

WEST CENTRAL GERMANTOWN NEIGHBORS  
BUSINESS MEETING, 27 JANUARY, 2019  
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Acting for President Rama Assaf-Smith, Luke Russell, President Emeritus, called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: Minutes of the October meeting were approved by voice vote.

TREASURER'S REPORT: According to Denise Alexander, the treasury currently has \$5,239, an increase of \$1016 since the October meeting, most of which was donated through PayPal. The organization has one fixed expense, so far, for the coming year, and that is expected to be \$744 for liability insurance.

COMMITTEE ON THE BYLAWS: Linda Corsover led a discussion of the proposed amendment aimed at doing away with annual dues as a condition of membership, emphasizing that, in response to concerns expressed at the first reading of the amendment in October, the board is working to establish a "strategic reserve" (or emergency fund--amount to be determined) to be used in the event of extraordinary expenses (unexpected and burdensome legal fees, for example). The fund will be placed in an interest-bearing account until needed. The Board further commits to establishing a transparent annual budget, detailing receipts and expenditures. As the new language states, the organization will, henceforth, depend on voluntary contributions/donations; and membership eligibility will be determined--not by dues paid--but by proof of occupancy within WCGN's established borders. The amendment was approved by voice vote.

[The original and revised versions of Article V (Membership) and Article VI (Finances) may be found [here](#), and a full copy of the Bylaws may be found [here](#).]

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Standing in for Roberta Moore, Marjorie Russell gave a brief accounting of current initiatives of the recently-formed committee. First, and perhaps foremost, is to follow up on the brochure which was distributed to 1,000 addresses in the neighborhood in late September and to continue a long-overdue outreach to the entire constituency within WCGN boundaries. The committee will also undertake the challenging task of creating a better, more cohesive, user-friendly communications system. Lastly, the

committee has begun to explore ideas for new projects and activities to engage the interest of the community and invites members to offer suggestions or to volunteer to join the committee. Some of the possibilities mentioned are: put a plan in place to offer a friendly welcome to new arrivals; enhance our support for the deeply historic heritage of northwest Germantown; co-ordinate community cleanups and other quality-of-life initiatives; facilitate the formation of thematic social groups: walking, cooking, reading, dining, &c. From the floor came a suggestion that we explore the idea of house tours, and there seemed to be a consensus that this should be pursued.

[As an aside, the question was raised as to how many members WCGN actually has, and the answer, quite simply, is that we don't know. There is no existing data-base to provide this information. This is an issue that the Membership Committee is tasked with resolving.]

GARDEN COMMITTEE: Marjorie Russell, Co-Chair, started by thanking those who, from time to time (and without being asked), stop by the train station garden to weed, to pick up litter, and just to keep an eye on things. She reported the good news that the long-promised sign for the garden may, in fact, soon be manufactured (based on a mutually-agreed-upon design), installed, and paid for by SEPTA. WCGN will send two members to a Philadelphia Orchard Project grafting workshop in March. The object is to learn how to graft a branch from a different species onto our existing cherry tree in order to improve the harvest via cross-pollination. And finally, there will be the usual spring cleanup day (weeding, mulching, edging) in late April-early May. [The date has since been established as Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.]

ZONING COMMITTEE: Chairman Luke Smith provided an update on the proposed transit-oriented, multi-family residential project known as "Tulpehocken Place", to be situated on a wooded plot behind the Wayne Avenue Co-op and opposite the train station on the access road from W Walnut Lane. There is some confusion as to what the developer (Mosaic Partners) actually proposes for the site in terms of density and configuration; and a heated discussion followed, the upshot of which is that the committee will arrange for a public meeting to view and critique the concept. It is to be noted, however, that this is a "by right" or "as of right" project, meaning that the developer does not need a zoning variance in order to proceed. This means that the community has very little leverage. Furthermore, both SEPTA and our fellow RCO, Friends of Wissahickon, are in favor of moving the project forward.

[The time and location for the public meeting with Mosaic Partners have since been set as Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm, at the Germantown community Presbyterian Church, corner of Greene and Tulpehocken.]

MISCELLANEOUS TRAFFIC ISSUES: 1) a petition is being circulated in favor of having speed cushions installed in the 200 block of Tulpehocken Street (similar to those in the the 100 block); and 2) Luke Smith reported that Walter King has forwarded to the city an application for a segment of WCGN territory to be designated a "Slow Zone", enabling the design and installation of various traffic-calming measures. The designated area is bounded by Germantown Avenue, Cheltenham Avenue, Wayne Avenue, and Walnut Lane.

[It has subsequently been revealed that the two Slow-Zone awards went to the Fairhill neighborhood in North Philadelphia and the Willard Elementary School neighborhood in Kensington.]

OTHER BUSINESS: Luke Smith reported that the long-awaited coffee shop/café at Wayne & Rittenhouse (Walter King, developer) should be open soon.

Jeff Smith offered an overview of WCGN's productive relationship with SEPTA as regards restoration and adaptive re-use of the historic Tulpehocken Station building since 2007. The next effort, now that utilities are in place, will likely be a push to have historically accurate windows installed. (The structure is listed on both the national and Philadelphia registers of historic places.) Ken Weinstein's enterprise, Philly Office-Retail, may play a role in this, subject to a SEPTA bidding process.

As for parking at the station: 1) cars illegally parked on the extension of Tulpehocken Street west of Wayne Avenue are being ticketed in an effort to keep two lanes clear for station ingress and egress; and 2) SEPTA intends to convert the existing free lot into a paid facility. The fee will be \$1.00 per day.

VISITORS: Before adjourning, the group heard in turn from Tonya Bah and Patrick Jones, both Democrat candidates jockeying for the position of 8th District Councilperson (running against the incumbent, Councilwoman Cindy Bass, in the upcoming primary election). To learn more, go to: "[www.tonyabah.com](http://www.tonyabah.com)" and "[www.voteatjones.com](http://www.voteatjones.com)"

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Our nearby neighbor, Marney Hague, spoke of the need for 10 hosts to provide overnight accommodations and breakfast to members of

the College of William and Mary Women's Chorus on the night of March 29th. Their concert is sponsored by First Presbyterian Church of Germantown, Cheltenham Avenue.

Jane Guerin of W Walnut Lane offers a service to order Lancaster County meats and produce (delivered to her house for pick-up).

Marney and Jane may be reached by emailing the board at:  
[wcnboard@gmail.com](mailto:wcgboard@gmail.com).

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was entertained, seconded, and approved by voice vote at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
--Russell Fulton, Secretary