

Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association

Meeting Minutes 8 January 2025

- 1) The Board of Directors of the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association (TLHCA) met by Zoom at 7:00 PM Wednesday, January 8, 2025. Members present and constituting a quorum were Jon Ware (President), Laura Stout (Vice-President), John P. Richardson (Secretary), Irene Szopo (Treasurer), Sima Nasr, John Ford, Eric Massant, Matt Fleming, Bill Braswell, and Alyssa Cowden. Other neighborhood residents in attendance were John Reeder, Mark Jones, Ted Stump, Michael Flahive, Garry Morgans, and Greg Perett.
- 2) Agenda and Minutes Approvals: The agenda for this meeting was approved. The Minutes of the TLH meeting of November 13, 2024 were approved with one correction: TLH was one of two Arlington neighborhood whose tree canopy *decreased* (not increased) in the past year.
- 3) Addition to TLH Board of Directors: The Chair called for a vote on adding Matt Fleming and Dave McGowan to the TLH Board. The vote was unanimous in favor.
- 4) Westover Market: Ted Stump, President and co-founder of the Westover Farmers Market (and a former TLHCA president), gave a summary of the market's status. It has been in existence for 10 years, one of four farmers' markets in Arlington under the umbrella of "Field to Table," the non-profit corporation in charge. The market is in operation year-round. The non-profit also makes small grants to local groups, e.g., Culpeper Garden, teachers, and the farmers' markets themselves. The grants to farmers' markets support, e.g., local gardens and debit cards for needy students. Stump welcomed involvement by TLHCA members in the Westover Farmers' Market committee. He said that the local market hopes to hire local teenagers (at \$21.00/hour) on an annual basis to support market operations.

Among questions from the meeting was one about dog owners and the market. Dogs are banned from the Cardinal School grounds next to the market. Stump said that while some markets permit dogs, Westover plans to leave the prohibition in place, although he agreed dogs should be encouraged.

Another question was about musicians. Stump said choice of musicians is at the discretion of the market manager. He said that the Farm-to-Table website is currently being updated and improved. He encouraged contact about the Westover Farmers' Market and identified Stephen Birmingham as its manager.

Related Topics: John Ford said that the house lot across the street from the school, which has been torn down by the county due to its flood vulnerability, could be used for dog space, although the county has not yet decided on its policy. Other issues raised included community action tables at the market, which Stump said are welcomed.

TLHCA members universally supported the market and the value it brings to the community.

Stump and TLHCA generally agreed to find ways to work together. This included - working together to advocate to the County on plans for the vacant lot across from Cardinal School; joint marketing / communications on our respective organization's social media / website platforms; continued sponsorship of Westover Day (and possibly other events); using TLH communications to solicit for Market Committee participants and teenager market assistant positions. President Ware agreed to coordinate with other nearby civic associations.

5) General Issues:

- a. Trees: Mark Jones spoke on the TLH tree canopy, one of two in the county that saw a decrease in the past year. He pointed out that Eco-Action will plant new trees upon request, depending on availability/funding. He said he hopes to print a flyer urging residents to plant new trees, particularly to replace those that die or are removed. Eric Massant volunteered to help with the project. Matt Fleming urged focusing on areas that are losing trees.
- b. Leaf Blowers: John Reeder made the case for banning gas-powered leaf-blowers in Arlington County, saying that the County Board has taken a “hands-off” approach to the noise issue, although Mark Jones said that the County Board is “considering” it. Jon Ware suggested Reeder write an article for the next TLH newsletter on the issue and provide the Board with some background materials on the issue.
- c. Other Issues:
 - 1. TLH Address List: Jon Ware reported that TLHCA now has 570 email addresses for the estimated TLH 851 residences.
 - 2. Yard Signs: Jon Ware reported that progress is being made on obtaining yard signs announcing upcoming TLHCA meetings.
 - 3. Newsletter: Sima Nasr reported that 76% of email recipients opened their December 2024 newsletters, aside

from the 430 who received a hard-copy issue at home. Sima said that as yet no new memberships have been generated from the hard copies.

4. Treasurer's Report: Irene Szopo reported that +/- two dozen TLHCA members are current with association dues. Six members have taken advantage of the new, \$150 lifetime membership offer.
5. Meet the Neighbors: Jon Ware reported an email from Jay Kress suggesting that TLHCA interview his mother, Helen Kress, a long-time resident and member. John Richardson, who knows Ms. Kress, volunteered to do so.
6. Public interest messages: Sima Nasr suggested that TLHCA send emails advising local teenagers about odd job availabilities (e.g., snow-shoveling).
7. Other: Jon Ware reported that TLHCA is monitoring community complaint meetings with Virginia Hospital Center (VHC) staff. He floated the idea of an association-sponsored spring event, possibly rekindling the "wine & jazz on the hill" near Westover from years ago or a "pub crawl" of Westover restaurants.

6. Next Meeting: The next TLHCA meeting will be in person at 7:00 PM Wednesday, March 12 at Trinity Presbyterian Church' Fellowship Hall.

7. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Richardson, Secretary