

## **NORWALK ASSOCIATION OF SILVERMINE HOMEOWNERS (NASH)**

Meeting minutes for January 17, 2011

Respectfully submitted by Eric Nelson.

The meeting took place at 100 Comstock Hill Ave, the home of Lee Levey.

**Board members in attendance:** Leigh Grant, John Kahler, Linda Lee ,Lee Levey, Alex Modica, Christine Names & Eric Nelson.

**Absent:** Heather Dunn, Leigh Finley, Sue Palinkos

The meeting was called to order by Lee Levey, President @ 7:43 pm.

**Please Note:** the outline of the minutes follows the meeting agenda.

**Treasurer's Report:** Linda Lee reported: Two checks were cut the previous month as we had discussed, \$500 to Norwalk Preservation Trust for their help with the house tour, and \$500 to Megan Ferrell for the work she was willing to donate, but we felt it really required some payment. Ending balance is \$26,000.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from October, November, and December were read and approved as is.

**Communications:** Christine Names reported: On Sunday Jan. 16, she sent an email blast using Constant Contact. Since this software tracks certain metrics, and the opening rate on the e-mail was 45%-50%. In contrast, typical neighborhood association e-mails runs about 18%. The click through rate (the percentage that click the supplied link to the NASH website) was good at 6%. She also talked about the Mayor's meeting and indicated that there was nothing new presented. One item of note was the fire department did ask the neighborhoods to look into digging out the hydrants.

**CNNA:** Lee Levy reported: Lee said he had received from CNNA about a survey they had done on how neighborhoods viewed their local association. In general, people in the various neighborhoods that found them helpful. Another discussion item was that Norwalk was going to do a transportation study looking at all modes of transportation. A comprehensive study was needed in order to update traffic models for bicycle, pedestrian, bus, and automobile traffic since these studies haven't in the past. Concerns were raised on whether or not the study will result in any concrete improvements and will recommendations being made on transportation actually be followed. In the past that really hasn't been the case. CNNA wanted input on the survey results so Lee's going to send them off to other board members. Lee asked the board to consider any traffic problems that we might have in Silvermine. A general consensus of the board was that in Silvermine there really is no traffic problem other than the occasional stop sign being disregarded.

**Historic District: Leigh Grant reported:** Leigh raised some questions on whether funds have been paid out to the CRC to do the survey work. Linda Lee indicated that she was wondering if she was going to receive something from the CRC indicating when the payment was due. Lee Grant suggested that they weren't at the point where they needed to ask us for money and wondered whether periodic payment for services to date should be made.

Some questions came up on whether board members would like the other historic properties in small historic districts. Lee Levey indicated he liked the Cliffview area, said there were some significant houses there, since three or four homes had very distinct architecture. Leigh Grant also saw some potential areas on Silvermine's northern boundary. James Street is also a potential small districts well as some areas of Comstock Hill. We also discussed the possibility of having the entire Silvermine area designated as a historic area. Leigh indicated that at this point that was unlikely to occur.

Alex Modica raised the question of whether or not we're really effective in communicating to our membership some basic information on Historic districts. Some of these informational points were: 1) where the historic districts are, 2) how they were determined, 3) what it meant to be designated as a Historic District, 4) the difference between a national historic district and a local one 5) the difference between a Village District and a Historic District. Lee Levy indicated National District has some possibility of tax credits, but it normally doesn't work very well in residential areas. The benefit of having a National Historic District is that it sets up for a local designation. A local Historic District designation can actually have more of an impact in terms of controlling development.

Alex and Christine wanted to see the website and the newsletter, communicate some of this information to the public. General consensus is that was a good idea and we should have it on a website. A substantial amount of this work has already been done by the Norwalk Preservation Trust. Alex asked whether we could use some of their material with attribution on our website. Lee and Christine will be look into that.

**Conservation & Zoning Regulations Committee:** Met in early January at town hall. They looked at several properties, one of which, Rowayton Woods, didn't work very well at all. Apparently there was very little in the way of true set aside of conservation land. Utilities were in the conservation area. Also some of the required zoning setbacks were used as conservation land. It was generally felt that that the Conservation Development there did not achieve the goal of a meaningful set aside of land for conservation.

Another Conservation Development which was much better was New Canaan Crossing. In this Development there was a significant parcel of conserved property which was contiguous to Norwalk Land Trust property and town

property. Lee Levey thought it worked well in actually conserving land. Other Conservation Developments will be evaluated in the coming weeks.

**Nature Preserve:** Work on the nature preserve is on hold for now since there is a lot of snow pack this winter and a lot of what we want to do on the nature preserve is subject to getting our 501(c)(3).

**501(c) (3):** The paperwork is going to be resubmitted with the attorneys reviewing it Wednesday of this week. Lee will meet with the attorney and should know more about ETA in getting that done.

**New Business:** None

**Old Business:** Lee Levey also indicated, as part of old business, there was nothing new to report regarding the Silvermine Tavern property.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:46 pm