

PHILADELPHIA CROSSTOWN COALITION

Minutes of Board of Delegates Meeting on DECEMBER 11, 2017

Location: 1st Presbyterian Church of Kensington, 418 E. Girard Ave, Phila, 19125

Called to Order: 6:05 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Attending: 20 member associations, represented by 35 delegates:

Eugene Desyatnik, Joe Celantano, Brandy Bones, **Bella Vista Neighbors Assn**; Joanne Kundrat, **Callowhill NA**; David Hincer, **Cedar Park Neighbors**; Celeste Hardester, Jim Petkovits, **Central Roxborough CA**; Steve Huntington, Jeff Brandt, Wade Albert, Bill West, **Center City RA**; J Miguel Garces, Jerry Salut, Sarah Stevenson, **East Point Breeze Neighbors**; Ian Wilson, Joseph Kain, Linda Huss, Shannon Wink, **Fishtown Neighbors Assn**; Andy Toy, **Logan Square NA**; Colleen McDonough, Andrew Barbato, **Lower Moyamensing CA**; Kevin Smith, **Manayunk NC**; Matt Ruben, **Northern Liberties NA**; Barbara Capozzi, **Packer Park**; Andrew Emma, **Passyunk Square CA**; Steve Sebelksi, **Powelton Village CA**; Jeff Hornstein, **Queen Village NA**; Mary Tracy, Lorna Katz, Rosanne Loesch, **Society Hill CA**; Murray Spencer, **SOSNA**; Eric Santoro, **Spruce Hill CA**; Judy Applebaum, **Washington Square West**; Chuck Bode, Lucia Esther, **W. Powelton/Saunders Park**

Also present: Tara and Bryan Gontek of **Holmesburg CA**; Connie and Sam Schepis of **Tacony CA**; Linda Colwell-Smith, **Holmes Circle CA**; Ryan R. Kelller, Office of Councilman Bobby Henon; Courtney Voss, Office of Councilman Bobby Henon; Otis Hackney, Director, Mayor's Office of Education; James Lott, Code for Philly; Dawn McDougall, Code for Philly;

Not represented: 12 Associations, including, Cobbs Creek NA; East Falls CA; East Kensington NA, East Passyunk Civic Assn; Garden Court CA; Girard Estate NA; Hawthorne Empowerment; Mantua CA; Overbrook Farms; Overbrook Park CA; S. Broad Street NA ; Walnut Hill;
INTROS/ROLL CALL WELCOME – PCC Chair Jeff Hornstein

1. Welcome/Roll Call

20 of 32-member civics present; Fishtown thanked for hosting the meeting; Guest attendees from the Northeast welcomed

2. **Guest Speaker:** Courtney Voss, Office of Councilman Henon – Insurance and SLAPP issues

Councilman Henon's office has encouraged civics to consider joining Crosstown Coalition because of our activity on SLAPP and D&O insurance. He feels RCO's are performing a City function and want to create 3 panels to explore the subject. Henon is a co-sponsor on [Resolution 170968](#) (Authorizing the Committee on Rules to hold hearings examining the challenges faced by Registered Community Organizations from abusive lawsuits commonly known as Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, discussing solutions thereof, including examining means of holding abusive litigants accountable, and authorizing the issuance of subpoenas to compel the production of relevant witnesses and documents.) They have some initial support, though they are not expecting it from the Administration. Hearing will be with Rules Committee on Jan. 31st, 10AM. Crosstown members are asked to come brief Council, and provide oral or written testimony.

Steve Huntington suggested the hearings be at night as possible when members are more likely to be available. Members agreed this is a good idea.

Jeff Hornstein said that insurance brokers Dash & Love might have found a carrier to provide D&O coverage to all PCC members; PCC will be the policyholder; we think the City should pay the premium. Regarding potential SLAPP legislation in Harrisburg, John Taylor and Martina White are the only two from Philadelphia who, as Republicans, can influence this legislation. It would help to have civics in the Northeast to join Crosstown Coalition to help all of us be a voice in Harrisburg.

3. **Guest Speaker:** Dawn McDougall, James Lott, Code for Philly;
jlott@codeforphilly.org

Code Philly uses tech and data as a mode of civic engagement bringing together a community of people dedicated to using talents to improve their home, the City and themselves. Code for Philly (CfP) are technologists, planners, designers, members of the public, focusing on implementation of civic technology, such as building a tool that tracks bills that are of interest to civics or developing a smartphone app that provides notification of hearings. What other issues do civics deal with and what technology tools could help them? Code for Philly (CfP) wants to know more about what problems we encounter.

Brandy Bones suggested we create a CivicTech Committee. Jeff Hornstein suggested she chair it. Eugene Desyatnik said there are lots of lists, such as Inventories of Historic Properties, that would be helpful to combine and cross-reference. Steve Huntington said civics could use a means to send out an electronic petition.

