

Kemp Mill Civic Association Meeting Minutes for September 10, 2019

Kemp Mill ES All-Purpose Room 7:30 – 9:20 PM

KMCA President Alan Felsen called the meeting to order

- The distributed agenda and minutes of previous meeting on June 18 were approved without objection.
- The treasurer's report was given orally; there are 120 membership households as of that morning with more members still in process of joining outside. One check was cashed and there is a total of \$6667 (\$3533 in Sun Trust checking + \$3133 in CD) in the account.
- Alan Felsen reviewed the rules for debate as established by the Executive Board to allow those people who were still checking in to complete the process before the speaker started. They were adopted without objection

Presentation by MCDOT Representative Frank Kingsley

History: Frank Kingsley is the Manager of the county's Annual Sidewalk Program, which is funded annually and based solely on requests by individuals in the affected neighborhood.

Summary of Process

1. Impact study is conducted taking into account variables such as trees, poles, hydrants, signs, driveways. The county Right of Way is 60 feet, 30 feet on each side of the center of the street. Construction is done within the Right of Way.
2. Notification is made to affected households with accompanying forms for feedback and resources to contact with questions/clarification.
3. After evaluating the feedback MCDOT decides whether to proceed with public hearings that are designed solely to provide testimony from community members. (If held, the meetings would probably occur in Spring 2020 with construction to begin in Fall 2020 at a cost of approximately \$500,000.)
4. DOT makes the final decision on sidewalk construction

Summary of Question and Answer Session

- Has there been a pedestrian survey? *No*
- Is an environmental study anticipated? *No*
- Is there a specific formula for whether to proceed to public hearing step? *No*
- Will homeowners be responsible for shoveling the new sidewalks? *Yes, but the county rarely enforces the rules.*

- Who is responsible for sidewalk maintenance and damages resulting from injuries sustained on the sidewalks? *The county is responsible for both since the sidewalks are in the county Right of Way and not homeowner's property. For the same reason there is no effect on tax assessments.*
- Has the effect on the Northwest Branch been assessed? *No, and the item was placed on Mr. Kingsley's follow up list*
- What about handicapped accessibility under the ADA? *Pinch points to 36 inches are approved for certain locations under the ADA and included in the plan.*
- What will be the height of the retaining walls? *Mr. Kingsley did not have specifics but they are based on where the sidewalks cut in with different styles available.*
- How deep will the excavation be for the sidewalks and gas/water valves? *5-6 inch excavation for the sidewalks and gas and water valves are raised or lowered rather than moved. They can be embedded in the sidewalk.*
- Can people demand specific replacement trees? *That decision is up to the county arborist.*
- Can part of the plan be approved and part dropped? *Yes*
- Can changes or alterations be made to the plan? *Yes, but it will extend the process by at least 9 months to repeat the process*
- Questions not specifically answered: *Issue with shortened driveways resulting in increased on-street parking and access for transportation and emergency vehicles were both added to Mr. Kingsley's list*

President Felsen repeated the motion to the membership. "The Kemp Mill Civic Association should support the county's plan for adding sidewalks on Lovejoy Street, Stonington Pl, and Hermleigh Road as presented at the meeting."

The member who submitted the motion was allowed to speak first, followed by a speaker against the motion. Debate continued with speakers alternating for and against the motion until 9:00 PM when it was time to move on to the vote.

Summary of Debate Points

For the Resolution

- Community has changed and transformed with more children and people walking
- Safer at school bus stops and for wheelchairs
- Cut through wanted but separated from rest of plan as not needed
- Will mitigate safety from speed on Hermleigh
- Support sidewalks but not this plan
- Kemp Mill Swim Club president concerned about walkers to the pool because of traffic
- Easier to walk up and down the street

- Separate out Stonington
- Dog walkers can't be seen at night
- Want sidewalks in front of every home

Against the resolution

- Issue resolved 50 years ago when original homeowners voted for sidewalks on each block
- Impact on utility poles, guidewires
- Other neighborhoods such as Chevy Chase and Potomac do not have sidewalks off the main arteries and we don't need them
- Buses can't get through with more cars on the streets
- Congestion and possible increase in damage due to increased street parking on streets already too narrow for two cars when cars are parked on both sides of the street
- Against construction on Stonington; just do the cut through from Lovejoy
- Parking from Chabad already causes visibility/ congestion problems
- Not needed on Hermleigh because car accidents don't occur there
- Study not based on evidence
- Negative impact on property values and character will not solving the real problem; need to impact pedestrian behavior
- Speaker initially requested sidewalks but now wants environmental study and is concerned about shade, climate, and neighborhood character

At 9:00 PM debate was ended. The President repeated the motion again and asked members to cast their ballots. There was a five minute recess while ballots were collected and counting began. Ballots were counted by Vice President Jacobson and Secretary Rosenblum.

Kemp Mill Community Day 2020 Planning: Volunteers are needed for the committee and \$1000 was approved for the project.

The results of the vote were given to the President who asked for a motion to amend the agenda and deliver the results at this time. Motion was made, seconded, and approved by voice vote.

Vote Result: The motion was passed by a vote of 44/22.

Maintenance Issues at the Kemp Mill Urban Park: The Parks and Planning Commission has been responsive. They are doing some maintenance and working to resolve the algae bloom issues. They are seeking solutions to the geese problem but many of the geese live there and are probably here to stay. Hopefully the situation will be helped if the county completes a

promised fence around the water to discourage the geese. Play equipment for younger children is being looked into. Police are patrolling more frequently due to safety concerns that have been raised.

New Business: Concerns with bus cameras and tickets, especially at corner of Lamberton and Lovejoy

Announcements: Friendship Picnic on 9/22. New Wheaton Library Complex opened on 9/8

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM