

Draft Minutes from the Brookland/Bush Hill Civic Association Meeting

September 19, 2006

- Meeting began at 7p.
- The May meeting minutes were approved as published in the BBHCA newsletter, e-mail newsletter, and Web site.
- **Newsletter**—Mailed to all residents and those with email addresses. We received \$700 for ads which will cover approximately 19 percent of the cost to mail the newsletter. In order to help defray costs of the newsletter the membership approved earlier to cut the newsletter from 5 to 4 yearly and to limit the newsletter to 8 pages.

The next deadline for the newsletter is October 7.

- **Treasury**—On the back of the current (September) newsletter is the proposed budget and expenses. The summer yard sale cost the Association \$125 for ads but we received \$200 from those who participated. To date we have spent \$178 for the mailing of the newsletter and \$1,050 to publish. A motion was made to approve the budget as presented on the back page of the September newsletter. Approved.

Joseph Blackwell conducted an independent audit of BBHCA's 2004–2005 FY books and found no problems.

A question was asked with regard to the budget as to why we are in a deficit. The answer is because of the cost to print and publish the newsletter. The board feels that by raising the membership dues this year from \$3 to \$5, by cutting back the number of newsletters printed by one, and donations received, we will be able to shorten the deficit significantly.

- **Membership**—Membership year started September 1. To date we have 56 members. We received \$385 in donations from 19 people. If you are willing to place a sign in your yard announcing our BBHCA meetings (five a year), please contact the Membership Chair.
- **Land Use and Zoning**—Two church improvements in our community—Bush Hill Presbyterian (corner Jane Way and Franconia) and United Wesleyan (corner of Trin and Old Rolling Rd)—are in the process of improving their facilities. Special Use Permits for community-based churches do not need to go before the Land Use Committee, only the Board of Zoning Appeal.

Bush Hill Presbyterian was approved. They have three church buildings and a day care center. The new plan is to improve the facility. One building will be torn down and rebuilt and they will have a new traffic pattern.

United Wesleyan is making a significant addition. Going from 4,828 sq ft to 12,924 sq ft. The current building is too small to all hold services concurrently. The County requires 33,000 sq ft of tree cover and their proposal exceeds that requirement with 50,000 sq ft of tree cover.

Kingstown was recently approved for 1 million sq ft of office space. One of the buildings will be near the theatre (in the vacant space where the huge dirt mound currently resides).

Sharon Chapel Road and Telegraph will have 11 homes built.

The driving range off Telegraph near Hayfield is being torn down to make way for active adult living. Plan is for 375 dwelling units (mid-level condo units). Backs up to Kingstown and wetlands.

Sidewalk & Trails: County is taking a look at the Van Dorn interchange for grade separation.

- **Neighborhood Watch**—In July a house was broken into on Brookland.

There is a call for a new neighborhood watch representative. Duties will be advertised in the next BBHCA newsletter. Time allocated for this position is approximately 10–15 hours/month.

Third Wednesday of every month at 7p (except in August) there is a Citizens Advisory Committee meeting held at the Franconia Police Station. The public is welcome to attend.

Other Business:

- **June Floods**—A small portion (approximately 7 homes) in the Brookland area were affected by the torrential rains we experienced in June. Up to 5 feet of water in less than 5 minutes inundated these homes. We are considered to be in a low impact area for flooding but as you can now see, flooding can impact any area. The Governor of our state was able to get the Small Business Administration to agree to low cost loans to help defray expenses.

As a result of this disaster our Association is asking for an Emergency Preparedness Committee. If you are interested in helping to form this new committee please contact our Co-President Sharada Gilkey. Information on this committee will also be posted in the next newsletter.

- The BBHCA Volunteer Service Award was presented to Bob Michie for his unrelenting work throughout the years as past President of the Association, developer of the BBHCA Web site, his work on the Bylaws & Constitution Committee, and most recently his representation on the County's Sidewalk and Trails Committee.

- **Speeding Issues**—A speed hump was installed on Westchester several years ago and, recently, a raised pedestrian hump and a stop sign was installed on Old Rolling Road in efforts to reduce speeding.

Approval was given by the membership to ask for Watch for Children signs to be placed at entrances into our neighborhood at Westchester/Franconia and Brookland/Franconia.

- **Program**—Officer Alice Bennett, Crime Prevention Officer, spoke to our group. She provided several handouts on crime prevention and mentioned a website that we all should be familiar with. The site is www.makeaplan.org and provides information on preparedness in case of an emergency. She mentioned that the Fire Department offers a free course for citizens that will train them to be part of a Citizen Corps. Training is in communication, directing traffic, and helping at a command post.

She mentioned that it is important to have an active neighborhood watch which does not necessarily mean people patrolling in cars. We should have a telephone network, window watchers, and information sent out through e-mails. Officer Bennett also mentioned that homes can have a free security assessment of their home. This is done by the police in order of request.

Long-time member and initiator of the BBHCA Neighborhood Watch 30 years ago, John Neves, pointed out that we have an active Neighborhood Watch, including patrolling cars (the signs for which were provided by the Franconia Police Dept). In reviewing a recent report of calls for suspicious activity from the neighborhood, Officer Bennett consented that our neighborhood was in fact extremely active. She encouraged those who call in and have difficulty getting through the dispatcher to be persistent and specifically state, "I want an officer."

- Prior to adjourning the meeting those in attendance were asked if we could move the meetings from 7p to 7:30p in the hopes that folks returning from work would have a little more time prior to the meetings. There was no disagreement.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:05p.