

**Carderock Springs Citizens' Association
23 June 2014 Minutes CSCA Board Meeting**

Board Members Present: Barbara Ames, Anne Carlson, Rob Gorman, Jack Orrick, Phil Rider, Donna Schwartz

Also in attendance: Mary Lou Shannon and Scott Wilets

Opening and Comments –

Phil Rider called the meeting to order.

1) Paula Bienenfeld, of the Montgomery County Civic Federation (www.montgomerycivic.org), was an invited guest. Ms. Bienenfeld explained the role of the Civic Federation. According to the MCCF website:

The mission of the MCCF is to preserve and improve the quality of life for all current and future residents of Montgomery County, Maryland. Since its founding in 1925, the volunteers of the MCCF have committed themselves to providing an effective citizen voice to government policy makers, both elected and appointed.

The Civic Federation is a not-for-profit, county-wide umbrella group designed to promote cooperation, education and effectiveness of civic and community associations in Montgomery County. It addresses a wide range of concerns in transportation, land use, environment, education, budget and finance, health and human services, public safety, and ethics. With its strength of numbers and thoroughness of its deliberations, the Federation influences county policy and balances the activities of vested county pressure groups.

The MCCF membership consists of neighborhood associations, as well as homeowner and condominium associations, which appoint voting delegates to the Federation.

The MCCF meets once per month. Topics discussed at their meetings have included deer management (and bow hunting), transparency of county budgeting processes (including schools and roads), and zoning ordinances. Members can suggest topics of interest for monthly meetings.

After Ms. Bienenfeld's departure, the CSCA board discussed and then decided to join the MCCF for a trial period of one year. The cost of membership is determined by the size of the member association. For the CSCA this will be approximately \$35 - \$50 per year.

ACTION: Phil to complete the MCCF application process.

2) Secretary's Report –

Donna Schwartz presented the May Meeting minutes and the meeting minutes from the April Annual Meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

Donna Schwartz will consider May Meeting minutes and April Annual Meeting minutes final.

3) Treasurer's Report –

Rob Gorman presented the Treasurer's Report. Rob and Bob Stocker are continuing to work on the transition of power for the treasurer's role. Rob has purchased Access software to enable him to continue to use the access database to track membership and finances of the CSCA.

The Treasurer's Report was approved without changes.

*ACTION: **Rob** to acquire control of CSCA bank account.*

*ACTION: **Rob** to determine the % of families that have joined the CSCA (also total number of families/households in the CSC, and % of the budget that membership fees provide).*

4) **Other Topics -**

- Barb Ames proposed that the CSCA have professionally printed signs printed that could be used to announce monthly meetings and other events. Each sign will be ~ 18” x 24” on weather-resistant corrugated plastic (cost \$140/4 signs). The board approved the purchase of 4 signs. The signs will be placed at strategic locations in the neighborhood 2-3 days before each meeting, and then taken down. Anne Carlson volunteered to be “sign master” for 1 year.

*ACTION: **Barb** to purchase 4 signs to announce CSCA Board Meetings.*

- A suggestion was also made that the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) may also want to use signs to announce their monthly meetings. This was tabled and will be revisited after the purchase and use of the CSCA Board Meeting signs and it is determined if they have an effect on meeting attendance.
- It was also suggested that the ARC use the CS chat to announce their meetings and provide a list of homes being discussed at each meeting.
- The outcome from the ARC meetings will be mentioned in the CSCA Newsletter.
- Adherence to CSCA covenants was discussed, specifically in regards to educating/informing new homeowners of the existence and importance of the covenants to maintain the character of the neighborhood. The board recognizes that the information around the covenants needs to be communicated to new homeowners prior to their move in (early intervention), as many new homeowners immediately start to make changes to their homes or landscape and do not consult with the ARC. To provide information to new homeowners several approaches were considered.
 - Realtors may be able to provide this information to prospective homeowners. Information from realtors is not consistent. One consistent item is that home sellers must complete Maryland Residential Property Disclosure and Disclaimer statement that is included in every transaction. There is a space on this form (page 3) to include that the property is restricted. Mary Lou suggested that there be “approved” language that could be given to home sellers to include on the disclosure form. Phil will draft language that the CSCA suggests all home sellers use when completing the statement.
 - Phil Rider will monitor the MLS listings in the neighborhood. Phil will provide the covenants to the listing Realtor and request that they provide the covenants to potential buyers.
 - Information regarding the covenants will be included in each CSCA newsletter.
 - The covenants are on the CS website; they will also be paraphrased in a positive manner. Phil mentioned that he had an older document that was given to him from a long-time CS resident. This document described the covenants as a positive way to maintain the character of the neighborhood.

- Mary Lou Shannon, as a function of the Welcoming Committee, provides a packet of information in each new homeowners mailbox including a letter that covenants exist, a message regarding the neighborhood directory, and instructions on how to join the cs-chat.

*ACTION: **Mary Lou** to set up Carderock MLS listing search with automatic notifications to Phil Rider's email address.*

*ACTION: **Mary Lou** to provide the ARC application in the Welcome packet for new homeowners.*

*ACTION: **Phil** to provide older covenant document to CSCA board members for their review.*

*ACTION: **Phil** to coordinate draft of common language that will be provided to home sellers to be included in the disclosure statement.*

*ACTION: **Jack** to provide an article to the CS Newsletter on the covenants and specifically mention the ARC and include the ARC application.*

- Parking issues were discussed. This included cars have been left on the street overnight or parking in front of other neighbors houses for extended periods of time. In some situations the parked cars were a safety issue. It was suggested that a letter stating the concern of long-term parking could be placed in the car owner's mailbox. It was suggested that the board provide a draft letter (approved language) that could be used in these situations. Phil also suggested working with Montgomery County officials on parking enforcement.
- The Board is responsible to uphold the covenants. The Board will support neighbors that feel the covenants are not being followed and bring these situations to the Board's attention. The Board 1) proposes that neighbors communicate with each other; if there is no resolution, 2) the neighbor with the complaint can escalate their concern to the county (anonymous complaints can be registered online with the county); and 3) the Board will become involved if warranted.

*ACTION: **Phil** to approach a few CS residents who have expressed interest in maintaining sensibilities in the CS neighborhood. He will request that they work together on preparing positive messaging documents regarding the covenants, parking, when to bring in the garbage cans, etc.*

- The CS Newsletter has historically been published as a paper document with an online version also available. The Carderock Springs Swim and Tennis Club has moved to an online only newsletter. The CSCA Board will continue to publish a newsletter and is committed to publish at least 6 newsletters each year. There will be a newsletter in July, but no newsletter in August. The decision to publish a newsletter will be discussed at each board meeting and then communicated to the editor and regular contributors.

Upcoming CSCA Board meetings (all at 7 pm):

July – no meeting, summer hiatus; **August 18** at the clubhouse; **September 15** at the clubhouse; **October 20** (at Anne Carlson's house); **November 17** (at Donna Schwarz's house); **December 15** (at Phil Rider's house)

Meeting adjourned.