

## **Helderberg Neighborhood Association Membership Meeting**

Meeting Minutes  
July 20, 2016

### **Meeting Start**

The membership meeting of the HNA was started at 7:05 p.m. by Eric Huntington. Eric, the Board, and the members all introduced themselves. During introductions, Joe Ingemie stated that he is now the Albany Community Policing Advisory Committee (ACPAC) representative for the neighborhood.

### **A) Presentation and Q & A - Frank Zeoli (Megan Ruby speaking) - Department of General Services (DGS)**

- Megan Ruby- Recycling coordinator for the City of Albany
- DGS takes care of the streets, trash, recycling, special programs like recycling, hazardous waste drop off, electronics drop off, compost yard waste, illegal dumping, overgrowth, takes care of trees, snow plowing, etc.
- Recycling pilot program about to start - 64 gallon cart which is larger than the 22 gallon bin, hopefully will get people to recycle more, also the truck will be picking it up and not people, this will be much more efficient/faster, hopefully will increase the amount of recycling, and the City is receiving a small amount of money for the program; they would like to see this program expand.
- Participants in the first pilot have already received a post card, cart should be delivered next week for use. This will be rolled out very gradually because the City only has one truck.
- A lot of places in the country have started to become automated

### **Questions**

- Olga Tenney- my street was supposed to be paved last year and it wasn't
- I will take this back to the office
- Judy Doeschate- the city is going to an automated process for recycling collection to reduce worker injuries.
- Roger Bombardier- anonymous complainers can complain to DGS about their neighbors and DGS has to go out and look into it and cite it if there is a violation; however DGS does not take care of properties that are clearly in violation if there is no complaint made, this process doesn't work
- Megan - I will take this back to the Commissioner
- Cathy Fahey- the mayor is aware of the reactive approach to things and this is something the City is attempting to change; but there are too few staff to be proactive. Most complaints received are legitimate
- Judy- 452 ½ New Scotland needs to have the lawn taken care of
  - Patty Pierce- will you ever do battery recycling?

- Regular batteries can be put in your trash, however if it is a rechargeable battery, stores that sell them have to take them back, lithium ion batteries need to be dropped off at hazardous waste days
  - Olga Tenney- I thought paper had to go into a separate bin?
- We have been single stream recycling for 5 years now which is not hard for the machines to separate
  - Audience member- one side of S. Main got trash picked up early morning and the other side didn't get picked up until much later. That doesn't seem efficient?
- It could be a split in the route
  - Audience member- what is recyclable and what isn't?
- The old brochure and the website is still accurate
  - Audience member- do people get fined for putting the trash out too soon?
- You can't put your trash and recycling out until 7 p.m. or dusk
  - Eric- is See-Click-Fix the best way to report properties / issues?
- Yes, but can also call or email DGS at Phone: (518) 434-2489 Email: [generalservices@albanyny.gov](mailto:generalservices@albanyny.gov)
  - Audience member- if the City allows private contracting for trash, trash cans will be out every day across the City
- Cathy Fahey- it is unlikely that individual residents will turn to a private collector

## **B) HNA Board Business**

- Updates from the Chair - (Eric)
- Yard sale & survey results
  - the weather was awful that weekend, it started raining around 10 a.m. Saturday and then there was a high wind warning Sunday
  - Per the survey, the majority of people do not want to change the weekend of the yard sale, so we can't hold it another weekend.
  - Only comment was to make our signs bigger, we will investigate the cost of this, otherwise the other advertising done seems to bring a lot of people out
- National Night Out is August 2<sup>nd</sup> - Grove Ave and Glendale Ave are participating. Eric will send a note out to the neighborhood to find out if any other street is participating.
- We now need to provide Sage with a certificate of insurance, \$2 million insurance policy for the duration of each event (movies / picnic), we are all set for this year. We will have to include this in our expenses next year.
- New pediatric emergency building they are putting up at Albany Medical, it's not right in our neighborhood but it brings in so much traffic on New Scotland Ave it impacts us long term, would like to discuss parking and traffic with a committee that was proposed during the meeting. This committee would be comprised of AMC, University Heights institutions and surrounding neighborhood associations.
- First movie night last Friday, a little rain at 6:30 p.m., no equipment was damaged, 250 people, we got some new HNA memberships, CCA equipment tripped the circuit breakers multiple times. Had to get a generator to keep the bounce house going, This happened at the Ridgefield Park Movie night, too. CCA is looking to raise funds for a new generator. There is support in

the audience for assisting CCA. Eric will get a quote from CCA for a large generator and get back to the neighborhood.

