

Carderock Springs Citizens' Association
March 16, 2020
held via Conference Call due to Covid-19
Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

Board members present: Jack Orrick, Ashish Goel, Jenny Spreitzer, Petra Jacobs, Sue Eastman, Tom Deyo

Board member absent: Bill Draper

Community members present: Katherine Stifel, Craig Stoltz

Meeting called to order at 7:38pm by Jack Orrick

- 1) Approval of February Board meeting minutes
- 2) Treasurer's Report
- 3) March 29 Community Meeting on Beltway Expansion
- 4) 2020 Annual Meeting – April 26, 2020 – Plans for Beltway Widening and Election of Officers/Directors (status of nominees)
- 5) Replacement of Entrance Lights with LED fixture
- 6) Old Business – Beltway Expansion/Sound Barriers etc.; PEPCO Issues
- 7) New Business
- 8) Next Meeting Date and Newsletter Deadline

Item 1: Approval of February Board meeting minutes

February minutes approved pending the following changes to Item 6: replace Jennifer Hughes with Lisa Deyo; note that letter was sent to MCCCPC and MD Dept of Environmental Protection

Item 2: Treasurer's Report

Regarding 2020 dues, two emails were sent and then dues notice letters were mailed to non-payees at the end of February. Ashish noted that we saved stamps/effort for 180 houses and that we are well ahead of where we were at the same time last year regarding household participation. In May/June, we can do a second effort for those who haven't yet joined/rejoined. 57% of households typically join and we're at 47% so far for 2020. We have collected \$12,676 in 2020 dues to date.

Item 3: March 29 Community Meeting on Beltway Widening

Discussed with Item 6 Old Business below.

Item 4: 2020 Annual Meeting – April 26, 2020 – Plans for Beltway Widening and Election of Officers/Directors (status of nominees)

Since community meetings are unlikely to be back to normal by late April, we decided that we should put a notice in the next newsletter for May 31 as a tentative date. Jack will contact invitees to reschedule.

Regarding new board members for 2020: Petra and Sue have identified potential candidates. We're having less luck in South Carderock, so Jenny will try harder. We have another month or so to solidify candidates.

Item 5: Replacement of Entrance Lights with LED fixture

Stefan Lobuglio and Ashish replaced the 2 incandescent light fixtures at River Road entrance with one LED light fixture. They also replaced the incandescent lights at Persimmon Tree Lane with LED fixtures. Since the Pepco bill was \$26 lower last month because one light on the Persimmon Tree sign was out, we now know how much it cost per month per non-LED light. Our savings with LED lights and the positive benefits to the environment should be substantial. The repair cost was approximately \$150 for parts. Ashish will be reimbursed.

Item 6: Old Business – Beltway Expansion/Sound Barriers etc.; PEPCO Issues

Beltway Expansion, Sound Barriers and Upcoming Meetings with Community and Government Officials

- CSCA wrote a letter in February to Hans Riemer, Andrew Friedson and Montgomery County Transportation and Environment Committee. Councilmember Friedson then wrote a memo to the committee based on our requests for noise barriers, expansion within existing right of way, and reflecting local community needs in the SHA requirements. The memo recommended by Friedson's committee includes the right of way and community input requests, but apparently not the noise barrier request. Full Council will ideally approve Friedson's memo on March 17. Petra will thank Friedson for his advocacy on our behalf and report back on March 17 council results in April.
- Jack received a letter dated March 16, 2020 from the Maryland State Department of Transportation (MDOT) in response to a letter written by Drs. Benjamin and Suzanne Bronheim living at 6912 Persimmon Tree Road requesting that noise barriers be constructed along their side of the Beltway. The letter stated that properties in their community and in Carderock Springs, including Carderock elementary school, are considered impacted by noise. The letter conveyed that if the MLS results in a build recommendation and noise barriers are "reasonable and feasible", they will build them. We interpret this as NOT being a commitment on MDOT's part regarding sound barriers. Jack was copied on the letter along with our state and local representatives; Steve Archer, MDOT Cultural Resources Team Leader; and Jeanette Mar, Environmental Program Manager of the Federal Highway Administration.

