

## **PRA MINUTES**

### **June 2007**

Kira Lueders, President of PRA opened by greeting everyone and having everyone introduce themselves. Then Kira introduced our guest speaker, Dan Wilhelm, of the Montgomery County Civic Federation. (PRA has recently joined this organization). For more information go to: [www.montgomerycivic.org](http://www.montgomerycivic.org)

Mr. Wilhelm began by telling the group about the organization, who it's members are and what it's mission is. General discussion and questions followed thereafter.

### **Old Business**

BRAC update: At the March meeting we had a speaker who brought us up to date on BRAC and what the potential problems were, and what we could do by contacting our elected officials. We were expecting a report, the Environmental Impact Statement, from the Navy which was supposed to be issued in June, but it has been delayed because Montgomery County has asked the Navy to do a certain number of additional traffic studies, since traffic is the major issue in Montgomery County. As of now the report is expected in September.

Kensington Sector Plan: Since the PRA belongs to the Coalition of Kensington Communities Kira wrote a letter on behalf of PRA saying that we supported the Kensington Sector Plan to get the County to do certain updates to the Town since it's our town. Kira attended a meeting that the Mayor of Kensington convened to discuss the Kensington Sector Plan. Representatives from the State and the County attended. It seemed as though local citizens who attended the meeting proposed lots of suggestions, while the County responded with lots of excuses rather than trying to work with the Town. Kira received a reply from County Council President Marilyn Praisner to her letter that any improvements to the Town of Kensington have been delayed by one year instead of starting next Spring. [webmaster note: See the [letter](#).]

As some may have noticed dead trees have or are being cut down in the neighborhood.

Susan Hayes raised the issue of RV's being parked in Parkwood and whether an ordinance against this could be passed. Kira said she had looked at the RV and County rules on street parking, and that since it appeared to be legal, there was nothing the PRA could do about this problem. Ms. Hayes asked the PRA to encourage the county to change the ordinance about RV parking, and Kira said she felt she would need the approval of the PRA membership to do so. It was decided that further discussion and more people would be needed to take a vote on this issue.

A question arose about beautifying the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Knowles Avenue with the idea of having restaurants instead of gas stations. It was pointed out that Kensington actually consists of three competing jurisdictions: The Town of Kensington, an incorporated town, which has its own strict guidelines and town council; The Township of Kensington, which incorporates the four corners of the railroad tracks; and the 20895 zip code of Kensington. As of now the old laws make it very difficult for a restaurant to operate in Kensington with a liquor license. However, that should soon be changing, which will make it easier on restaurants, thus enticing them to come into our town.

John Low (who lives on Oldfield) is a business owner of Antiques on West Howard Avenue on our side of Connecticut. He also represents the West Howard Merchant's Association – a civic group of like-minded merchants. John reported that he was able to get money from the County and they will be starting a beautification program very shortly. Also there are plans in the works for a nice restaurant to move in (hopefully within two years). It will probably be a 5-7 year program of fixing up the street, addressing all of the issues to make it more pedestrian friendly, etc. He requested on behalf of the merchants on Howard Avenue for PRA members to please partner with them to help make the whole area beautiful, safe and successful.

### **Committee Reports**

Membership: Kitty Stone reported that just over 150 households have joined the association. Discussion followed about people paying their dues more than once within the one-year period and how to get more people to pay and become members.

Beautification Report: Clare Murphy was unable to attend the meeting– Kira gave the report. The island on Saul Road and Cedar will be cleaned, mulched, etc. very soon or already done. One member raised the issue that some of the street gutters are full of debris. A call had been put in for street cleaning and this should take place by June 14th. Maybe something could be said to the residents about cleaning the gutters themselves.

Kira thanked Kathy Byars who puts together the welcome folders to new residents, and New Block Captain Patrice Mills Markle for taking over from Paula Flicker, who has done a great job in that capacity for a number of years.

Neighborhood watch: We are in police District 2. Kira just discovered by checking crime statistics for our District on the web site that vandalism is not considered a crime by the Montgomery County Police. Therefore, all our reporting of vandalism does not get listed as a crime. Kira did not get a chance to contact the police department to question their reporting system. General discussion followed.

There was a quick discussion regarding location of the meeting. Basketball game/practice routinely occurs next door during the PRA meetings. A change of rooms would be desirable.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

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