

Civic Association Board Meeting
Minutes: Tuesday Jan. 13, 2015

Present: Allan Carlson, Helen Maiwald, Ann Arnold, Bill Levin, Dick Menzer, Bob Wehr, Beverly Swain, Dedra Salitrik

Absent: Carol Goldstein

Meeting convened at 7:05

1. Agenda approved with one addition: a treasurer's report.
2. Minutes approved for December 9, 2014 meeting

Added item: Treasurer's report distributed by Bev. Discussion about bank fees and the two-year website fee that was purchased last year.

3. Website data: 415 emails received. 250 website visits.
4. Jan. 21 preparation & discussion. 74 residents and guests signed up so far. Helen and Bev will sign up new residents for our emails & accept 2015 dues from members at this meeting. They will also ask attendees what brought them to the meeting such as the topic, location, no cost, etc.

Food responsibilities for 1/21

Allan-decaf coffee & coffee urn

Helen & Bev-200 cookies, creamer, sweeteners

Dedra-cold drink (Arnold Palmer) & urn, case of water

Ann-paper goods (hot & cold cups, napkins, stirrers)

Other items:

Bill-restaurant gift certificate

Bill-finds out about help setting up chairs since Chris is unavailable. Will let us know.

Allan, Bob, Dedra-bring cameras

Allan-brings projector & laptop

Allan-will email last year's civic association informational handout to Bob

Bob-will create a new flyer using color, fonts, photos and information in time to print and distribute at 1/21 meeting.

5. Anthony Castellano was invited to discuss the reaction by the community to the violation letters received by residents. Anthony summarized the process that resulted in 200 violation letters being mailed to residents. For years, Patty Vasco was able to complete only "spot checks" of property and follow up with letters. These spot checks were generated exclusively by neighbors' complaints. Anthony determined that it is in the DRB's purview to complete an inspection of the entire community, which had not been done for years, and although they will never do these inspections again, it would be

a good experience for them. The DRB was instructed by the Board of Trustees to check the front and back of all homes, and to write up the violations they observed. Their lists of perceived violations, from spider webs to dirty windows to rotting wood, became the basis for the letters. However, violations were inconsistently noted within clusters and across the entire community. Residents were given little, if any, warning of inspections or of the violations that were being targeted. Dozens of violations were considered petty and incorrect, or both, and wound up angering residents.

Anthony reviewed most of the letters before they were sent and realized that nearly 25% of them were going to cause problems. He had most of them sent anyway, and he stated that the BOT is still working through meeting with residents who are responding to these letters.

When asked how the process will change with the new management company, Anthony stated that the next series of inspections would likely start in April. He has not yet determined how they will differ. The Civic Association Board (CAB) offered several suggestions such as informing residents via email and a Mill Monitor article months before inspections will begin and providing specifics about what exactly will be targeted in the inspections. Another suggestion was to have the entire inspection process posted on the Conservancy website. Anthony's response was, "I want to make the next letter softer and create less paperwork."

One CAB member wondered if the BOT needed an ombudsman. Anthony stated that there is a process in place for homeowners who are unhappy: a suggestion box, board chats, and time during BOT meetings for resident feedback.

Another CAB member stated that she received numerous violation letters, all of which contained errors. She wrote a letter to the BOT and attended the following Board meeting both to hear the response to her letter and because the agenda for this meeting contained an item relevant to her letter. The unfamiliar clubhouse receptionist greeted her by name, and she was escorted into the meeting where other residents' letters were discussed, but hers was ignored. The agenda item she came to hear was also skipped over. Her concerns, stated in her letter, were ignored by every member of the Board, and she felt intentionally and specifically shut out of the process. Anthony's response was that he did not put that item on the agenda.

Anthony concluded that he will write an article for an upcoming Mill Monitor issue about the next inspections. He will request that in the future, inspections will be completed in one cluster at a time.

6. Board meetings on March 10, May 12, July 14, Sept. 8 will be held at the Clubhouse at 4:00 pm instead of at 7:00.

7. Ann is coordinating carpools for the March Homewood meeting and beyond. Discussion-welcoming and including new residents/potential members in our conversations and at our tables so they feel a part of the group.

8. Jan Gardner has not yet confirmed her attendance at our May 21 meeting. We may need to identify a replacement speaker/program/topic for this meeting.

9. Suggestions for future programs included authors, history (re-enactors, the Civic War in Frederick, including the Monocacy Battlefield, the Civil War Medical Museum), and ethnic cuisine in Frederick. This will be an agenda item for next month's meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.