

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK
MINUTES OF MEETING ON FEBRUARY 19, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Betsy Woodrow, Bob Teti, Lane Randall, Linda Scott, Anne Walters, Jenn Long, Jonathan Long, Dean Diehl and Veronica Balassone.

--MINUTES of the last meeting were approved as written.

--Linda gave the TREASURER'S REPORT. The checking account balance at this date is \$33,849. Accounts receivable includes \$15,000 from receipts for memorial park benches. Linda pointed out that the expense associated with the benches is \$6,780 at this time, and does not include installation costs.

The Progressive Plates Fundraiser brought in \$8,223. Attendance this year dropped by 15 persons. Income for the event this year was down 18.5% from last year.

--No additional agenda items were suggested.

--Jeff introduced Dean Diehl, a certified arborist who is a member of the Shade Tree Commission and has worked with Jeff on tree issues in the park. Dean used a tool, a resistograph, which drills into the trunk to assess the presence of and percentage of any decay in the tree due to insect infestation or disease. He noted that one cedar tree was completely hollow. In general though the park trees are fairly healthy. He suggested that fertilization is not very beneficial for really old trees. Also that the root systems are being damaged by mowing. His advice included placing wood chips, not mulch, at the root zones. He will work with Denise Kesterson to discuss pruning out the dead wood in park trees.

--Jeff reminded all that the spring park cleanup is scheduled for April 18th, from 9–10:30. He is trying to get another group similar to last year's West Chester University group to assist in the task.

--At this time, the "tree walk" with Ken Leroy that Eric Miller is planning is still scheduled for Saturday, July 18th, 10:30.

--A discussion regarding the leaf/mulch program focused on the lack of follow-through by the Borough. Dean will work with Jeff on this and together they will review the mowing schedule, woodland vs. turf zones, and the leaf mulching program, which did not take place as planned. Anne asked where we might get wood chips for woodland zones. Dean suggested approaching tree companies, possibly Delchester, as they all need a place to stockpile chips. It would be ideal to have a location to stockpile chips on the park grounds for a brief time before volunteers could spread them. This would need to be cleared with the borough. If chips are in place prior to the April cleanup on the 18th, the crew can help spread the chips that day.

--The HICKMAN gave a presentation of their expansion plans recently; Jeff attended and participated in a focus group. There are now two proposals to review; one sketch has a bigger footprint and is three stories tall, and the other has a smaller footprint but is four stories tall. They are eliminating structured underground parking from their plans. The Hickman is being encouraged to bring the building further back from the curb lines, use better materials and landscaping. The importance of the site to the

neighborhood and community is being emphasized. The plans were presented to the borough council for review.

--The last four trash cans for the park are now on order and are due in April. The first order of the memorial benches will likely be received in late April.

--Jeff will send his edited version of the By-Laws draft written by Rose Stancato, and encouraged others to provide their comments. Also anyone interested in helping Rose with the effort should contact her.

--Betsy reported on the Progressive Plates fundraiser. Because of feedback, she believes next year's event should limit the time at each house to one hour, not an hour and a quarter. The event was attended by fewer people this year. Cost did not seem to be an issue.

The Fundraising Committee hasn't met since last fall. Members are Michael Civita, Bob Teti, Lee Miller, Linda Scott, Kathy Talley, Betsy Woodrow, Heather Gallo, Veronica Balassone. Bob offered to organize a meeting. Ronnie will contact Heather Gallo about a second annual MSP Run/Walk.

--The Membership Committee needs more people. Currently members are Rose, Bill Scott and Eric Miller. Membership numbers are down this year. An email blast is needed to remind people to renew their membership.

--Anne Walters gave the FOUNTAIN committee report. On March 5, Jeff and Anne will meet with Jane Dorchester and Mac Cotter to discuss applying for a grant next year to help with fountain restoration costs. The subcommittee to raise funds for the restoration will be developing a new strategy. A list of contractors is being developed, and more refined cost construction estimates need to be made. Jeff is willing to develop plans in three phases: 1) the restoration and installation of the cast iron fountain, excavation and repair of the basin, repair of the fencing, and the plumbing and electrical systems to the basin edge, 2) installation of the equipment to make the fountain operational and 3) the brick work around the fountain including the walkway, bollards, landscaping and signage. In terms of the funds currently available, we have more than half of what is needed for the first phase.

Jeff could develop the drawings for all three phases for \$2,800. These documents will be required in order to get accurate contractor cost estimates, bids, permits, and for any grant application. Betsy made a motion that Jeff draw up bidding documents for the three phases for \$2,800, Linda seconded and the motion carried.

--A Playground Improvement Committee is being formed by Heather and Steve Gallo. Jeff's plans that incorporated walkways to and around the playground area were approved at the last meeting. Anyone wishing to be on the committee can contact Jeff.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone