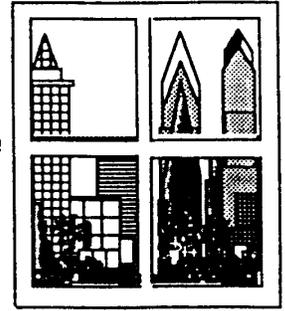


South of South Neighborhood Association  
1711 South Street • Philadelphia, PA 19146  
215-732-8446 • 215-732-2016 (fax) • www.southofsouth.org

---



**Minutes of the November 10, 2004 General Meeting**  
**St. Anthony Senior Center, 2309 Carpenter Street, 7:30 p.m.**  
**DRAFT**

**S O S N A**

*A record of those in attendance is in the sign-in book at the SOSNA office.*

Laura Blanchard announced the new officers for current SOSNA year (October 2004-September 2005): Laura Blanchard, chair; Ted Lee, vice chair; Ann Hoskins-Brown, corporate secretary and assistant controller; Anthony Moretti, treasurer; Samuel Porter, assistant treasurer; Marni Showell, controller. She reminded people in attendance that committees are now open to community residents. She outlined the committees and their charges and encouraged people to sign up using the sheets in the back.

**Community Announcements.** Susan Cole, SOSNA housing director, announced a NAC alliance banquet, October 13. SOSNA still had two remaining tickets for this \$40 a head black tie function. Proceeds benefit the citywide alliance of Neighborhood Advisory Committees, of which SOSNA is a member. She also announced the grand opening and ribbon cutting of the new Sharon Savings Bank, the SOSNA service area's first bank, on November 19.

**Center City schools.** Ellen Hannah from the Center City District outlined the plan for Center City schools, which include schools and students within an area roughly bounded by Poplar Street on the north and Washington Avenue on the south between the rivers. The objective of the plan is to encourage residents to locate or stay in Center City by improving the appearance, the performance, and the perception of the schools within its boundaries.

**EH-36.** There will be a change in the administration of this program, by which parents can apply to have their children assigned to schools outside their catchment area. For the Center City area first priority will go to students within the existing catchment area. Second priority goes to students within the "Center City Network". In response to a question from the floor Hannah confirmed that there was still a commitment to retain the "desegregation" racial balances and students escaping underperforming schools under the "No Child Left Behind" legislation would also receive priority status as mandated by the legislation.

Although charter schools are exempt from this measure, Hannah explained that part of this initiative is an attempt to encourage the area charter schools to draw more from the Center City area.

**Improvements to schools.** Some of the improvements will be to the appearance or "curb appeal" of the schools through landscaping, use of greenspaces, improved play

spaces. Some improvements will be to the internal appearance. Beyond that, CCD and the school district will work with individual administrations to develop action plans to

Minutes of the 11/10/04 general meeting

Page 2

identify critical needs and to develop strategies to meet those needs. They have just contacted the three schools in the SOSNA service area to set this process in motion. Hannah described the process as it has worked at other schools in the expanded Center City area. It involves participation by a variety of community stakeholders in addition to faculty, staff and families of students and an identification of a unique focus for each school.

**Public Safety: Attempted Abduction.** Lt. Deal from the 17th Police District and Inspector Steven Johnson addressed community concerns in the wake of an attempted abduction of a nine-year-old girl in the SOSNA service area. To protect her identity, Ted Lee provided a brief description of the incident and the suspect. A composite sketch of the suspect, described as a medium-skinned African American male in his mid-thirties driving a champagne-colored late 1990s model Camry or Maxima, is being prepared and will be circulated in the neighborhood. Deal and Johnson stressed that they have not been able to connect this to other incidents in the city but urged parents to be mindful of the need to keep close watch. Among some of the steps suggested were: do not permit children out after curfew; encourage them not to go away with strangers, including unfamiliar young people (Johnson cited an incident where the "stranger" was a high school student and the victims middle school students); establish a secret password with children so that they won't be vulnerable to a stranger claiming to be sent by a parent. Children should also be instructed not to travel alone and to run away screaming if approached.

Community residents were also encouraged to increase their awareness of suspicious activity on their blocks and to feel free to call 911. Johnson stressed that callers' ID is kept in confidence. He explained that some drug dealers try to intimidate residents by hinting that they know the identity of callers but that this simply is not the case. Regina Woods, community outreach coordinator for the Chester A. Arthur school, explained that the school is about to re-establish its "Safe Corridors" program. In this program, trained block representatives wearing special vests stand in their doorways in the mornings or afternoons. Children know that these individuals serve as resources if they are in difficulties on their way to and from school.

**University of the Arts design project on South Street.** Jamer Hunt from University of the Arts explained his students' design project for the South Street corridor. Although their class project is coming to an end in December, they were interested to know that corridors would be the focus of SOSNA's January general meeting. They will bring poster boards with their design proposals to the December general meeting for community review and comment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Blanchard for the Secretary