

**The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd (NCBC) Virtual
Board Meeting
March 2, 2021**

Board Attendees

Ed Altman, Vanessa Coke Cohen, Maxine Goldberg, Anne M. Greenhalgh, Aaron Gross, Ricky Guerra, David Haas, Glenn Manko, Brian McGuire, Roger Moog, Randy Myer, Anita Pepper, Dan Russoniello, Linda Sagman, Nielufar Varjavand, and Merle Zucker

Absent

Eric Godfrey and David Rosenbaum

Officials Attending:

Commissioners David McComb and Mike McKeon.

Call to Order

President Ricky Guerra called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Police Report

Officer Michael Bedzela reported a slight uptick on thefts from vehicles and of vehicles. These are thefts of opportunity: cars are typically unlocked, and keys are left in vehicles.

Elected Officials Report

Representative Pamela A. DeLissio reported on an upcoming March 19, 2021 104th Town Hall Meeting. Topics will include information on the state constitutional amendment process including the one and possibly two amendments that will be on the ballot for the May 18 primary election and an update on the COVID-19 vaccine. The mail-in ballot process will also be reviewed.

One of the amendments concerns the declaration of emergency powers. Right now the Governor has the power to declare an emergency and to extend as needed. The amendment says that the Governor would not be able to extend emergency declaration automatically. The general assembly would need to grant emergency power. Representative DeLissio reported that she is not in favor of this amendment.

Representative DeLissio is also serving as Minority Chair for the committee focused on children and youth. Her main interest is addressing the funding disparity among school districts. 300 school districts are overfunded and 200 are underfunded. She is working towards the adoption of a “fair funding” formula to bring those districts that are underfunded up to par.

Representative DeLissio concluded by reporting on the vaccine rollout. The biggest stumbling block has been supply. As of today, 4 million state residents 65 and older are eligible for the vaccine. Supply has been increasing, especially with the addition of the vaccine produced by Johnson & Johnson.

Commissioner David McComb underscored that residents who would like to implement traffic calming measures must report traffic incidents to the Lower Merion Police and speak with a unified voice in support.

Commissioner Mike McKeon added that the Township reviewed four applications for traffic calming measures, one from Belmont Hills. Vassar Road in College Park will have improved road graphics that have associated costs. Commissioner McKeon reported that the Township is coming up with a plan for opening the public pools this summer. On March 3, the Township will review the paving schedule (Ward 13 is on the schedule). He concluded by reporting a downtick in crime on Rock Hill Road; no crimes have been reported in the last three or four weeks.

President's Report

President Ricky Guerra asked those submitting articles for the newsletter to get them in by the end of the week. He is also working on the purchasing and planting trees from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in order to increase the canopy over Bala Cynwyd. The Board approved the purchase of 14 trees for \$50 per tree. He concluded his report by acknowledging Julia Salinas's service to the board and her request to resign. He asked the Nominating Committee to begin a search to fill the vacant position.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ed Altman presented two reports:

- Statement of Financial Activity for the period January 1, 2021 – February 28, 2021 indicating YTD Total Revenue of \$7,295 and Expenditures of \$22,841 which includes the Club's payment of \$17,500 to LM Township for the Pavilion project. Year to date Net Operating Revenue excluding the Pavilion payment was \$1,954.
- Statement of Financial Position through February 2021 indicating current Total Assets of \$23,279 of which \$8,201 are temporarily restricted funds.

Brian McGuire moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Dan Russoniello seconded the motion. The Board gave its unanimous approval.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Anne M. Greenhalgh presented the February 2021 minutes for review and approval.

Randy Myer moved to approve December minutes. Ricky Guerra seconded the motion. The Board approved the minutes.

PRESENTATION REGARDING THE RESIDENCE AT BALA CYNWYD (211 BELMONT AVE),

Dayna Glantz, Business Development Director

Dayne Glantz and Ted Doyle presented the project to the Board. The building will house 84 units, including a memory care unit. The majority of apartments are independent and assisted living units. If residents need additional care, care will come to them—they do not need to move. For more information, see:

<https://www.lcbseiorliving.com/communities/residence-at-bala-cynwyd/>

PRESENTATION REGARDING THE MARRIOTT AT PENCOYD IRON WORKS

Stephen Gibson gave a history of Pencoyd Iron Works, followed by an update on the status of the project (including a restaurant and café). For more information, see: <https://www.weddingwire.com/biz/ironworks-at-pencoyd-landing/00e85d89f75d53e5.html>

He will request a variance related to signage and present to the Board in April.