- There is an individual who has contacted the City arborist and the New Scotland/Woodlawn NA about a mass tree planting along New Scotland Ave from Albany Med all the way up to St. Peter's, he will do matching funds, but he wants assurance that people will take care of the trees, people need to water the trees for the first year, they would be looking for funds and help from HNA to take care of the trees; a lot of trees have been identified as diseased and need to be taken down and there are a couple bare spots that need to be filled in
  - Audience member- 24 Fleetwood, there is a tree out front that has limbs falling down, the City said they would take it down but they haven't yet
  - Audience member- Oak trees are on the City's list, and they are a messy tree
  - Reminder: Annual Picnic is August 21st! (Eric)
- Sage campus lawn from 1-4 p.m.
- Please RSVP this year by the picnic date (how many coming, what are you bringing?)
- It is a potluck, but we also overbought food last year
- We are having a rain location (Beth Emeth Congregation 100 Academy Rd) instead of a rain date, last year we used our rain date at the end of September, it was getting a little cold, but trying to coordinate with a couple dozen businesses not to make the food on that day that got rained out was difficult
- We could use help: people to solicit businesses, a grill master, etc. Please volunteer sign-up sheet.
- Request for volunteers will go out this weekend via "Sign-up Genius"
  - Annual HNA Flyer Drop to advertise HNA & Picnic (Eric) - Delivery people needed
- One side of the flyer is about the picnic, the other side is to sign up to become an HNA member
- Last year it took us 3 weeks to deliver, we are 4 weeks out now so we should be fine
  - Email Survey Results (Alyssa)
- 103 responses, the point of the survey was to see what people wanted to hear, overall the feedback was pretty good, everyone felt informed and the current email volume and content was fine.
  - Movie Nights Need You! Volunteers, Donations, Services (Bill)
- Next movie night will be September 16<sup>th</sup>, we could always use volunteers for set up and tear down
  - New Scotland Ave Businesses (Eddie)
- Nothing new to report regarding the association
- Business Advertising Deadline in HNA Reporter is July 27, publish date is August 5
- \$10 gets a 12 month membership and a FREE ad
- \$95 gets you a 12 month member and 6 ads
  - Treasurer report & Membership Report (Patty)
- Brought in \$70 in revenue
- Expenses of \$191.07
- Account balance of \$4,987.88

### **C) Membership & Audience Announcements & Concerns**

- Eric- has anybody reported any complaints involving people / locations involving treatment for mental illness / substance use disorders to RSS since the last meeting?
- Audience - No
- As a reminder, such issues should be reported to John Paduano, Managing Director of Rehabilitation Support Services (RSS). His email is jpaduano@rehab.org. His phone number is 518.462.1094 ext 251. Mention you are from the Helderberg NA. The HNA would also like to be notified by email (CC) or voice mail when someone contacts RSS.
  
- Charlotte- since Gary Tucker left us no one has seen Gordon McLean his replacement, the Bach Branch and businesses have no idea who he is
- Lt. Gipson will talk to him, the library is a satellite office, so it's not his only location
- Judy- I've seen him and I always meet him at Stewart's because it was the place where there were always complaints for behavior
  - Charlotte- would like to compliment police, she called, there was a suspicious person and they showed up very quickly
  - Audience member- the car break-ins, have these cars been habitually unlocked?
- Lt. Gipson- yes
- Detective- it's usually between 1:00-5:00 a.m. that these cars are broken into, we've had plain clothes officers make arrests; a lot of them are juveniles and are out the next day
- Do motion sensor lights deter them?
  - Yes
- Any news on the car with slashed tires?
  - Eric- never heard back from Gordy, notified the neighborhood, but usually it's personal, don't know if the culprit was ever apprehended
  - Judy- teenagers don't have to have a reason to do stupid things

