

North Ridge Citizens' Association  
Minutes for April 13, 2020  
Virtual "Zoom" Meeting  
"Covid-19 Lockdown meeting"

NRCA President Chuck Kent called the meeting to order at 7:30. Mr. Kent noted that this was the first virtual meeting of the entire Board. An attendance list is attached to these minutes.

Sgt. Thomas Ground, the Police Department's liaison to NRCA, gave a report that covered the period of February 10 through April 13, as he had not given a report at the Association's March annual Board-election meeting. He noted that during the period there had been 59 "cases" in our neighborhood. This 30/month average was right in the middle of the range of 24-34 cases/month over time.

Sgt. Ground reported, however, that there had been a "massive amount of tampering with automobiles." Of the fifty-nine cases, twenty-one involved automobile break-ins or thefts. In almost all cases the automobile was left unlocked. Six vehicles were stolen. All were stolen from driveways in front of homes and in four cases the vehicle was left unlocked. One car was recovered in Prince Georges County.

Sgt. Ground noted that the Police Department has an adequate quantity of personal protective equipment to deal with Covid-19 concerns. Police officers will come to homes if asked and will use social distancing and meet outside where possible.

Lyn Gubser reported that the Association's Planning and Zoning Committee has sent the Board a new edition of the guidelines that will apply to addressing issues related to planning and zoning and other land use matters. He noted that the committee had previously been called the Land Use Committee and suggested that we go back to using that name. He thanked John Fehrenbach, Jane Seward, Sunny Yoder and Meghan Rainey for their assistance in developing the guidelines. He particularly thanked Ms. Seward for drafting the new section on developing the tree canopy and Ms. Yoder for making the definitions employed more specific.

Mr. Fehrenbach noted that there was a public hearing scheduled for April 18 that was to discuss a revised draft action plan on addressing the City's housing needs. The notice of the meeting referred to the City discussing with the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) the possibility of placing affordable housing on ACPS property. The meeting was also to address the possible permitting of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on lots zoned for single-family units.

Mr. Gubser said that he wouldn't want the City to go down the path of rezoning single-family areas. He noted that he is concerned that residential zoning is "on the chopping block" and the Association should cover the April 18 meeting. He further noted that, to his knowledge, there is no school property that can accommodate anything other than schools.

Jennifer Dougherty said that she did not think that City Council could vote on anything while the Covid emergency is in place. She noted that several other citizens' associations had sent a letter to the Council asking that the City suspend holding planning meetings until the emergency is over. Mr. Kent said that he believed the City may be trying to work around that. He said that several people on the NRCA Board are focusing on the City's consideration of the City's rezoning proposals. He believes that it is likely that the Association will be able to develop a firm consensus on the issue.

Kay Stimson said that she shared Ms. Dougherty's concerns and that she was worried that the City could try to move forward on zoning issues even while the Governor's emergency order is in place. She would like the Association to ask the City to suspend its rezoning consideration process.

Meghan Rainey asked if the Association was going to send something to the Council before the April 18 meeting. She thought we should say something about our views on the rezoning proposal. She said that she didn't see how the George Mason construction program could go forward at this point. She agreed that the City should pause its zoning review and noted that it should give citizens adequate time to comment once the emergency order is lifted.

John Fehrenbach said he was not sure that the George Mason construction plan would be discussed at the April 18 meeting. He endorsed the idea of NRCA sending a request to the City to postpone meetings on zoning matters.

Mr. Kent asked Mr. Fehrenbach and Ms. Yoder to look at the City's notice of the meeting and draft a letter to the City. He asked them to circulate it to the Executive Board and said he would get it to the whole Board if feasible.

Bruce Snapp reported that there is nothing going on with respect to the West Glebe Road bridge reconstruction project. He noted that NRCA has a request in to the City staff for a meeting on the project. He also reported that there is a second bridge reconstruction project proposed on the other side of 395 where Shirlington Road crosses Four Mile Run. Four Mile Run hiking and bike traffic use this bridge and the plan is to build a 15 foot wide separate bridge for bike and pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Kent reported that he had received a courtesy call from Mayor Wilson who wished to chat about North Ridge. The Mayor said that essentially all new projects are on hold at the moment. The City is developing a revised budget and he said there are going to be big cuts in both that budget and the ACPS budget, probably twice as large as the cuts that were made in response to the 2008 recession.

Mr. Kent noted that there is also a fair amount of uncertainty about NRCA's budget. Wheel Day has been cancelled and the tree planting program has been postponed. We may try to do something with National Night Out but it is hard to predict what

might be possible at this time. He noted that the Association has a good balance on hand and perhaps we could consider making a one-time contribution to Alexandria's Covid response effort. He asked for views on this option.

Bruce Johnson said that he still had not heard back from the Gallerys about whether they will be doing the Christmas tree sale this year and noted that we should develop a contingency plan. He suggested that Mr. Kent, Amy Burwell, Ms. Stimson and he meet this week to discuss options. He said he was concerned about future revenues and suggested that we may need our big budget balance in the coming year.

Mr. Snapp said he agreed with Mr. Johnson and suggested that individuals who wish to make contributions to a Covid cause can do so individually.

Ms. Stimson said she agreed and noted that the website development work would likely cost more than \$1,000.

Mr. Kent said that we would "shelve" the contribution idea until the NRCA financial picture is more clear.

Charlotte Corcoran said that a former neighbor who resides in Goodwin House says that the residents and staff are in urgent need of protective masks.

Rachel Newhouse said that there are people placing notices on "Next Door Alexandria" that they are making masks and looking for places to donate them.

Sunny Yoder said she lives across the street from Envoy nursing home and that is another place that may have a need for masks. Ms. Corcoran said she would call them the next day.

Mr. Kent reported that the City would soon be identifying a location for residents to take their yard waste. The downside is that residents will have to take their waste to the site themselves. He said that he believes that if we can get North Ridge residents to pay a modest amount he can get someone to haul the waste. Several individuals said this sounded like a good idea. Jeanne Snapp suggested that Mr. Kent send out a survey to assess interest and Mr. Kent agreed to do that.

Mr. Kent observed that Parkfairfax has been hosting food trucks in their neighborhood. He said he hadn't had time to look into the possibility of NRCA doing something similar, but he would. Kay Stimson and Tack Richardson volunteered to lead that effort. Kay said that if food trucks park on private property, say a church parking lot, the Association wouldn't have to pay anything to host the trucks. She said she would talk to the Rocklands barbeque company to gauge their interest in serving North Ridge.

Ms. Stimson said there have been some mail delays and that the Bradley post office is shut down.

Mr. Kent adjourned the meeting at 9:15.

Russ Bailey  
Scribe

Attendance List:

Charlotte Corcoran  
Helene Vonnegut  
Chris Nottingham  
Jennifer Daugherty  
John Fehrenbach  
Bruce Johnson  
Amy Kraft  
Lyn Gubser  
Kate Crawley  
Glenn Thomas  
Bob Miller  
Diana Day  
Catie Fitzgerald  
Jeanne and Bruce Snapp  
Julie Porter  
Mike and Linda Oliver  
Amy Burwell  
Lee Guerry  
Rachel Newhouse  
Sunny Yoder  
Tack Richardson  
Bill Clayton  
Julia Dols  
Kay Stimson  
Susan Gallagher  
Jane Frazer  
Janet Brown  
Bruce Schmid  
John Winstead  
Ashley Berrang  
Alicia Rutherford  
Ellen Balis  
Meghan Rainey  
Jarred Brown  
Sgt. Thomas Ground

