

TWINBROOK CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

February 27, 2007

Twinbrook Community Recreation Center

President's Report: President Christina Ginsberg called the meeting to order and introductions were made. Christina reported that the city found an additional \$17,000,000 in the budget, including \$300,000 in a budget amendment for Meadow Hall. As a result, the Meadow Hall gymnasium will be fully funded. She said that TCA should ask for replacement trees to be planted; the cost is \$150,000.

The January minutes were approved as amended.

Brigitta Mullican gave the treasurer's report. The January balance was \$6,443 and the February balance was \$6,339.78. She received \$120 for 10 memberships.

Old Business

Neighborhood Watch and Public Safety: Captain Michael England gave the safety report and provided detailed statistics about crime in Twinbrook comparing calls for service in Twinbrook with the rest of the City. Part I crimes (serious offenses such as homicide, robbery, and rape) in 2005 and 2006: 13%. Part 2 crimes (petty offenses) in 2005 and 2006: 15%. He said Twinbrook has low crime statistics relative to the size of its population at approximately 20-25% of the city population. The breakdown is as follows:

Part I Crimes: 2005 – citywide, Part I crimes totaled 1,758; of these, Twinbrook had 267 or 15%. 2006 – citywide, Part I crimes totaled 1,807; of these, Twinbrook had 236, or 13%. 2005 – citywide, Part 2 crimes totaled 3,493; of these, Twinbrook had 512 or 15%. 2006 – citywide, Part 2 crimes totaled 3,395; of these, Twinbrook had 512 or 15%.

Total Calls for Service: 2005 – citywide, the number of calls for service was 36,578; of these, Twinbrook had 3,425 or 9%. 2006 - citywide the number of calls for service was 35,822; of these, Twinbrook had 3,783 or 11%. This includes calls handled by both county and city police. Rockville police in calendar year 2006 handled 72% of all events occurring in the city limits.

A bar fight resulted in a stabbing at the billiards hall behind Twinbrook Post Office on the night of February 7. A witness positively identified Roberto Eliezer Herrera Lopez and a warrant was obtained for Mr. Lopez, not a Rockville resident. He was arrested for attempted murder and first degree assault. Followup will continue as evidence seized during the arrest is analyzed.

John Tyner agreed to chair the Public Safety Awards event again this year, tentatively scheduled for June 13.

Business Development and Relations: Mike Bodde of T-Mobile presented information about the proposed monopole at Rockville High School. A community meeting was held on February 26 and letters were sent to the developer of the proposed Oxbridge town houses and to the synagogue, but neither has responded.

There are currently four 80-foot poles on the stadium field and the company proposes to install a tower on the existing tower at the back of the property. The monopole will be 95 feet tall, 15 feet taller than the current lights, and will not be visible from Old Baltimore Road. Adjacent land is owned by the city and Maryland Capital Parks and Planning Commission and there are no plans for development. If the school agrees to install the pole, other cell phone carriers may attach to the pole, as one pole can support up to three carriers.

Debra Munk, principal at Rockville High, is supporting the installation of the tower because the school will receive several thousand dollars a year as "rent" for the pole. One-third of the revenue will go to the school to support new

programs, one-third will go to the general fund, and one-third will go to the school cluster. The school district and T-Mobile will jointly own the tower.

Individual contracts have been finalized with seven other schools in the county—Wheaton High and Sherwood, among them. The final plans must be approved by School Superintendent, Jerry Weast. It is not anticipated that the Mayor and Council will get involved in the decision because no unusual circumstances are foreseen. At Julius West, T-Mobile did not ask for any special exceptions that required the attention of the Mayor and Council.

However, Bridget Newton, former president of the West End Civic Association, said the organization has filed suit against the Board of Appeals for its support of the monopole slated for Julius West. She said there is much in the literature to show that these towers are dangerous to people's health. Erika Kapneck of TCA did extensive research on this topic about a year ago. By regulation of the FCC, however, opponents of these towers are not allowed to cite health factors.

The city is expected to spend \$2 million to defend its opposition to the cell tower at Twinbrook Mart. The application for RHS has not yet come before the city.

Code enforcement: There was some discussion of snow removal policies and practices during the recent storms. Chuck Aubertin said that he issued over 100 citations this winter for violations of the city's snow clearance policy. Linda Bozzonetti said she is not pleased that the city expects residents to clear their walks within 24 or 48 hours if the city does not do its own areas. The area leading to Rockcrest Park has not been cleared, she said. Steve Wilcox said part of the cul de sac leading to the recreation center "never gets cleared." However, Chuck pointed out that there are some 200 areas like this throughout the city—stretches of a few feet or a few yards—that have to be cleared individually, often by hand. In terms of priorities, these places are generally the last to be cleared.

Carol Hannaford asked about an absentee owner's (rental, empty house) responsibility for clearing the sidewalk after a storm. It is the same as an occupying owner. That is, for snow depth of less than 3 inches, the walk is to be cleared within 24 hours; for a depth of more than 3 inches, the walk is to be cleared within 48 hours.

