

4th District Neighborhood Planning Council
May 17, 2010

Minutes

Present: Tina Robinson, Joanne Gaitwood, Dan Walsh, Dave Blankenship, Kathy Denhardt

Tina Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. There was no meeting in April due to lack of attendance, so no meeting minutes to approve.

Discussion items:

- The Herman Holloway Senior Park improvements (funded through capital improvement grant from the 4th District NPC) began today (May 17). Residents of the Eastside were assisted by volunteers from Urban Promise and the Delaware Center for Horticulture. Lighting and new benches are underway. Painting of the playground equipment will take place on another day when it is not raining. This will be scheduled with Romaine Alexander of the City's Parks and Recreation department.
- The Pole Banners are delayed (yet again) because of communication problems with Delmarva Power on whose poles the banners are to be installed. Sophia Hanson is back from maternity leave and will be working with Delmarva Power to move this project along.
- When working with Delmarva Power, Dave Blankenship suggests using their Customer Care Website where one receives a customer care # when lodging the request. This # should be used in all follow up correspondence. It appears there are better results with this system than with phone calls.
- Money remains in the capital improvement funds available to the Neighborhood Planning Councils so there was some discussion of what projects might be undertaken. "Green Street Lighting" had been discussed in previous meetings and there is a pilot project going on in another part of the city. Dave Blankenship suggested the group consider projects related to transportation enhanced innovations, for which there is federal money available which requires only a very small local match (\$100k federal funds with \$2k local match).
- There are currently two open elected positions on the 4th District NPC because the persons holding the positions are unable to attend meetings: Secretary and Vice-President. No one present at the meeting volunteered to step into either of those roles. There was discussion about how to make the NPC an organization that was doing things sufficiently meaningful to attract volunteers from across the 4th District to participate in the monthly meetings as well as be willing to hold elective office. Ideas suggested included having the NPC systematically receive information about all capital improvements (and capital improvement budgets) that will take place in the District, and that our representative from the 4th District

consult with the NPC before casting votes on capital projects, rezoning, and planning issues that will affect the 4th District. It is not clear why such systems are not in place. Kathy Denhardt volunteered to contact Sophia Hanson about how the NPC can take on a more active role in these decisions. It was suggested by Dan Walsh that the Presidents of all the neighborhood civic associations in the 4th District be included on an email distribution list for 4th District NPC meeting announcements, minutes, and distribution of announcements between meetings (e.g. the notifications regarding planning & zoning changes that are sent to the NPC presidents). In this way the NPC would be seen as a vital conduit of information by all the neighborhoods in the district. Those neighborhoods include (email contacts were added by Kathy Denhardt following the meeting):

- Eastside (Eastside Blueprint leaders are Joanne Gaitwood jgaitwood@netzero.com and Alice Marsh amarsh@infwilm.org)
- Trinity Vicinity (communications@trinityvicinity.org)
- Quaker Hill (Casandra Marshall ctmarshall@verizon.net)
- Southbridge (Marvin Thomas marthomas@comcast.net)
- Midtown Brandywine (midtownbrandywine@gmail.com)

Tina Robinson informed the group that all of these efforts have been tried with no results.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Denhardt.

Next meeting: June 21, 2010