

# **Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association**

## **Minutes of the November 10, 2020 Virtual Meeting**

### **Board Members in Attendance:**

|                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| John Ford, President      | Meredith Judy   |
| Dave McGowan, Treasurer   | Ray Keaney      |
| Mary Ann Frias, Secretary | Sima Nasr       |
| Fred Blott                | John Richardson |
| Bill Braswell             | Irene Szopo     |
| Matt Fleming              | John Vihstadt   |

**Guest:** Eric Karlinsky, originally from Virginia and recently moved from California

### **Administration**

The minutes from the September 9, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved.

### **New Board Member**

Sima Nasr was introduced as a board candidate. She has helped Jon Judah over the past few years with formatting the TLHCA newsletter. A motion was made to elect her to the board which was seconded and unanimously approved. Sima will serve as Communications Chair.

Meredith reported that Arlington Community Corps, an organization which connects neighbors with other neighbors, has been helping those who need assistance accessing groceries, medicine, etc. during the pandemic. This has recently been expanded to include a diaper and food drives.

### **Halloween & Winter Festival**

John Ford noted that on Halloween, residents put tables outside to distribute candy in a safer manner due to the pandemic. After talking to residents, there will likely not be a winter festival at Big Walnut Park due to safety concerns. Instead, smaller neighborhood gatherings will be held.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Newsletter & TLHCA Website**

John Ford has drafted a lengthy article on stormwater retention. There have also been articles written about local schools redistricting. John Richardson has written an article on the Arlington Neighborhood Village and offered to do a piece on the Westover Beer Garden. Meredith will write one about the Arlington Community Corps. John Richardson raised the idea of featuring one Westover business per newsletter. Bill suggested including information on the biography of Walter Reed, and John Ford proposed an update on the Lee Highway issue.

The goal is to get a newsletter out in December.

## **UPDATES**

### **Lee Highway Alliance - Renaming of Lee Highway**

The LHA task force began soliciting suggestions for a new name for Lee Highway. A month ago they had over 100 names under consideration; the list was narrowed down to 20. It was decided that the new name should not be an individual already recognized in some other way in Arlington. The next step is getting input on the current list which will be used by a subgroup to come up with a final list. This final list will then be submitted to the Arlington County Board who will decide what to send to the Commonwealth board. Any other name ideas should be sent to Bill.

### **Greater Westover Website**

If any board members have content they would like to post on the website, they should forward to Matt Fleming.

### **Neighborhood Conservation**

No money was allocated from the recently approved \$2,000,000 bond due to the need for funds on priorities of stormwater and schools. Several projects will be completed in the spring. Significant savings are expected on projects; 15th Street should be funded in the spring funding (in the June time frame).

Bill has requested that a beacon flashing light be installed at the intersection of Patrick Henry Drive and 18th Street North to increase safety for students walking to school.

### **Civic Federation**

John Vihstadt reported that there will be a Civic Federation meeting on 11/17; the agenda will include discussions about the following considerations by a recently formed governmental reform task force: 1) whether the county should become a city, 2) possible expansion of the number of County Board members, 3) whether there should be district/at large elections, 4) an increase in Board member compensation, 5) and the extension of term limits. Another issue to be discussed is the question of qualified immunity for police, specifically, immunity from personal lawsuits for actions. Arguments have been raised to remove this immunity; however, counter-arguments suggested this would negatively affect recruitment/retention. This measure was defeated in the state senate but continues to be an issue.

George Mason University - there are plans to construct Kahn's Department Store next to the GMU law school at Virginia Square. A presentation was made by Steven Krim regarding the impact on residential parking permit changes. It may become more expensive and difficult for neighbors to take advantage.

CivFed has encouraged neighbors to participate in its meetings.

### **Reed School**

APS believes that construction will be wrapping up in August 2021, with the summer work focused on internal finishes. An organized group of McKinley parents are trying to come up with a name for the school; however, this may be problematic for citizens of Highland Park-Overlee Knolls. These residents are still unhappy with the changing of the name. TLHCA may have a voice in naming the school. McKinley School will become Arlington Traditional School. John Vihstadt noted that rather than making a decision among the twelve members present, it may be better to invite people from the schools to give their

pros and cons. The time frame is not currently known, but John Vihstadt will try to find out and invite representatives to discuss with the TLHCA Board at our January meeting. There are some families at the planning unit near the intersections at George Mason, Patrick Henry Drive, and N. 18th Street (a total of 42 children) slated for Glebe; is there a consensus from those parents to move them to the Reed School? The deadline is in December. If a solid majority favors moving to Reed, the TLHCA would issue a plea for parents to move but grandfathering in those wishing to remain at Glebe. There should be a provision that there will be no adverse effects on families having to leave the Glebe School. Our CA should be represented at Reed.

Matt suggested surveying neighbors for their thoughts on the Reed School name change; this would likely attract younger residents with children. A video of two people with opposing ideas could be included with the survey. Sima agreed that this is a good time to try to get younger families involved as they are more concerned and at the same time dependent upon their communities.

### **Election/County Bonds Ballots:**

The Civic Federation overwhelmingly passed a resolution proposed by the stormwater committee. There may be some good news about the mitigation of stormwater flow into the Westover area. The issue is whether it is possible to have underground facilities that can arrest the progress of floodwater under the Reed School playground. There has been a lot of work on this and the neighboring four civic associations have contributed to this effort. The county seems to take notice when four civic associations join together on issues. Saving Westover businesses is one of the goals.

### **Virginia Hospital Expansion**

Some residents near the hospital have found cracks in their ceilings and masonry faults in foundations resulting from the hospital construction. These residents have filed Insurance claims and the contractors have been reportedly responsive.

**Miscellaneous** John Ford noted that he receives questions from concerned neighbors about things such as construction and the service at the George Mason Post Office.

### **Next Meeting**

The next TLHCA meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 5, 2021, and likely virtual.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm.