

Fells Prospect Community Association

Minutes of Meeting: February 9, 2011

I. Introduction: The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm by Alana Ridge, vice president

II. Committee Reports and Announcements

- A. Treasurer's Report - We have \$6400 in general account
- B. Land Use Committee – none
- C. Social Committee – none
- D. Crime Committee – none
- E. Traffic/ Parking Committee – none
- F. Beautification Committee – none
- G. Any other reports or announcements

New community group: Official Ravens Nest #27 of Patterson Park

Hosting the Inaugural Winter Picnic Pub Crawl. Proceeds go to community and park. Membership is \$15 per year.

They are a 501 (c) nonprofit organization.

Saturday, February 19 · 12:00pm - 8:00pm

Begins and ends at Butts and Betty's Tavern
with stops throughout historic Fells Point.

Tickets are \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members.

III. Old Business

Gating: Gates are up and installed. Took two years. Gough St. between Chester and Castle. Keys given to residents to use in emergencies. Additional gate behind 1900 block of Pratt St.

Cost was considerable. Knox boxes are in place in case of emergency. Question: How tall are the gates? Dependent on surrounding structure. Anywhere from five to seven feet tall. If want to green the alley and is driveable, need 100 percent of resident approval.

Recycling Bin Give-a-Way: Second month of Clean Currents raffle for bins. Have 15 to raffle tonight.

Potential ZIPcar location – Gough & Broadway. Near Perkins on west side of Gough. Questions: emails about location. Have not ruled out RAP near park that would leave enough room for ZIPcar. Might find location near Boston Street that is visible to many commuters. May be more flexibility about location.

IV. New Business

Mayor's Town Hall Meeting, Wednesday, February 23, 2011, Patterson High School, 100 Kane Street
6:30 - 9:00 pm, Doors open at 6:00 pm. Location is out toward I95.

Dennis is organizing bus trip to Atlantic City in April 27. Have four seats open.

V. Presentations

Councilman Jim Kraft: Wants to talk about nuisance bill, flier law, and redistricting legislation.

Nuisance bill: Involves padlocking facilities that are public nuisances. There is also residential nuisance bill that addresses specific neighborhood issues. Then there is a disturbing the public peace bill. Various penalties for these levels of violations. Fines, evidence, owners responding by hiring more staff, residents change behavior, etc. If no solution, then goes through criminal court. Some issue with absentee owners. Must show effort to evict offending tenants.

Flier law. Many people who had filed complaints about fliers got citations for fines. People filing the complaints are not being competent. Kraft has complained to States Attorney Bernstein and others about correct prosecution and correcting the mistakes in fines. Test case is Nephew's Pizza. It is in major violation of the flier law. Many residents are willing to prosecute. In meantime, Kraft will bring in legislative groups for hearing about issue. When live entertainment law was passed, this group was supposed to help citizens, but never happened.

Nephews Pizza has been fined thousands of dollars, but has not lost health department license.

Alana gave report of her trail of phone calls about the fines. Did not hear back from City until Victor called and demanded that someone should call her. She gave information about problems with reporting. Made list of requests of what she would like to see. Jim Kraft confirmed that he was working on her case as soon as he learned about the problem.

Comment: Kraft needs to go to officials and union leaders and let them know that changes need to be made before citizens will vote for candidates who support groups that are not efficient or honest. Let the City know that citizens are not happy with the services that they receive for the taxes they pay.

Union contracts: Each time they are negotiated as better for the workers. Now are under the contracts that tie hands until contracts are up. Only tool is to cut those jobs out of the budget. Can't get the votes for that.

Comment: Now City council members are chosen by unions.

Kraft response: Most of the union members who work in Baltimore don't live in the City. He used to vote against the budget, but that doesn't really do anything. All he can do is cut the budget, earmark items, and reduce personnel. Must have eight council votes to do anything.

Question: What can we do to help you?

Ans: Make administration understand how you feel. Example of parking citations given between 11pm and 5 am. Many citations given in southeast Baltimore. Kraft asked for stepback of ticketing. Was told that tickets are a result of complaints called in by residents. Police don't want to ticket. But parking control is strict in ticketing; was given no discretion. So Kraft wrote law allowing for flashers to be on for 15 minutes while car is double-parked.

Question: What is code for the law? Ans: Kraft doesn't know, but will communicate. Email to james.kraft@baltimorecity.gov.

Districting: Mayor has to present a new redistricting map to Council by Feb 1 based on new census results. Mayor has presented map and redistricting bill is now before council. Will be hearing it until middle of March. Public meetings will be held. Districts need to be contiguous, compact, and of like nature. Southeast has shown most growth in the last 15 years. Covers Dundalk marine terminal to Scarlett Place and up to Pratt. Kraft wants to put neighborhoods back together. District numbers don't matter, just put them together. New map puts Greektown and Bayview together. But Highlandtown is not included. Working to make that happen. Bad parts are Perkins, Washington Hill, and artists' housing area on west side of Broadway. Kraft has gotten Upper Fells back into District 1; he is now fighting to get Butchers Hill back in the district. Hearing is next Wednesday; will be televised. Vote goes to council in March for approval. Kraft's goal is to keep neighborhoods together. Changes in ways prisoners are counted have impacted the numbers. Prisoners are now counted in last area of residence, not prison.

Kraft is running for re-election. Would love to have our support. Would be happy to answer any questions.

Question: Districts formed by population and geography? Yes. Try to keep them together.

Question: How can we as an organization address problems with union and city employees? Ans: Look for individual incidents. For example: trash men should empty trash can and put lid back on. Employees should not park on break and leave engines running. Don't call 311; call Kraft and give him as much information as possible. Must send message to those who don't do job.

Anecdote about trash union task contract and changes to it.

If trash workers don't pick up all trash, ask them to do it. If won't, get truck number and report it to Kraft. Head of trash collection will issue citation.

Raffle for recycling bins: 15 tickets; all are winners.

VI. Adjourn: at 9:04 pm.