

Minutes for WCGN March 26, 2025, Community Meeting

Suzanne called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:05 PM

Board Members Present: Suzanne Ponsen, Bob Lane, Julie Stapleton Carroll, Phil Kane, and Mike Ramos.

Minutes for the 1/29/25 Community Meeting were approved unanimously

Presentation: Extending WCGN's eastern boundary.

Suzanne began with a slide showing a map of the area being considered

Area includes all properties between the south side of E. Washington Ln. and the north side of E. Cheltenham and between the east side of Germantown Ave. to the west side of Baynton St.

The next slide broke down the number of properties and their zoning & rental makeup.

Total properties: 484

Zoning:

CMX2.5 (48) all on Unit Block of E. Cheltenham and the 5700 and 5800 blocks of Germantown

CMX 2 (27) these were down zoned from CMX 2.5 to CMX 2 through the efforts of WCGN

RM-1 (1) at the corner of E. Price & Baynton

Residential RSA-3 or RSA-5 (408)

Of the 408 Residential properties, 132 either have current rental licenses or recently expired rental licenses.

Of the 484 properties, 11 are city owned.

Suzanne explained that according to Philadelphia's RCO rules, boundaries must be geographical or physical i.e. the middle of a street, a railway line, a river, etc. It may not go through the backyards. Currently, WCGN's eastern boundary is the middle of Germantown Ave. Any property on the east side of Germantown Avenue is not within our boundary. If we want the east side of the avenue within our RCO, we must go through to the west side of Baynton St., the next street to the east.

Q and A: Extending WCGN's eastern boundary

Q: Do the property owners who live there want to be part of WCGN?

A: WCGN has contacted around 20 neighbors, including 59th Ward Democratic leader, Patrick Jones, Committee Persons for the 15th and 16th Divisions of the 59th Ward and others who regularly attend our events and/or are newsletter subscribers. All expressed a strong interest in becoming part of WCGN.

Q: Does extending the boundaries give WCGN as an RCO more clout?

A: Not necessarily. Given our strained relationship with the Councilwoman, it is unlikely that she will choose us as a coordinating RCO for variance requests, etc. However, as it is currently, we never receive any notification of those variance requests, and we don't officially have a seat at the table as any issues arise there.

Q: Are there any neighborhood organizations there?

A: There are no community organizations there. When a zoning issue arises, either the 59th Ward (a large political entity) or Faith Community Development Corporation or KEKO (which cover huge geographic areas from Allens's Lane to E. Mt. Airy Avenue to Stenton Avenue to Roberts Avenue (below Wayne Junction) to Wissahickon Avenue to Morris Street back to Washington Lane) is selected as the Coordinating RCO. These entities depend on the developer to post a sign on the property and to send letters only to "near neighbors" rather than notifying all constituents. WCGN makes every effort to notify all its constituents about zoning variance requests.

Q: Will some of those neighbors feel that WCGN is intruding in their issues?

A: WCGN is committed to reaching out to introduce ourselves respectfully and including them in all our picnics, meetings and other events. We will ensure that their voices are heard and respected especially when working on zoning issues.

A motion was made by Lois Brucker and seconded by Phil Kane "To extend WCGN boundaries to include the area within the south side of E. Washington Lane, to the west side of Baynton Street to the north side of E. Cheltenham Avenue to the east side of Germantown Avenue back to the south side of E. Washington Lane."

Each person present was asked for their vote with the following tally of the 19 total votes being:

14 In Favor 2 Against 3 Abstentions

A motion was made and seconded "To amend the WCGN Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to reflect the new boundaries."

19 In Favor

Guest Speaker and neighbor Gary Hines, from G-Town Radio at 92fm, introduced the station to the group, explaining its 18-year history, programming, and community involvement. He invited all to visit the station on Maplewood Mall, record promos, and collaborate on events. Jill Saull emphasized the station's focus on locally produced content and seeks ways to work with WCGN.

Suzanne then shared announcements about upcoming events including:

- WCGN garage sale at 41 W. Walnut Lane on Sat. March 29 from 9-2
- The registration deadline for free trees through Treephilly.org is April 2.
- WCGN's Philly Spring Clean Up Sat. 4/5 from 10-1 meet at 6201 Germantown.
- Lingelbach Fundraiser
- 6225 Germantown Avenue – Proposal for a by right 45 unit with 20+ parking spaces. Community Civic Design Review Zoom meeting hosted by the 59th Ward Tuesday April 8 at 6:30 pm
- Events Committee is being formed to plan fundraising events (garden, house, walking tours, etc.) to celebrate when our own Tulpehocken Station Historic District is entered on to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The committee would also organize other in-person meetings, picnics, and other social events. Please consider joining.
- Next Community Meeting on May 26th our annual Memorial Day Potluck Picnic.
- Election of our Board at our October 29 Community Meeting
- Please consider joining our board as an officer or a committee chair
- Casey Prammanassudh for the Price-Knox RCO announced their May 17th Yard Sale to be held on the Mastery Pickett campus from 9-12

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:35 PM

This draft of minutes written by Suzanne Ponsen, in Lora Lewis's absence on 4/8/25
 These minutes were approved on 5/26/25 at the annual Memorial Day Picnic.