At 6003 LeMay, where more than \$20,000 in fines have been paid, the owner was told by the court to come forward with a plan and to implement it by June 30.

On 1903 McAuliffe, the burned out house has been gutted and is uninhabitable at this time. It is over 2.5 years since the fire. It is still boarded up and the sidewalk is not cleared as required by city code. The owner sold it and it has been sold again. Terry Treschuk said the clock begins again at this point. Christina said that, at the least, the outside should be repaired to code or the house should be razed. She asked what is required to demolish a house; Terry said he will find out.

Neighborhood Services: Thee Perry said that the citizen-based Traffic and Transportation Commission has worked with city transportation staff on a draft plan to prioritize areas to be considered for new sidewalks. Charlas, the group of Latino parents that meets at Twinbrook Elementary School has made a CIP request to support the installation of missing sidewalk links near the school.

Thee said that residents can still petition for new sidewalks. To read frequently asked questions about the project, further details on the ranking system for prioritizing new sidewalks, and to provide comments, visit <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/residents/traffic/pdf/sidewalk-method-draft.pdf>, or contact Carrie Sanders, Transportation Planner, at csanders@rockvillemd.gov or (240) 314-8529, to obtain a paper copy. Comments are being accepted through April 30.

Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan: The Planning Commission held a public hearing for the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan on February 21 but made no decisions. Ann Wallas said they have watched the last hour of the

tape and are organizing notes to present to the commission. The commission is concerned about the need for more neighborhood outreach to make sure that residents are aware of potential changes.

Christina Ginsberg will be working with the TCA outreach effort and Lora Meisner will be doing the same for Burgundy Estates Civic Association. In addition, John Tyner reported that property owner Avalon Bay is proposing a change in use for the Ardennes Avenue FDA offices to residential apartments wrapped around a structured parking facility. Christina has invited them to make a presentation at our March meeting.

Library/education: Meadow Hall observes its 50th anniversary this year and the school is selling commemorative bricks that will be placed in a memorial terrace. The proceeds will help pay for a new sign board for the front of the school. The Executive Committee voted by email to donate \$50 for a commemorative brick; the money will come from TCA's general fund.

Twinbrook Sector Plan: John Tyner said the plan is being delayed by 6 months because of more pressing issues at White Flint.

Membership: Steve Wilcox and Brigitta Mullican are working together to get dues notices and membership forms out. To save postage they asked for volunteers to hand deliver thank you notes. Carol Hannaford volunteered. Brigitta also asked Kelly Silver and Susan Writer to distribute membership applications at their next PTA meetings and she would like someone to solicit the Twinbrook businesses. Membership forms were also left with Kelly Day at the Twinbrook Community Center. There are 154 households listed as members.

Twinbrook Community Recreation Center. Kelly Day Terry reported that there were 10,000 visitors last month. The center's version of March Madness will begin when members of the police department challenge an 5th, 6th, or 7th grader in a three-point shootout, basketball relay, half-court shootout, and other contests.

In March, the center will start a new program called "second Fridays" for 6th to 8th graders. The cost is \$3 for residents and \$5 for nonresidents if preregistering. At the door, the cost is \$5 for residents and \$7 for nonresidents. Call (240) 314-8830 for more information.

Traffic and Transportation: Todd Harrison said that initial work has begun on the Broadwod/Veirs Mill Road light, and it appears they have run some wires underneath the roadway in several places. The work is expected to be finished in April. There will be a pedestrian crosswalk and Todd has asked that it be crosshatched. The city and state will continue to monitor the situation in case changes are needed.

On February 22, there was a community meeting at the Civic Center to discuss traffic issues on Grandin Avenue; about 25 people attended. Staff has been conducting small studies at citizen request and there is about \$80,000 in the budget for traffic mitigation measures. This meeting was the first outreach to the citizens. There will be several more opportunities for comment.

There was representation from the East Rockville residents for the section north of First Street, Silver Rock from First to Clagett, and TCA from Clagett to Nimitz. Three top concerns noted were speeding, cut through traffic, and noncompliance with stop signs. None of the residents in the Clagett to Nimitz sector support installation of the light at Broadwood and Veirs Mill Road.

Timeline: Phase I: (preliminary concepts) February thru May. Phase 2: (preliminary designs) May through July. Phase 3: (final design and implementation) July through December

Outreach/International/Historic/Senior: The Executive Committee voted to have Richard Gottfried become the chair of this committee.

Twinbrook Commons: No report.

Garden Club/Environment/Parks and Recreation: No report.

Education/Library: No report.

Rockville Pike Corridor Neighborhood Plan: No report.

Member at Large, North and South: No report.

New Business

A time capsule will be buried in Town Center before construction is finished. Residents are invited to write a note saying what it was like to live in Rockville, how the city has changed, and how they envision the city 30 years from now. Submissions may be made on a form provided by the city or on a page no larger than 8 ½ by 11 inches. Photos, ads, announcements of events, or small items may also be submitted. Submissions are due no later than May 12 at the City of Rockville, Neighborhood Resources Program, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville Maryland 20850.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 27, 2007 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Twinbrook Community Center. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Hannaford
Secretary