

Charles B. Aycock Neighborhood Association
Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting
July 23, 2012

Present: Betsey Baun, Christina Cantrell, Sara Farnsworth, Linda Fusco, Khalil Perilstein, Dave Wharton, Shawn Wriede

Absent: Fabio Camara, Bert VanderVeen

Guests: Officer Douglas E. Campbell, City Councilman Jim Kee, GDOT Chris Spenser, Downtown Greenway Project Manager Dabney Sanders, Residents Mebane Ham, Brian Heagney, Pam Grigsby, T.K. Miller, and Mindy Zachary, Business Owners Clint Spivey and John Mandrano.

Meeting Called to Order: 6:35 pm

1.) Special Speaker: City Councilman Jim Kee provided an update from City Council on the following topics:

- i. **Landfill** - the city continues to evaluate options to dispose of trash.
- ii. **Performing Arts Center** - Mr. Kee asked whether Aycock neighbors supported the concept of a performing arts center with a seating capacity of approx 3,200 and whether they supported a special referendum in April 2012 to vote on it. The meeting participants all **confirmed that they support a performing arts center as long as the location is downtown**, but did not feel that the cost for a special referendum in April (as opposed to the regular ballot in November) is warranted. Betsey Baun suggested that Greensboro not mimic the mix of shows that Durham's DPAC carries but rather find a mix more aligned to Greensboro. David Wharton mentioned that some studies indicate that a single, dedicated sponsor may experience less planning woes than a broad coalition of backers. Sara Farnsworth asked whether the current coliseum management will be managing the new venue. Mr. Kee stated there is no decision; the War Memorial Auditorium and Coliseum on Lee St. are owned and managed by the city, but handing over the operation to a private firm (as DPAC does) is certainly a consideration.

2.) Special Speakers: Downtown Greenway Project Manager Dabney Sanders and GDOT Representative Chris Spenser provided a short overview of the overall plan of the Downtown Greenway. Mr. Spenser presented the two options for the Murrow/Summit interchange that were communicated via public meetings on June 26, 2012. Option #1 retains the ramp from Murrow Blvd to Summit Ave and includes two pedestrian intersections at Park Ave and Summit Ave. There is no ability to turn right onto Park Ave from the ramp and there is no ability to drive across Summit Ave from the ramp to the entrance to Fisher Ave on the other side due to medians on Summit. Option #2 closes the ramp completely and directs all

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traffic to Summit Ave via Homestead and Charter Place; this means there is only one pedestrian crossing at Homestead. GDOT estimates the daily vehicular traffic at approx 1,800. During the public meetings, Option #2 had considerable support. GDOT prefers Option #1 because they are concerned about the increased traffic on narrow Charter Place. Betsey Baun pointed out that Option #2 directs traffic away from the Aycock historic district. **Most meeting participants preferred Option #1.**

There is an **entrance from the Downtown Greenway to Heritage Place** but it is a small connection and there are **no plans to extend the Greenway into the Aycock neighborhood** as initially proposed by the neighborhood. A concern was raised by a resident on Chestnut about increased foot and bicycle traffic from the Greenway via the connection at Heritage Place; she prefers the peace and quiet of the cul-de-sac feel of Chestnut. However, many meeting participants felt that the connection would be used predominantly by Aycock residents accessing the Greenway. Clint Spivey, owner of Breedlove Radiator, suggested another connection closer to his business. He also asked about the possibility of repurposing the Summit merge lane to the ramp onto Fisher as a driveway to Breedlove to prevent clients from driving through the neighborhood to his location. Mr. Spencer stated that could be accommodated.

There were questions about **signage and art along** the Greenway. Ms. Sanders stated that most locations in Phase 2 of the Greenway are already slated for art, although there is some flexibility. She stated that the process of selecting art and artists along the Greenway must follow the same transparent and public process as the other connections from the Greenway to neighborhoods. However, it does not preclude the Aycock neighborhood from enhancing the area immediately adjacent to the Greenway with landscaping and art of the neighborhood's choosing.

