

Minutes
The Stoneleigh Community Association
Board of Governors
December 10, 2002

Present:

David Hudson

Rob Starr

Fred Stringfellow

Michael Gill

Donna Moss

Betsy McGlone

Pam Sommerville

Carole McDade

Anita Meros

Jim Leonard

Brough Schamp

Chris Lehmann

Not Present:

Janice Arcieri

Michael Mulderrig

Chuck Gelso

The Annual Meeting of the Stoneleigh Community Association Board of Governors was held on Tuesday, December 10th, 2002, in the new cafeteria addition to the Stoneleigh Elementary School. President David Hudson called the meeting to order at 7:17 pm.

David Hudson opened the meeting by calling for the approval of the minutes from the Annual Meeting held on December 4th, 2001 and the November 18th, 2002 minutes.

Calls to the a president:

A few calls were received regarding the School Testing, which Carole McDade will address later in the meeting, during her School Liason's Report.

Pool Committee

David Hudson introduced Pam Sommerville who reported that the Pool Committee had had a very busy year in 2002. The relationship with DRD management was successful this year and will continue into 2003. Regarding the latest Pool Vote, there were 223 votes cast, of which there were 165 "yes" votes, so we as a community will go forward with the new revised Baby Pool plans. The one-time assessment deadline will be extended to January 31, 2003. Pam thanked the Pool Committee for their service during a difficult year. A question was raised regarding the cost of a family membership in 2003, which will remain the same as in 2002 at \$250.00.

Renovation Committee

Mike Gill reporting for the Renovation Committee, stated that although John DiMenna was unable to attend the Annual Meeting, he should be publically thanked for his time, effort and tremendous dedication over the course of the renovation planning process and that we should also thank all of the other dedicated members of the renovation committee, as well.

Mike offered to show any interested neighbors, the detailed engineering drawings that are available. Based on the response of the first vote, the west-end, where the courts are located, will not be changed. The renovation proposal evolved due to a leaks of thousands of gallons of water that began about two years ago. Certain problems had to be addressed: such as the need for dual drains, the diving well which needed change, and the electrical work which had to be brought up to code. The stump, which is said to have been responsible for the odd shape of the deep-end, will be removed and as a result, the lap lanes will become more even. Piping will be replaced, which will be key to rapid water changeover . This is important, in case of fecal contamination, a recurring problem that we experienced a year ago . Once the committee addressed these problems, it became clear that due to the breadth of the necessary work and investment in the pool, other improvements made sense. Therefore, the renovation committee set to work to come up with the comprehensive plan, that the community has now approved.

The rain, snow and the vote by the community to redesign the baby pool have caused some delays but even in the worst case scenerio, the pool will open in the summer and construction work could be pushed to after Labor Day, if necessary. Before the “Baby Pool” construction begins, the Big Pool renovation will be near completion and the budget reevaluated. Provided there are no unforeseen “skeletons”, work on the baby pool will then proceed.

Neighbors Input and Questions on the Pool Renovation

- * A neighbor brought up that the bathrooms need upgrades and wondered if that could be considered in the renovation process. Others agreed that an upgrade would be desirable.

- * Baby Pool will not impact the basketball and volleyball courts and will still have a sightline to the shallow end of the baby pool.

- * Concern was raised by a neighbor regarding conservation of trees on the property and the effect the relocation of the “Baby Pool” will have on them . Mike stated that tree experts had assured us that the trees will not be affected by the baby pool because the area is already paved and it will be elevated. The footings will be wider and will not have to go down to the frost-line, so roots will be affected any more than they are at the present time.

- *Another neighbor wanted to have the Pool Committee budget handed out.

- ***Action:** The separate pool budget will be posted in the Stoneleighite. It was noted that normally, the pool budget is approved by the Board and becomes part of the Associations annual budget.

The By-laws will be changed as a result of the pool renovation process, where we needed a short “turn-around time”. There was also a need to allow absentee ballots, due to votes taking place during traditional vacation times. Therefore, we wanted to permanently amend the 1930’s by-laws to allow for a more rapid response from the neighborhood, in such cases as we experienced this summer.

- * A neighbor requested the numbers on the cost of the Baby Pool, which is estimated at \$45,000.

* Concern was expressed about the effect of delays on the loan, but the “*loan*” is actually a *line of credit*, therefore, payments won’t be due until the work has begun.

