

The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd (NCBC)
Virtual Board Meeting
March 1, 2022

Board Attendees

Vanessa Coke Cohen, Maxine Goldberg, Frederic Goldfein, Jason Landau Goodman, Anne M. Greenhalgh, Aaron Gross, David Haas, Brian McGuire, Roger Moog, Randy Myer, Anita Pepper, Jim Remsen, Dan Russoniello, Kay Stickles, Nielufar Varjavand, and Merle Zucker

Absent

Ricky Guerra, Linda Sagman, and Linda Tasker

Officials Attending:

Merle Zucker representing Representative Pamela DeLissio as well as Commissioners Gilda Kramer, Mike McKeon, and David McComb

Call to Order

President Aaron Gross called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Police Report

Officer Gerstman reported that Lower Merion has seen an increase in car jackings along the City Avenue Corridor. Two happened at the start of the new year and two in the last week. One carjacking took place in Narberth last week as well. Car jackers tend to strike at convenience stores or gas stations. These are crimes of opportunity.

Elected Officials Report

Merle Zucker relayed a report from Representative Pamela DeLissio – who encouraged those in attendance to apply for their mail in ballots. The primary takes place on May 17, 2022. Merle Zucker also relayed Representative DeLissio’s desire to continue to represent the Bala Cynwyd portion of the 194th district.

Chris Leswing, Director of Building and Planning, Lower Merion Township—announced that next Thursday, March 10, the Township will hold a Lunch & Learn, hosted by PennDOT about proposed improvements at the intersection of St. Asaph and Belmont Avenue. This Lunch & Learn is in keeping with the Township’s efforts to reach out to the community to get input on development plans.

Chris Leswing reminded the Board that the targeted adoption date for SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance) is April 2022. He added that the ordinance now requires information about transportation management. The aim is to tamp down on the use of single occupancy cars.

Commissioner David McComb – added to Chris Leswing’s report by giving a recent example of Township outreach, a walking tour sponsored by the Bridlewild Trail Association

Commissioner Gilda Kramer – reported that the American Rescue Plan Committee will hold public meetings in order to solicit recommendations about how to spend the \$13.5 million available. Funding will go to four types of projects: income replacement, public health, impact on the

community, and infrastructure projects. Commissioner Kramer reported that the County is also soliciting ideas for funding. The County is putting a priority on such issues as affordable housing and behavioral health. The window to apply closes April 30, 2022.

Roger Moog asked if funding for a Master Plan could be included by the township in the AFC funding, as suggested by Representative Pamela DeLissio and Commissioner Mike McKeon. Commissioner Kramer said she would look into the matter.

Linda Tasker will serve as the liaison for the sustainability committee. She added that the Township has rain barrels and compost bins available for residents.

COVID cases have come down (the Township reported fifty-one cases last week).

Citizens can request mail-in ballots for the entire year but need to do each year.

Commissioner Mike McKeon – reported that the Belmont Hills Library will apply for funding for an addition through the American Rescue Plan. He announced that the TSA resolution will come out on March 9. The pool fees will stay the same as the 2020 rates for 2022 and 2023.

President's Report

President Aaron Gross – reported that the NCBC purchased four trees. President Gross asked for volunteers as tree tenders and tree planters. He recommended that property owners along the Cynwyd Heritage Trail plant trees on their property along the Trail.

President Gross announced that the NCBC sent out an additional eight hundred membership letters, many to apartment dwellers. He would like to hand out promotional materials during homeowner settlements. He would like to re-engage businesses and increase the NCBC presence on social media.

Treasurer's Report

Past President Ricky Guerra – No report.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Anne M. Greenhalgh – presented the February 2022 minutes. Anita Pepper moved to approve the February minutes. Vanessa Coke Cohen seconded the motion. Randy Myer abstained. The Board approved the February 2022 minutes.

1 BELMONT AVENUE, PARTIAL REDEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION

George Broseman, Pete Sikora, Bob Keane, and Patrick Stewart presented the proposed development of the 1 Belmont site, formerly known as the GSB building and currently Karr Barth building. The developer has made three conditional use requests:

The City Avenue District zoning regulations contain various general design standards for redevelopment in the District. When the City Avenue District zoning was adopted, and through later amendments, it was recognized that the goals and objectives of the District could be better served by allowing for flexibility in design. Accordingly, the Code provides a mechanism for flexibility in design by Conditional Use.

Conditional Use approval is sought for three items: (a) the build-to line requirement for Building B and West Drive to allow for a larger public gathering space in the location suggested by Township Planning staff; (b) the build-to line requirement for an area adjacent to Building A and the St. Asaphs Road/Belmont Avenue intersection to provide a larger setback along portions of the building; and (c) to provide the building setbacks as shown on the plans.

Vanessa Coke Cohen moved that the NCBC take no position; Anita Pepper seconded the motion. Randy Myer, David Haas, and Merle Zucker abstained. Maxine Goldberg and Roger Moog voted against the motion. The Board passed the motion.

DAN ALVA, Sutton Terrace

Dan Alva is the President of a coalition of condominium, home, and apartment owners in the neighborhood who are concerned about the development of the City Avenue District and the possible ill effects of unchecked and uncoordinated development. Dan Alva is opposed to a round-about at the intersection of Belmont and St. Asaph's. Commissioner McComb encouraged everyone to attend the March 10 meeting with PennDOT.

Dan Alva presented a petition to the Neighborhood Club and asked that the Board support the petition and circulate it to its members. Roger Moog made a motion to support the petition and send it in an eblast to members. No one seconded the motion because of concern about the appropriateness of the NCBC sending out a petition on behalf of another organization. President Aaron Gross said he would release a message to members about the roundabout in advance of the Township's March 10th meeting.

Standing Committee Report

Membership Committee – Vanessa Coke Cohen – No report.

Public Service and Improvement, Anita Pepper & Anne Greenhalgh – Anne Greenhalgh reported that the NCBC can get on the construction schedule as soon as the Board settles on roofing materials. Anita Pepper recommended that the Board apply for funding from the American Rescue Plan on the grounds that the pavilion is intended to enhance social well-being in the post-COVID era.

Zoning – Frederic Goldfein, Dan Russoniello, and Brian McGuire plan to convene the committee. President Aaron Gross commended on Zoning Application 4559: The Zoning Officer ruled that developers cannot charge for required on-site parking. He suggested that the Board “should think about coming up with a statement of position supporting the Zoning Officer's determination and/ or opposing the owner at the March 17, 2022 Zoning Hearing Board meeting.”

Environmental Committee – Kay Stickles reported that Linda Tasker and she will explore all compost initiatives in the Township.

Farmers Market – Nielufar Varjavand reported that Bob Pierson from Farm to City is organizing a Farmer's Market at 1 Belmont Avenue in May or June on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Federation – Maxine Goldberg reported the previous reports have covered most of what was discussed

at Federation. She added that the Penn Wynne School trailers are being removed.

Newsletter committee – Jim Remsen reported that the first newsletter will go in May and announce the Independence Day Celebration.

Independence Day Celebration – Anne Greenhalgh said that plans are underway. Jerry Francis was nominated for Citizen of the Year.

Old Business

None.

New Business:

Vanessa Coke Cohen reported on upcoming renovations at the Cynwyd Club and asked that the Cynwyd Club get on the Board's agenda sometime in the near future.

Adjourn

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

The next meeting will take place on April 5, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,
Anne M. Greenhalgh, Secretary