

January 12, 2022

The January 12 meeting of the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association Board of Directors was called to order by president John Ford at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was held virtually. The minutes from the November 12 Board meeting were approved; John Richardson noted that a list of board members attending should be attached to the minutes. This will be done going forward. Attending this meeting were:

John Ford, President
Irene Szopo, Treasurer
Sima Nasr, Communications Chair

Pete Erickson
Matt Fleming
Meredith Judy
John Richardson
Jon Judah
Fred Blott
Bill Braswell

Community Members:

Glenn Lincoln McCurdy
Lois

Waycroft-Woodlawn CA:

Diane Kelly
Jessica Matthews-Rauhala
Kutlay Ebiri

Irene Szopo presented the Treasurer's Report, which was accepted by the board. Suggestions will be welcome from board members about projects TLHCA might support. Minutes from the November meeting were approved without change.

Three guests from the Waycroft-Woodlawn Civic Association spoke to the board seeking its support for an initiative to transfer ownership of 2.5 miles of Washington Blvd westward from Glebe Rd to the intersection with Langston Blvd from the state (the road is now VA Route 237) to the county. Such a change would permit much more expeditious handling of traffic and pedestrian safety measures along what is presently a two-lane road that handles 25,000 vehicles each day.

W-W is hoping to enlist the support of other civic associations whose territory covers the affected part of Washington Blvd. W-W President Diane Kelly was accompanied by her board members Jessica Matthews Rauhala and Kutley Ebiri; all presented different aspects of the problems that exist along Washington Blvd. and some proposed remedial measures. These might include more crosswalks, lower speed limits and flashing beacons to facilitate pedestrian movement.

The TLHCA Board was broadly supportive and disposed to join the W-W effort, along with other affected CAs. Jon Judah reported on his efforts a couple of years ago to engage with VDOT and county officials in pursuit of many of the same aims. Other comments were positive and supportive. John Ford will follow up with W-W and other CAs as appropriate.

John Ford reported for Alyssa Cowden on traffic restrictions that are now imminent on N Lexington St between N 18th and N 19th Sts. In connection with the forthcoming installation of the large stormwater detention vault under the playground of the new Cardinal Elementary School. He also briefed on new watershed-based CA coalitions elsewhere in the county that are following the model established over the past two years in the Westover area, and provided a brief update on community relations around the Virginia Hospital Center expansion project.

Also, John Ford reported that Laura Stout and Meredith Judy had collected 200 lbs of food for delivery to AFAC just before Christmas – a project that TLHCA was happy to endorse and help to publicize.

The Board returned to the vexing issue of risk mitigation measures at the dangerous intersection of N Patrick Henry Drive and N 18th St. John Ford and Bill Braswell reported no visible movement from the county since an exchange of emails between TLHCA, Cardinal and Swanson PTAs and the County Board chair in December. It was agreed that John Ford would send a follow-up communication to the CB requesting an update and reminding the county of the urgency we attach to this issue.

Other measures were discussed also, particularly a proposal by John Richardson that the TLHCA commission a placard or other visible sign that could call attention to the dangers of trying to cross the streets at this intersection. John Richardson agreed to explore securing the necessary county permission to display such signage at the intersection, and report back to the Board by the time of its March 9 meeting.

Meredith, Matt Fleming and others emphasized that it is important not to simply abandon this issue if we don't get rapid county response. We must stay engaged with the county.

Matt is acquainted with the editor of Arlington Magazine and suggested that he might contact the editor about a possible story based on the difficulties faced by concerned citizens in securing remedial county action for troublesome, often dangerous road safety questions in neighborhoods. Washington Blvd concerns and N 18th St./Patrick Henry Drive could be vivid illustrations, together with Pete Erickson's efforts to get a sidewalk installed on N 15th St under the Neighborhood Conservation program.

The Board enthusiastically endorsed Matt's proposal and believed any additional publicity highlighting our efforts and county unresponsiveness could put useful additional pressure on the county to effect remedial action. Matt will follow up.

The next TLHCA Board meeting was set for Wednesday, March 9 at 7:00 p.m., virtually.

The January meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

In attendance were:

John Ford, President
Irene Szopo, Treasurer
Sima Nasr, Communications Chair

Pete Erickson
Matt Fleming
Meredith Judy
John Richardson
Jon Judah

Fred Blott
Bill Braswell

Community Members:

Glenn Lincoln McCurdy
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