



**S O S N A**

**Neighborhood Advisory Council  
General Meeting  
February 9, 2005**

-- APPROVED MINUTES --

Ann Hoskins-Brown, Chair opened the meeting at 7:40 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Ms. Hoskins-Brown introduced herself as the new Chair and announced the resignation of Ms. Laura Blanchard. Ms. Blanchard resigned due to personal and professional reasons but she plans to stay involved and continue to serve as volunteer webmaster maintaining SOSNA's website.

The recent resignation leaves a vacancy on the Board. When this occurs the bylaws state that the Board can appoint a member to fill the position. The Board has appointed Matthew Corcoran to fill the position until the election in October 2005.

**Action: A motion was made by John McHugh to ratify the action taken by the Board to appoint Matt Corcoran to the Board. Ms. Soledad Gillespie seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.**

Ms. Hoskins-Brown informed the members on recent events involving the Open Space Committee and efforts to maintain the community garden at 20<sup>th</sup> & Catharine. There is a strong community concern for lack of open space in the SOSNA service area. In response to this concern a committee was established by Council President Anna Verna's office to look at the options for open space of which 20<sup>th</sup> and Catharine is seen as a viable option. Discussion ensued regarding the sale of property and the planning for privately held land. SOSNA is seeking community support to pursue plans to maintain 20th and Catharine as a community garden.

**Action: Ted Lee made a motion to allow the Board to explore opportunities for open space. John McHugh seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.**

The Chair stated Pathmark had approached SOSNA seeking community support to put a liquor store in the Grays Ferry supermarket. The State of Pennsylvania will run the liquor store. Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the request. It was noted that Pathmark is contacting a broad cross section of neighborhood groups in the area served by the Grays Ferry Pathmark and that if there is no strong opposition, Pathmark will gather further information and make a formal presentation of the project to gain community support at a future date. The Chair asked for a show of hands in support of Pathmark pursuing the concept. More members were in favor than opposed.

**Action: A letter will be sent to Pathmark reflecting the community's lack of opposition and interest in seeing a fully developed proposal.**

The Chair introduced Larry Schaeffer, Committee Chair of the SOSNA Streetscaping and Traffic Calming Committee and resident of the 1800 block of Christian Street. Mr. Schaeffer is seeking community support to stop a garage front from being added to a house under rehabilitation on the 1800 block of Christian Street. Under the zoning code garages are permissible but residents have

already expressed issues with parking. Mr. Schaeffer has requested Council President Anna Verna intervene on their behalf with 100% of the homeowners in opposition to this garage. Mr. Schaeffer is requesting a letter of support from SOSNA

Discussion ensued regarding garages and the impact it has on the neighborhood. Mr. Schaeffer noted that parking spaces are being sold at \$25,000 and above per space. After much discussion on parking and garages the Chair asked for a vote. The membership voted in favor of sending a letter to council President Verna in support of the resident's request to block a curb cut for the garage at 1821 Christian Street.

**Action: A letter will be sent to Council President Verna in support of the resident's request.**

Eve Lewis, NAC Director announced that the March 9, 2005 SOSNA General Meeting would be held at St. Anthony's Senior Center. Ms. Lewis announced free heart screenings and information session on "Women and Heart Health" on Wednesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at Graduate Hospital Atrium. She also informed the residents of the various committees and that sign-up sheets were available for anyone wishing to volunteer and encouraged their participation. Ms. Lewis also noted the NAC is also seeking block reps.

**Minutes:** The minutes from the January meeting were unanimously approved.

**Introduction of Guests:** Ms. Hoskins-Brown introduced the following guests:

**Otis Cook, Enforcement Officer-** Philadelphia Streets Department gave an overview of what his responsibilities are. He informed resident that dumpsters have to be registered and permits posted on site and/or on the dumpster. Developers who don't have permits will be ticketed. There was some discussion on the practices of developers and the effect it has on the neighborhood.

Mr. Cook stated property owners have six hours to remove snow and a pedestrian walkway with a minimum width of 30" is required. Those owning a corner property need to remove all snow from the area. Residents complained about Graduate Hospital property and lack of snow removal. Mr. Cook encouraged residents to contact the Sanitation Enforcement division Sweep Office at (215) 685-4275/76/77. Ultimately the property owner is responsible to remove snow regardless of the circumstances.

Discussion ensued regarding trash, vacant lots and absentee owners. Mr. Cook stated the rule is that trash can be put out after 7:00 pm the day before trash collection. Trash can be stored on a stoop if it is properly bundled. Discussion ensued on the responsibility for alleyways, which in most cases it is the property owner. Mr. Cook noted when sweeping sidewalks or clearing snow, don't sweep into the street or sewer – it's illegal.

**Joann Killebrew, Director, Community Outreach Early Action Revitalization Network (EARN)** of the Managing Directors Office introduced the EARN program to the community. Earn is a program implemented by the Managing Director's office to support community

associations/organizations and residents to engage in blight abatement activity. The program began 4-5 years ago and utilizes community service workers. EARN works with community residents in one-time alley cleanings, cleans fire hydrants, and loans equipment. Workers clean 4/5 alleys in one day citywide. Trees cannot be removed by EARN workers.

Residents complained of lack of services in the neighborhood. Discussion ensued regarding City street sweeping. Mr. Cook noted the problems with parking and the use of mechanical brooms stating that many residents don't cooperate with the street department to move cars and are ticketed causing more problems. Residents complained of trash being left in the street by trash trucks. Mr. Cook recommended taking down the number and reporting the truck.

Ted Lee requested that SOSNA contact Council President Verna's office to request President Verna, Clarena Tolson, and Bill Stern of Philadelphia More Beautiful attend the March General meeting. Matt Corcoran stated we should ask as an organization.

**Action: Ted Lee made a motion that SOSNA write a letter to the Streets Department requesting street cleaning. Seconded and unanimously approved.**

**Steven Greene, Director of Support our Blocks**, a Philadelphia Investors Group/Club consisting of more than 1,200 members based out of New York City. Support Our Block sponsors the Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee *Annual Clean Block Awards Contest*. Support Our Blocks grants awards to block captains who have demonstrated a need and register with the awards committee. Interested residents can contact Mr. Greene at [sgreene@supporourblocks.com](mailto:sgreene@supporourblocks.com) or telephone no. (917) 656-1837.

**Tracy Childress, Director of Community and Business Development for the Schuylkill River Development Corporation (SRC)** gave a presentation on the new Schuylkill River Development including updates on the South Street Bridge. The SRC sees the Schuylkill River Park as a vital asset to the community. Projects are scheduled from the Dam to the Delaware. Currently Locust through South Street is under design. The SRC currently has seven (7) priority projects and is working with twenty-seven (27) community groups. The South Street Bridge development is scheduled to begin in May 2007 and take approximately 14-16 months ending in the latter part of 2008. It will take approximately \$3 million to finalize the trail.

A question was asked regarding the outcome of the CSX access issues. Ms. Childress informed the residents that the judge stated CSX was being unreasonable. A resolution looks promising.

*Respectfully submitted*  
*Eve Lewis*  
*NAC Director*