#### **D) Albany Common Council Update / Q & A**

- Hon. Catherine Fahey (Ward 7)
- We'll be entering budget discussions in September, we had a \$12.5 million deficit last year, we received pilot money through the state which the governor has said he won't do that again next year, we are looking at \$16 million shortage for next budget season, we are bringing in a financial consulting group (paid for by NYS) that specializes in municipalities and looking for ways to trim the budget and the impacts of what that will be
- Audience member- does Albany Med pay taxes?
  - No, but they are giving money back (\$500,000 annually) because they do receive fire and police services. St. Peters says they currently have insufficient funds
- Audience member- firecrackers were really bad the week of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July
  - Lt. Gipson- they are able to be purchased legally now in Albany County
  - Cathy- we'll make a note of that. Support / opposition for fireworks was about equal.
- ADA compliance- communications we have, a lot of our departments need to be updated, this is something that a new taskforce will address, also make the parks ADA accessible

- City Hall on the Road- one tonight in Arbor Hill; Giffen Elementary on August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m.; Tuesday September 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 at JCC, Thursday Sep 29<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm at Pine Hills Elementary. Visit <http://albanyny.org/Government/MayorsOffice/CityHallontheRoad.aspx>
  - Hon. Judy Doesschate (Ward 9)
- Consultant group that the state decided to bring in to look at our finances, they will figure out if this is this really a reoccurring problem or if we are just making the deficit up; the initial group provided a lot of information that helps promote the issue in the City and all of the state owned tax exempt land, we have adopted a lot of those recommendations from 5-6 years ago (i.e., the Capital Punishment fiscal study), we know the group already has a pre-disposition to be sympathetic to us, some prior recommendations are simply unworkable
- The state is paying for the consultant to come in
- Mayor has to publish budget by October 1<sup>st</sup> which won't give her enough time to include recommendations this fiscal year
- We did pass a bond for street-scape improvement on New Scotland between Quail & Ontario, we will be meeting with the planning department, DGS, and City planning engineer next week, make sure there will be enough time for community input. Eric would like to make sure the New Scotland Business Association and the mass tree planting is included in the planning.
- A lot of complaints about cigarette butts out front of St. Peter's, last year they sent their employees a letter saying not to drop their cigarette butts out there, they have now purchased a butt sweeper that their staff uses

#### **E) Albany County Legislator Update- Lynne Lekakis**

- Voted for tobacco 21, no more tobacco being sold to people 21 or younger
- Got a lot of calls about fireworks, voted no on fireworks
- Largest county legislature in the state, 39 is a lot, wheeling and dealing is more of a problem than the actual number of members
- Supporting independent redistricting process, don't want to get sued again, majority minority districts are important

#### **F) Albany Police Dept, Neighborhood Engagement Unit (NEU) Update**

- Lt. Melissa Gipson- neighborhood engagement unit from 4pm-midnight- she supervises the beat officers
- Thanks everyone for welcoming me, been on the police force 18 years, still learning how neighborhood associations work, because of what is going on in the country, all of our officers are doubled up right now for safety reasons so response time is a little slow
- Contact Info : Lieutenant Melissa Gipson
- Phone: 518-320-6949
- Email: [mgipson@albany-ny.org](mailto:mgipson@albany-ny.org)

Due to a resident's concerns, Lt. Gipson will have:

1. A traffic car will be detailed to Fleetwood between Helderberg and NSA in reference to the stop sign and speed violators.
2. Traffic Engineering will evaluate whether or not to add a left turn lane NB on S Main Ave to

WB onto NSA. (Apparently, people are crossing the double yellow lines on S. Main and using a standby median as a left turn lane and ppl who use the lanes correctly are unable to make a left turn safely).

**G) Meeting Wrap-up**

- E-mail us if you have a recommendations for our next speaker
- Next Meeting: September 21st 2016. **Note a change in venue for the Sept meeting.** The next meeting will be hosted by Parsons Family Center at 60 Academy Road, and will feature tours and refreshments.

**Meeting End**

The membership meeting of the HNA concluded at 8:42 p.m.