

Tavistock Civic Association
2009 Annual Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2009

Location: Talleyville Fire Hall
Meeting called to order at: 7:30 p.m.

Business Attended:

▪ **Corporal Amy Kevis, County Community Policing Officer**

Cpl. Kevis wanted to make sure everyone understood that we have the ability and right to contact her at 395-8059 if there is a crime-related incident in our neighborhoods, unless the crime is ongoing, which is when you should call 911. You may also e-mail her at akevis@nccde.org. She can track criminal activity from neighborhood to neighborhood, and there has been an increase in crimes of opportunity in the past year where criminals are looking for places off the beaten path, even in the middle of the afternoon. Make sure you lock all your doors, cars and garages, even when you're outside. Lighting is very effective, as are motion sensors. House alarms are good, but they don't have to be monitored.

There is a warrant on file for an identified person who was stealing from mailboxes, and another person has recently been found to be stealing from mailboxes. It was recommended that you don't leave mail out for the mail carrier to pick up.

Cheryl Patterson, current President of Edenridge III, where several break-ins and tire-slashings were reported, attended our meeting and was introduced by President Maderich.

▪ **Councilman Bob Weiner**

Councilman Weiner, who represents our district, gave out a tri-fold listing of phone numbers of county and state services. New Castle County is responsible for sewers, police, 911, volunteer police and other volunteer activities, libraries and parks. We have ½ the police that we really need, but crime is not significantly higher because of volunteerism. We have volunteers fighting graffiti, broken windows, and illegal signs, and they are helping to spread mulch at parks, working in libraries, doing community block watches, cleaning up roads and river banks, etc.

Nobody wants another shopping center on US202, referring to the proposal on the corner of Naamans & 202. A hand vote showed that nobody in the room wanted another shopping center. All it would do is cannibalize other shopping centers nearby. The property, owned by Woodlawn Trustees, is currently zoned high density residential. Bob suggested that a community health care center would be an excellent use of the property which would be good for the community and provide higher paying jobs than retail stores.

Another property not in agreement with community desires is the proposal to build a "King of Prussia" type mall at Barley Mill Plaza on US141 and 48 (Lancaster Pike). Go to Bob's website, www.bobweiner.com, for additional information on this project. Other projects that did get built, like the Brandywine Town Center, never did perform the way the developer described it, but it helped form the Citizens for Responsible Growth group that is helping to ensure that this type of irresponsible development isn't allowed to flourish. The Stoltz development proposals are a case in point where the developer is not listening to community needs or concerns and refuses to meet with community leaders.

Another issue facing New Castle County is the budget crisis. Although Bob is not in favor of increasing taxes, we are using 1996 dollars which is when we stopped adjusting property values for inflation to determine property taxes. Therefore, in 2002 county government had to start cutting costs even though it was serving a growing population. County Council will be voting on a property tax increase the end of May. Therefore, Bob asks that we contact him to let him know where we stand on the proposals being discussed.

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Lastly, Bob was in favor of creating a residential community at the current Pilot School property. He was facilitating a meeting the next day between the Tavistock working committee overseeing the developer's plans to develop the property and the NCC Department of Land Use to help the committee decide how much negotiating room there can be between the communities of Tavistock and Edenridge III and the developer, Jerry Heissler. Fortunately, the developer is known to be a reputable developer who wants to work with the communities and come up with a proposal that will satisfy both the residents and the need for a project that is considered economically and aesthetically viable.

▪ **Senator Michael S. Katz**

Sen. Katz stressed the need for accountability and transparency of State government and he stated his support for property rights legislation that reduces the ability of government to use public domain as a way to acquire properties. However, the biggest challenge being discussed right now is the State budget. Although he is not in favor of increasing taxes on income, he needs more feedback from his constituency. Delaware is the worst State in the country in terms of costs being above budget. If you want to be on Sen. Katz's e-mail list to review proposals that cut costs and/or increase taxes and other revenues, please e-mail him at michael.katz@state.de.us, or phone him at (302) 528-0694. Delaware has a 3.4 to 3.5 million dollar budget with a 600 million dollar deficit which is expected to get worse caused by the financial services and auto industries, the loss of a significant number of jobs, and the housing mortgage crisis.

Sen. Katz also discussed the Freedom of Information Act known as HB1. It was recently passed unanimously in the House and it is now in the Senate. This bill allows the public to have access to meetings of the Delaware General Assembly except for caucuses. Additionally, the bill allows the public to have access to records of the Delaware General Assembly.

▪ **Representative Dennis E. Williams**

Rep. Williams interjected that all revenues to the State are down. We actually have a 750 million dollar deficit, but the federal stimulus package reduces it to a 600 million dollar deficit. We currently have a 7.4% unemployment rate in Delaware which is expected to go up.

There are several proposals being considered to reduce the deficit, including a 1% increase in the top income tax rate from 5.95% to 6.95% for people earning and AGI of \$60,000 and above. Another proposal being considered is increasing the number of tax brackets above the \$60,000 mark, as well as, increasing corporate taxes, sports betting, additional casinos, and other fees, and then cutting expenses by instituting pay cuts for State employees. A figure of 8% was mentioned.

Since Delaware gets 38% of the money gained by the casinos, and sports betting gets people to come in and use the slots, it is a particularly enticing way of increasing revenues. However, they cautioned that adding casinos tends to cannibalize the existing three casinos in Delaware and the one in Chester, PA.

Both Sen. Katz and Rep. Williams encouraged the use of e-mail to stay in touch with them. They both promised to write back personally or through legislative aides. Rep. Williams may be reached by e-mail at dennis.e.williams@state.de.us or by phone at (302) 373-0115. Both men preferred contact by e-mail if possible. However, they need to hear from the citizens in their district. Please note that although the House did pass the Freedom of Information Act, e-mails are exempt from that Act. Therefore any communications with Rep. Williams will remain confidential unless he is specifically asked to share the information as may be necessary to resolve an issue.

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▪ **Park Superintendent Dwight Anttila**

Mr. Anttila mentioned that a trail review will be conducted in 6 to 8 months from now to determine which trails to close since they want to eliminate some un-official entrances along Mt. Lebanon Road and the roads adjoining Edenridge III that have developed. Trail bikes are apparently creating erosion problems on some trails and the dumping of yard waste at the entrance of some trails is a serious problem.

If you have any question, comments, or would like to report any incidents of yard waste being dumped on State property, please contact Dwight at dwight.anttila@state.de.us or call (302) 577-3534.

▪ **Treasurer's Report**

Assets: Regular checking account = \$2,120.14 as of 3/25/09

Artisans' Savings Bank CD = \$5,123.26 as of 2/27/09

Summary of 2008-2009 income was composed of:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Dues | \$6,330.00 |
| Tree Program Reimburse. | \$1,168.00 |
| Tree grants (state of DE) | |
| 2007 | \$2,802.00 |
| 2008 | \$2,758.74 |
| Snow Plow Reimbursement | \$ 273.00 |
| Total Income: | \$13,331.74 |

Expenses:

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Tree Committee | |
| 2007 & 2008 | \$12,245.00 |
| Block & Halloween Party | \$ 947.99 |
| Snow Removal | \$ 1,820.00 |
| Traffic Circle Maintenance | \$ 626.00 |
| Copying & Stamps | \$ 156.60 |
| Regional Civic Assoc Dues | \$ 50.00 |
| Delaware Franchise Tax | \$ 25.00 |
| Meeting/Fees | \$ 85.00 |
| Domain Name Registration | \$ 20.38 |
| Bank Service Fees | \$ 12.00 |

Total Expenses: \$15,987.97

Surplus/(Deficit): (\$ 2,656.23)

- ❖ Billing for the 2007 tree planting projects was paid during the 2008 fiscal year which created a large expenditure in the tree committee's expense category. However, the expense was anticipated and does not reflect any unforeseen expenses.
- ❖ Snow fall was so light this winter that no reimbursement was received from the State (through DelDOT). However, we received a reimbursement of \$273.00 from the snow plow contractor.
- ❖ The 2008-2009 dues collection represented the participation of 144 homes out of 146 in Tavistock.

Treasurer's Report was voted on and approved at meeting.

▪ **Election of officers for 2009-2010:**

There were no nominations from the floor. The proposed slate was elected and the following will serve: Don Thureau, President; Michele Borzio, Vice-President; Maryann McConnell, Treasurer; Marisa Facciolo, Secretary.

The next Board Meeting will be at the new President's home on Wednesday, May 13, at 7:30 pm at 740 Taunton Rd. There are three board meetings each year. These meetings are open to all association members who wish to attend.

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Tavistock's Annual Meeting on March 25, 2009