

WACA Minutes, 2012 January 26

WACA held a board and committee chair meeting on 1/26/12 from 7-9pm at the home of Geoff and Anne Riefe.

Attendance: Erica Hoffman (President), Mark Peck (Vice President), Rolf Hill (Member at Large), Geoff Riefe (Member at Large), Anne Riefe (Member) Kurt Riegel (Member), Kurt Johansen (Traffic Committee Chair), Ginny Vroblesky (Heritage Committee Chair *NEW*), Lynne Sherlock (WABA President), Kurt Riegel (Website and Directory Developer *NEW*)

Committee Updates:

Traffic Committee, Kurt Johansen: Kurt gave an update on the Forbes Street issue. The WACA traffic committee is working closely with Lisa Greico from Annapolis DPW (Department of Public Works). WACA has provided documentation of our residents' concerns to DPW and DPW is currently studying the scope of the problem and will come back to the community with a recommended action that addresses these concerns. Some of the options include: making Forbes 1-way or installing a flexible 'barrier wall' on Melvin to prevent left turns both from Melvin onto Forbes and left turns from Forbes (Grauls side) onto Melvin. WACA will continue to communicate any developments on this issue to the neighborhood.

Heritage Committee, Ginny Vroblesky: WACA has decided to implement a Heritage Committee (applause, applause!) Ginny Vroblesky who is the author of Listening to our Trees, a Walking tour of West Annapolis, has graciously agreed to head up this committee. She has a wealth of knowledge about the history of our neighborhood. The goal is to educate our citizens and preserve the history of our neighborhood. The goal for this year is to conduct at least one neighborhood Heritage event and to set goals for future actions of this committee. Many ideas were discussed, including incorporating our neighborhood's role in the war of 1812 during the annual 4th of July parade and adding a historical component to the already planned community scavenger hunt event. WACA will be a part of the West Annapolis Heritage Partnership combining efforts with Wardour, WABA, and Admiral Heights. **Attention history buffs, or anyone curious to learn more about the rich history of West Annapolis: We are currently in need of volunteers to help Ginny with this fun and rewarding work!**

WABA (West Annapolis Business Affiliation) President Lynne Sherlock (Owner of Tara's Gifts and Parties) - We were very pleased to have Lynn Sherlock join us from WABA. Based on the feedback from the neighborhood survey done last fall, we heard loud and clear from our members how much they appreciate the commercial district of our neighborhood and how they want to make sure it remains vibrant and successful. Lynn presented several upcoming community events being planned by WABA, including Heritage Day March 24th, Paper Flowers workshop and May Day Baskets on May 1, Cinco de Mayo Festival on May 5, a June Flea Market date TBD, the Oktoberfest date TBD, and It's a Wonderful Life Holiday event in December. We discussed how our organization can help our business district remain vibrant. Her number 1 recommendation: **SHOP here! Eat at our local restaurants! And, tell your friends to do the same. Also, help promote our local businesses by promoting events and businesses on your own Facebook page, etc.**

Erica also provided an update from Mayor Josh Cohen regarding the trash management issues of businesses in the Graul's shopping center. The City has re-inspected the commercial properties and all were now in compliance except for Rite Aid. The City is working with Rite Aid to come into compliance.

Chip Seymour - Neighborhood Watch Committee - Chip Seymour, Molly Smith, Nick Peters, and Earl Diamond researched safety tips and created a list ways we can all keep our neighborhood safer. Chip presented the document and we discussed the best way to disseminate this information. It was decided that a multi-media approach using the yahoo list, website (coming soon!), and the newsletter is the best way to inform residents. Bottom line, the best way to keep our neighborhood safe is to look out for each other and report ALL suspicious activity to the police immediately.

Kurt Riegel - Website and Directory. Kurt Riegel, a new resident to our neighborhood, has generously volunteered his time and talents to our neighborhood and created a website westannapolis.org and a community directory. Kurt shared his need for volunteers to help increase participation in the directory by having a volunteer from each street ask their neighbors to participate. This initiative will really help us create a safer neighborhood where we know each other and can easily communicate with each other in the event of an emergency.

General Discussion -

- We discussed the invitation to be a part of the Annapolitans for a Better Community and decided against it. ABC is a political organization that files campaign finance reports and publicly endorses candidates. For this reason we deemed it inappropriate to have WACA directly affiliated with this organization.
- We discussed an action plan for 2012. Key actions decided in this meeting include:
 - Redistribute the survey responses from last year and ask for volunteers who are interested in heading up any initiatives related to the identified issues (Erica Hoffman)
 - Publicize Neighborhood Watch Tips in Newsletter, Website and on Yahoo list (Chip Seymour)
 - Gather social committee and Heritage Committee Chair to determine how to infuse history and heritage into our existing social events (Erica Hoffman and Ginny Vroblesky)
 - Continued communication of developments on Forbes Street issue (Kurt Johansen)
 - Recruit volunteers for Heritage committee, (Ginny Vroblesky)
 - Continue work on website and neighborhood directory (Kurt Riegel)
 - Publish Newsletter (Krista Kriswell)
 - Plan general membership meeting before end of 2nd quarter 2012 (Erica Hoffman)

Respectfully Submitted - Erica Hoffman

Number of Surveys completed: 30

What we love most about our neighborhood and want to preserve for the future:

Location

- Walkability to
 - Shopping
 - Water
 - Downtown
- Convenience (to city amenities and to commuter routes, Rt 50 and I 97)

Community

- Relationships with neighbors
- Social events
- Diversity

Aesthetics

- Eclectic Houses
- Quiet
- Wide streets
- “Village” feel
- No further development

What we most want to change or improve about our neighborhood:

- **Traffic**
 - Speeding concerns on Ridgely, Melvin, and Tucker
 - Making Forbes 1-way
 - Traffic on Rowe, Taylor, Melvin gridlock from 4-6pm
 - Safety and condition of walkways, sidewalks for pedestrians and for wheelchair access
 - Bike safety/access on neighborhood roads

Business/Retail

- Appearance/Maintenance of Graul’s Shopping center and parking lot
- Business District revitalization to include restaurants, coffee shops, pub, ice cream shop, etc.)

Social Involvement

- Additional opportunities and more involvement in community events such as Halloween Party, Holiday Party, 4th of July, Block Party, etc.
- Exploration of a community pool and/or community dock

Safety

- Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Watch