

Shandon Neighborhood Council Annual Meeting
March 11, 2013 at 6:15 pm
Fellowship Hall – Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church

I. Welcome and Introduction of Council Members.

Those in Attendance: Jason Bobertz, Derek Gruner, Jesse Burke, Daniel Coble, Mary Greene, Betsy Beach, Caroline Clarkson, Carla Moore, Tina Cundari, Ron Burns, Jane Key, Charles Appleby

Those Absent: Ryan Causey

II. Presentation of Checks to School Principals and Home Tour Report.

Georgiana Graham recognized for the presentation of the checks. This year the Tour generated the most revenue ever.

AC Moore, Rosewood, Hand, and Dreher have all received checks for \$1,600 each. The principals for all four schools were in attendance and received their checks.

III. Safety Report – City of Columbia Police Officers. Officer Broder and Lt. Gates. Please raise any traffic concerns to Officer Broder so he can adjust enforcement in problem areas.

There have been numerous arrests (10-15) in the last three months for burglaries. Officer Broder states the crime rate in the South Region is down 27 percent, and he credits the level of community involvement in the neighborhood and surrounding areas.

There are some auto break-ins going on in the area. Lock your car doors and remove valuables to help prevent crime.

Officer Broder recounted a recent event where a student left Hand Middle School in the middle of the day and walked around the neighborhood. He stated neighbors saw the young man walking around and did not say anything. Officer Broder encouraged neighbors to report to police when younger children who should be in school are out on the street.

As far as traffic enforcement, the neighborhood is on the list to receive the temporary speed hump on Monroe, as discussed in the November meeting. Some intersections have been painted with stop bars and signs indicating cross-traffic does not stop.

As for the St. Patrick's Day celebration in Five Points, Officer Broder stated there will be an influx of pedestrians and cars and there may be parking issues. Please contact CPD if

you need assistance, have noise complaints, or have any other issues. 100 extra officers will be on duty; however, the normal patrol will be operating so that Five Points does not reduce other patrols.

IV. Guest Speakers. Senator Courson, Richland County Council Member Seth Rose, City Council Member Moe Baddourah, and Representative James Smith all spoke. The remainder of the City Delegation is currently in Washington, DC.

Senator Courson thanked neighbors for their support in the November election. Please stay in touch on issues of concern.

Representative Smith stated the budget process started today in the House. Representative Smith stated he is focused on Medicaid participation, if the General Assembly agrees to accept the funds. The plan proposed is the same plan that Florida recently agreed to adopt, and Representative Smith indicated he is in favor of adopting this approach. There also exists the potential to save the Palmetto Compress Building. Representative Smith thanked neighbors for letting him serve in the State House.

Richland County Councilman Rose noted one of the complaints from neighbors involved sexually oriented businesses in the area near Greystone Blvd. and Bush River Road contained some businesses that were operating without a license. He stated two of the businesses have been shut down completely.

As for the asphalt plant in Rosewood, there are ongoing discussions to determine whether the business might be interested in relocating to another facility that is less residential. The county cannot make the business move, but it is working with the business.

Councilman Rose is chairing a Committee to supervise the Richland County Detention Center to look into the jail and how it is being run. The Center has a lot of inmates pass through each year with very few problems. However, the pay for guards is very low, and it is difficult to keep good guards.

Please call Seth if you have any concerns. 361-2360, or go to sethrose.com.

Councilman Baddourah provided an update on the storm drainage pilot program. The program is ready to begin and pilot areas will be completed by November. The bidding period opens April, with contracts to be awarded in May. Construction will begin in June or July and last through November.

Councilman Baddourah is happy to see the crime rate in the district has dropped. He wants to see the infrastructure improved, and water and sewer funds to stay in water/sewer department so that the city is not borrowing later to pay for the funds.

Councilman Baddourah stated he is also developing a Senior Citizen program to assist senior citizens who are unable to find help. A database is being created-idea of phone number to call.

Councilman Baddourah addressed the Rosewood contamination problem. He indicated the contamination has been cleaned up, and the community is now safe.

Councilman Baddourah wants to increase the police force in the city. He asked neighbors to call police if there are problems in Five Points this weekend. There will be private security officers working in addition to the officers.

