

CCRA BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the President, Richard Gross. Board members present were Judith Axler (by phone), Elena Cappella, Michele Ettinger, Kate Federico, Gil Feinberg, Matt Fontana, Jared Gluskin, Larry Goldberg, Richard Huffman, Steve Huntington, Susan Kahn, Wayne Macfadden, Doug Mellor, Ryan Mulholland, Maggie Mund, Lauren O'Donnell, Harvey Ostroff, Charles Robin, Nan Robinson, David Rose, Rick Speizman, Richard Vaughn, Irena Wight and Ben Zuckerman. Also present were Counsel Wade Albert and Managing Director, Travis Oliver and City Councilmember Allan Domb and Mike Kihn were present for a portion of the meeting as were a number of CCRA members.

1. Community Garden - Mike Kihn, co-chair of the steering committee for the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden, reported on the impact of the recent flood. The garden sustained two to three feet of flooding. However, extensive soil testing conducted by Penn State Extension Service revealed no residual heavy metal contamination or hazardous levels of organic material. While the flooding ended gardening activities for 2021, he reported that the garden has been cleaned up and will be safe for gardening in the spring. Mike agreed to arrange a tour of the garden for Board members in the spring.

2. Special Interest -

a. Streeteries – City Council member Allan Domb reported on his efforts to make outdoor dining structures permanent. Earlier that day, City Council's Streets Committee debated the merits of two separate bills on streeteries. CCRA designee, Tim Kerner, testified that streeteries should be held to certain design, safety and accessibility standards. Without adopting these recommendations, the Committee unanimously passed a compromise measure that would extend the legality of streeteries in commercial areas and allow them in residential areas subject to councilmanic prerogative.

The Committee passed a separate bill on the status of sidewalk cafes. The bill extends the legality of sidewalk cafes for another year. Both bills will be voted on soon by City Council. The Board authorized the President to write to the Council seeking the addition of design, safety and accessibility standards to the legislation.

b. Bankroll Project – Charles Robin reported that a stakeholders' group successfully negotiated an agreement with Bankroll to address noise, streetscape, traffic, and security concerns of neighbors. In addition, the property owner, Pearl Properties, has agreed to restrict its deed to prohibit gambling on the property in perpetuity. At this time, the William Penn House is not a party to the Agreement, but negotiations continue. After discussion, the following resolution was moved, seconded and passed:

The Board authorizes the President to execute the proposed agreement with Bankroll Club, LLC as the same may be slightly revised to accommodate the interests of any stakeholder who participated in negotiating the agreement so long as such revisions, in the opinion of counsel to CCRA, do not materially alter the provisions of the agreement in any manner adverse to CCRA or the neighborhood.

3. Treasurer's Report – Rick Speizman presented a positive financial report. He reported that income has exceeded a third of the budget and expenditures are below a third after a third of the fiscal year has passed. Rick also presented a resolution concerning the community garden. Over the course of the past several months, Rick has met many times with the garden leadership in order to develop both a closer working relationship with and better financial oversight of the garden. He stated that, for many years, CCRA has maintained a separate bank account for the garden which, on June 30, 2021, had a balance of \$23,003. He proposed that the Board designate the garden account for the exclusive use of the garden. All plot fees would be deposited into the account and expenditures would be drawn from it. The resolution was moved, seconded and passed.

4. Managing Director's report - Travis reported that the WeWorks lease expires in March, and the rent going forward will increase significantly. Rick G. reported that Rick S. has agreed to explore other options with Travis. Travis also reported that the December winter campaign will go out soon. He also said that many Board members have not submitted their pledge form and conflict of interest form. He will send them to all Board members to return asap. Finally, Travis reported that neighbors of the Vesper Sporting Club located at 223 S. Sydenham St. have asked for CCRA's help with noise and safety concerns from unruly patrons of the club. Rick G. has asked Nathaniel Parks to work with Travis and the neighbors to address their concerns.

5. Minutes - The minutes of the September 14, 2021 Board meeting were approved as amended.

6. Committee Updates –

a. Development - Rick G. reported that Casino Night has been scheduled for January 27 at the Ethical Culture Society.

b. Membership –Michele Ettinger reported that the October 20 "meet and greet" for 50 new members was a great success. Membership numbers have dropped to 1294, because the Murano has not yet renewed. However, 10 Rittenhouse has signed on as a new member, and 2101 Coop is in the process of becoming a high-rise member. They are among the seven new high-rise members in 14 months. Michele also reported that the Merchant Partner blurbs in the newsletter have proven to be successful generators

of business. The committee plans to offer framed copies of the blurbs to be displayed in Merchant Partner stores.

Rick G. reported that he met with the new president of the Fidler Square Neighborhood Association who expressed interest in working closely with CCRA. Rick G. plans a meeting with the group and the CCRA Executive Committee in January. This group will offer the perspective of a younger demographic.

c. Communications - Given the upcoming plastic bag ban, Barbara Halpern would like to offer reusable CCRA shopping bags, Rick G. reported. Jerold Gluskin will develop this initiative in consultation with Nathaniel Parks.

7. New Business –

a. Floodplain Manager's Presentation on Flooding in Philadelphia – Susan Kahn reported that Josh Lippert, the City's former floodplain manager, has agreed to give a Zoom presentation on the area's vulnerability to flooding, current mitigation measures and additional measures that are needed. It was agreed to schedule the presentation between Thanksgiving and Christmas and to engage Barbara and Jen with publicity.

b. High Rise Reserve Presentation – The Community Association Institute will discuss how high-rise condos can properly maintain a reserve in order to avoid the catastrophe that befell the Surfside condominium in Miami. This paid event will be held at the Union League in January.

c. Zoning Board of Appeals – Lauren O'Donnell, CCRA's representative to the Crosstown Coalition, reported on a resolution to professionalize the membership of the ZBA. It was agreed that discussion of the resolution would be tabled until the December meeting so that the Board may be better informed.

d. Council redistricting – As a result of the recent census, councilmanic districts need to be redrawn. Rick G. reported that there is a consensus that CCRA should be in the fifth district, rather than be divided between two districts. The issue will be decided in February.

8. Executive Session - The Board considered an issue in Executive Session.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m. The next meeting of the Board will be held on December 14.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kahn, Secretary