

NDRA/North Downtown Neighborhood Meeting

Thursday, June 25, 2009, 7pm, Central Library, 3rd fl. room

In attendance:

Board members: Colette Hall, Ruth Stornetta, Mark Kavit, Bill Sampson, Debra Weiss, Pat Napoleon, Alex Ix, June West, and Burnie Davis
Residents & Guests: Jane Myers

The meeting called to order at 7:04 pm. by Colette Hall

Colette announce that on July 30th, Officer Harvey Finkel will present a program entitled "Refuse to be a Victim" at City Space at 7:00-8:30 p.m. All are invited, and bring a neighbor!

The minutes of May 28, 2009 were approved as presented .

Treasurer's report –Income of \$60 in dues and \$0.14 in interest; expense of \$1.18 in Paypal fees. The new balance is \$1,408.22

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Colette reported that there as not yet been a decision in the Committee to Save McIntire Park lawsuit, but that the decision may come next week.
- B. Colette surveyed the Directors regarding the preferred date for the Annual Picnic. The group seemed to lean toward September 13th, pending availability of Alex's fiddlers for the music. Discussion of how to publicize the picnic.
- C. Ruth reported that the City Manager will meet interested residents on September 10th, at 5:30 p.m., in front of the library. Anyone with "sites" to be visited with the CM should contact Ruth so she can plan the walk accordingly.
- D. Nominees for the Board elections are needed – there will be at least 2 vacancies this fall. Please give names of possible nominees to Pat Napoleon.
- E. Colette asked whether political candidates should be invited to the Picnic, in light of NDRA's non-partisan status. The Directors urged the invitation of all our local candidates and the present City Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Colette completed her report on the City Manager's meeting of April. He (CM) claimed that VDOT could condemn by eminent domain the land needed in east McIntire Park for the Parkway, but others doubted that this was legal or practical.

B. Lengthy discussion of the Single Room Occupancy Ordinance under consideration at City Council. The rules are under discussion, and no site has been specified as of yet.

C. It is time to nominate a Director for "Director of the Year" honors for 2008-9. Please send the name of your nominee and reasons for your nomination to Colette.

D. The Alliance of Neighborhoods meeting on "Managing Neighborhood Traffic" was very interesting and useful, even if attendance was small.

E. Discussion of the redevelopment plans for the Martha Jefferson Hospital campus, after they move to Pantops in 2012. Apparently, MJH is still negotiation with the developer *Crossland*, hoping for public discussion by late July. NDRA will be kept informed of the plans and planning process.

F. Colette opined that the report by Jeannette Jazniak to City Council on the Meadowcreek Parkway issue contained numerous questionable statements and should not be accepted unquestioningly. The problems of the Birdwood neighborhood access were not addressed at all. The report is on the City's website.

G. The *Committee to Save McIntire Park* had their first Picnic in June, in the rain, but with encouraging enthusiasm. Further Picnics are planned for July, August, and September.

H. Discussion of the First St. Project. Cheri Lewis, our neighbor, is leaving the Planning Commission, but will be the new liaison for the "Day Haven" program with the community. Colette has invited her to discuss the project at our August meeting, if their guidelines are ready for public presentation at that time.

I. Under "Matters by Directors," Mark asked which City department to call regarding tree slash in the neighborhood. Colette recommended calling Public Works. He also reported on a parking issue at 414 Altamont St. The rumor of a "dance hall" being opened on the Mall was raised – it may be going into the former Gravity Lounge location. Discussion with June West about the development plans at the Water House garage and mixed use building, near the Lewis and Clark Condominiums.

Finally, Mark suggested that time be provided at our meetings for guests to air their concerns without having to wait until the end of the planned agenda. Discussion supported some flexibility in this regard, possibly with a time after "Old Business" for such public comment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Minutes submitted by Burnie Davis, Secretary.

REMINDER: The next NDRA meeting will be at 7 p.m. on **Thursday, August 27th** at the Central Library.