

`MINUTES
WCGN GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING
January 26, 2022, 7:00 PM, on Zoom

Marjorie Russell called the meeting to order about 7:15, and there were 15 or 16 persons in attendance.

After welcoming a newcomer, Dawn Pomento, who lives very nearby on East High Street, Marjorie announced the virtual memorial service for Sue Finch that Sue's family will be hosting at 1 PM on Saturday, February 5. To attend, contact Sue's daughter Susan susan@susanefinch.com and she will send you a Zoom link.

MINUTES: Marjorie obtained approval of the minutes of the October meeting, pending reviewal by any interested members. Those minutes are posted on the web site.

TREASURY: Johan de Jong

WCGN's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. We started the year with a bank balance of around \$8,000. Our current bank balance is around \$11,000. We have spent a fair amount of money this fiscal year, mostly on legal and professional fees associated with the Mosaic development (which will be discussed later). The total fees have been around \$9,500, but we were able to raise a lot of money for our Legal Fund to offset these fees: around \$11,500. We have also spent \$250 on membership dues, because we decided to join the Crosstown Coalition, which is a coalition of Philadelphia RCOs. Our general revenue (donations to our General Fund as well as proceeds from our Yard Sale) is more than adequate to cover our regular operating expenses.

ZONING AND LAND USE: Bob Lane

- **MOSAIC:** The development across from the train station (6134R-46 Wayne Ave) was approved by the ZBA despite our best efforts, with a proviso regarding safety on Station Drive. As of now, WCGN does not have the language that is in that proviso. WCGN thought it might have the support of SEPTA, but in the end SEPTA supported Mosaic unconditionally. And the ideas we had for appealing the decision proved to be very costly and unlikely to prevail.
- **COMER PAPER PROPERTY:** the variances requested for 6237 Germantown Ave were granted by the ZBA on January 12. 4 stories, commercial on the first floor Germantown Ave frontage, 41 parking spaces. Suzanne, who attended the ZBA hearing, said that there may be a proviso, as recommended by Cindy Bass, involving a reduction in apartment units so that there is 1-1 parking.
- **REZONING:** After reviewing the background of the proposed remapping of our part of Germantown, as well as the extensive work put in by WCGN's Rezoning Task Force to provide feedback to the city, Bob reported on the current status of that process.: WCGN has finally completed its feedback to the city, and these documents are in the hands of

Councilperson Cindy Bass. At the meeting of the Task Force with Cindy in December, she promised to support our recommendations. Since that meeting, we have asked for additional changes to the proposed rezoning and are awaiting another meeting with Cindy before she takes the next step – proposing the draft to City Council to be voted into legislation.

- **MITCHELL JOHNSON HOUSE:** WCGN has been approached by a local stand-alone midwifery practice, the Philadelphia Midwife Collective, that wants to buy 200-202 W Walnut Lane so that their practice can include a small home-like birthing center. They have requested an informal meeting with WCGN's Zoning Committee in order to get an initial assessment of neighborhood reaction. Accordingly, on Wednesday, February 2, at 7 PM, the group will give a presentation and then there will be a Q and A session. This is not an official RCO meeting, but what is called in our Zoning Protocols a "pre-submission" meeting. WCGN has warned them that the prevailing sentiment at this meeting may not be the same as that in the RCO meeting if and when such meeting is held.

This announcement precipitated much discussion, including many concerns, questions, and objections regarding the proposal. These included worries about maintenance of this historic property (it is on the Philadelphia Register), the adjustments that will be required to meet city safety standards, possible outdoor signage, inadequacy of parking, and potential future uses for the site once variances have been granted. The Board encourages people to read about their proposal – an attachment on the WCGN web site – and attend the meeting (Zoom link also on web site).

HISTORY AND HERITAGE: Russell Fulton

- Russell announced that this committee is still in its infancy. He wants to think himself more about its scope before recruiting members, although he did respond positively when asked whether it might not be helpful to have others involved sooner rather than later.
- He reported that WCGN has so far sponsored two nominations. One of them, 224 W Washington Lane, was not accepted because it turned out the owner was already in the process of acquiring a demolition permit. The other, 5920 Greene St (formerly the home of the Ellen Rose Restaurant), was put on hold for six months at the request of the owner. It will be considered at the June meeting of the Historical Commission.
- He also announced that the Preservation Alliance Speaker Series will present a lecture pertaining to Germantown Tuesday, March 1, 6:00 – 7:30 PM, \$15.
<http://www.preservationalliance.com/> .

The meeting was adjourned about 8:45. The next scheduled business meeting will be the last Wednesday of March (the 30th).