Gwinhurst Civic Association meeting

*01.02.2017 Meeting Minutes*

# Attendees -

GCA Board: Steve Bufflap – President, Adrian Dejong – Vice President, Dave Paules– Treasury;

Kristin Ford – Secretary absent

Residents:

22 attendees ??

Special Guests:

NCC Councilman John Cartier

Jake’s Burger’s site - Dreamer’s café on philly pike in Wilmington, moving in. Already open.

Superfresh site – indoor storage for medical records. Nolan associates group bought it. Will not develop pad site at front.

Claymont Train-station update – open in 2021 is current plan

Tri-state mall – still under review for re-investment

250 apartments units in Darley Green. Rest are townhomes and condos.

Paper Streets and ownership – still in limbo…still an arduous legal process to determine / change ownership.

Foreclosed Homes

Philips 66 site – no plans to redevelop

Senator McDowell

Smyrna prison riot – sergeant Floyd killed.

Revenue shortage for past 8 years continues. Lowest taxes vs. other states in the nation. 250M shortfall. $150M in built in increases. 1/3rd of budget is for education. More pupils signing up for charter schools in lieu of private schools. Have reduced state employee headcount by 800 over 8 years. 100M to close gap with corporate registration tax increase. Longest period of growth month over month. Unemployment is down, but wage growth is lacking.

AstraZeneca clawbacks. Are we able to recoup the investments we made in that business? McDowell wasn’t certain of the details of their stay.

Chemours (operator of old Edgemoor site) will stay at downtown Wilmington location. Markell offered it to keep them.

James Spadola

**Crime Report**

* No code violations report
* Crime Report produced

# Financials -

Starting balance from last meeting, 11/03/2016 $18,788.63

Debits $207.50

Credits $2150.00

**Total Balance as of 01/2/2017 $20,731.13**

YTD dues 84/578 have paid their dues for 2017 resulting in a 14.5% contribution rate.

By comparison: 2016 dues 169/578 for 29.2% contribution rate.

Yard Sale on May 6th 2017.

# Minutes

Top GCA Events – Elections take place at next meeting, Nov 3rd for 2017 officer positions.

Suggestion to have 1 or 2 meetings on a Sunday. Meet in the fall. Mention its air conditioned, smoke free, etc. Kristin book meetings with Catherine @ VFW. Need to decide on dates.

Santa night

Easter egg hunt

Halloween times

Road Repair – how to get the next road into the repair.

Claymont Train Station going to be moving northward. Opening in 2020.

Edgemoor – being considered to expand into a container/ shipyard.

Crime Report County Police. Code enforcement.

Gwinhurst Park being cleaned up through November.

573-2800 – county police non emergency line to report loitering.

Public service commission – post on facebook as means to call about wires that are on the ground in the community.

VFW – donate $200. Need signatures from another board member.

# Prior Issues Raised (historic meetings)–

**Extra lighting for Lincoln/Townsend Ave**

* Some residents asked about getting lights on Townsend as there are none.
* Councilman J. Cartier informed residents that we need to submit a petition with 60% favoring more lights.
* He noted the lights will not be decorative, but the basic ‘cobra’ style metal overhang model.
* NCC applies a light tax to pay for the power for the lights.
* The NCC petition will be provided to whoever requests it.
* GCA Board recommends that those that want lights form a committee to organize the collection of signatures, and inform the community on their progress.

**Stop signs are needed. Some intersections have 1, 2, or none.**

* Rep Short will follow up with DelDOT on which intersections should have stop signs.
  + Grant and Garfield has none (Invalid. No intersection here).
  + Odessa and Lincoln has 1

**Mobile home at corner of Holly Oak and Philly Pike**

* Residents complained to code violations and debris. J. Cartier promised that he would carry this back to Code Enforcement, personally (Frank Walsh).

**Pats’s Pizzaria’s fence**

* Residents noted fence was damaged this past winter. It is leaning into neighboring yards. It was reported to County Enforcement already. However, residents asked Cartier to check into this as they felt code enforcement was not pursuing remediation aggressively enough.