- 3.) Community Resource Officer Report:** Officer Doug Campbell reported the following **police incidents between June 28 and July 23, 2012:** June 26 – hit and run at 704 Chestnut St. June 27 – a person set fire to a room at 694 Chestnut following a roommate dispute. The suspect was arrested and charged with first degree arson. July 12 – forcible entry between 3 am and 6 am at 669 Percy St; wallets and cell phones were stolen while residents were sleeping. July 18 – items missing from vehicle at 115 Cypress, no forcible entry.

Officer Campbell requested **“No Loitering” signage to be placed at the Leftwich Tunnel** as part of action items from last board meeting. Parks and Recreation is creating the signs.

Officer Campbell requested a **temporary flash cam** to be mounted near the Leftwich Tunnel. He stated that flash cams work best in areas that are off-limits after dark, such as public parks, rather than on thoroughfares which are accessible

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at any time. They have not been effective in some areas of Greensboro, but Parks and Recreation is willing to monitor the camera for a limited period. Jeff Minor is the Parks and Recreation contact for the project.

Officer Campbell was asked about **specific laws regulating beverage containers that may contain alcohol**. The open container laws state that no one may be drinking alcohol (beer, wine, or liquor) on a public street or sidewalk.

- 4.) **Community Watch:** Sara Farnsworth will follow-up with **Jeff Minor of Parks and Recreation** who is responsible for the flash cam installation.

Officer Campbell provided gun safety pamphlets to be distributed at National Night Out. Ms. Farnsworth said any other pamphlets promoting safety would be appreciated.

Ms. Farnsworth also mentioned there was a suggestion to acquire "No Solicitation" signs for the neighborhood. Most board members feel that since the signs are not legally enforceable, there is no point in cluttering up the streets with more signs. Ms. Fusco asked if small signs that can be affixed to doors might be useful in the Welcome Packet for new neighbors, but Ms. Farnsworth felt it was sending the wrong message. The suggestion was dropped.

- 5.) **Secretary-Treasurer report: Minutes from the June 2012** board meeting were reviewed and approved. **Treasury report** shows a balance of \$6,591.71 with \$3,390.56 in the General Fund and the rest in escrow accounts.

- 6.) **President's Report:** Bert VanderVeen was not present; no report.

- 7.) **Community Development:** Betsey Baun reported:

- i. The application for a **Neighborhood Small Project Program** (NSPP) grant for a neighborhood sign at the corner of Yanceyville and Bessemer scored high enough to move forward and the **Planning Board made a favorable recommendation to fund the project** at the July 18, 2012 public hearing. Field Operations is responsible for installing the sign.
- ii. Ms. Baun contacted Mike Mabe of the city's Field Operations Department to request an update on repaving Aycock streets and **exposing the brick gutters** after the water line and fire hydrant rehabilitation. Mr. Mabe indicated that his budget is insufficient to repave until approx 2015. He also stated if brick gutters are in good condition and do not interfere with existing driveway aprons, they will be exposed during the resurfacing project.

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- iii. **Sternberger Park Improvements** –Ms. Baun will contact Russ Clegg for an estimate of any surplus funds from a previous NSPP grant so that small improvements to the park can proceed.

8.) Historic Preservation (COA): Linda Fusco reported no COAs this month.

9.) Newsletter: No news this month.

10.) Technology: No news this month.

11.) Welcoming Committee: There is an open position for this committee. Linda Fusco stated the position will be assigned after elections in August.

12.) Old Business:

- i. **Trashcan at Leftwich Tunnel:** David Wharton met with a contact from DGI (Downtown Greensboro Inc.) and is scheduled to meet with Leo Cheeks. There is potential for permanent trashcans on the Summit side of the tunnel, an area maintained by DGI which will empty the trash cans. However, DGI's area does not extend to the Leftwich side of the tunnel or to the area around the Max Bridge. It was suggested that the landscaping contract be reviewed for wording that might indicate trash disposal. Some residents recall that a previous landscaper performed this task.

ACTION ITEM for Christina Cantrell - review existing landscaping contract for wording on trash disposal.

