

Please find below the DRAFT minutes of the RCHCA Autumn meeting held on October 17, 2016. These are marked “DRAFT” since they have not yet been formally approved by the membership.

Rock Creek Hills Citizens’ Association Autumn Meeting – October 17, 2016 (DRAFT)

RCHCA President Jim Pekar opened the meeting and introduced officers. The minutes of the Spring Meeting were approved.

Treasurer’s Report

RCHCA Treasurer Maria Marzullo reported that RCHCA received \$6,440 in dues this year, which was much higher than last year and includes 161 households.

Checking: \$2,780

Savings: \$6,000

2016 Expenses:

Mailings – \$700

Legal – \$ 2,200

Officers Insurance – \$1050

Spring picnic – \$2,000

Total: \$5,500

Crime and Safety

Neighbor Eden Durbin, Co-chair of the Citizens Neighborhood Watch, introduced District 2 Police Officer Oliver Janney, who gave a presentation on neighborhood and area crime. The police work in three shifts: day, evening, and midnight. More officers work evenings and midnight. If you call to report a crime, the response time is usually 2-5 minutes. Janney said RCH does not have a lot of auto theft; six have been reported this year. If there are more, they haven’t been reported. The best way to prevent vehicle theft is to lock your doors. Also remember to keep your garage door opener – and anything else of value – out of car. If they see it, they’re going to take it. There have been seven house burglaries within the past year. Lighting is paramount in preventing burglaries and thefts. Keep lights on outside, keep shrubbery at window-level so you can see out. He said 70% of burglaries happen during the day while most people are at work. If you see something suspicious or out of the ordinary (plain panel van with no sign should raise alarm because most companies will have some sort of marking on the vehicle), call the police. Criminals case homes. At this time of year, wood-choppers come through the neighborhood and prey on the elderly. Watch out for your neighbors and check up on them. If you are the victim of a crime, file a report right away, not a few days later. Be specific and say that you want to be seen when you call the police. For further information on specific crimes, visit the District 2 website. In addition, DataMontgomery.gov offers more detail on crime in the area.

The police offer a free Home Security Survey, which takes about an hour or so, to explain how to make your home more secure.

Contact Information:

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Community Services Officer
Department of Police
2nd District
7359 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20814
[240-773-6728](tel:240-773-6728)
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Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

Jim Pekar said neighbors should make sure trees and shrubs aren't blocking signs. If they are, the County should be contacted. There was a bicycle accident on Saul Road, which may have been caused by potholes created by construction vehicles. RCHCA is looking into adding crosswalks at a couple of locations. There had been some interest in sidewalks previously, but there are no updates on this issue. The County is looking into providing a walkable route to the Capitol View/Forest Glen Metro.

RCHCA Vice President Hill Carter proposed creating residential permit parking in the immediate vicinity around the new middle school. Neighbors are already experiencing parking issues with the construction crews parking on neighborhood streets, blocking fire hydrants and making it difficult for more than one vehicle at a time to drive on the street. Hill reported that there will be approximately 120-130 staff at the school, which will have less than the required number of parking spaces onsite. BCC High School has dealt with overflow by installing permit parking on its streets. In order to get permit parking, one must send a written request to the Dept. of Transportation, with the concurrence of 2/3rds of households per block. The cost of a permit is \$40 per vehicle, renewable every two years. A motion was passed to move forward. Hill will send an email out on the listserv for volunteers on a block-by-block basis to gauge the level of interest.

Hill also recommended reading the recently released boundary study for the new school, which contends that the school will be at 99% capacity within four years of opening. When the school opens next year, just two grades – 6th and 7th – will attend the first year. If you want to provide comments on the study, send them to the Board of Education at: boe@mcpsmd.org **There will be a Board of Education Work Session on Nov. 3, Board of Education Public Hearings on Nov. 10, and Board action (vote) on Nov. 17.**

Construction Updates**Middle School**

RCHCA officers have attended monthly meetings with MCPS and the construction contractor in order to provide feedback from residents and receive construction updates. MCPS has received several violations for stormwater management. RCHCA has requested copies of the violations, but has not yet received them. A few weeks ago, there was a concrete spill at the site, which workers dealt with by using hoses to wash the cement into the street and into Silver Creek. They didn't follow proper protocol. The construction company - Dustin Construction – has worked with the County for decades,

so they should be well versed on the rules and regulations. Jim Pekar said it also has become routine for trucks that are supposed to stage offsite to arrive before 7 am and for bright lights to be left on throughout the night, shining into nearby homes.

Despite repeated requests for updated construction plans, the plans on the County website are the ones submitted to the Montgomery County Planning Board last year. We know the plans have changed, but they have not been posted. RCHCA did receive a “flyover video” of the site, which does not provide a meaningful perspective because it doesn’t include elevations.

Neighbors are encouraged to be vigilant in reporting violations they witness. Please feel free to send emails to your RCHCA Board members, who will share them with Dustin & MCPS. Egregious violations and/or threats to safety or health should be reported to the police.

WSSC

WSSC has announced a second water main project for the neighborhood. Details will be coming soon.

Salt Barn

State Delegate Jeff Waldstreicher and Congressman Chris Van Hollen sent a letter to the State Highway Administration regarding the construction of a Salt Barn on Kensington Parkway and the Beltway.

RCHCA Covenants

RCHCA Covenants Chair Vince DeCain provided an update on the neighborhood Covenants. Mr. DeCain said the community must be vigilant in monitoring and maintaining the Covenants in order to preserve them and maintain the character of the neighborhood. Recently Mr. DeCain sent a letter to a homeowner, asking them to cease construction of a front-yard fence. The Covenants state: “No line fences or walls of any kind shall be erected except growing hedges or such as may be approved by Rock Creek Hills Covenants, Inc.” However, in this case, the homeowners (on Kensington Parkway) did not submit the required neighbor notification and application for construction, which is a violation of the Covenants, and have not responded to Mr. DeCain’s letter. Dr. Pekar said that regarding this matter, he saw two goals – one being to enforce and thereby preserve the Covenants, by seeking removal of the noncompliant fence; the other being to ensure that civility is maintained by eschewing and rejecting any discussion of anyone’s character or motivations. We seek to enforce and maintain the Covenants, and we will treat everyone with courtesy and respect. A motion was passed for authority to proceed with litigation if this issue can’t be resolved amicably.