

DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Board Meeting

Wed., September 19, 2019 @ 7:30 pm

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers: K Eisterhold, C Liggett, A Wallace, F Putney

Past Pres./Ex-Officio: C Sleeth.

Div Chairs: J Critz, R Nelson, Y Weatherly, M St Louis, D Engle, S Thornton, R Foust, V Biesel, S Misner.

2019: R Atkins, T Roeser, A Silverman.

2020: J Jones

2021: T Blalock, M Herold, D Shuey, W Tomlin, D Rollins

Guests: James Donald, Nan Leftes, Donna Bowling, Katherine Butler, Gary Tapp, Emily Rogers

President Kit Eisterhold called the Board meeting to order at 7:35 pm and the August minutes were approved.

Guest speaker Terry Theisen of Theisen Consulting was introduced. She said she had been asked by EC to give phased approach of what may be helpful to DHCA. Questions to be answered:

- What are results we're trying to get?
- How do we get those results?
- Are we structured properly to get those results?
- How will we fund the work we want to do?

Terry says it takes about a year to do this work. Shouldn't do too fast.

Steven Misner: Gathering data from neighbors other than members?

TT: Yes, that might be. Find out different constituents.

Question: What is problem we're trying to solve?

Kit: Clearly schism within organization and disagreement about organization's purpose. I'm land use guy; other people have other ideas. Disagreement on stuff like bike paths, Emory, etc. Some say we are too bloated, too many board members. Me, I think we could use an outsider help us with objectives.

Sandra: Seems like starting with goals is like starting with step 2. Need to identify problems first. Losing membership, for example.

Chris: Was part of large leadership team – was difficult & went through similar consulting process for 2 years. Thought it was good experience. Not an indictment to do this – more like health check up & looking for purpose and making us more effective. If we've never done it, we're overdue. Initial steps designed to do what you're saying – developing data about ourselves, then move forward.

TT: Data gathering phase is usually precursor & happens before any org develops goals/plans. We are usually hired to do that process. Produce report & bring to org, discuss and then go forward.

Justin asks about fee structure and what costs are included. Mailing costs included?

Jan asks what % of responses from neighborhood would be enough?

TT: 5 – 6 % would be enough to draw conclusion.

Carol asks if Thiesen has worked with other neighborhood associations?

TT says yes.

Alida notes that Thiesen's client list didn't include other neighborhood orgs.

TT: Boards should have most participation and authority. Most Exec Committees are small. Average non-profit board size in US is 20; most ECs are just officers, just 5.

Alida says she thinks neighborhood associations are different from other nonprofits.

TT: Every non profit is different & unique, but all same in one way: all corporations first with same governance requirements first & have same rules regarding tax exempt, second. Beyond that, they can operate however they want. That's why we need plans to carry out purpose.

William Tomlin asks what is role of this board & what about final product coming from this?

Discusses deliverables designated on phased plan. Board has to be involved and agree as we go through each phase.

Dick Huber asks if there could be an ad hoc committee to do this work. TT says that's for you to decide.

Announcements --

Anne Wallace: DH Book signing on Sept. 8 (Jennifer Richardson & Sue Sullivan) sold 70 copies!

Yard Sale on Sept. 21 – Thea says there are 49 sellers. Registration fees donated to Fernbank Art Dept.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLIC SAFETY – Thea

From her report: 80% is car break ins, etc. Springdale has most reported crimes.

Emphasizes If you leave it, they'll retrieve it campaign.

Ideas for next steps.... Encourage residents to request footage from Flock; consider signs/flyers; expand Neighborhood Watch Program. Streetlights on Springdale.

Steve Misner – Thought report was impressive. Question: could we tell police about the Flock system to get it used more by law enforcement?

Discussion about awareness about Flock security camera system. Anne says everyone in Division One received a flyer about the system. Police need a police report in order to pursue. Justin explains Flock is a private system. They have to request permission & it has to be granted.

Bottom line: clear out car, don't leave keys in car.

Doug: Can't say definitive where cars are when they are broken in. Anecdotally, probably cars parked on street or in parking lots.

Mike St. Louis – think we're not getting full benefit of Flock. Think we need more useful data.

Kit: Police dept don't always do anything about it.

Alida: Great work by committee should be recognized.

TOUR – Anne Wallace on behalf of Sue Sullivan

2020 Tour committee met first time at Bonnie Wolf's house. Tour is set for May 1st – 3rd. Gala planned for Friday, April 24 @ Callanwolde. Harriet Lane – chairing Gala; Sue Sullivan– house selection. Sponsorships: Kit (with Cynthia Messina) Have lots of homes already. Going for 6 – 8 homes ideally. Still need good volunteers including communications expertise to work with Sharon Day, who is chairing Publicity, to do social media, etc.

Renee: Any other thoughts about anything fundraising besides Tour? Anne, no not since so many people are stepping up. Confidence about this year.

GOVERNANCE

Discussion about Theisen Consulting Proposal:

Carol – Concern that she's never worked with other civic assoc. before. We have a lot of better functioning civic associations in nearby neighborhoods. Maybe we could talk with others before we invest \$30K. Maybe have some volunteers talk to them and find out how they operate.

Thea: We need help; we are disconnected with community. Need someone from outside with no agenda. DHCA right now is very fragile. Community connection just not there anymore. Need membership back and people who want to be on board. \$30K is a lot of money, but this can be make or break.

Doug: Think we have answers to problems in this room. Need people to say we need to do what's in best interest of neighborhood. Need to do Phase 1. To me no brainer.

Mark: Checking with higher functioning neighborhoods is actually part of proposal. Secondly, her expertise is with process taking divergent thoughts and looking for commonality. She doesn't have to be expert in neighborhood organizations I think diversity of her experience is a good thing.

Kit: No plans for succession like on Tour. Another thing – spent tremendous amount of time in beginning on in-fighting. Great to have somebody above fray, outside org, to help provide clarity on how we should be structured and where to focus our efforts. Very impressed with EC meeting with Terri. She had a lot of insights from get-go. We have resources

Rocky: Terri is amazing; she is as good as it gets. We've had tremendous experience with HOPE. Still have concerns about whether this org is ready for her. Would be easy to waste resources if we're not ready.

Alida: Also a lot of time. Agree with Sandra, think we have preliminary homework before we engage with someone high powered like Terri. Maybe a board retreat early in year.

Dick: Agree with Rocky & Alida. Don't think we're ready. Maybe a one day. Discuss our mission. What is it? Are we on track?

Chris: Phase 2 of Terri's proposal will do this exactly. She will design & facilitate a visioning session. Key part, after review of data (phase 1) she'll do this. Doing visioning on our own will result in wandering all over the place.

Rocky: Worked with Terri at HOPE first on a day- long meeting, doing homework first.

Concern about EC doing most of work in phase 1. Discussion about replacing EC with "working group".

Ron: Observe she is very talented. Don't have confidence that we will be different when it's all over. Don't know if we'll ever be ready. Skepticism about human nature in general. Go through lot of work; skeptical about success in implementation, even if good ideas come out of it.

Doug: What about just proposing to do Phase 1 first?

Anne: That might be best to find out if we have the buy in.

Motion made to defer vote for 30 days. 10 in favor of defer; 9 opposed.

TRANSPORTATION - Van Biesel

Sub-committee assigned to look at Kimley-Horn report. A lot of people show up for it. Basic process – communicate with residents of four major streets where there were recommendations. Still in process of doing that for majority of streets. For Lullwater, we have good idea of what they feel -- they feel time is of essence. We decided to put forth this statement based on that even though work is ongoing.

Justin: Motion to approve resolution as presented. Seconded.

Discussion about removing the lead-off sentence in the Proposed Resolution: "The DHCA supports safe bicycling and walking and the improvement of bicycle and pedestrian connectivity

within Druid Hills given a process which includes residential input and given the context and guidelines of the historic district.”

Darin: We’re not voting on a bicycle path.

Guest comments: We just discussed hiring a consultant. You’re gonna let an outside consulting company come in and tell us what to do in DH? Can’t even agree on mission statement. Can’t trust organization to carry out our mission. Adoption of resolution will create issue with people you want to work with your organization.

Kit: This language is a result of a joint effort of your organization (Druid Hills Preservation Alliance) and DHCA.

Van: Trish & I worked on what led to this Resolution. Sub-committee worked long and hard. Want to give context about 1st sentence. Wanted to set context: we support mass transit, but opposed to this specific implementation. That’s what we wanted to do here: we support safe biking & walking, but we have these comments about these specific recommendations, etc.

Darin ... you can’t support safe cycling and also the recommendations. Incompatible. Proposal lacks specificity.

Chris: Why are we just saying we’re opposed?

Sandra notes it doesn’t address scooters.

Guest says that fundamental flaw with Kimley Horn study is it didn’t consult those affected.

KH report says no parking on Lullwater. What about safe driving because of cyclists?

Thea: I understand where you’re coming from. Once you open the door to bike trail to Lullwater, opens it to other streets. We need to be careful that we send message that we’re listening to community first.

Carol: Board asked Transportation committee to form Sub-committee. Anyone could have been on it. We spent hours and compromise on wording, best we could come up with. We are not finished.

Mike St. Louis – Agrees with Carol. Impressed committee worked to come up with thoughtful language that clearly lays out areas of recommendation that group of residents. Tried to balance – remember we’re part of a larger grid.

Van: This is specific to recommendations to Lullwater Road. If we’re against this, then what are we for? Tasked to address KH report, that’s why we don’t get into alternatives.

Guest offers alternative language that strikes safe biking language

Chris challenges anyone to find out a way that historic district is compromised by proposals for bike/ped paths.

Motion to amend is not passed. Vote on Resolution as written passes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.