4. **Guest Speaker:** Otis Hackney, Mayors Office of Education – Update on plan for local control of Schools

The Mayor's commitment to Education including lifting the 26% of Philadelphians in poverty. Programs include: Pre-K, Rebuild, Ready by 4th, OST (Out of School), Green Play Spaces, Diversion Program (instead of arrest – avoiding mistakes), Work Ready Philadelphia

SRC (School Reform Committee) started in 2001 as a Declaration of Distress by the Secretary of Education, and the State takeover initially came with promised additional resources for the City. Those have recently been cut, and the expectations of SRC control have not been met. The City faces challenge of poverty, low literacy, and an untrained workforce. We have made important investments outside of schools – now we need to make improvements in schools.

Key factors for local school board: We have a strong superintendent who just signed another 5-year contract; current SRC governance has diffuse accountability, no appointments by current governor or mayor; unlikely adequate funds will come from State; improved relations between City and PSD; Mayor Kenny taking on accountability for a local School Board.

Dissolution of SRC will need to be approved by the Dept of Education

Process for creating local School Board is that the Mayor will appoint the 13 member Nominating Panel (must be City residents at least 18-years old); Nominating committee must make 27 recommendations for School Board candidates; the Mayor will select 9 out of the 27. They will have the same term as the Mayor's. Ideally they have children in the PSD or were in it themselves; heads of organizations wanted. Members of Nominating Committee cannot be a School Board candidate. Board work is 20-30 hours per week. The Nominating Panel will be rolled out in January; the new School Board must be in place before July 1 so they can vote to borrow money by July 1st. School budget is \$3 billion. State covered 55%. City has increased \$500 million over past 4 years. Now they plan to add \$103 million.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT - Jeff Hornstein

A. OCTOBER 30 MINUTES: approved

B. FINANCIAL REPORT – ending balance at Oct. 31 was \$6136; \$500 came in for the Puerto Rico fund. Dues have been submitted. Balance currently about \$6400. Judy Applebaum moved to approve the report; David Hinchon seconded; Motion passed.

C. BEST PRACTICES SUMMIT – do another one in March; topics include Zoning, and Avoiding Lawsuits; volunteers for planning: Matt Ruben, Jim Petkovits, Ian Wilson, Joe Kain, Andy Toy, and a woman from the Northeast – not sure if it was Tara Gontek or Connie Schepis

D. NEXT MEETING – We are planning an Affordable Housing Forum, with potential date of Jan. 22; Inga Saffron may host; Sandy Shay suggested we could hold it at PNI auditorium, 8th and Market? (Councilman Greenlee has agreed that Council can slow down the AH legislation, but they need to hear from us about what we support.

A. Committee Reports

A. AFFORDABLE HOUSING – Steve Huntington and Judy Applebaum

The PCC AH committee includes Steve, Jody, Miguel Garces, Rosanne Loesch, Jeff Braff, Brandy Bones, and Jeff Hornstein; Chronology outlining AH legislation history and PCC responses was circulated;

Working group sessions held by Councilwoman Sanchez; PCC attended many, once invited in; minutes of meetings not kept, so many great ideas not recorded. Amended legislation issued 14 hours before bill was heard at PCPC hearing on Nov. 21st; Judy testified at this hearing. Bill was then presented to Rules Committee on Nov. 27; Kim Williams and Jeff Braff testified. Rules voted it out of Committee on Dec. 5th, but did not recommend it. Bill was scheduled for first reading on Dec. 14, so it may be voted on by Council on Jan. 25th. Steve recommends that PCC members pay visits as a group to individual Council members, and circulated a blue form seeking volunteers.

We are hearing that alternative legislation may be introduced on the same day, which would cause both bills to be deferred. The second bill would be an Impact Fee Bill, with a psf charge for new development – from the RCO perspective, this is a better bill, suggests Steve. Rosanne Loesch disagreed.

Jeff recommends that we hold a Community Forum prior to Jan. 25th, inviting Penn Praxis, Developers Workshop, BIA. Discussion ensued over whether we should hold a forum, hold discussions as PCC among ourselves to determine our position; ability of PCC to determine position considering that delegates cannot make decisions without consulting their boards; the logic of holding the Forum prevailed, so that delegates could then go back to their boards for a vote on position on legislation. It was suggested that the PCC member boards be invited to the Forum.

Joe Kain moved to hold the Forum on Jan. 9, 10, 11 or 22nd, as panelists are available. Rosanne Loesch disagreed. Vote not taken.

B. EDUCATION/HEALTHY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE – Jeff Hornstein - Will PCC move to support this initiative? Judy Applebaum move to support, Andy Toy seconded. Motion passed.

As recorded by Celeste Hardester, Secretary