

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

Minutes of Meeting on November 16, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Jim Salvas, Linda Scott, Anne Walters, Holly Brown, Betsy Woodrow, Jen Long, and Veronica Balassone.

--Minutes of the last meeting were approved and accepted into the record.

--Linda Scott gave the Treasurer's Report. On the Balance Sheet, Fountain funds are a negative \$14,017, \$29,187 is in the checking/savings accounts, resulting in a checkbook balance of \$15,170. Accounts receivable of \$3,257 includes \$3,000 for a fountain stone and the balance includes an amount due from FWCP & R. The only Accounts Payable is \$76 for our post office box rental. On the Receipts and Disbursements statement Linda pointed out the \$4,156 line item for Fountain Maintenance expenses.

--Jeff has requested an email blast to our members in a search for someone to give Linda assistance in her role as Treasurer.

--An additional agenda item was added by Anne Walters regarding the West Chester Preservation Award.

--The brick sidewalk repairs were originally scheduled for the end of October by the borough, but delays in executing the contract has delayed the project. Weather permitting, it is still hoped the work can be done in 2017. If not, Public Works will rollover the funds into next year's budget for spring scheduling.

--With regard to the restrooms, Bill Scott continues to try to get the roof repair funds in the budget. FMSP is handling the structural repair and requests only that the borough pay for installation of shingles chosen by FMSP.

--There's been no further progress on 501c3 application.

--Anne Walters reported that Marshall Square Park won Honorable Mention in the 2017 HALS Challenge: Documenting City or Town Parks (the National Park Service Historic American Landscapes Survey). The documents submitted included maps, photos by Jim Salvas, and a report on our park's history, and will be preserved in the Library of Congress as one of America's historic landscapes. In addition, the recognition of our park was publicized in the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) National E-Letter. Anne Walters would like to see this achievement publicized in our area. Suggestions included contacting Cathy Quillman, Diane Lebold, County Lines, "The Bid", Vista E-Blast and the Borough Website. Ronnie suggested contacting the Chester County Historical Society to inquire as to display options for our awards (which include also our recent Preservation Award) and for archival options.

--The Events Committee report resulted in discussion regarding the viability of the Progressive Dinner on February 3rd, as there is concern among committee members that perhaps it should be suspended for a year. Linda and Holly are exploring expanding the reach for participants as well as host houses to the west side of High Street. The committee will continue to explore options, and possibly consider a spring gathering in the event houses cannot be secured for the Progressive Dinner.

--Jen Long reported on the Membership Committee. The Holiday Party is scheduled for Tuesday, December 5th at Side Bar. Eric Lorgus has been invited to address the group about preservation history in the Borough. The committee has distributed membership brochures at the Loft, Chestnut Square, Sharpless Works and 124 Market apartment complexes. We may host monthly wine and cheese presentations at Chestnut Square to recruit new FMSP members. Jen is working on a lawn sign inviting people to join FMSP. Additional funds are needed for membership brochure reprints. Holly moved to authorize up to \$300 for this purpose. Jeff seconded and the motion was approved. Jeff asked that a mailable insert be included in the brochure to facilitate responses. Jim Salvias urged us to consider lowering the cost of membership. Jeff suggested creating a lifetime membership option, perhaps \$200, to reduce the need for annual collection of dues. Ronnie suggested hosting special events just for lifetime members if that category is created.

Jen would like to see a 2018 calendar on the website that clearly lays out all the park events for the coming year. There's been no progress on developing an FMSP Welcome Bag for new park area residents.

--Anne Walters presented her landscape plan for the third and final phase of the Fountain Restoration. The plan proposes removing four trees and planting smaller blossoming trees in an arc. These are a backdrop to an 18-inch fence and seasonal interest plantings placed in a circle around the fountain area. A very detailed drawing has been developed by Anne. Input is welcome from the members and support will be needed as there is opposition to tree removal in the park. The most contested proposition will be removal of the weeping beech, which will clearly threaten the fountain area as it grows. It simply will be too large as it matures for the location. It is hoped that a case can be made that the \$250,000 investment in restoring the fountain to the park must be protected from the damage posed by the tree. The Tree Commission meets the first Wednesday of February and member attendance is encouraged.

--Jim Salvias reported that Michael Civita will stay on and be responsible for securing bands for the Summer Concerts in our park. It is crucial that others be recruited to work on the committee for the concerts as at this time only Jeff and Jim are involved.

--Luminaria in the park setup is scheduled for Friday, December 1st.

--The next meeting is January 18, 2018.

--The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone, Recording Secretary