Standing Committee Reports

Membership

Vanessa Coke Cohen reported that The Club now has 186 members. The Club is still working out some kinks on the website which will allow us to place each member's name in the Resident Directory. The Club sent out a membership mailing recently and the return payment slip gave members an opportunity to weigh in as to what types of social activities they would like to see from the NCBC. Outdoor movies, a book club and community service projects were the front runners for suggested social activities. Other write-in suggestions were organized walks/exercise meetups (including a "Bala Cynwyd Run/Walk" -- which has potential as a fundraising opportunity as well), a business block party and a food festival.

The head of the Women's Club of Bala Cynwyd also contacted the Neighborhood Club. The Women's Club is interested in co-sponsoring social events us in order to reinvigorate the Club (and expand to men as well).

Vanessa Coke Cohen concluded by welcoming support in bringing one or more community events to life -- a virtual book club might make an excellent low-cost, initial community activity.

City Avenue District Master Plan,

Roger Moog and Ricky Guerra followed up on the position statement presented to the Board. Along with Merle Zucker, they met with the Township on February 25, 2021. Chris Leswing presented an outline of next steps, a study that would define the need for a master plan (see **attachment**).

Federation

Maxine Goldberg reported that Federation covered a wide range of topics, including various properties up for development, the Lord & Taylor development, lights on Arnold Field, the state of the civics, assisted living space on Rock Hill Road, the COVID exposure in Villanova, tree planting in the Township, the removal of 400 or more trees at the site of the new Middle School for development of school fields, and the future of Saint Charles Seminary.

Public Service and Improvement

Dan Russoniello gave an update on the pavilion project. He provided detailed feedback and drawings to the Township. The vendor will get back to the Township and the Neighborhood Club with more precise pricing on rails on five sides as well as the cost for a wood shake roof and underlayment. The Township will meet with members of The Neighborhood Club to determine the site position before installation begins.

Independence Day Celebration

Anne Greenhalgh reported that the 2021 Independence Day Celebration is tentatively scheduled to include a car parade, lawn decorating contest, and – if possible – a socially distanced and responsible celebration of the new pavilion in the Bala Cynwyd Park.

New Business

President Ricky Guerra reported on several complaints about Cross Properties construction. He also introduced Fay Wright who recommended that the Neighborhood Club adopt “Vassar Island,” a traffic circle. President Ricky Guerra will reach out to the Township for an application to receive some initial funding for improvements to the circle that would be maintained by interested neighbors.

Adjourn

David Haas moved to adjourn the meeting. Brian McGuire seconded the motion. The Board gave its unanimous approval.

The next meeting is April 6, 2021. The meeting will be virtual.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne M. Greenhalgh, Secretary

PURPOSE:

- **Assess whether the new Zoning District is resulting in development that achieves the established Goals and Objectives.**
- **Assess Land Use Assumptions Report compared to land development that occurred.**
- **Acknowledge new conditions that impact the existing assumptions.**
- **Identify opportunities for future development**

INTRODUCTION

1. Outline the major issues, assumptions and objectives on which the City Avenue District Zoning, City Avenue Official Map and City Avenue Transportation Service Area Studies were developed to address.
 - A. Outline vision/issues/goals from Zoning Process
 - B. Include background reports of vacancy/trends
 1. E-Consult Report – Summary;
 2. Increased Competition/New Product (Conshohocken – Limited; KOP Trends: New development primarily residential, Life Sciences, R&D/Medical Uses)
 - C. Brief Historical Overview of the City Avenue District
 1. Bala Village, Bala Cynwyd Shopping Center and Office Park (Map)
 2. Establishment of the CASSD: Purpose, Role, Relationship, Boundary (Map)
 - C. Summary Sheets: Overview of each planning tool, legal authority, how they can be used, how they're related. Include a timeline to illustrate when they were adopted and how they've evolved.
 1. CAD Zoning
 2. City Avenue Official Map
 3. Transportation Service Area

ANALYSIS

1. Land Use:

- A. CAD Goal: *“Enable the development of a mix of commercial, institutional and residential uses”*
- B. BV Goals: *“Encourage multiple-use real estate development within the CAD-BV District that creates a vibrant sense of place and welcomes residents, visitors and workers” & “Promote the livability and identity of the district by providing for dwellings, shops and workplaces in close proximity to each other”*

