

## **Minutes of Parkwood Residents Association, September 29, 2015**

The meeting was called to order by Kira Lueders, president. Twenty-one persons were present.

The minutes from the March 24, 2015 PRA meeting were accepted.

Liz Brennan, president of Friends of Kensington Library, announced an author program. Events will be posted on the PRA list serve. All events will be held at the Kensington Town Hall while the library is closed for renovation.

### **Villages of Kensington Presentation by Suzanne Bowler, Vice President, Villages of Kensington**

#### **Background**

Ms. Bowler described the background and vision of "Villages." The Village concept is a grassroots, non-profit, volunteer-driven coalition of neighborhoods. It envisions neighbors helping neighbors in a "Village" that can range in area from one street to an entire county; its program will be unique to community needs. The Village concept began in Beacon Hill, Boston in 2002 and has spread from there. Montgomery County currently has 23 Villages. Pazit Aviv, of Montgomery County HHS, Aging and Disability Services, coordinates the Villages programs in Montgomery County with support from WAVE (Washington Area Villages Exchange). Aging in place is a primary goal, with a focus on transportation which is a prominent need and the most requested service. Other benefits include referrals for professional and other services, increased social contacts and friendships, and opportunities for volunteers to make valuable contributions to neighbors and community.

#### **Villages of Kensington (VoK)**

The Villages of Kensington has a 2016 start date. Susan Bowler is Vice President; Sharon Parver represents PRA on the VoK board. Its mission is to build and sustain a supportive, diverse, intergenerational network of neighbors helping neighbors. It will serve people of all ages. Ms. Bowler mentioned transportation, computer assistance, home maintenance, babysitting, after school care, yard maintenance and snow shoveling as possible services. Activities could include group walks, lectures, classes, book clubs, social gatherings and group discounts.

Progress toward establishing Villages of Kensington is underway. A steering committee has been formed; there is a board of directors and officers. Bylaws have been finalized and the group has acquired 501 c3 (nonprofit) status. More than 50 Kensington residents have expressed a willingness to volunteer. Partnerships have been formed with providers of social services such as Temple Emmanuel, Jewish Social Services, and Kensington Park Retirement Community.

#### **Responses to Questions**

##### **Vetting of Volunteers**

Volunteers will be vetted by a private company for \$25 per person. Then volunteers will form groups based on interests and abilities to provide certain services. There will be a volunteer manager and possible volunteer committees.

##### **What about persons needing extensive services?**

VoK will connect people needing extensive help with Montgomery County services.

Are there membership dues?

Individual members pay dues to cover costs but community organizations pay nothing. Fees for VoK have not been established. Active volunteers are exempt from fees.

The PRA is composed of Kensington and Bethesda residents. Can Bethesda residents join VoK?

This is the intention behind the invitation to join. The Villages of Kensington will vote on whether to accept all Parkwood residents. Kira proposed that the PRA hold off voting whether or not to join the Villages of Kensington until this issue is resolved by VoK vote.

Anyone is welcome to attend monthly steering committee meetings and to access the VoK website ([www.villagesofkensington.org](http://www.villagesofkensington.org)).

### **Other Business**

Motion passed: PRA endorses work of VoK on condition that Bethesda portion of PRA be included.

Vice-Presidential Election

No one volunteered for the VP position of PRA. Alex Clark volunteered to help put together the newsletter.

Beautification Report

Gail Dalferes, Beautification Committee Chair, proposed that the memorial plaque for Irene Madden (community activist and founder of the community gardens committee) be replaced. The current plaque is deteriorating and the post has rotted. The cost estimate would be \$500.00. This was approved. The suggestion that the plaque be installed on the bench to lower the cost and increase prominence met with a favorable response. A memorial article re: Irene Madden should be composed for the PRA website.

Support replacements for the Parkwood garden bench have been ordered; Bailey Condrey has offered to install them without charge.

There will be a fall clean-up of PRA garden areas in October or November.

The proposal for a PRA picnic was discussed.

PRA Newsletter—electronic vs. paper

Discussion: A proposal was made for one paper copy of the newsletter per year accompanied by a PRA membership payment envelope. Other issues of the newsletters would be posted on the Parkwood website. It was suggested that the next PRA membership application include a poll asking members to record their preference for a paper or electronic newsletter.

Motion: Participants approved the motion for one paper copy of the newsletter per year. Other issues will be electronic. The paper newsletter will have a question as to preference for paper or electronic version.

Stump Removal—The County has not removed all stumps of trees cut down along Parkwood roads. Interested persons could call Roger Berliner, our representative on the County Council.

Bailey brought up the issue of rats coming from Kensington Parkwood Elementary School. More frequent

emptying of trash cans might remedy this.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judith Dighe, secretary