There was a question from the Council about some of the recent issues in Five Points and problems with violence. There was a comment about re-zoning some of the area and to look at whether the bars are becoming a nuisance in a legal sense.

A block watch program has been considered by City Council. A handout is available from CPD. There has been interest amongst neighbors.

V. Special Presentation. The Council recognized Dr. Belinda Gergel as well as her husband, South Carolina District Court Judge Richard Mark Gergel. In recognition of Dr. Gergel's service to the Council and the neighborhood, Council has created the Belinda Gergel Neighborhood Leadership Award to recognize a neighbor who has made a positive contribution to the neighborhood. The award will be given semi-annually.

Council presented Dr. Gergel with a plaque in thanks and recognition for her service to the SNC and the City Council.

Dr. Gergel thanked the Council for recognizing her, and she thanked other people in the neighborhood who step forward to assist their fellow neighbors. She stated that office holders have to depend on people who live in those neighborhoods. She would love to be present or present any future awards.

VI. Reports.

A. January Minutes – Jason Bobertz. The Minutes from the January 8, 2013 Meeting were approved.

B. Treasurer's Report – Jane Key. Jane indicated the Council is in good shape financially. Total expenses for the year were \$14,116.78, with \$11,878.87 in revenue. However, Jane noted Council paid for 5 issues of newsletter instead of the ordinary 4 this year, and did not receive a check from Strictly Running for the Turkey Trot until after books closed.

Current cash on hand as of March 11 is \$12,487.67. Expenses totaled \$690.31 with \$2,331 in deposits since the last meeting.

C. Newsletter – Julie Ruff. The next newsletter will be out in two weeks.

D. Turkey Trot – Charles Appleby and Ryan Causey. No report.

E. Easter Egg Hunt – Jason Bobertz. Scheduled for March 30 at 9 a.m. at Sims Park. We are looking for volunteers to help set up prior to the Hunt at around 8 a.m.

F. Signage – Daniel Coble. Council has looked into procuring signs identifying the neighborhood. Daniel has consulted about signage with a nearby neighborhood, and is looking into what kind of signage might work. Two big signs may cost around \$900, and smaller signs might be less. However, big signs could be stolen, which can get expensive.

Daniel also stated that he is now an Assistant Solicitor in Richland County. He asked that neighbors stay in touch and offered to help any neighbors who have been victims of crime.

VII. Old Business.

A. Rosewood Safe Route to School Grant Update – John Myrick. This issue has been in the works for several years. In the Fall of 2006, parents were upset about traffic issues and children walking to Rosewood Elementary. Neighbors sought a federal grant to assist, and a \$200,000 grant was awarded in 2007. However, due to economic problems, the grant fell through. SCDOT also disallowed a traffic light.

There has now been some activity concerning the initiative. John indicated it might be possible to put in some pedestrian lighting and sidewalks. Installing sidewalks could cause damage to some of trees, however. City has surveyed the trees on the road and a master drawing has been produced; however, the plan is still in flux.

A neighbor stated that the issue is very controversial. South Walker residents are concerned about losing trees. It was stated that some of the trees might already be in danger because they are not healthy. There is also the possibility of putting sidewalks in separate and apart from the grant.

Jesse Burke indicated the City arborist and City Manager requested the sidewalk be placed on the east side, but utilities are on the other side and can't be moved.

VIII. New Business.

A. Election of New Council Members. Daniel Coble and Mary Greene, who are currently on the Council to fill unexpired terms, were elected to new, two-year terms.

There are currently three new openings on the Council. Andy Shlon, Ashley Gwin, and Polly Thompson were all nominated and elected. Congratulations to them.

IX. Open Discussion and Announcements.

A. SNC Officers for 2013-2014. Caroline Clarkson is the new president; Ron Burns is the new president-elect; Jane Key continues as Treasurer; and Jason Bobertz is currently the Secretary. A new secretary will be nominated and elected at the next meeting.

Thanks to Tina Cundari for her service. Tina still updating the website, and is looking for someone to take over for her.

Julie Ruff has been on the Council for eight years. Even though she is leaving the Council, Julie is still doing the newsletter and organizing the home tour.

Tina thanked Carla Moore for her service as president. She stated the Council was lucky to have her leadership through historic designation process and through other issues.

X. Adjourn.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 13 at 6:15 pm at Emily Douglas Park