1. Data:

- a. Use Mix by category (2012 vs. 2020) considering sub-district.
- b. Evaluate Ground Floor Retail

2. Economics:

- A. CAD Goal: *“...[M]ore economically productive use of land parcels in the vicinity of City Avenue (U.S. Route 1). It recognizes the importance of City Avenue as both a gateway and as an economic generator for Lower Merion Township by permitting higher densities...”*

1. Data:

- a. Database of land development activity/building permit in and around CAD
- b. Background reports of vacancy/trends

3. Character & Quality

- A. CAD Goal: *“Protect the character and quality of existing residential neighborhoods proximate to the*

CAD-RCA”

B. BV Goal: “Minimize to the greatest extent possible any adverse impacts on existing residential neighborhoods of any new development in the CAD-BV District”

1. Data

- a. Surrounding property values – 2010 and 2020 (Assessments, Sales Data – Turnover of Single Family Detached Homes)
- b. Surrounding demographics -2010 and 2020

4. Transportation:

A. CAD Goals: “Discourage the dependence on automobile use by promoting multimodal transportation, improving connections and links to public transit and creating safe and inviting pedestrian access ways, thereby reducing traffic congestion.” & “Promote the smooth and safe flow of vehicular traffic through the corridor while reducing cut-through traffic in the neighboring residential districts by creating pedestrian-scaled blocks, separated by public access streets with sidewalks.”

B. BV Goals: “Discourage the dependence on automobile use by promoting alternative modes of transportation, including rail and bus, bicycling and walking, thereby reducing traffic congestion” & “Promote the smooth and safe flow of vehicular traffic through the corridor while reducing cut-through traffic in the neighboring residential districts”

1. Data:

- a. Traffic Counts & Public Transit usage
 1. Summarize circulation, PENNDOT traffic data /McMahon counts/ Traffic Impact Studies submitted through land development
 2. SEPTA data
 3. Census Data: Vehicles per household
- b. Physical Improvements to Transportation Infrastructure
 1. Traffic impact fee generated to date (Chart) & overview of projects (Map)
 2. Capital Improvement Projects: CASSD Projects

5. Community Amenities:

A. Civic Space

1. CAD Goal: “Promote the creation and maintenance of landscaped open areas among buildings for public gathering space.”

a. Data:

1. Inventory of Official Map improvements (public gathering space, transit improvements, etc.)

B. Connections

1. CAD Goal: “...improving connections and links to public transit and creating safe and inviting pedestrian accessways, thereby reducing traffic congestion”

2. BV Goal: “...improving connections and links to public transit and creating safe and inviting pedestrian accessways, thereby reducing traffic congestion”

a. Data:

1. Analysis of Multipurpose Path (linear feet)

6. Form:

A. Parking.

1. CAD Goal Parking: “Encourage the development of shared parking, liner parking, underground parking, and attractive and convenient off-street parking facilities to reduce on-

street congestion and facilitate vehicular and pedestrian circulation.”

B. BV Goal: *“Encourage the development of shared parking and attractive, unobtrusive and convenient off-street parking facilities to reduce on-street congestion and facilitate vehicular and pedestrian circulation.”*

1. Data:

a. Analysis of surface parking lots redeveloped/structured parking

B. Building Location:

A. CAD Goal: *“Ensure that the architectural proportions and design of new buildings create a pedestrian-friendly environment, especially at the street level”*

B. BV Goal: *“Enhance the visual character and identity of the district through appropriate building scale and design, landscaping and signage, and by encouraging the renovation and erection of buildings and storefronts that provide direct connections to the street and sidewalk”*

1. Photo Analysis

7. Sustainability/Stormwater Management/Green Infrastructure:

A. Need to add a Goal?

1. Data:

a. Inventory of stormwater infrastructure installed and green building technology

EVALUATION

A.. Evaluate the extent to which the City Avenue Ordinance, CAD Official Map and CAD Transportation Plan have addressed the problems, assumptions and objectives by auditing land use and circulation development activity within the District since the Ordinance, Map and Plan were adopted;

B. Evaluate the extent to which the issues, assumptions and objectives have been reduced or have increased since the Ordinance, Map and Plan were adopted;

OUTCOMES

A. Recommendations

1. Identify specific areas of the City Avenue District zoning, City Avenue Official Map and City Avenue Transportation Service Area Study which should be modified to better address core planning principles, changing planning assumptions and evolving development patterns
2. Articulate the Vision for the City Avenue District.