

Ellis Neighborhood Association
 Open Board Meeting
 March 23, 2010
 Boston Ballet 5th Floor Board Room



Board Attendance

P = present, A = absent, NA = notified/excused absence					
Nan Coellner	P	Dave Hauck	P	Susan Passoni	P
Paul Duffy	NA	John Herbert	P	Elizabeth Peck	P
Kathy Emrich	P	Barbara Hoffman	NA	Peter Pogorski	P
Hugh Fitzgerald	NA	Gordon Holmes	P	Sandra Silver	P
Jennifer Girvin	A	Abby Johnson	P	Gretchen Speck	P
Tony Gordon	NA	Maureen Lamb	P	Carol Trust	P
Bill Gregor	P	David Mundel	P	Stephen Vowles	P
Betsy Hall	P	Doug Murphy	A		
Michael Hall	NA	Will Murphy	P		

Guests: Katherine Canavan, Peter Hill, Phil Veysey, Bill Doran, Paul Umbro (Umbro and Sons Construction), Carolyn MacNeil (BPD), Clare Hayes, Irene McSweeney (Boston Water and Sewer Commission), Peter Shilland, Tabitha Bennett (Mayor Menino's Office)

Welcome

Abby Johnson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

1. Presentation by Boston Water and Sewer Commission

Irene McSweeney, Director of Construction gave a presentation describing the repairs that Umbro and Sons Construction will be undertaking on Appleton Street between Clarendon and Dartmouth Street. There will not a replacement of the underground pipes, but a cleaning and insulating project. The cleaning is done so iron oxide does not start to build up in the pipes. This particular project will take about three to four weeks. Other projects are scheduled around the city throughout the spring and summer.

2. Presentation by Carolyn McNeil, Director, Neighborhood Watch Unit, Boston Police Department

Carolyn MacNeil spoke about the importance of Neighborhood Watch groups in the South End. She mentioned the Chandler Street group that has now had several meetings. The groups get people interested and invested in their neighborhoods and the work of each group centers around safety and security.

3. Presentation by Marleen Nienhuis, President, Friends of the South End Library

Marleen noted that the Friends of the South End Library are looking for new board members and asked everyone to let her know if they knew someone who was interested. She also talked briefly about the potential budget cuts affecting the libraries across the City.

General Announcements and Topics of Discussion

4. Announcements

Susan Passoni, President, thanked everyone who helped with the “mini” clean-up on March 20th. The larger Boston Shines clean-up is scheduled for April 24 from 9am – 1pm.

Susan announced that Peter Shilland has been re-elected to another term on the Boston Groundwater Trust.

Susan announced that the Department of Public Works will be holding a meeting about trash issues on March 30 at 6:30pm at the Blackstone Community Center on West Brookline Street.

Susan announced that the Ellis would support the Youth Worker’s Alliance with a donation of \$250 as recommended by Michael Hall at the February Board meeting.

Susan announced that nominations for the 2010-2011 Board are needed by the first week of April. Candidates for the slate will be asked to attend the April Board meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

Sandra reported that the Ellis raised \$300 from the Progressive Dinner and that the Ellis had over \$61,000 in the bank at the end of February 2010.

3. Committee Updates

-Groundwater

Peter Pogorski reported that the recharge well at the end of Casenove Street is showing some positive results, but a long-term study really needs to be undertaken. Peter Shilland added that the Groundwater Trust is working on recharge systems and that Tufts University is working on a study of passive recharge systems.

-Licensing

David Mundel reported that Castle Square Tenants Association is reviewing their position on Masa’s application to increase their hours of operation. David suggested that Ellis withhold their position until Castle Square makes a decision.

David reported that the property at 78 Montgomery was found in violation relating to the roof-top window. More Landmark Commission issues will be forthcoming.

There will be a hearing for 28A Lawrence Street on Friday, March 26 at 8 am to review the location of roof-top solar collectors.

-Development

John Herbert reported on the ongoing construction at the Union Building. He stated that all of the neighborhood concerns raised in January have been addressed and that the neighbors seem to be happy.

-Wine Group

Bill Gregor reported that 47 people attended the whiskey tasting and 16 different whiskeys were sampled. April 22 is the date for the 3rd Annual Berkeley College of Music concert and wine tasting. May 26 is the date for a blind wine tasting at the home of Lynn Babington and Randy Carpenter. This year the Pride parade is on Saturday, June 12.

- Green

Betsy Hall reported that the "Greening Your Home" Forum is set for May 10 at 7 pm at the Lyric Stage. There will be a three person panel and will last approximately 90 minutes.

4. Other Business

Sandra reported there has been a lot of support from neighborhood groups and elected officials regarding the Stuart Street Advisory Group's response to the BRA's draft zoning recommendations. The Advisory Group will meet with the BRA in April to outline the next steps.

Liberty Mutual Insurance Company purchased the old Salvation Army building on Columbus at Berkeley and is hoping to begin development as soon as possible. The company is requesting Tax Increment Financing (TIF) from the City, which provides a tax exemption for a portion of the value of the project. The exemption is worth approximately \$16 million and would phase over a twenty-year period. Sandra reported that the City Council is scheduled to vote on whether to approve the TIF at their meeting on March 24, 2010. The Board then voted to oppose a TIF credit being given to Liberty Mutual. The vote passed with five members abstaining. Carol Trust agreed to go to the City Council meeting to deliver the results of the vote.

Peter Hill suggested that moving permits should be suspended on street cleaning days. Tabitha Bennett said that she would look into this.

It was suggested that pressure should be kept on the City to clean up the Columbus Center site.

Conclusion and adjournment

The next meeting will be held on April 27, 2010.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Respectively submitted,

Abby Johnson for Barbara Hoffman