* A neighbor asked if the assessment will be necessary this year, if there is a “worst case scenerio”. The response was that the assessment would be drawing interest and would cut down on the total debt, or possibly be used toward the improvement of the bathhouse and office areas.

Treasurer

Chris Lehmann reported that we had greater than expected inco, due to the successes of the year; such as the 5K race, which raised \$4,800.00, the success of the dinner dance at the Maryland Country Club, and the increase over last year of donations and the improvements line-item. As a result, we had \$7000.00 more in income, than budgeted for in 2002.

There were, however, some unexpected expenses: such as the printing of the pool ballots and some Stoneleighite legal issues. There is approximately \$29,000 in the bank which leaves the Association in good financial shape for the upcoming year.

The 2003 budget is based on “actuals” from the 2002 numbers. The new Stoneleigh website will have a budget of \$1,000 for 2003 This is a new line item for next year. The website is not yet completely developed, but the target date is January, 2003. Prior to its inauguration, it will need to be approved by the Board.

There was a motion to accept the 2003 budget. Motion approved.

Greening and Recycling

Brough Schamp reported that the community put in 26 good-sized canopy trees in the spring and 10 more trees were planted in the fall. We plan to plant trees at Stoneleigh Elementary School’s northern border, to replace coverage that was lost due to new home construction. The money for this project was raised from the proceeds of the Stoneleigh Stampede. Trees were fertilized in the fall by a local cub scouts den. There is \$2,000 in the budget to go toward tree planting in 2003.

Dumpster day was a success thanks to the efforts of our neighbor Kathleen Williams. Brough also thanked Rob Reilly who is responsible for maintaining the York Road strip

This coming Sunday, Christmas decorations will be going up thanks in part to Larry Becks and the use of his bucket truck to help mount the greens on lampposts in the neighborhood. If anyone is willing to volunteer to help decorate the neighborhood, it would be appreciated.

Betsy McGlone was recognized her holiday decorations placed on the Stoneleigh sign, located at the entrance to the neighborhood.

Security and COPS

Security and COPS

In Janice Arcieri's absence, Pam Williams, the new recruiter for the COPS program gave her report.

There have been five recent burglaries in October and November, which underscores the need for constant vigilance on the part of neighbors and the COPS patrols. There are 20 active patrollers in the neighborhood and some are not very active. The goal is to have three patrols daily. COP needs more neighbors to volunteer, just one hour a month to the program. If unable to volunteer regularly, Janice asks that those with a cell phone report suspicious activity by calling 410-887-2222 or 911 (depending on the severity of the situation) .

Kathleen Williams was thanked for being the sponsor of the printing of the refrigerator magnets with the police's non-emergency telephone number.

Towson's National Night out sponsored by COP organizations in August was a success, including participants from 10 local COPS groups and the police.

Mischief night was uneventful, due in part to COP patrols although there was one incident in Wiltondale.

To receive the latest information on crime in our area, send an email to Janice Arcieri at janjoeka@comcast.net to be added to the Stoneleigh email network and to alert@tacop.org to be added to the Towson area Crime email network.

Neighbors were urged to complete the COP survey for feedback to COP.

Pam William's daughter is the COP youth ambassador. She too spoke on the importance of residents volunteering for COP.

Hospitality

Rob Starr announced that he had greeted 25 new neighbors in 2002. He pointed out that he depends on neighbors and block captains to keep him up-to-date on new neighbors and to let him know if anyone has been overlooked. He also reported that an updated new directory will be available in the spring. In the meanwhile, corrections, additions and deletions will be issued in an addendum that is due to go out in January of 2003.

If anyone knows of any changes, please contact Rob Starr or David Yarkony.

Traffic and Roads

Chuck Gelso was not present. There was a discussion of curb work being in the neighborhood by an outside contractor for the County. It was noted that the Association can recommend work projects to the County, but it is ultimately the County's decision as to which projects will be pursued.

Restrictions and Improvements

Jim Leonard reported that the Stoneleigh Community Website is due to start up early next year. Included on it will be the Historic District postings, along with Maryland Historical Trust links, information about how to obtain tax credits, the Smart Growth initiative, a link to zoning building codes. It was mentioned that a permit is required on any project over 100 square feet. There is also a question and answer feature on the code link which is informative, along with an explanation of the design process.

