

**COLLEGE GARDENS CIVIC ASSOCIATION (CGCA)
MEETING MINUTES, June 8, 2010**

GENERAL MEETING

Welcome

Mike Phillips, President of CGCA, welcomed the membership (approx. 35) to the meeting.

Also attending were *Jennie Forehand*, MD State Senator, *Cheryl Kagan*, candidate for MD State Senate, *Elyse Gussow* and *Gerry Cashin*, President and VP of Plymouth Woods Condo Association, and *John Telesco*, a member of the Rockville Bike Advisory Committee.

Treasurer's Report

Susan VanGrack, Treasurer of CGCA, reported that the Association has \$12,246.00.

Old Business

New Pond Park

Two questions were posed by members. These questions were forwarded to Mike Critzer, Rockville's Parks Services Manager. His prompt responses are included below.

One member noted that there are no trash cans along the back walkway that boarder houses on the cul-de-sacs of Purdue and Carnegie Courts.

City response: The park reconstruction Task Force members did consider and made recommendations on the number and locations of litter cans. I recall discussing having a litter can along the pathway between the pond and the houses and it was generally agreed to not initially install a can along this pathway. Most felt not having a litter can along this pathway would look and smell better, and there did not seem to be a litter problem along this section of pathway in the past . Litter cans were placed at, or adjacent to, high use activity areas including the playground, basketball court, picnic area, shelter area, and pond overlooks. If we find we have a real need for a litter can along the rear pathway we can add one.

One member pointed out that the retaining wall on the SE corner of the pond by the stand of trees is unsafe because there is no fence and children who might be playing along the wall might fall. The drop from the wall is approximately 5'.

City response: There was consideration given to installing a fence on top of the retaining wall but the engineers determined it was not required by the building code, and Task Force members felt a fence was not necessary because of the very brief periods that any water would be next to the wall. Also, nobody seemed to like the way a fence on top of this wall would look, or how it would restrict people from sitting on the wall. Staff does not feel there is a safety problem because when the pond is full during a storm, the depth of water next to the wall would not exceed much more than 24 inches, and then only for a very brief time before draining out. The area between the base of the wall and deeper water should have a good stand of reeds soon and this will help to create a barrier to deeper water around the edge of the pond.

Electronic Newsletter

During the prior meeting, a motion was made to move to an electronic newsletter (emailed). Discussion at the current meeting pointed out that indeed many residents still need paper. It was generally agreed that paper newsletters will continue. Newsletters are produced at least twice per year preceding the twice per year CGCA membership meetings.

In order to reach as many members as possible, communications to the membership may include one or more of these methods: mail, email, signs, and the CG ListServ. We will be working with members to improve and broaden our communications methods.

Points to clarify:

Email List: The executive officers maintain a list of email addresses. This list has approximately 150 addresses and is estimated to reach *only* about one half of the homes in our neighborhood. This list is used only for neighborhood issues and email addresses are masked to maintain privacy. We will look for ways to expand the list.

Please join our email list by send an email request to any officer on the last page of this document.

CGCA ListServ: The ListServ is run by Yahoo, and is public and free for everyone to join. It allows all subscribers to post, read and reply to messages. We encourage more neighbors to join. It's easy; simply send an email to collegedgardens-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and you will get an email right back with directions.

Montgomery College Fence

City might conduct a survey to have greater input from the community. The survey might also include a suggested plan, developed by the Executive Committees of the associations most impacted by the fence closure. Stay tuned for updates.

Scarborough Square has 2 gated fence openings to MC. These gates have signs that say "Open Gate Hours Daily 5:30 AM – 11:00 PM." Some neighbors may be using these openings to access MC. It was pointed out that they may be trespassing.

Follow Up: Tom Miner spoke with Chris Natele, the Scarborough Square property manager on site. He said the two gates are controlled by MC. He said that indeed they should be open from 5:30 am to 11.00 pm but he could not confirm that MC actually locks and unlocks the gates because he is not on site at those times. Asked specifically if residents of Yale Village or College Gardens would be trespassing if they used the gates, Chris said no; he regularly sees people that are not Scarborough Square residents use the gates and is fine with it. Should there be an increase in trash or similar problems, Scarborough Square might alter their position.

Concern was expressed about the 4th of July and whether MC will temporarily open the fence like they did last year. CGCA will work with Plymouth Woods to make sure MC knows our desire to have the fence opened on that day to allow residents easier access to the fireworks ceremony.

