing crime in the Patterson Park area by creating a community camera network and improving communication with the Baltimore Police Department (BPD).

Arch shared the three main areas that he has focused on - crime prevention, crime incident response and arrest follow up. He has created a community camera network and shared the steps to a successful program. First the network must be built and maintained. He has registered over 200 homes and businesses and over 700 cameras. He developed and maintained the database of cameras using Google Survey to create a map showing where security cameras are and are not located in the neighborhood. He established sectors and sector captains within the

neighborhood. Arch has applied for neighborhood grants and worked with the City to encourage the camera rebate program. To implement the network, Arch:

- established communication to owners of the cameras
- built social media groups to disseminate information
- learned the BPD patrol geography
- connected with the neighborhood community officers
- established rapport with patrol post officers
- has the contact name and number of district detective unit
- posts “be on the lookout” messages
- identifies and shares chronic offender identifications where appropriate
- created a Facebook group of sector point of contacts
- encourages neighbors to file police reports and press charges
- emails camera files to the BPD and testifies in court

If an event occurs, the sector captain reaches out to the individuals who have cameras in the area of the incident to determine if there is useful footage and, if so, shares the footage with the BDP as necessary.

Arch said that as a result of the efforts, crime in his neighborhood has been reduced from 2017 to 2020. Burglaries dropped 50+% (a couple of hundred incidents) and package theft has dropped.

Arch also shared that his neighborhood has safe walk areas where there are numerous cameras. This initiative is still in progress and he is working with Johns Hopkins to communicate with residents about the safe walk areas. Arch said that he does not encourage putting signage in residential areas where cameras are installed.

Arch works with the neighborhood to submit Community Impact Statements when crimes occur which outline the incident, the impact on the community and the community expectations to the State’s Attorney’s Office. Beth shared that if there is a crime on the Southern Peninsula, a Community Impact Statement is signed by the presidents of all of the neighborhood associations on the peninsula.

Brad asked that the neighbors keep a lookout for a camera survey that will be distributed requesting information about cameras in Federal Hill and a flyer with safety tips and the link to the survey.

Block Captain Initiative- Beth introduced Zac Blanchard and Pablo Padin who are Co-Chairmen of the Block Captain Committee. Zac shared that he wants to reinstate the Block Captain Program in Federal Hill to connect neighbors and facilitate the flow of information from and to the FHNA. Zac is working to identify block captains for every block in Federal Hill. He has sent an email to the current block captains and identified new block captains. He will be sending

a survey to the block captains to determine priorities for the program. He plans to hold a Block Captain meeting in November.

Pablo is focusing on public safety and the block captains' role in public safety. He is working to connect residents with the public safety effort. Pablo is working on collecting data to inform the public of statistics regarding crime and safety.

Visit Baltimore Logo Sculpture- Trish McClean of Visit Baltimore shared the 3 prong branding effort that Visit Baltimore is focusing on to encourage visitors to Baltimore.

- Building local pride
- Attracting regional visits and day trips
- Messaging to tourists for long term

Trish shared the new Visit Baltimore logo and a logo sculpture that has been created. Visit Baltimore is looking for space with water view to place the sculpture and is considering Federal Hill Park as an option. She wanted to obtain feedback from the FHNA to determine if there would be interest in having the sculpture placed in Federal Hill Park. Visit Baltimore would pay all of the expenses to have the sculpture installed and removed. They are looking at a 4 to 6 week timeline for installation. Beth will get feedback from South Harbor Renaissance to determine if they approve of the sculpture. Beth will then send an email to the FHNA members to obtain approval/disapproval of the initiative.

Digital Harbor High School- Brooke Shird of DHHS invited the neighbors of Federal Hill to DHHS Fall and Harvest Festival on Friday from 5-7 p.m. She will also be sending information on their coat drive. They are also accepting candy donations for their Trunk or Treat event.

2020/2021 FHNA Board Election – Two Board members – Faith Millspaugh and Nancy Gordon are up for reelection as their 2 year term is over. There was a motion to approve the reelection of Nancy and Faith and it was seconded. Beth asked that FHNA members send an email to ehillsider@gmail.com to send their vote to approve or disapprove their reelection. Beth will announce the results at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

There will be a collaborative fall cleanup between FHMS, FHNA, FHSNA and the businesses on Saturday, November 14th at 10 a.m.

The BPD will be presenting a Decent Decree Update virtually on October 28th at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at approximately X p.m.