- Thanks to Nicole Ferran and Beltway Expansion Working Group, NEPA Section 106 review response was submitted March 16th indicating concern over right of way and noise barriers. We likely won't hear anything again until May 1 or later when the Environmental Impact Statement will be released. Community meetings scheduled by the State Highway Authority for mid-June for this.
- March 29 meeting with community members
 - Flyer created by Katherine Stifel was distributed to Carderock and South Carderock properties. We have 6 responses so far.
 - March 29 meeting goal is to have boards with maps of publicly available materials, showing properties that need to be impacted. We will then have between 3/29 and 4/26 to figure out what to do. Ideally, we'll have more photos to share how the environment will be impacted.
 - For 3/29, we discussed rescheduling to a conference call or webinar. A Power Point Presentation will be prepared: we need to contact the Working Group to see who could help on this. Katherine will provide an outline draft with some slides that we can build on.
 - We will invite Carol Rubin to provide a short summary of MNCCPC's efforts and the process.
- 4/26 meeting with community and local/state officials: this meeting is at risk too. Should we push it back to June in the hopes that it will happen then? We will decide next month.
- Tom Deyo proposed hiring an expert who could respond to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), i.e. an expert witness to go toe to toe with the state's experts. We will have until July 31st to submit comments on the (EIS). We would need someone who can evaluate the noise studies results and, if necessary, question the methodology of the study. The Board agreed that this is worth further consideration.
 - Tom asked if it might be possible to use community emergency funds for this. The primary use of emergency funds is for covenant defense, but they're not only limited to that. We have about \$90,000 in savings. We could also approach other neighborhoods to contribute to this effort: River Falls, Persimmon Tree, Cabin John / Evergreen.
 - Tom will look into finding an expert and defining the scope of what we need. We will also share the 2001 sound study.
 - CABA (Citizens Against Beltway Expansion) might be considering suing as well based on the results of the EIS. We don't know but Petra could ask them.

PEPCO Problems

- Sue reported that Michal Freedhof spoke with Jacob Auslander of the Office of People's Counsel (OPC). Auslander still believes that the cause is voltage over-builds (ie the super-high voltage wire is located directly above or below the lower one, and when they

get too close together it causes an extremely rapid high voltage surge that a surge protector might not be able to mitigate against because of the speed at which it occurs). This would explain why other Pepco repairs have not fixed the problem, and why some surge protectors did not in fact help last February. However, he cannot establish this definitively without a very expensive EMTP study, that OPC does not have the funds to conduct.

- Sue requested that Auslander send us a letter summarizing this and to copy PSC staff on the letter. He will additionally ask PSC staff to meet with him to discuss, and he will see whether the PSC can voluntarily push Pepco to either work with them to do the EMTP study, or take steps to address the overbuild absent a study. Pepco will be reluctant to do the latter because they would be unlikely to get cost recovery from the PSC unless they are forced to do it, but that is why seeing if the PSC would be helpful is a good idea.
- Sue noted that these are the things we should request as a community as we determine longterm planning
 - Extension of the Pepco contract w the community
 - Pepco retention of AMI data related to outages for a useful period of time so that in the event of another outage we could actually learn something about it
 - The EMTP study

Item 7: New Business

- Due to Covid-19 pandemic, International Potluck and Progressive Dinner will be postponed until further notice. Hopefully we will be able to schedule for Fall.
- ARC: regarding the brightly painted house that didn't go before ARC, Scott Wilets will discuss with neighbors who have objected to the house's color to try to find a solution.

Item 8: Next Meeting date/Newsletter deadline

Next meeting date: Monday, April 20.

Newsletter: articles needed by Friday, 3/27.

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.