GUILFORD ASSOCIATION BOARD – SEPTEMBER 9, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2014

7:00 PM

Westcott Room, Second Presbyterian Church

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Margaret Alton, Francesco Castellanos, Elizabeth Comer, Felix Dawson, Howard Friedel, Lisa Garten, Anthony Gill, Clarke Griffin, Angela Hamilton, Tom Hobbs, Lynda Riley, and Sharon Smith. Michelle Truesdale, Office Manager, was also present.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Cathy Boyne, Tim Chriss, Heather Fones, Jeremy Hoffman, Larry LaMotte, Steve Shattuck and Bernie Shutty

PRESIDING: Tom Hobbs, Guilford Association President, welcomed Ashley Trout and Jean Mallot from Blue Water Baltimore, and called the meeting to order.

The minutes from the June 10, 2014 meeting were approved.

**Blue Water Baltimore: Ashley Trout and Jean Mallot**

Blue Water Baltimore has secured funding for the removal of 10,000 SF of asphalt from the Guilford Elementary and Middle School playground to be replaced by turf and landscaping. The design is 95% completed. The asphalt will be removed and 8-10 inches of topsoil will be brought in and grass and woody trees and shrubs will be planted in fall 2015. The Board endorsed the project and has requested that the City plant street trees on the east side of Eastway along the school property.

**Liquor Board Hearing: Tom Hobbs**

On July 31st Tom Hobbs, Tim Chriss, Howard Friedel, Felix Dawson, Clarke Griffin and Lynda Riley attended the Liquor Board Hearing along with our Baltimore City Councilman, Bill Henry, members of the York Road Partnership and numerous neighbors from both sides of York Road to protest the transfer of a liquor license to the convenience store located at 4419 York Road which is across from Northway. The license transfer was denied.

**Sherwood Gardens: Margaret Alton, Clarke Griffin and Francisco Castellanos**

The first year of the transition in management of Sherwood Gardens is almost complete. The tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, in our first year of bulb rotation, were beautiful. The planting of the summer flowers got off to a late start, but looked good by midsummer. The planting of flower beds by landscape companies at their own expense appears to have promise. This summer we had five beds planted by five different landscape companies. We had donations for 8 beds. In 2015 we plan to recruit landscape companies to plant all beds in a competition, the winners to be voted on at a summer garden party and posted on our website for a year.

**Other Parks: Margaret Alton**

There has been a lot of tree work in Sunken Park, Gateway Park and Little Park. In the fall the gaps in the St. Paul median will be filled with plants that can withstand the harsh environment of cold and salt.

There has been difficulty with the North Charles Street bumpouts. Some of the liriope and crepe myrtle have died due to the harsh winter.

**Reservoir: Tom Hobbs**

The Memo of Understanding to protect Guilford during the three plus years of construction of the reservoir has been signed by Tom Hobbs. Cathy Boyne worked with City officials to negotiate the terms. We obtained agreements needed concerning work hours, lighting, contractor parking, and a designated individual we can contact regarding issues that arise.

**Architecture: Tom Hobbs and Anthony Gill**

There have been 27 applications for architectural changes in the quarter since last meeting including a proposal for a new house on St. Paul Street.

There are currently 9 foreclosures in progress, three on Southway, three on Greenmount, two on York Courts and one on Northway.

Tracey Clark, Anthony Gill and Tom Hobbs will try to attract interest in houses in the southeast corner of Guilford through a meeting with Live Baltimore on September 27th. Live Baltimore attempts to locate houses that may sell for under $300,000.

**Litigation: Tom Hobbs**

There are six lawsuits or pre-litigation actions in process:

3538 Greenmount Ave. The court held the owner in contempt for failing to complete the work of replacing the porch, replacing the windows and repairing the brick wall. The work is now largely accomplished.

415 Bretton Place. Despite a stop work order, the roof was replaced with asphalt shingles and the wood trim was covered with vinyl, violating the Architectural Guidelines.

3701 North Charles Street. The house has deteriorated significantly due to lack of appropriate maintenance. Owner has failed to respond to suit and is in default.

3600 Greenmount. Investor owner has replaced roof and windows and removed elements of the porch and stairs without application to the Architectural Committee and in violation of the Architectural Guidelines..

4410 Bedford Place. Wood windows were replaced with vinyl windows after application was denied and stop work order ignored.

3 Whitfield Road. Windows were installed that are in conflict with the specific specifications in the Architectural Committee’s conditional approval. The house is in violation of an exterior easement granted to the Trust for Architectural Easements.

**Other Issues: Tom Hobbs**

**North Baltimore Broadband.** Guilford’s goal is 158 people to pledge $10 in support of broadband expansion. Guilford has only 113 households pledged 71% of the goal and far behind Roland Park, Blythwood and several other North Baltimore communities. Anthony will pursue.

**Bretton Place Gates**. The Northern District Police major has recommended we close the gap at Bretton Place as a possible means of reducing criminal activity entering the community from Greenmount. The City Solicitor has indicated that the street right of way was not abandoned. Neighbors are collecting petition signatures in support of closing off Bretton Place at Greenmount.

**The Bouton Well** Memorial in Gateway Park has deteriorated significantly. We have a proposal to restore it for $17,000. A resident has agreed to contribute $5,000 toward its restoration. There will be fund raising solicitations for the remainder.

The free city Circulator Bus will soon travel to University Parkway.