- ii. **Little Free Library:** Linda Fusco is awaiting MSD funds to order the box.
- iii. **Park Ave stone wall repair:** Linda Fusco reported that **4 of the 5 property owners signed the consent agreement**; she is working with Samuel Johnson, who has volunteered his time, to resolve the remaining legal issues.
- iv. **Streetlight at Leftwich appears missing** – Christina Cantrell emailed Kym Smith several times about its disappearance but has not received a response. Ms. Cantrell will continue to email Ms. Smith.
- v. **Overgrown yard complaint at Dunleith** – Christina Cantrell submitted a complaint on May 9, 2012 via the online complaint system (case #201202969) after residents on Chestnut St. complained that they were unable to get resolution from the city or from the Daskalakis family. Ms. Cantrell had no success contacting Crystal Loy, the inspector assigned to the case, and emailed Sue Schwartz, Director of Planning and Community Development, on July 10, 2012. After a few days, Ms. Schwartz responded that the property was

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inspected on July 11, 2012 and was found not to be in violation. Note: A memo forwarded from the city to Greensboro Neighborhood Congress members stated that the number of complaints regarding overgrown lots has increased dramatically, which may contribute to this particular case being closed. No further action from the board is planned.

- vi. **Contact Donna Gray to see whether the Leftwich Tunnel can be painted in the same manner at the railroad overpasses at the Downtown Greenway -** Christina Cantrell will take this pending action item from Bert VanderVeen.
- vii. **Identify street sections where granite curbs are missing -** Action Item for Khalil Perelstein is pending.

13.) New Business:

- i. **National Night Out** is Tuesday, Aug 7, 2012 starting at 7 pm. Several residents have volunteered to host porch parties; however, no one on Chestnut or Cypress has come forth. John Mandrano offered to speak to a couple on Chestnut St. who might consider hosting a porch party. **Elections** will be held at one location: 721 5th Ave. There are only enough candidates to fill the open positions. Betsey Baun advocated for more candidates on the ballot; Ms. Fusco solicited volunteers via the listserv and although good candidates responded, there are only enough to fill the open positions vacated by board members who moved from the neighborhood. The following residents offered to host porch parties:
 - Michaela and Gordon Hafley at 520 Park Ave
 - Mark Walter at 614 Percy St
 - Linda Fusco and Bob Coltun at 721 Fifth Ave
- ii. Brian Heagney presented the idea of a **street mural** to slow vehicles down on Yanceyville. Chris Spenser of GDOT remarked that painting a street has not been done anywhere in Greensboro, although a section of Bragg St. which will be closed to vehicular traffic as part of the Downtown Greenway is being considered for painting. Mr. Spenser stated that some colors are restricted (for example, red is a universal color and may not be used on a street surface). **Mr. Spenser and Mr. Heagney agreed to meet to see if a proposal can be developed** within the existing street painting guidelines. Board members are in favor of exploring this idea.

ACTION ITEM for Linda Fusco - place review of Mr. Heagney's research on street mural options on agenda for next month's board meeting.

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- iii. **Proactive pruning of trees** – the recent drastic pruning of trees around power lines underscores the need to better protect neighborhood trees which are an important asset. The board discussed partnering with Mike Cusimano, the city’s urban forester, to identify trees in the historic district that eventually will suffer the same disfigurement because they are too close to power lines and, using MSD funds, **remove and replace them with specimens that will not impede power lines**. The board further discussed that such a plan could be part of a **‘wish list’**: projects which have a defined scope, realistic cost and time estimates, and a specific proposal, but are not under immediate consideration. The Aycock website can be used to track such a ‘wish list’.

ACTION ITEM for Linda Fusco – place item on agenda for next month’s board meeting

- iv. Pam Grigsby suggested that the neighborhood might patronize the **Lowe’s on Cone Blvd**. It was suggested that a newsletter article might highlight the close proximity and large selection of the store.
- v. T.K. Miller is concerned about the **overgrown yard at 708 Cypress St**. It is very difficult to pass by on the sidewalk. Since the city did not respond positively to the overgrown lot complaint at Dunleith, it is probably a waste of time to use that method. It was suggested that cleaning up the property might be a good project for Eagle Scouts.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:52 pm.