**Massage Parlors on Philly Pike**

* We continue to be plagued by numerous massage parlors that are fronts for organized crime, including human trafficking and prostitution. Residents asked Rep Short whether government is doing anything to address the problem.
* It’s a state issue (because Philly Pike is State jurisdiction), thus
* Attorney General Matt Denn is involved. Rep Short and Sen Harris McDowell are working this issue.
  + It’s recommended that we continue to write letters to State House Representative (Bryon Short), and our State Senator (Harris B. McDowell), Attorney General Matt Denn, Governor Jack Markell to keep heat on the issue.
  + We should stop in at the local State Police office on Philly Pike to complain about massage parlors in order to get more attention at stopping it in our neighborhood.
  + The concern is that this is a point solution and they could re-occur in our area or another without a holistic plan.
* These massage parlors are NOT being screened by business licensing by the state. They aren’t being re-reviewed. State claims it doesn’t have the authority or resources to re-investigate these places after granting the initial license. Can only investigate after a complaint is raised against one of them.
* Residents asked about licenses for the workers and whether we should be reporting to the police those without licenses? How can we get police to focus on this with as much attention as Drug Selling
  + For example, licenses for hair stylists are granted, but no one inspects them once granted UNLESS a complaint is filed. Massage parlor licensing is the same way under the law currently.
* Other ideas raised were to chase after property owners
  + Exponential legal fines and fees with each violation.
  + “flashing signs” onto Philly Pike are a code violation that we should apply to getting them shut down/regulated out of business

**NCC Councilman John Cartier spoke with the residents:**

* Residents asked Cartier to get county out to examine Gwinhurst park between Park Drive and Lincoln. There are downed trees and over growth in the area that many residents would like addressed/touched up to make the park more presentable.
* A sump pump is pumping directly into Gwinhurst Park making it difficult for the county to cut due to flooding.
  + If the pump is 6ft out from property it isn’t in violation. Code enforcement will review to see if it is being drained directly into park
* Reminder: 90 day Vacant Properties should be reported to 302-395-5555 (county enforcement)
* Open Code Enforcement violations were provided by Councilman Cartier
* Autozone site demo has begun (old 7-11 on philly pike)
* Old coach house site will become a Dollar General. Nothing citizens can do to prevent this (there is no legal concept of “not in my backyard” that we can apply.)
  + Dollar General will be pressured to adhere to the Claymont Overlay design guidelines.
* Superfresh site: no new developments or interest to buy it from anyone yet.
* EVRAZ Steel site: Continuing its demolition. No definitive plans for its next usage.

**State Rep Bryon Short spoke to the residents**

* Addressed the problem of the massage parlors.
* Repair of Harrison Ave 2 blocks at speed bump at park coming this year (2016). Rep Short also indicated that he will revisit our community, recognized that our roads are in need of significant repairs/reinvestment.

**Reminders and Followups**

* **Code enforcement/County park clean up** 
  + 302-395-5555 if you suspect a code violation please call and report to this number.
  + Contact Paul Johnson (parks maintenance manager) with any complaints of park land or county land not being sufficiently maintained for public safety.

# Community Calendar –

* **Gwinhurst Community Yard Sale scheduled for Saturday 6.11.2016 8:00-1:00pm**
* Facebook communication will be created
  + Post/Link to other Yard Sale Facebook events
* NCC Classified and NCC Yard Sale sites
* News Journal advertisement will be included
* Postcard mailing to residents
* **Claymont Fire Hall Shrimp Fest** – Friday 5.6.2015, 7-9pm, $30.00 pp. TIX SOLD OUT
  + 3223 Philadelphia Pike, Claymont
  + <https://www.facebook.com/events/958209970964517/>
* **Bellefonte Arts Festival** – Saturday May 21st 9-5
  + <http://www.bellefontearts.com>

Next Meeting – August 4th, 2016