

Carderock Springs Citizens' Association
January 23, 2017 Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

Board members present: Jack Orrick, Bill Moore, Bill Draper, Rob Gorman, Seth Hertlein, and Julie Weber. Excused – Stefan LoBuglio, Sindy Udell, Yvette Quintela

Other association members included: Petra Jacobs, Karen Roman, and John Karlik.

President Jack Orrick convened the meeting around 7:30 PM.

The Board first unanimously approved the November minutes as drafted, this was the most recent meeting as the Board had not met in December.

Next Ms. Karen Roman, Co-Chair of the Traffic Safety Committee, led a lengthy discussion about the Fenway Road Traffic Safety Survey and next steps. Ms. Roman also distributed an updated draft survey for the Board's review and comment. She explained that three changes had been made since she had last emailed the earlier draft survey to Board members on January 18th. These changes included how the survey authors and those who had input on the survey were designated (or not) on the survey itself, what the specific dimensions of the proposed island design were, and the addition of a survey question concerning whether residents would be interested in having the DOT install trial islands as a possible option. In the case of the last change, were the neighborhood to agree to the pilot, Ms. Roman shared that another survey following the pilot would have to be distributed.

Mr. John Karlik stated that the new island design was an improvement. However, he also expressed concern that the new island design would be in conflict with a MD law that renders it illegal for a driver of a motor vehicle to pass a cyclist in a 3' safety margin. He explained that if a driver overtakes a cyclist in remaining space, that driver would be breaking state law. Ms. Roman explained that the car could go in front of the bike. Mr. Karlik stated he disagreed with Ms. Roman's explanation. President Orrick explained that the car driver has an option if by chance the car and bike happened at the same part of the road – the car should stop and/or slow down and let the bike pass through the space adjacent to the island.

Mr. Karlik also indicated that he felt some obligation to inform various local cyclist associations in the area (e.g., Potomac Peddlers) of the island design and its potential conflict with the MD law regarding cyclists.

President Orrick underscored that there were three traffic calming measures on the table – speed cameras, pavement markings, and islands.

President Orrick asked Ms. Roman if the DOT had provided criteria of what “resident concurrence” means. Ms. Roman said no. She further explained that until the Board sees the survey results, it will not know if it has any resident concurrence. There was consensus that if there was concurrence, the Board should hold another neighborhood meeting with DOT so that residents can ask questions to then decide what to do next. President Orrick underscored that transparency of the process and clear communication with residents are priorities.

Mr. Karlik indicated that what had been described regarding process “sounds reasonable to” him.

Mr. Karlik asked about parking issues. Ms. Roman indicated that only 10% of Fenway Road would lose some parking. She also stated that any resident could choose not to have the island in front of his/her house on either side of the road.

Ms. Roman discussed getting the survey out by February 1st and retrieving all of the results within three weeks. There was discussion as to how the survey would be delivered, including through Survey Monkey. The Board decided to allow residents to return the surveys by March 1.

Ms. Jacobs asked what people should do if they have a question about the survey. Ms. Roman offered to include her email in the survey and to act as point of contact for questions. Mr. Draper offered to help.

There were multiple additional questions asked by those present at the meeting, including but not limited to whether a ticket would be rendered in the case of the use of a speeding camera (yes), how would the Board ensure that each household would only fill out one survey (addresses need to be inputted on the survey), what happens if multiple surveys from the same address were returned (use the first one if not feasible to contact the residents) and where to return paper copies of the survey (CSCA P.O. Box or at the CS Club, only with Larry’s permission),

In addition, suggestions were made as to how to improve some of the survey language, and how to improve the data charts in the survey. After the robust discussion, President Orrick called for a vote on the survey language. The Board all approved the survey with the changes discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Karlik indicated that this presented survey was of much higher quality than previous surveys.

Due to time constraints, the Board decided to defer talking about the agenda item, the Carderock House Springs House Tour 2017, until its next meeting. For similar reasons, the Board also agreed to table the discussion concerning the agenda item, Board Members 2017-2018 and the appointment of a nominating committee, until its next meeting as well.

Ms. Petra Jacobs and Mr. Seth Hertlein then presented a detailed and informative slide deck on their collective research concerning how the neighborhood could potentially obtain Beltway sound barriers adjacent to the Carderock neighborhood to mitigate the high intensity Beltway noise. Both Ms. Jacobs and Mr. Hertlein discussed the impacts of increased highway noise (up to 80 decibels) and the increased geographic area within the neighborhood that is impacted by the highway noise today compared to 10 years ago. They also discussed how the noise was negatively affecting the sales of homes in the noise zone, and property values throughout Carderock.

In addition, the presenters outlined the two potential avenues to obtain Beltway sound barriers, including the criteria required to exercise each option. The presenters explained that one of the two options is not available now where there is no new proximate construction on the highway, one of the stated criteria. However, Mr. Hertlein discussed how highway construction is scheduled to occur after 2020, and thus, this option could be available to the neighborhood in the future.

The second option – concerning existing communities being affected by noise where the highway is not undergoing construction - may be available to the Carderock neighborhood now. Mr. Hertlein shared that there had been inconsistent treatment of this date/timing criteria regarding option 2 in the past, and that there may be a possibility of exercising option 2.

Mr. Hertlein also explained that there had been changes to MD highway noise policies through the years concerning the maximum cost of the wall per resident and the maximum amount of square footage per benefited residence.

Ms. Jacobs indicated that the neighborhood could also contact the MD EPA to request restoration of native species in the Beltway area pursuant to recent state policy. Ms. Jacobs also suggested that the neighborhood could plant trees in specific areas to mitigate the sound. President Orrick and Ms. Jacobs also discussed the fact that the County should have money from its recent canopy restoration law to plant trees potentially in the designated neighborhood areas where the highway sounds are particularly acute. Mr. Draper suggested we get the Carderock Springs Elementary School involved too, where they back up directly to the beltway and would also be interested in mitigating the sound. President Orrick also suggested that Roger Berliner be contacted to find out the County's position on the sound barrier issue.

Secretary Rob Gorman then distributed CSCA's 2017 Budget to the Board for their review and discussion. In his overview of the budget, Mr. Gorman discussed the monies that were recently paid for many months of newsletter delivery as well as for Anne's daffodil planting. Mr. Gorman also discussed paying out dollars related to rainscape issues. Moreover, Mr. Gorman indicated that he moved 30% of the dues money from checking to savings to support any potential litigation related to neighborhood covenants or other contingency matters that may arise.

Overall, Mr. Gorman indicated that revenues exceeded expenditures. He also indicated that the new budget incorporates Jack's suggestions from the last meeting, including adding a place holder for house tour expenses, boosting the budget for maintenance of neighborhood signs/entry/exit to \$1500, removing the directory printing budget, and slating up to \$500 for use by the traffic safety committee to distribute the upcoming survey. Mr. Gorman also discussed increasing the social committee's budget. The Board agreed that the archives project was on the back burner.

President Orrick briefly discussed the deadline for the Board's next newsletter. He explained that due to the later date for the CSCA Board meeting this month, articles needed to be submitted to Noelle by Friday, January 27th, with the distribution date being February 3rd.

President Orrick adjourned the meeting around 9:45 PM.