John Telesco, a member of the Rockville Bike Advisory Committee, noted that MC's master facilities plan makes no mention of bicycles or pedestrians.

Jennie Forehand, MD State Senator said she did not believe there was any funding at stake from anti-smoking groups. This was in response to a question about whether MC's no-smoking policy is tied to funding it has received.

A motion was made and seconded that reads, "CGCA will formally ask the City to resend their letter of 3/22/10, with a request for a response to MC, the MC Board of Trustees, the New President, and Dr. Ackerman."

A vote was taken: 24 For, 2 Opposed. The motion passed

A motion was made and seconded that reads, "CGCA will write a letter to Montgomery County Ride-On asking them to modify the Bus 45 route to include a stop on Mannakee at the Montgomery College bus stop." It was generally felt that this stop might increase ridership on the Bus 45 and that increased ridership might prevent reduced bus service and / or reduced hours of operation.

A vote was taken: 34 For, 0 (zero) Opposed. The motion passed.

New Business

Additional Playground Equipment

City Council member and CG resident Mark Pierzchala proposed adding new playground equipment to CGES and asked CGCA for \$2500 to show community support as he approached the City to pick up the rest of the cost. This equipment would help foster inclusion of specially enabled children, and is also targeted at children who have outgrown play equipment but are not yet using the adult-size facilities. Examples, but not necessarily the same equipment, can be seen at the Rockville swim center and Mattie Stepanik Park in King Farm in the form of "Bank Shot Basketball." The equipment would belong to and be maintained by the City, but would be on MCPS property. The owner of this local firm lives in Rockville and is willing to sell the equipment at or near cost. Marl Pierzchala will also meet with CGES PTA and seek funds.

Some questions and concerns were voiced. Is the equipment really needed? There are already 2 similar facilities nearby. Might this have an impact on rainwater penetration? Is there a real need?

A motion was made and seconded that reads, "CGCA will provide \$2500.00 towards the cost and installation of specialized playground equipment for specially-abled children to promote inclusiveness in their play."

A vote was taken: 20 For, 7 Opposed. The motion passed.

In a post-vote note, Pierzchala mentioned that if the idea did not receive support from the school or the PTA, the money would not be spent, and in any case, would not be needed for some months. Support from the school and the PTA would be seen as an expression of need. Also, the idea is that the City of Rockville would provide the bulk of the funds if approved by the Mayor and Council.

National Night Out

Susan VanGrack is spearheading the NNO this year and actively seeking volunteer help. It is scheduled for Tuesday, August 3rd and will be held in our new CG Park. This NNO will trend more towards an old fashioned, small-town get-together. Specifically omitted will be the moon-bounce type of equipment. Rather there might be clowns, face-painting, cotton candy machine, bike parade, 3-legged races, etc. CGCA will arrange for burgers and dogs (including the veggie kind) and will ask for families to bring more substantial salads and side dishes to share. A point was made that CGCA should check with the City to make sure the park is not double booked.

Volunteers will be needed and **Don Mann** was to first to volunteer to help at the grill. Thanks Don! Other volunteers should contact Susan VanGrack at (301) 279-2266 or SVanGrack@writ.com.

A motion was made and seconded that reads, “CGCA will allocate up to \$1000 to pay for expenses associated with NNO in 2010.”

A vote was taken: 34 For, 0 (zero) Opposed. The motion passed.

Note: Traditionally, NNO costs approximately \$500 so \$1000 should more that cover it.

Note: City Council member and CG resident Mark Pierzchala doesn't recall ever losing more that \$200 or \$300 on it over the years, once donations and raffle were taken into account. CGCA appropriated more than that to cover costs but always did decently on the return.

Elections

June 2010 marked the end of the two year term for the officers of the CGCA. Four people were nominated to succeed them for a two-year term from June 2010 to June 2012: Tom Miner, President; Susan VanGrack, Vice-President; Kathy Goldgeier, Secretary; and Don Mann, Treasurer.

A vote was taken: 34 For, 0 (zero) Opposed. The people mentioned above are now the officers of CGCA and will serve a two year term until June 2012.

A special point was made to thank the outgoing President, Mike Phillips and VP Ciaran Murphy for their service and contributions to College Gardens.

The meeting was adjourned.

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