

Cool Spring/Tilton Neighborhood Association

Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2011

Attendees: See attached list.

1. Welcome

Meeting chair Clara Zahradnik (President – CS/TNA) welcomed CS/TNA meeting attendees and encouraged any non-members to complete a membership form.

2. Announcements

- Neighborhood Clean-up Day-April 9

The idea of a CS/T neighborhood-wide Community Project Day with a goal of neighborhood clean-up was discussed with neighborhood residents volunteering to clean up their own properties as well as nuisance properties. This would involve identifying areas, including private home lots, which need cleaning and sending letters to owners of nuisance properties. Councilman Martelli indicated that community volunteers can clean up public right-of-ways but not private property; however, if the homeowner does not clean up a nuisance property, Wilmington Department of Licensing and Inspection can ticket the owner of the property.

A motion was made to organize a CS/T neighborhood-wide Community Project Day.

In favor: All

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Organize a CS/T neighborhood-wide Community Day.

- Community Yard Sale- April 30

If interested in selling items, please complete the form attached to the agenda. As in past years, the 2011 yard sale will be at individual homes. CS/TNA had considered organizing a neighborhood-wide community day at the Cool Spring Plaza; however, permits required for such an event are expensive (totaling over \$700.00 and including \$135.00 for park reservation, \$50.00/hour for required police patrol, \$130.00 for required toilet facilities) while guidelines for such an event are complicated and would require a massive amount of time and effort on the Association's part. Therefore, having the sale at individual homes was decided to be a more feasible approach.

- Wilmington Community Project Day- May 14

Wilmington Community Project Day will substitute for Clean Wilmington Day due to budget constraints. CS/TNA will plant sweet potato vines in street planters and perennials in Cool Spring Park at 10th & Van Buren Streets.

3. Streetscape around Cool Spring Park (Transport Enhancement Program)

The objective is to return Cool Spring Park near Jackson Street to its condition prior to the construction for the plaza. The enhancements include new lights and trees in and around the park, an extended walkway through Cool Spring Park to Jackson Street, and reinstallation of the fountain and statue. Delmarva Power is replacing cobra lights inside the park with architecturally appropriate ornamental lights. Monetary commitments have been obtained from State Senator Henry and State Representative Brady. Commitments from State Senator McDowell and State Representative Keeley are needed.

4. Support for Community Garden at Rodney Reservoir

Greg Luna reported that organization for a community garden at Rodney Reservoir (entrance on Clayton and 8th Streets) is well underway. Twenty raised-bed plots at \$25-30/plot are available and about 75 people have expressed interest in the garden. Guidelines to insure plots are well-tended have been discussed and include restrictions that a non-tended plot will revert to the waiting list. Grant money is being procured for fencing with a lock in/lock out facility. Other community gardens are being established in Father Tucker Park (which include a Bocce Court and farmers' market along with the community garden) and on 7th Street. Public Allies (westsidegrows@gmail.com) in conjunction with Cornerstone West has done extensive work organizing the community gardens.

Letters of support for the community gardens to be written to the Wilmington Department of Public Works are needed from community organizations. Councilmen Prado and Ignudo are supportive of the garden at Rodney Reservoir. Mr. Luna requested support from the CS/TNA.

A motion was made for CS/TNA to send a letter of support for the community garden at Rodney Reservoir.

In favor: All

Opposed: None

Motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: CS/TNA to send a letter of support for the community garden at Rodney Reservoir.

Discussion on the community garden followed. Ellen Priest explained that a project with smaller community growing areas on Van Buren Way was in progress and congratulated Christian Willauer of Cornerstone West for her excellent job of implementing ideas to benefit our neighborhood.

5. CS/TNA Picnic

Venues for the annual neighborhood picnic, to be held in late June, were discussed. Jay Mocklin has invited CS/TNA to have the picnic in the area of Rodney and 7th Streets. Other potential venues include locations near the homes/businesses of Sandy Dolan, Terry O'Byrne, Kevin Melloy, and Clara Zahradnik as well as on 8th Street and on Kirk Avenue which has been the location of the picnic in previous years. Evaluation of a location other than Kirk Avenue was suggested to increase inclusivity.

