MINUTES
OCTOBER 2024 MONTHLY MEETING OF
THE NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB OF BALA CYNWYD
UNION FIRE ASSOCIATION & ZOOM
Zoom Account: 823 745 2538
Password: 850924
October 8, 2024

Attendance: Kay Sickles (President), Vanessa Coke Cohen (Vice-President), Jason Landau Goodman (Secretary), David Haas (Solicitor), Maxine Goldberg, Joseph Hirsch, Bill Krebs, Brian McGuire, Roger Moog, Randy Myer, Dan Russionello, Sandy Kornhauser, Jim Remsen, Merle Zucker

Absent: Marion Williams (Treasurer), C. Aaron Gross (Past President), Anne Greenhalgh

Public Officials in Attendance: Commissioner Gilda Kramer, Commissioner Lou Rossman, Commissioner Jeremiah Woodring

CALL TO ORDER at 7:33pm
ANNOUNCEMENTS, Kay Sickles

ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORT

Commissioner Kramer: Lower Merion Township spending American Rescue Plan funds on projects, including the renovation of the Ashbridge House, Ardmore Community Center, and Gladwyne Park for next year. Following, hopefully one project a year and soon one for Bala Cynwyd. At the Lower Merion Township Board of Commissioners meeting tomorrow night there will be an action on the lights at Arnold Field, which will involve moving fields and restrictions on when the lights can be on. An ordinance is in the works regarding lighting on private property. The Board of Commissioners is reviewing a minimum wage for staff at the Belmont Hills Pool.

Commissioner Rossman: Discussed redevelopment on Bala Avenue. Cynwyd Road was originally a one-way street and will partly go back to being a one-way road.

POLICE REPORT: Officer John Hayward

Officer Hayward discussed motor vehicle thefts from around Lower Merion Township, especially when keys are visible inside a vehicle or windows are down, as well as fraud of older residents. Kay asked about elderly fraud prevention resources. Roger commented about speeding vehicles on Montgomery Avenue. Commissioner Rossman added that a major grant has been awarded to do a full traffic evaluation study along

Montgomery Avenue from City Line through Villanova — and following there will be more information on best next steps. Officer Hayward continued that St. Asaphs Road is targeted for speed monitoring. Vanessa remarked about a phone scam where the caller claims to be a sheriff demanding the payment of back taxes to prevent a summons for a grand jury.

ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORT

Commissioner Woodring: Green Lane Bridge rehabilitation set for 2030. There was an open house to discuss the project at Roxborough Hospital in September. There was a study to understand bridge lane closures during construction.

The Lower Merion Township solid waste fee is going up in 2025.

Following up on the 2023 ordinance related to the location of gun stores — there was one store that moved from Bala Avenue to Rock Hill Road in 2024, which at this time just does virtual reality lessons. There is now an application for a conditional use to sell firearms. The tentative dates related to this application are: a meeting on November 4th with the Planning Commission and on November 5th there a Conditional Use Hearing when public comments can be received for the final decision document. Kay asked the Board if NCBC should wait until after then to have the store owner present before the civic, and the consensus was yes to wait for November. Kay asked if there were any incidents with the store when located on Bala Avenue, and Commissioner Woodring responded that there has been no incidents.

Jason thanked the Commissioners for Lower Merion Township's support of the pilot composting project being hosted now for Bala Cynwyd residents at the Belmont Hills Library. Kay asked for information on the project to be posted on NCBC social media.

Commissioner Woodring shared that there would be an "Anything with a Plug" recycling event at the Lower Merion Township Public Works Complex on October 12th and 15th. Jason asked if there was any information on the ethical or environmental stewardship of the recycling vendor.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

<u>President's Report</u>, Kay Sickles

Kay reported out a meeting with Lower Merion Township Building and Planning Director Chris Leswing to discuss a proposed daycare facility and the proposed roundabout project at Belmont Avenue and St. Asaphs Road. Kay shared that the Bala Avenue Art Walk was successful. Alec Hersh of the City Avenue District added that 1,700-2,000 attendees participated in the event throughout the day. Alec added that there would be a review of which vendors did well and to prioritize them returning next year.

Secretary, Jason Landau Goodman

Jason presented the drafted minutes for consideration, with a final edit to change "City Line Avenue" to "City Avenue." Brian made a motion to approve the October 8, 2024 draft meeting minutes. Seconded by Dan. Unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Zoning/Public Service and Improvement Committee, Brian McGuire

Sidewalk construction continues on Levering Mill Road. Maxine commented that it is really great.

Ad Hoc City Ave. District, Bill Krebs

Bill summarized the roundabout meeting with PennDOT that took place on September 25th at the Fairmont. Represented at the meeting of about 20 attendees were the condo coalition, PennDOT, and Lower Merion Township. Topics included concerns of safety, raising parts of the road, removal of the historic wall, and a traffic light for Clwyd Road and St. Asaphs Road. Kay added that the traffic light proposal was raised by Lower Merion Township to PennDOT as well, and that PennDOT indicated they would consider it. Bill asked about the number of parking under the project of the former Lord & Taylor building. Brian mentioned it was in the development plan. Commissioner Kramer added that the Karr Barth property redevelopment would include no residential and would be coming up for a vote soon before the Board of Commissioners. Bill continued with expressing concerns about the roundabout. Commissioner Rossman commented that there is a traffic study for Clwyd Road and St. Asaphs Road. Bill added that there will be a City Avenue District networking event tomorrow night. Merle thanked Bill for his thorough comments summarizing the September 25th meeting. She added that the proposed roundabout is personal to the residents in the area and that many have continued concerns regarding it. NCBC Member Nanci Goldman offered comments expressing concern with the proposed project and reiterated the point of why is this intersection being chosen for the first two-lane roundabout in Pennsylvania. Kay responded to the public comment and reiterated that if there is no roundabout, then no project will be considered by PennDOT, in the context of 36 serious accidents at or near the intersection. Nanci raised the topic of adding a left turning arrow to the traffic light. David asked if anyone has reached out for discussions on this proposed project to state legislators or the Governor's office. Nanci responded that communications have been sent to public officials and that Commissioner Rossman and others have been engaged in meetings with the condo associations. Commissioner Rossman responded that state legislators have no direct control over PennDOT, but Governor Josh Shapiro would, and that his goal as a commissioner is to make sure the intersection is safe for

pedestrians and offered suggestions including timed traffic lights. Kay suggested this conversation continue at the NCBC November meeting.

Nominating Committee, C. Aaron Gross

Interviews have taken place with three board member candidates. The Nominating Committee found that all of them are qualified and energized to be assets to the NCBC Board. Aaron made a motion to add Mark Prudente, Juan Rodriguez, and Margaret Hunting to be formally nominated and considered for Board appointments for the 2025-2026 term. Seconded by Roger. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Brian made a motion for NCBC to support the Lower Merion Township Board of Commissioners to authorize the execution of an Anchor Building Program Loan Repayment Agreement with Bala 202 LP to facilitate the rehabilitation of 202 Bala Avenue. Seconded by Kay. Unanimously approved.

Kay moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:02pm.