

## Minutes for WCGN January 29, 2025, Community Meeting

Board Members Present: Suzanne Ponsen, Bob Lane, Julie Stapleton Carroll, Phil Kane, Lora Lewis and Mike Ramos.

Suzanne called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:09 PM

### **Minutes for the 10/30/24 Board Meeting was approved unanimously**

Suzanne introduced Board Members

**Julie Stapleton Carroll**, 1<sup>st</sup> VP and Zoning & Land Use Committee Chair who reported:

1. 6206 Germantown Avenue RCO meeting held on 1/8. 15 neighbors attended.  
Vote of the Near Neighbors: Support 2, Oppose 1  
Vote of other Neighbors: Support 5, Oppose 2, 1 Non-opposition.  
WCGN therefore wrote the ZBA in Support of the variance for owner to operate 3 apartments as "Visitor Accommodations". Separately, the owner will operate a restaurant on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and has applied for a PA Liquor License.
2. 6201 Germantown Avenue (former site of Rite Aid). An RCO meeting via Zoom has been scheduled for 2/10 at 6:30 PM to consider a variance for ArchWell Health operate a primary care facility for seniors.
3. 6100 Germantown Avenue Pocket Park Committee has been created to explore a joint WCGN, Wyck House & Gardens, and GUCDC (Germantown United Community Development Corporation). This committee's next meeting will be held on February
4. Next Zoning & Land Use Committee meeting to be scheduled for late February.

**Mike Ramos**, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP and History & Heritage Committee Chair who reported:

1. Tulpehocken Station Historic District Nomination. Progress is being made, with photos to be taken as soon as the snow has melted. He anticipates its nomination to the Philadelphia Historical Commission by late spring.
2. 26-24 Church Lane (site of former Nolan Building Materials). Although the Historical Commission's Architectural Committee voted unanimously against the design of a 5 story 33 unit apartment building, the property owner, Nadlan Properties, LLC, the Court of Common Pleas has ruled in the owner's favor and deemed it non contributing to the Germantown Historic Village District. For that reason, the Historical Commission can only **recommend** a more suitable design and cannot force the developer to create a building that adds to the historic district.

**Lora Lewis**, Secretary

**Bob Lane**, Treasurer who reported:

1. WCGN's 2025 Budget of \$8,000 has been approved by the Board.  
It includes a goal of raising approximately \$7,000 in donations. Plans are on the table to host a major fundraiser event to celebrate the admission of the Tulpehocken Station Historic District to the City of Philadelphia's Registry of Historic Places.
2. WCGN currently has a balance of \$11,725.70.
3. He encouraged all who have contributed in the past to continue monthly contributions and one time donations via PayPal or by personal check.
4. Suzanne reminded those attending that WCGN does not require dues but strongly encourages all neighbors to make similar donations.

**Phil Kane**, Green Space Committee Chair who reported:

1. Tulpehocken Station Garden news that an expansion of the native flowers continues.
2. Pruning fruit trees (pear, apple, plum, cherry, pawpaw and fig) is needed.
3. Caring of berry bushes (service berries, blueberry, and raspberry) is also needed.
4. Volunteers encouraged to contact Phil by phone 215-680-1131 or email [carpentryandbenchwork@gmail.com](mailto:carpentryandbenchwork@gmail.com).

**Vacancy** for the position of Community Engagement Committee Chair

Suzanne reported:

1. Because of increased work commitments, Roberta Moore has resigned her position on the Board.
2. The creation of 3 separate committees to divide duties  
Community Engagement Event Chair – for potlucks & other events.  
Community Engagement Communications Chair - for Website and Newsletter  
Community Engagement Social Media Chair – for Facebook, Instagram, etc.  
(This last one was added by Suzanne after further consideration.)

## **Election of all Board Members**

To take place during the October 29, 2025, Community Meeting.

## **Nominations**

Due by May 26, 2025, at the Memorial Day Picnic.

Suzanne strongly urged to all present to step up and volunteer or to at the very least to encourage your neighbors to step up and volunteer to serve on the WCGN Board as the **Chair of a specific committee** or as **President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary**.

Contact Suzanne by phone at 215-720-0809 or email her at [suzanne.ponsen@gmail.com](mailto:suzanne.ponsen@gmail.com) to volunteer or ask questions concerning the Board positions.

**Extension of WCGN eastern Boundary** – to include the area between the east side of Germantown Avenue to the west side of Baynton Street and the north side of E. Cheltenham Avenue to the south side of east Washington Lane.

Suzanne began the discussion by identifying the number of properties that would be added (484) and their zoning categories: CMX 2.5 (48), CMX 2 (27), RM 1 (1), Residential (408) of which 132 are rented and not owner-occupied and 11 which are city owned.

She explained that since our eastern boundary only covers the west side of Germantown Avenue, we have no seat at the table for any proposed development on the east side of the avenue. If we were to extend the boundary, we at least would be formally notified – but given the circumstances, we may not ever be chosen as the coordinating RCO by the Councilwoman.

She noted that although we could officially change the boundary anytime but that it would not be recognized by the city until the open renewal period for RCOs until June 2025.

Answering Marjorie Russell's concerns about getting permission from other RCOs before making a change, Suzanne explained that 1. We don't need anyone's permission and 2 that there are no current neighborhood organizations, there is only the 59<sup>th</sup> Ward which is a political entity. Bob Lane reminded us that we would probably never be chosen as the coordinating RCO so why bother. Mike Ramos did not see any real purpose to extend the boundary, and he questioned WCGN's vulnerability if those "new" neighbors would have the same interests (historic preservation, zoning, etc. as we currently have.

Without a quorum to bring the issue to a vote, the motion to extend the boundary was tabled until the next Community meeting on March 26. A straw poll was taken though which resulted in 1 opposed, 2 abstentions, 8 in favor.

### **Guest Maleka Fruean from Germantown InfoHub & Resolve Philly**

Asked for our input and interest in their Equal Info Text service which could send automatic notifications, information and resources about Germantown subscriber phones via text. The service would be free and would have a live moderator to screen and answer questions in real time. Seth Dunoff questioned the need when money could be spent directly addressing issues. Lora Lewis asked if neighbors would be able to leave comments on posts. Maleka explained that the moderator would answer questions or concerns directly with posts.

**Guest Jayme Walker, Constituent Service Advisor to Andre Carroll, PA State Representative for the 201<sup>st</sup> District**

Introduced himself and announced the opening of the new 201<sup>st</sup> PA District office at 5845 Germantown Avenue. He welcomed all to feel free to stop by with any questions, issues to share, or just to say hello.

**Mayor Parker's District 8 NCAC (Neighborhood Community Action Center)**

Location: Joseph E. Coleman Northwest Regional Library

Hours: Monday & Tuesday: 11-6:30

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 10-5:00

This center will offer neighbors throughout the 8<sup>th</sup> District an opportunity to address all Philadelphia City Department issues everyday Monday-Friday.

Drop in during the hours above and see Kenneth Day, Office Manager or

Cameron Holmes, Community Organizer

You can also email: [ncacdistrict8@phila.gov](mailto:ncacdistrict8@phila.gov) with your concerns.

In addition, they will host regular community meetings with city department heads.

Suzanne represents WCGN on the Mayor's District 8 Community Advisory Board.

**March 26, 2025 7PM** next WCGN Community Meeting

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 8:39 PM

This draft of the Minutes was prepared by Lora Lewis and Suzanne Ponsen and submitted they were approved by the community on March 26, 2025.

