

NOVEMBER 2009 MINUTES-PWCA

PWCA MEETING, November 12, 2009

ATTENDEES: Rick Churchill; Jean Claude St. Germain; Tony Gil; Karen Gotlieb; Miranda Hughes-Zoler; Nancy Isserman

We did not have a typical board meeting; 4 items were presented under New Business, which everyone wanted to discuss. One item under Old Business was also presented.

New Business

A. Rick Churchill (the new township Commissioner Elect) told attendees that a proposal for pedestrian walkway/bike trail behind Lankenau Hospital [i.e., southern end] was before the Board of Commissioners and might be discussed at the Budget Meeting on November 19.

Attendees were very concerned about this proposed path. After discussion, several attendees (Tony, Jean Claude, Karen, Nancy) decided that they wanted to draft a response to send to the Board of Commissioners about the proposed bike path. The following represents what was sent to the Board of Commissioners.

"The Penn Wynne Civic Association respectfully objects to the proposed preliminary land development plan associated with Lankenau Hospital's expansion that is now before the Board of Commissioners.

The civic association specifically opposes items 25 and 26, which refer to the "implementation of future pedestrian and bicycle connections to the campus." While this language seems beneficial and, on the surface, innocuous, we foresee potential problems in terms of both security and the financial aspects.

Similar trails at Haverford College and in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park, to name two nearby examples, have been the recent sites of muggings and sexual assaults. Lower Merion presently is dealing with a rash of home break-ins and establishing the proposed trail is likely to exacerbate that problem. The surrounding neighborhood already has been victimized on numerous occasions via both break ins, as well as assaults on some of the residents. Establishing that trail could create a conduit for further criminal activity.

Meantime, establishing a trail creates ongoing financial commitments -- something often not taken into consideration. How often have we seen a new community addition fall by the wayside after the initial surge of interest fades? A trail would need to be maintained and security would be required, as mentioned before. Given that this trail would run through the back portion of Lankenau's property, ongoing security would be a difficult proposition.

Finally, as proposed, the trail would require significant amounts of lighting, which would detract from the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Many residents chose this leafy neighborhood precisely because of its green nature. Dozens of lights will alter the nature of the neighborhood."

Several other concerns/items about the proposed pathway were:

11/22/09

- 1) The provisions state this will be a pathway connecting the [Lankenau] campus to neighborhoods east and west. Do the neighbors to the west of Lankenau (Indian Creek) want to be connected to their neighbors in West Philly? [Note that It is also not clear exactly where the bike path[s] will be.]
- 2) Is this a plan that Lankenau Hospital supports and if so, are they prepared to pay the many associated costs?
- 3) The community has not had a chance to review the proposed pathway and should be allowed to have input.
- 4) Per Lance Rogers, Lankenau Hospital does not want this bike trail.
- 5) Note that it is not clear who suggested the proposed bike trail (someone on the land development planning committee?).
- 6) Because a bike trail sounds green and harmless, attendees were concerned that it might seem odd that the PWCA was against this path.

Several attendees stated they would attend the Budget Meeting on Nov 19 and will report about what transpired regarding the proposed bike trail/walking path and other issues at the next PWCA meeting in December.

B. Other items that were discussed include:

1. Tony Gil would like the PWCA to consider inviting our neighbors in the Wynnewood Valley area to join the PWCA. Attendees agreed this was a good idea. However, Jean Claude said that he thought he had already sent membership applications to residents in that area and would confirm whether this had been done. Note that we currently mail to about 1600 households. Jean Claude extensively updated our mailing list this year.
2. Nancy Isserman proposed that lawn signs should be posted about when the PWCA was holding meetings to increase attendance at our meetings and to hopefully get some new board members. Everyone agreed that signs should get made and posted the week before each meeting.
3. Jean Claude welcomed Commissioner Elect Rick Churchill and agreed to nominate him as *Sergeant of Arms* of the PWCA when there was a quorum, hopefully at the December meeting.

Old Business

Jean Claude discussed the *Garden for the Blind* in Wynnewood Valley Park. The Ardmore Rotary Club has raised money to refurbish the garden; the township is contributing funds. Lindsay Taylor would like the PWCA to "own" the garden. The PWCA could organize neighbors to help keep the garden clean (perhaps twice each summer).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting will be Thursday, December 3, 2009.

Submitted by
Miranda Hughes-Zoler
Acting Secretary