

Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee

November 9, 2015

Minutes

Attendees: Lisa Miller, Gloria Aparicio, Taylor Roethle, Drew Hogg, Aaron Springer, Robert Day, Bob Schnabel, Dustyn Kujawa, Paul Carlson, Lt. Waters, Bob Ryan, Karyn Keating-Volke, Maj. Ken Calvert, Chief Dave Mitchell, David Lloyd, Scott Somers, Bill Gardiner, Stephanie Stullich, Patrick Wojahn, Andrea Goodwin, PJ Brennan, Bonnie McClellan, Alan Hew, Mayor Fellows.

1. Call to Order / Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 by Patrick Wojahn, and attendees introduced themselves.

2. Annual report draft—review and approve

Discussion of the draft annual report was held until Stephanie Stullich arrived.

3. Committee updates and reports

a. Code Enforcement and Public Safety

Lisa reported that the committee isn't able to address some of the issues because the code enforcement software update hasn't been completed. Council may need to get involved if new products have to be approved. CMAST is going well, although we still need help getting residents to report incidents so they are captured. Chief Mitchell added that the Nuisance Abatement Board Chair is attending meetings. The City has a low rate of burglaries. The Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention has funded a grant to the University to provide a Safety Ambassador Pilot Project.

Within the past weekend we had issues in Calvert Hills with vandalism (breaking car mirrors). The police are holding meeting Thursday night with CHCA and Old Town Civic Association to follow up on this investigation. They are looking into whether or not it was caught on camera. On campus bike thefts and laptop thefts are up.

Lisa said that we have a good story to report. One of the worst of the Top 10 problem properties, "The Pool House" (4617 College Avenue), has been turned around through collaborative work with the landlord. There have been no reports of violations this year. Bob Ryan noted that the State's Attorney called in the property owners of the main problem houses.

Aaron Springer raised the issue with non-emergency transfers when calling 911. Residents in Calvert Hills are getting tired of having to report issues, and the issues have been increasing. More and more people are walking through the neighborhood attending or looking for parties. The number of disturbances—or at least the number of residents disturbed—is higher. People are waiting to retire and leave. Some residents don't feel that acting will make a difference.

Lisa Miller suggested that we can take a different approach to get a better result. Aaron said the residents don't want to meet with anyone—they want results. PJ said that in Lakeland and Berwyn they are also seeing an increase in the volume of people at parties and on the street. It is hard to communicate to residents exactly what the residents should do to report disturbances. Lisa said we need to be both reactive and pro-active. She hopes the City can do a mandatory annual orientation for landlords.

Lt. Waters stated that the County police have a task force for Knock and Talks, and a strategy regarding how they break up parties, cite offenders, report to UMD, etc. They cannot handle every party in that comprehensive way, but are doing something about the parties. The primary objective is to shut down parties.

Robert Day said that we don't publicize the positive work we do frequently enough. Stephanie sends an email with all the info people need to have regarding communications when events occur. We need to get ahead of the curve to prevent problems from occurring. If the police are breaking up a party, it's too late. Patrick noted that this is an opportunity for a joint effort with sub-committees.

Bob Schnabel said that only a small percentage of residents will call in complaints. He feels that Code only reacts to complaints—they can hear the parties, but won't respond unless they get a complaint. He is not sure if the waves of students walking thru neighborhoods are being addressed. Vandalism sometimes accompanies the groups. Alan Hew said that because the campus is dry, the drinking part of college life is in our community, and noted there have been some efforts to change campus policies.

Patrick said we do have a problem with large groups making noise, and he isn't sure how the police are addressing it. The noise ordinance doesn't apply easily to individuals. Disorderly conduct might apply. Stephanie said that for some residents, the noise in the street is worse than the parties. Chief Mitchell said that the police need to be called. The City is paying over \$1 million a year for contract police, but they can't respond to calls. Bob Ryan stated that the contract police monitor calls and do respond. Stephanie asked if contract officers respond if County beat officers are not available, and Bob said yes. Lisa said that a meeting is scheduled for 7:30 Nov. 19th and this conversation can continue.

2. Annual Report Draft

Stephanie distributed the draft annual report and asked that the committee review it and provide comments and edits to Stephanie by the end of the week. One sub-committee report is not yet available. Patrick asked if it would be okay to submit the document to the Council after the revisions are made, but prior to the next committee meeting. There was some discussion regarding what would constitute the "year" and it was agreed to be the academic year.

b. community building and culture change.

Robert said that the committee has not met in some time, but the conversation tonight regarding change is similar to the committee conversations. Taylor said that the IFC has been trying to get the alcohol policy changed, but have not had success yet with the administration. The policies related to

hosting parties with alcohol make it very expensive for organizations. Andrea said that the university is stepping up alcohol-alternative events this year. She will bring information regarding the attendance, which has been very strong.

c. Expectations and Best Practices for Property Owners

Paul said that the committee discussed the letter to the property owners who are members of the PGPOA. They held their membership meeting and started another round of accreditation. They are trying to get the membership in front of the issues that create problems in the community. The core group of the association is in agreement on how to proceed. They hoped to have a video completed, but it is not yet done. They need to edit it so the focus is on quality of life. Paul said that the landlord orientation will be something the city needs to address, as well as a way to let landlords know of violations and the details in real time. The next subcommittee meeting scheduled for November 23rd at 7 pm. PJ said he likes the idea of a mandatory orientation. He asked if the organization would be willing to let the City use the PGPOA exam give it to non-member landlords. Lisa said they are interested in helping and could discuss the request. She feels that a mandatory face-to-face meeting is better.

Stephanie believes the Council should take up this issue, and could use the committee to help divide the work that would be required. She asked if there are other cities that do this—Lisa said that Frostburg does it. Bob Ryan suggested that we consider putting the process online for both landlords and tenants. Patrick said that we need to put it on a Worksession agenda. Scott suggested that staff do some research and create some drafts prior to it going to a Worksession. Bonnie stated that she thinks things are working in College Park Woods. She feels that the students there are integrating in the neighborhood, and looking to be part of the neighborhood.

D. Diversity of Student Housing Options

Cole is not able to be here tonight. CHUM has been meeting but Patrick is not sure what the status is.

E. Home Ownership

Bonnie said the annual report provides a good overview of the committee work. Thirsty Thursdays are alive and well. As of October, three homeowner grants have been awarded—one is in Berwyn, and one is in Crystal Springs. The challenge is to identify more funds for the program. An event was held to discuss resources for aging in place, and 60 people attended. An Art Reception is planned for the spring in conjunction with the Arts Exchange. The committee has also worked on some marketing plans. PJ explained that they are working on a companion website—Live College Park—for the Shop College Park website. It will highlight neighborhood amenities.

The committee also met with Lupi Grady, the Board of Education member for our area. Peggy Higgins has joined the committee. The committee has discussed school programs in the area, and they were surprised to learn of the many special and successful programs. Patrick mentioned that the City is partnering with the UMD Conference and Visitors Center to do joint marketing.

f. Metrics

Stephanie referred to the metrics on pages 15-16 in the annual report. She said that we need to add some metrics that were discussed tonight. She will begin compiling the data now. She asked if the academic year is the appropriate timeframe. Patrick suggested the fiscal year. There was some discussion on how to collect data on investor purchases and owner-occupied purchases of houses.

g. Public Outreach

PJ said that we should schedule the outreach event to correspond to the annual report year and not the calendar year. We need to spend more time strategically planning the event.

4. Next Steps—meeting goals for the end of the year

Patrick encouraged the committees to complete the work on the current goals and to set up new goals.

5. Meeting Schedule for 2016

Patrick suggested the following dates after some discussion:

Feb. 22

May 2

Aug 29

Nov 14

A motion was made to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Robert Day. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was passed unanimously at 8:47.

Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee

November 9, 2015

Agenda

1. Call to Order / Introductions
2. Annual report draft—review and approve
3. Committee updates and reports
 - a. Code Enforcement and Public Safety
 - b. Community Building and Culture Change
 - c. Expectations and Best Practices for Property Owners
 - d. Diversity of Student Housing Options
 - e. Home Ownership
 - f. Metrics
 - g. Public Outreach
4. Next Steps—meeting goals for the end of the year
5. Meeting schedule for 2016
6. Adjourn