

## **September 3, 2009**

### **Roland Park Civic League Meeting**

In Attendance: Phil Spevak, Mike McQuestion, Muriel Berkeley, David Blumberg, Jesse Halvorsen, Peter Kannam, Chris McSherry, Ian MacFarlane, Jennifer Cooper, Bill Sharpe, Rita Waters, Louise Phipps Senft, Kate Culotta, Ken winkler

Absent: Michael Braverman & Yovi Poblete

Special Guests: Council Person Sharon Middleton

Kristy Taylor (Mayor's Office)

Idris Shadid (Transportation)

Joe Kittner a traffic engineer hired by the City from the firm JMT

Mark Hoffman, Physical Plant Superintendent from Gilman

Sandy Summers from RPE&MS

Meeting began: 7:10 called to order by Phil Spevak

Announcement of new RP Office Manager: Marni Toop, brief bio by Kate Culotta

#### **Updates on Old Business:**

1. Update on 4301 Roland Ave: Demo phase has begun. Frank Harvey to update progress via web site

Steve Ziegler staying in contact with the project.

2. Update on Roland Park Place and proposed PUD: RPP would like to amend existing PUD to increase employee and resident parking by altering a residential property & church property on Roland Ave. Land Use Committee working with representatives from Rol-Den communities.

#### **Gilman Traffic Study:**

At 7:15, Phil turned to floor over to DOT Idris Shadid and Engineer Joe Kittner to discuss the proposed changes to Gilman's proposed new entrance. This project has been on the table for several years. Currently 2 thru-lanes heading south on Roland Ave with a left turn break in the median, but no dedicated left turn lane into Gilman. There is currently a dedicated left turn lane into a now closed/old main entrance. Gilman would like to relocate the turn lane space to the new entrance. There is a great deal of traffic in the mornings and afternoons due to three schools in the same area and speeding traffic has been a concern, as well during off hours.

The City Consultant, Mr. Kittner, would like 265 ft of current landscaped median to become left turn lane. Several mature trees would be eliminated. Gilman says they will replant new, young trees and that there will be a net gain of 2 trees, but young.

Chris McSherry, Chair of RP's Traffic Committee spoke next: She has been involved in this discussion for several years. Chris advises no more than 100 feet of lost median, restoration of north median by the current turn lane & speed cameras in the area. Chris also explained that during the course of discussion, Gilman, RP and the City reached an agreement in spring of 2008 of which Gilman would gain a new 100 ft turn lane, the city would restore the northern median to its full width. Though 4-5 mature trees would have been lost, 12-13 new trees would have been gained in the restored northern median. The city was to come back with additional ideas for traffic calming. The City did not turn to the discussion table until this summer, with the new plans for a 265 ft turn land and no mention of the earlier deal.

Mark Hoffman- Gilman Representative spoken: Also involved in discussion for several years. Says Gilman is committed to safety. Gilman is also working with the adjacent neighborhood Association to create new left turn lane on Northern Parkway, across from Bryn Mawr School.

Sandy Summers- RPE&MS Representative: Not convinced a left median turn will work. Would rather re-time the existing red lights to allow one way traffic at a time to allow for both left turns into all schools and pedestrian crossing. Also concerned loss of mature trees will encourage increased speed.

*Questions & Comments from the board and audience include:*

What traffic calming options are available? Answer from Mr. Kittner: speed humps, speed cameras, reduced speed time periods.

Sharon Middleton: Speed camera a must for the area.

Joe Kittner: not asked by City to consider options, only to design a new left turn

Phil Spevak asks what else Gilman does to reduce traffic? Again, not part of study.

Mark Hoffman added to Gilman committed to safety, looking at options like restricting student drivers. Not familiar with school programs to encourage bikes, walking or car pooling.

Phil Spevak: Will a left turn lane actually solve the problem of too much traffic?

Audience question of staggered school starts?

Comments by Louise & David of not enough cross-communication between the schools.

A show of hands by the audience favored further discussion.

Chris McSherry offered to contact the involved schools for a discussion group all together to brain-storm for ways to reduce traffic and increase safety in the area.

### **Baltimore Sustainability program & Energy Challenge:**

The next topic was the City's Sustainability Program and Energy Challenge by Rita Waters & Mike McQuestion.

The first goal is to implement the Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge. Roland Park is one of the eight BNEC pilot neighborhoods. (The BNEC pilot neighborhoods are: Park Heights Renaissance, Fulton Avenue in Sand town, Reservoir Hill, Bay brook, Banner/Middle East, neighborhoods of Greater Laura ville, Ten Hills, Mount Washington and Roland Park.) The program looks to reduce energy consumption in the community over a 12 month period. Mike & Rita are looking for neighbors to volunteer as plat captains to coordinate plat coverage over the neighborhood.

Rita Walters gave an overview of the Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge (BNEC). They handed out some information from the City and discussed a number of ideas and strategies. The BNEC captains will serve for a 12-month period. They will be local coordinators and communicators in their neighborhoods. Their main task will be to let homeowners know what they can do to make their homes more energy-efficient and to get them in touch with the resources they need to do it (g, BG&E energy audits). They will have a Vista volunteer to work with. They and the City BNEC team will actively support them. And the captains will establish ties with captains in the other seven BNEC neighborhoods.

The City would like to see a minimum of 200 households enrolled.

The second goal is to devise and carry out local activities of our own making to make life in Roland Park more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. Our blueprint is the City's Sustainability Plan. They are articulating with other RPCL efforts including those of the Beautification and Schools Committees.

*\* Above passage on sustainability is quoted from a follow-up memo by Mike McQuestion*

*Comments from the board and audience:*

Greg Otto would like to see more public trash cans to reduce litter.

Request to Doug Munro to put Energy Initiative Program memos on web site.

Audience member comments that Black & Decker manufactures devises to measure energy use.

BGE peak Rewards Programs

Greater Home wood Association: Pilot program to train young people to weatherize homes and restore old windows.

**Other Business:**

1. Minutes from July: motion to approve by Kate, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Louise. Motion approved
2. Treasurers report next month

**Open Projects:**

1. Zoning Master Plan. Motion to appoint Michael Braverman to respond to meeting
2. Louise: request to plat reps to walk your plats, see whats going on
3. RPCS-notice of outdoor mixer on Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 7:30-9:30

Meeting Adjourned: Motion by Kate, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ian MacFarlane 9 pm