6. Wilmington Renaissance Corporation (WRC)

Carrie Gray, Managing Director of WRC, discussed the scope of work of this privately funded, non-profit economic development organization which is focused on the revitalization of the City of Wilmington. A 28-member board includes the mayor and selected members of his staff plus 20 corporate members while three full-time and one part-time employees comprise the WRC staff. The combined Wilmington Magazine and Out & About are sponsored publications.

WRC has four primary areas of activity:

- Advocacy around public safety, arts and culture, and transportation.
- Economic development with merchant initiatives, the Downtown Business Information Zone, and major project assessment.
- Residential marketing to promote Wilmington as a place to live.
- Events and promotion
 - Wilmington Grand Prix cycling race – May 19-22. 2010 race had a \$750,000. impact with 15,000 people attending.
 - Downtown Fall Festival – November 5. A family-oriented event.
 - Restaurant event in March.
 - Networking event-April 8. The invited speaker will describe an initiative in other cities in which vacant properties were sold for \$100. to artists and which greatly increased property values.
 - Promotion of World Café Live and Queen Theatre.

- Weekly e-newsletter to publicize downtown news and promote events in Wilmington such as community yard sales. The newsletter is sent to 3,000 people directly.
- Internet site of downtownwilmington.com.

In discussion, CS/TNA meeting attendees expressed great interest in the artist initiative and strongly supported the importance of the Grand Prix.

7. Public Safety

Wilmington police officers attending CS/TNA meeting: Cramer, Jordan, and Satterfield.

They reported:

- Emphasis on patrolling 7 and 8th Streets.
- Arrest on Van Buren Street on illicit drug charges.

8. Update from City of Wilmington and State of Delaware Elected Officials

Councilman Martelli reported on several issues:

- Parking

Many residents have complained about parking since budget issues have resulted in greater enforcement of parking regulations. It is imperative to abide by parking regulations in order to avoid ticketing.

- City of Wilmington budget issues

Lay-offs in city government are occurring due to the budget crisis. City budget hearings will occur in late March and April and residents are encouraged to become involved. Please give Councilman Martelli feedback on ideas to save money. He explained his stand on adhering to the city charter with funding for police, fire, water and sewer, and street cleaning but not festivals which should be privatized like the Brandywine Festival.

- Trash pick-up

Many residents have complained about delayed and cancelled trash pick-up which resulted in a build-up of trash on streets this past winter. Councilman Martelli explained the “Tropical Clause” in the union contract for city sanitation employees that notes employees do not have to work on days with <45° and precipitation at 5:00 a.m.; however, the employees are not paid overtime for Saturday hours due to weather. He recommended that city unions should contribute ideas for how to do their jobs better, cheaper, and faster. Please email John Ashe regarding sanitation complaints.

Councilman Prado indicated Councilman Martelli had covered the topics he wanted to raise.

State Representative Brady reported there will be no state tax or fee increases for 2011. Governor Markell and the State Assembly have emphasized the budget will be based on cutting expenditures and attracting new businesses.

9. Wilmington in Transition

Laura Philon reported that a presentation on climate change, entitled “Our Grandchildren’s Climate”, will be presented at Westminster Presbyterian Church on Sunday, March 13 at 3:00-5:00 p.m.

10. University and Whist Club Mixer

A CS/TNA mixer will be held at the University and Whist Club on Thursday, March 31 at 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Attendees

Christian Willauer

Bill & Barbara Dunn

John Shaw

Ellen Priest

Jim Dolan

Eric Zumsteg

Greg Luna

Laura Philon

George Ropes

Dennis Gallagher

Maria Caterara

Terry O'Byrne

Amy O'Neill

Doug Gerdtz

John & Judy Fardoulis

Clara Zahradnik

Ed Weirauch

Connie Smith

Wilmington Renaissance Corporation

Carrie Gray

Elected Officials

State Representative Gerald Brady

Councilman Stephan Martelli

Councilman Sammy Prado

Wilmington Police Department

M/Cpl. Donald Cramer

Cpl. Ryan Jordan

Cpl. Mark Satterfield