

Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday, November 15, 2017

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 6, 2017, 8:00 p.m.
Somerset Town Hall (4501 Cumberland Ave.)**

Attendees

Brookdale: Bob Cope

Chevy Chase West: Lloyd Guerci

Chevy Chase Village:

Drummond:

Friendship Heights: Norman Knopf, Melanie White

Glen Echo Heights: Harry Pfohl

Kenwood (the subdivision): Jenny Sue Dunner

Kenwood Condominium: Sue Schumacher

Kenwood House Coop: Jean Iker, Judy Throckmorton

Town of Somerset: Jack Frink

Springfield: Phyllis Edelman, Cynthia Green, Brent Mickum, Pete Salinger

Sumner Village Condo:

Westmoreland Citizens Assoc: Celia Martin, Barry Miller

Westbard Mews: Lynne Battle

Westwood Mews: Frank Anderson

Wood Acres:

Guests: Donna Collins, Dennis Collins

Administrative:

- The meeting was called to order by Harry Pfohl at 8:00p.m.
- The agenda for Wednesday, November 15, 2017 was approved.
- The minutes of the October 15, 2017 meeting were approved.
- Treasurer's Report – Sue Schumacher reported her balance was \$200 off from the bank's but that she would work with the bank to determine who is in error.
- Montgomery County Civic Federation – (Sue Schumacher) A speaker from the State Highway Administration reported that no state road construction is going on within the CCCFH communities. Monica Mead representing the Purple Line said that they are of the opinion that the "Purple Line will be used for short hops" and not for long travel between Bethesda and New Carrollton. Silver Spring can expect traffic bottlenecks for the next five years with Purple Line construction. Sue reminded us that since the Purple Line is not part of Metro, it will have an entirely different fare schedule.

Reports/Discussion:

- **5550 Friendship Blvd.** (Norman Knopf) – The developer withdrew his application for an 18-story building on the site. What’s next? He could: 1) come back with a building of 90-feet in height, which would be within the permitted zoning; 2) wait until the sector plan is revised; or 3) he could do nothing. Item #1 would not need a zoning change, but would be inconsistent with the current master plan unless the current building was torn down.
- **Willard Avenue Park.** (Norman Knopf) – The wooden fence around the house on an acre of parkland, which the county purchased in 1995, was removed, replaced by a chain link fence. The house is now empty and should not be re-rented, but demolished to restore it to parkland as expected from the 1995 purchase.
- **Westbard Self Storage.** (Lloyd Guerci) – The staff report should be out by December 4, and possibly by December 1. The CCCFH needs to send a letter to planners based on our views of the staff report. The CCCFH was successful along with others in removing the building from the 100 foot stream buffer. Current major concern: How does the storage facility fit in with the major amenity in the Westbard Sector Plan: the Willett Branch Greenway? The width of the access area to the Willett Branch between the proposed storage building and the wall behind McDonald’s (blueprints show 22 feet) is too narrow. Also the Greenway between the rear of the proposed storage building and eastern property line at the rear HOC parking lot was not wide enough.

Other concerns with plans:

- **86,000 sq. ft. within the “cellar” is exempt from FAR regulations.** Building will have 191,000 sq. ft. Instead of a 2.5 FAR, it will have the equivalent rentable square footage of a 4.0 FAR. Because the developer is getting so much additional density, their building design should be more attractive since it is next to Willett Branch.
- **Where is the 50 feet in height allowed in the zone measured from?** From high ground near the road or near lower ground, closer to creek?
- **What is the definition of “cellar” vs. “basement”? Is the cellar taxed?**
- **How is the 10% of green space required measured?** Theoretically 10% of the lot should be greenspace, based on the portion of building above ground. However, since the cellar will have a larger footprint than the part of the building above ground, shouldn’t the 10% be based on that area?
- **What ground level infiltration storm water management controls are in place?**

A motion was made, seconded and approved that the CCCFH send a letter to the Planning and Parks departments voicing the above-mentioned concerns.

- **Cemetery/burial ground legislation.** (Harry Pfohl) – The cemetery burial bill (No.24-17) only deals with subdivision of property, not with the building permitting process. Chair Pfohl drafted a letter for CCCFH member review asking the County Council to return to this issue and pass legislation for burial ground review during the site plan and permitting processes. The letter, with one addition, was approved for distribution to Council members.
- **Cemetery & Macedonia Baptist Church (MBC).** (Celia Martin) – The MBC had a rally on November 12. Mediation re: cemetery delineation has not been resumed. The cemetery delineation bill (24-17) is not strong enough as written.

- **Update on Westbard re: HOC/Regency.** (Bob Cope, Jenny Sue Dunner) – Bob Cope handed out a map delineating the following properties:
 - **238** – site where the HOC building is located
 - **175** – driveway next to the HOC building, where the cemetery is reported to be located
 - **177** – lot the Westbard storage facility will dedicate
 - **143** – parking lot behind American Plant, owned by Regency
 - **240** – parking lots behind the HOC building that the creek runs through
 - **B** – parking lot in front of HOC building

Cope reviewed possible scenarios as to what could happen with these properties to determine if the Willett Branch Greenway could ever become a reality.

Jenny Sue Dunner met with the Regency rep and emphasized that the community wants more of a “neighborhood” with the redesign of Westbard – much like the Catholic University plan developed for the CCCFH. She feels they have a bit more understanding of the area than Equity One (**EO**) and are likely to redo the Sketch Plan EO submitted with less density as Regency does not build high rises. Dunner was not sure if Regency would approach development using standard method (where no amenities are required) or optional method.

- **Status of Save Westbard Lawsuit.** (Celia Martin) – The trial date is January 22. They hope that two of the allegations, (Complaints 1 and 2) will be ruled on before then, leaving complaint #3, contract zoning, as the only open question.

New business:

- It was asked if a roster of delegates with phone numbers and email addresses could be developed and disbursed. Lloyd Guerri will work on this in January.
- A motion was made, seconded and approved to reimburse Jennifer O’Keefe for \$70 of expenses for the CCCFH Website.
- It was recommended that the December 20 meeting be rescheduled to Dec. 5th or 6th because the current date is too close to the Christmas holiday and it would be helpful to have member input on the Westbard Self Storage for the Dec. 14 Planning Board hearing after the staff report is issued Dec. 4. Chair Pfohl will look into the availability of the Somerset Town Hall for early December.

A motion was made, seconded and approved for adjournment at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Edelman
Recording Secretary