**CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

**Contingent Upon COVID-19 Restrictions:**

**Virtual Meetings will be announced at least one week in advance**

**In-Person Meetings will be held at 7:00 pm in the WHCP Meeting Room**

**516 Race Street, Cambridge, MD 21613**

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**VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING**

**December 10, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Chuck McFadden (President), Roman Jesien (Vice President), Mary Ellen Jesien (Treasurer), Tom Puglisi (Secretary), Andre Duerinckx, Beth Kline, Sharon Smith, and Jane Weeks, constituting a quorum of the Board with 8 of 11 members present.

**Board Members Absent:** Michelle Barnes, Rick Klepfer, and Dave Thatcher

1. **Opening Comments.** CAN President Chuck McFadden opened the virtual meeting at 7:00 pm via Zoom. Approximately 20 CAN members and guests were also present, including Cambridge City Council Commissioners-elect Brian Roche (Ward 1), Lajan Cephas (Ward 2), and Jameson Harrington (Ward 3). Chuck congratulated the Commissioners-elect on behalf of CAN, and welcomed new and existing members to the meeting. All present on the call were invited to introduce themselves.
2. **January 2020 Annual Business Meeting Minutes.** Tom Puglisi, made a motion, seconded by Roman Jesien, to approve the minutes of the January 2020 Annual Business meeting, and the motion was approved unanimously.
3. **Treasurer’s Report.** Mary Ellen Jesien reported that 62 members have paid CY2020 dues and there is currently $2773.79 in CAN’s treasury. One additional new member application was received today, dues payment pending. Mary Ellen reported that $15 was spent in the demolition of a neighbor’s fence. A membership drive will start in January at with dues at $20 (donation) per family or $15 for an individual. CAN will waive the dues upon request.
4. **CAN Activities for 2021.** Chuck McFadden explain that the primary purpose of tonight’s meeting is to discuss ideas for activities that CAN could become involved with during CY2021.  He reminded us that we need to keep in mind that the next several months are going to be the worst we have experienced, so we are looking for activities that are safe and socially responsible.  With that in mind, Chuck presented the following ideas for discussion:
5. **Cambridge Community Conversations.** Sponsored by WHCP, CAN, the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce, the Dorchester Star, and the Dorchester Banner. Chuck McFadden and Tom Puglisi of CAN currently serve on the committee that organizes and produces the conversations.
6. **Monitor and report on the City Council, Commissions, and other Community meetings.** Steve Rideout is retiring from City Council and will coordinate monitoring of community meetings for CAN. CAN is seeking volunteers to monitor all such meetings. Sharon Smith has volunteered to monitor Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc. (CWDI) and Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) meetings. Judd Vickers will continue to monitor Planning & Zoning Commission and Appeals Board meetings. Brian Roche indicated that he is interested in continuing the summaries of City Council meetings currently provided by Steve Rideout. Chuck stated that that WHCP may be willing to help improve the video/audio broadcasts of City Council and other City meetings.
7. **Rental Property Monitoring and Analysis.** Greg Boss explained the work he has done to identity rental and dwelling units in Cambridge and enter them into a database for analysis. CAN would like to identify rental property in the City and determine if the property is up to neighborhood standards. Greg’s analysis has found that many of the rental properties in the City are appraised at very low value and do not share an equitable tax burden compared to owner-occupied houses in the same neighborhood, especially given the services these properties absorb from the City. Greg has identified landlords who are paying their fair share in taxes versus those who do not. Greg pointed out the value of the Cambridge Revitalization plan in addressing the housing issues we are experiencing, including establishing a land bank. What we need is affordable housing to replace below standard housing. Greg explained the tiered rental licensing plan that Minneapolis has established. Violation data are used to determine cost of licenses, etc. Minneapolis data are provided routinely online, which is what Greg advocates for Cambridge. CAN could advocate for the City Council to establish a process to examine and focus on these issues and would be very willing to assist in this process. Brian Roche asked Greg to provide him with any information is available. Information about the Minneapolis approach is available at <http://www2.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@regservices/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-216657.pdf>
8. **Welcome Package for New Neighbors.**  CAN could develop a package of information for newcomers about businesses, fun activities, civic associations, etc.  It was suggested that CAN might work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop this activity.
9. **Marina Committee.** Chuck McFadden suggested that CAN form a marina committee of boat owners to review what is or is not happening to the Marina. A variety of issues need to addressed to make the marina a cost effective asset for the City. For example, the pump house could be used productively, and local businesses should be promoted to visitors. Cambridge Main Street operates the Farmers Market on city property adjacent to Long Wharf, but it has been reported that Oasis Marina is now claiming authority over Long Wharf Park and the parking lot. The community of boat owners should be consulted in these matters. The boat ramp near the hospital also needs to be addressed.
10. **Additional Participant Suggestions.** Participants suggested that CAN could explore listing and expanding the use of area universities, pro bono legal services, and other resources that are available to the City and citizens.
11. **Adjournment.** Chuck McFadden made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Roman Jesien. The motion was adopted unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.