As for the “zoning sign” question regarding the house on the corner of Oxford and Hatherleigh, the neighbor had applied for variance, which was denied. They have filed a due process appeal. The hearing date will probably be in January or February of 2003. The position of the board is that the shed should follow code and be located in the rear of the yard.

Our application for Historical Status is into the State, and should be ratified in the spring. Residents can apply for part 1 and 2, now, for next year. However, if ratification is delayed, there could be a problem. The designation needs to be formally ratified in the same year as the completion of the project, or the tax credits won't apply. It was noted that AC and heating to the original structure can go towards credits, as well as, electrical work and sanding of floors. Only the original house can apply for the 20% tax credits which means that they can not be applied toward new construction or additions. It is a matter of interpretation in the approval process, so get projects approved in advance of construction. Tax credits are not retroactive.

Regarding the Gross' boarded up home on Register Ave. The heirs are in dispute with the insurance company as to the extent of damage to structure and to its contents. The house, as it stands, meets County standards. The Stoneleigh Association can not force its renovation or sale. As far as the County is concerned, the home is properly boarded and the lawn has been maintained.

School Liaison

Carole McDade wanted to thank the County and State for their financial support to the new school cafeteria where the Community has held several meetings so far and also to the architects. The project has required 5 years of construction which is now in its final phase. To be completed are the new asphalt mini multi-use space and new green, yellow and red playground equipment with a mulch base and more grassy areas. This phase is due to begin in January.

A strip of trees will be planted by the fenced area, just north of parking lot and new lighting will be installed. Carol noted that she met with immediate neighbors, before the selection of lighting fixtures.

A few mischief break-ins have occurred on school property which have been reported to the police. Carol called for neighbors to keep vigilant to reduce the risk of future incidents.

As for her response to an article in the Saturday paper regarding our public schools, there is good news in that Towson High received the highest scores in the County, after Centennial High. The bad news is that Dumbarton's 8th grade and Stoneleigh's 3 grade scored lower than last year's MSPAP testing. Possible reasons for the abnormally low scores could be the fact that the scoring was done by a subcontractor for the first time in the test's history, subjective scoring procedures, and the fact that this was the last year that the MSPAP test will be administered. Students, parents, and teachers were aware of this fact, and at one point the tests were to be cancelled, but the decision was subsequently overturned. The MSPAP has been given for the past 10 years and our schools have done well in the past. Carol noted also that the 5th grade scores were good. She added that the CTBS scores are more objectively scored and ours are the top 2-5 schools in the area with an 80th percentile average in all areas. Carol has been in contact with the principal of Stoneleigh Elementary, who sent out a letter to all families outlining all that she knows about the testing issue. The principal could not attend this meeting tonight, but she will meet with those individuals who have further questions. Public relations is a challenge. The Maryland PTA may get involved or a citizens group could challenge the scores. Dumbarton's principal has personally contacted the Maryland State Board of Education, and it was noted that the principal had helped develop the new test.

New Business

Stoneleigh By-laws Amendments and Modifications

Article IV, section 1

Government and administration of the Association shall be by a Board of Governors composed of sixteen members, consisting of a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, the most recent Past President and ten other board members *shall also be re-elected to one- year terms*, including the Pool Committee chairman, the "Stoneleighite" Editor, and the chairperson of the Stoneleigh Community Oriented Policing effort. The President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and the most recent Past President *shall be elected to a one-year term and may not succeed themselves in office*. The Secretary and the Treasurer *shall not be elected to more than two consecutive one year terms in the same office*. **OR:** *The ten other members shall be elected to, but not limited to, one-year terms.*

Motion on Article IV, Section 1 passed as amended note wording changes from the published amendment changes

Motion to accept changes approved

Article IV, Section 7

All dispositions of Capital Assets shall be first recommended by two-thirds of the Board of Governors and then approved by 60% of the members present at the annual meeting or a special meeting or vote after at least 10 days notice to the membership of the proposed disposition.

Motion to amend approved.

Article IV, Section 8

A majority of the five elected officers may authorize an expenditure up to \$250.00. Authorization of all expenditures over \$250.00 must be approved by a majority vote of Board of Governors present and voting at the Board meeting.

Motion to amend approved.

Article VII, Section 4

All voting must be done in person *unless a written ballot is otherwise authorized by the Board of Governors.*

Motion to amend with the above wording approved.

Article X, Section 1

The President shall appoint a committee composed of two members who are not members of the Board of Governors, or alternatively an outside CPA firm, to audit the books of the Association at the close of the fiscal year. The Treasurer's Annual Report and the Journal shall carry the signatures of the auditors showing that all accounts have been checked and found in order.

Motion to amend approved.

It was noted that the hiring of a CPA firm does add an expense, but that it is worth the expense to protect the interests of the community.

New officers:

President: Rob Starr
First Vice President: Fred Stringfellow
Second Vice President: Courtney Galuza
Treasurer: Chris Lehmann
Secretary: Cretchen MacKenzie
Past President: David Hudson
Garden Club: Betsy McGlone
Greening and Recycling: Brough Schamp
Traffic and Roads: Toby Belloff
Restrictions and Improvements: Jim Leonard

School Liaison: Carole McDade
Security, COPS: Janice Arcieri
Stoneleighite Editor: Lee Starkey

The election of new officers was approved unanimously.

Outside Affairs

Fred Stringfellow stepped in for Mike Mulderrig, in his absence. Regarding the Drumcastle Shopping Center location for a proposed Walgreens store, a meeting was held to explain Walgreens' intentions for site, however, plans were not 100% nailed down at the last meeting. Community concerns included: the increase in traffic, the esthetics and landscaping plans. Walgreens countered that it will not be a traffic generator, however will derive business from workers on the way to and from work. As for the esthetics, rather than the usual square white building, they could use Baltimore red brick to better fit into the neighborhood esthetic. They also added that they would do landscaping and maintain a green area around Drumcastle Center. The new building would be slightly larger than the present building, but essentially on the same spot. They initially were understood to be achieving the same grading as that of York Road, however the plan now seems to be simply improving the grading. Their plan calls for slightly more parking in the rear. Walgreens intends to place the drive-thru in the rear near apartments. The community raised the question of safety with that plan. Walgreens may relocate the drive-thru.

* One neighbor questioned the pillars supporting the southern edge of the new Panera restaurant. Unconfirmed reports suggest that grading issues and not being allowed to build in the parking lot were explanations for that pillar solution, though not ideal. Apparently, Panera was placed on the "city side" of the City/County line to avoid conflicts with County representatives. It is possible that the "pillar" situation may be improved once re-grading is completed.

There are no updates on the Home Depot proposed for the former Super Fresh site. That proposal is not as far along as that of Walgreen's. There should be upcoming meetings.

Social Committee

Fred Stringfellow announced the upcoming Annual Breakfast with Santa on Saturday December 12th at 9am. Please call the Belloffs if you plan to attend, in order to receive an individualized ornament. As in the past, toys will be collected but will go primarily to our Adopt-a-Families and any extras will be donated to charity, as done in the past.

The Adopt-a-Family Charitable Drive was organized this year by Kate Reinhardt , Coutney Galuza and Susan Dempsey. Neighbors are called upon for unwrapped new gifts or cash donations to support this worthwhile cause.

The Annual Caroling will take place on Sunday December 22nd ,is being organized by Gwen Farrugia.

The Winter Social will again take place on March 15th at the Country Club of Maryland, which is close by.

Garden Club

Betsy McGlone reported that the club meets every 2nd Tuesday from September to May. A donation of \$20 dues is requested. Fund-raising activities include the annual sales drive of geraniums and impatiens to the neighborhood, a plant sale at the Kenilworth Shopping Center featuring plants from neighbors' gardens, and the White Elephant Sale at the Labor Day Fair. This year they organized a trip to the Chesapeake Bay and Assateague Island. The group supports nature conservation, such centers as Oregon Ridge; they organize visits, have demonstrations, luncheons, toys for Tot drives.

Stoneleighite

Anita Meros reported for the last time, as she is stepping down as editor. This upcoming Stoneleighite will be her last issue. There is a January 31, 2003 deadline for the next issue. With our new printers they arrange for advertising so the newsletter is printed for free now. We have signed on for another 3 years. Anita was thanked for her service to the neighborhood as our editor.

Old Business

Dave Hudson thanked everyone for their attendance. He stated that he is looking forward to working with Rob Starr, as our new Association President. The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Moss

