



Federal Hill Neighborhood Association
General Meeting, November 14, 2023
Light Street Presbyterian Church
Meeting Minutes

Zac Blanchard called the hybrid meeting called to order at 6:32

55 attendees in person
25 on Zoom

October minutes approved:

Kathleen Robinson made a motion to approve the October minutes. Donna Price seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Principal Mavis Jackson from Digital Harbor High School thanked the neighborhood for its support and apologized for the “small number of students who are not making the right choices”. Principal Jackson provided her personal cell number: 443-687-5579 and invited residents to call her if we see incidents, both inappropriate and praiseworthy, that involve Digital Harbor students.

Principal Jackson highlighted some of the good work happening at Digital Harbor, including AP classes, the band, and upcoming travel to Italy and Montenegro, amongst other places.

With the community’s assistance, Thanksgiving meals are being prepared for Digital students who may not have access to a traditional Thanksgiving meal at home.

Principal Jackson had no information to share about the proposed Mayor’s Office of Safety and Engagement (MONSE) initiative partnership at Digital.

Principal Jackson reported that School police officers at Digital are primarily for activities and incidents that take place on school grounds. A mobile police unit is sometimes available to respond to community issues.

How to resolve escalating behaviors with DH students. Send pictures or images of inappropriate behavior to Principal Jackson, who wants to make “strong, systemic changes”.

In response to the question, “What can the community do to support Digital Harbor?”, Principal Jackson highlighted the Arts (theater, piano, AP Arts, pottery, etc.) and Athletic (Bocci, badminton, swimming, wrestling, track etc.) programs, and invited the community to follow them on social media. She indicated that the school needs our “time and energy”.

Welcome

Pastor Tim Hughes Williams of Light St. Presbyterian Church welcomed the group to the church.

Baltimore Police Department - Captain Adam Lattanzi

Captain Lattanzi reported that a number of juvenile arrests tied to robberies had been made over the past month, and that the Department of Juvenile Services had released most of the alleged offenders to their

parents' custody. Captain Lattanzi indicated that approximately 10 juveniles are responsible for the bulk of the carjackings.

Federal Hill is part of sector 3 in the Southern District. While Sector 3 crime is overall down 26%, there's been a slight uptick over the last month: The number of incidents increased from 10 last month to 13 this month.

Thanks to grant funding, Federal Hill will be getting new License Plate Readers (LPRs). New intelligence and information sharing technology is being deployed in Federal Hill.

Kathleen Robinson inquired about whether officers can be deployed to Federal Hill Park during the day. Captain Lattanzi responded that there's only one post officer assigned to the neighborhood, making that kind of deployment challenging.

In response to concerns expressed by residents about slow and ineffective 911 response times, Captain Lattanzi indicated that the 911 system is not run by BPD – it's a different City entity.

BPD is trying to “rewire the brains” of younger officers to be more proactive and get out of the “Covid mindset”, encouraging them to get out of the patrol car, and engage business owners and community members. Inadequate staffing remains an ongoing issue.

There is a standing Southern District Community Relations Council (CRC) meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 10 Cherry Hill Rd.

Public Safety – Brad O'Brien

- \$60K in grants is paying for 2 License Plate Readers
- A “BCIC room” staffed by 5 or 6 detectives just looking at digital resources is being put online.
- We received a \$30K grant for 3 additional lights for Federal Hill Park
- 46 is the most densely populated liquor license district in the state of Maryland!

FHNA Public Safety Update (see attached handout)

We need people to give their time to the 95% of Digital Harbor students who are doing the right thing.

TIP: If possible, to help in identifying a suspect, pay attention to their shoes. Criminals will take off their hoodie or throw away their backpack, but typically NOT their shoes!

Neighbors need to shake off apathy and do something.

Jen Covino E. Montgomery St. Neighbor

Jen described an unfortunate incident during which a brick thrown through her front window. The responding police officer asked, “Did you get the suspect’s name and date of birth”? This experience, along with conversations with concerned neighbors about their experiences with crime in Federal Hill has resulted in a community letter to public officials requesting key action steps, including:

1. Asking Councilman Costello to convene a meeting with Mayor, MONSE, BPD, BCPS, etc.
2. Requesting that BPD implement community policing practices that include building relationships with neighbors. We need police visibility during the daytime.

3. Asking that the city meet its obligation to provide necessary public safety services and enforce existing laws.

The community letter was available for signing following the meeting

Transportation

Locchanan Sreeharikesan, the transportation chair and has also taken on the role of parking chair.

- New 4-way stop sign at Henrietta and Charles?
- The intersection of Hamburg and Light is being evaluated re: speeding

Nigel Crocombe outlined an initiative concerned with increasing pedestrian safety around Federal Hill Park. The focus is on crosswalks, speed humps, and an appropriate median in the 300 block of Warren Ave

Social Committee

Sheri Hunt is no longer in the neighborhood and has resigned as committee chair. The new chair, Paco Cummings, described the planned emphasis of the committee, which includes:

- A proposed large event in Federal Hill Park in the Spring
- Working alongside existing events, e.g.,
 1. Dumpster days
 2. Parking Pass distribution

Digital Harbor Liaison

Donna Price spoke about the desire to create a Food Bank at Digital Harbor. They need canned goods, etc.

Federal Hill Prep Liaison

Celine Plachez encouraged neighbors to link their Harris Teeter loyalty membership to Federal Hill Prep. Go to the "Together in Education" section of the Harris Teeter website. The code for Federal Hill Prep is **1469**.

Window Planter grant

Up to \$250 in matching grant are available for the installation of CHAP-compliant window planters for 50 participants.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm

Prepared by James Woody