



To Preserve And Promote Our Historic Lifestyle

Federal Hill Neighborhood Association (FHNA)
 General Membership Meeting
 Meeting Minutes October 20, 2015

Date: October 20, 2015	Start Time: 7:05 pm	Chair: Beth Whitmer
Location: Christ Lutheran Church	End Time: 9:19	Secretary: Jessica Damen
Board Members Present: Beth Whitmer, Jessica Damen, Bob Merbler, Nancy Gordon, Deb Nelson, Kyle Warner, Brooke McDonald, Sharon Johnson,		
Board Members Not Present: Walt Ettinger		
Members / Guests in Attendance 28 registered members		
Guests: Mrs. Shannon Mobley, Mr. Dave Verdi, Dr. Bowden, Ms. Joyce Argonot, Mr. Robert O'Brian		
Itemized Agenda: Adoption of Minutes from 9/15/15 meeting – Damen. Minutes approved as written and Special meeting minutes of October 4 th approved as written.		
Treasurer's Report- Nancy Gordon- It was moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as written. Approved.		
Public Safety :Officer Shaun Mahoney reviewed for the membership his experience and educational background. Officer Mahoney provided a brief overview of the crimes occurring in the FH area. He noted that burglaries are trending down. A discussion ensued regarding the police presence during the upcoming "Halloween bar crawl." It was noted by a member that according to Lindy Promotions' Facebook page approximately 3.5 thousand tickets have been sold, nevertheless it is not a "special event." According to Officer Mahoney there is no law that prohibits the "crawl." Officer Mahoney approves all the special events but the Halloween event does not fall into this category since no streets are being closed by prior request. However, the police have the discretion to close down the event for public safety reasons. Officer Mahoney suggested development of legislation. A member, Susan Ettinger, said that the Public Safety Coalition, formed after the Irish Stroll, has not be able to obtain data from the appropriate Baltimore City departments, which could prove to be the basis supporting legislation. It appears that the City either does not have the data or, does not wish to reveal it. Many members have observed a lack of enforcement of public nuisance citations.		



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DHHS and Public Safety: Jessica Damen (FH School Liaison) and Mrs. Shannon Mobley (Principal Digital Harbor High School, DHHS), Dave Verdi, vice principal, Dr. Bowden, vice principal, Joyce Argonot, (Hall monitor at DHHS and neighborhood resident.)

Members expressed concern to the DHHS representatives about increased criminal, intimidating and truant behavior by DHHS students. Members described specific instances of the foregoing and the School representatives addressed some of those instances individually. The School representatives stated that there is a large police presence by both the School Police force and Baltimore City police, especially during dismissal time. Also, the School does share a lot of information through the DHHS Alliance. The School representatives reiterated the following, that DHHS:

1. Is a school of choice part of a Citywide program? DH never was intended to be a criteria or magnet school.
2. Less than 100 students out of 1500 student come from south Baltimore,
3. The School must comply with the City's and Maryland State Code of Conduct guidelines.
4. Curriculum emphasis is technology and it is presumed that students who attend want to earn a certification in technology.

Jessica Damen reiterated the School telephone numbers and email addresses, which are posted on Facebook and inside the newsletter, Hillsider

CHAP Update- John Thompson- met with Eric Holcomb, executive director of CHAP for the City. John showed the map of the proposed CHAP border. Chap district boundaries are the boundaries of Federal Hill. The map shows the Cross Street Market inside of the FHNA proposed Chap boundaries. John described in detail the process for responses and hearings. Discussion ensued about the time frame and education of the benefits or disadvantages of CHAP designation. Mailing is going out the middle of November and then there is a 90-day response time. They will not redo mailing regardless of response. After responses are analyzed there will be two public hearings. Testimony, email, letter or appearance will be accepted. Then the planning commission will do another mailing. If approved by the planning commission, the application goes to City Hall and then there is one more hearing. One member raised concerned about why the CHAP designation process is being done now and concerned about the letter sent originally requesting a CHAP designation. One member verbally expressed his opinion that there may be conflict of interest with the FHNA preservation committee chair representing a client regarding a zoning variance No other members voiced concern and no motions were introduced.



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DOT update on Key and Light Sts. Intersection: Mr. Robert O'Brian presented a poster picturing the proposed changes to the intersection. Some Project details were presented to the membership. There is a hearing planned for community input at the 95% plan completed stage. Construction is planned from the summer through the fall of 2016. Construction maintenance is about a year and a half. Final approval is at the Maryland State Highway commission. It is a funded project. A member raised questions regarding about allowable hours for construction and whether there are contractual incentives or disincentives for compliance with the construction timeline.

Federal Hill Neighborhood Peace Ambassador Program: delayed due to late hour

An investor purchased 807 Light. Mr. Polan negotiated an agreement with the investor that would limit the amount of parking permits permitted at 807 Light. A member raised the point that downgrading commercially zoned property to multi-family may not be allowable under BC zoning regulations as a matter of right. Therefore, the membership consensus was to table the proposal reached with the investor and that Mr. Polan and Merbler research whether the investor can, as "a matter of right" change zoning from commercial to multifamily. Following the meeting it was determined that the property was never zoned as commercial. Correction noted in addendum below.

Action item – John Bacci recommended a sub-committee be formed regarding zoning changes.

Announcements: Walt Saxon reported regarding Fall Clean – up.

New Business and Event Announcements.

Public safety committee update - National preparedness brochures distributed.

Liquor Advisory Committee report:

-Porters had not paid renewal for liquor license and now Porters has been closed almost 180 days.

- The "Langerhans's" site includes a new proposal for a beer garden. This site is within SBNA boundaries.

- Cowboys and rednecks – 3rd deal has fallen through.

- Cross Bar – There is no definitive information regarding why Cross Bar construction is stopped.

New Business: Beth Whitmer reported about various meetings attended.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:19 pm

Adjourned



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Addendum

Email dated October 23rd sent by Beth Whitmer:

Dear FHNA Members:

First, thanks for hanging in there through a very long meeting Tuesday night. We covered a lot of ground and I think everyone that wanted to weigh in on various issues had the opportunity.

I do need to correct some information that was presented on 807 Light. Rich Polan was our negotiator on this zoning concern (while keeping Bob and me fully in the loop). He intended to present Tuesday night. When he had to leave the meeting early, Bob agreed to present in his place but was unclear on some of the detail. He has since discussed with Rich and zoning.

The message Bob sent below clarifies the information. The bottom line is this property was never zoned as a commercial property; it has been approved by BMZA for 2 apt instead of one and we have negotiated in good faith with the purchaser to reduce the number of parking decals and passes from a potential of 10 to only 4.

Eric is willing to introduce a bill as we did with Olive to give more teeth to this parking agreement.

It was suggested at the meeting that we need a committee to handle zoning issues that go beyond parking. I agree and will have this as a key item on the next board meeting agenda.

We will add this correction as an addendum to the meeting minutes when Jessica compiles them.