

Charlestowne Neighborhood Association  
Membership Meeting minutes  
January 14, 2013

A meeting of the Charlestowne Neighborhood Association (CNA) Membership was held at 5:30 PM on Monday, January 14 at First Scots Church in Molly Weir Hall. Mr. Steve Gates, acting as President, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

The first order of business was to recognize outgoing Board members Mrs. Tootie Dawson, Mrs. Melinda Laurens, Mr. Jeff Leath, Mr. David McCormack and Mr. Preston Wilson and to elect new Board members Mr. Rich Leadem, Mrs. Bowe Pritchard, Mrs. Zoe Ryan, Mr. Simmons Tate and Mr. Jay Williams. The slate was elected by unanimous voice vote. Mr. Gates thanked the nominating committee, comprised of Ms. Charlotte Caldwell, Mr. Will Cleveland, Mrs. Margot Rose (Chair), Mrs. Ellen Smith and Mr. Peter Williams.

The next order of business was for Mr. Gates to introduce the topic of the condition of the seawall along East Battery and Murray Boulevard. He briefly summarized the City of Charleston *Seawall Evaluation and Study*, which was prepared in 2004. No work has been done to date.

Mr. Gates then introduced Laura Cabiness, Director of the Department of Public Service and Frank Newham, Senior Engineering Project Manager for Stormwater Service. Ms. Cabiness outlined the three proposed phases for the seawall repairs. The highest priority is for the concrete extension, referred to as “the turn” at the corner of East Battery and Murray Boulevard. Phase one, which will be funded by hospitality fees and the accommodation tax, will commence this year to include “the turn” and the High Battery. Timing of the work is approximately nine months. Ms. Cabiness stated that East Battery will be closed along the High Battery during construction and that a temporary U-turn will be placed at the eastern end of Murray Boulevard. The steps at the bend will be replaced by a ramp to allow for greater accessibility.

In response to questions, Ms. Cabiness indicated that, as a repair project, planning did not take into account anticipated stronger hurricanes or higher sea levels. She also noted that phase two (Murray Boulevard) and phase three (the turn near the Coast Guard station) have been discussed, but there is no funding source to date.

The next order of business was to introduce City Council member, Mike Seekings, who suggested looking at all possible sources of funding for this project, including priority for hospitality and accommodation taxes, bonding to spread the cost over years, road funds and FEMA grants. He encouraged being outspoken on the issue to support his one vote out of thirteen on the Council. Mr. Gates indicated that the CNA Board would continue to be active on the issue. Mr. Seekings provided some figures of interest to CNA, those being the annual budget for the City of Charleston is \$148 million, 52% of which is for police and fire. There are 120,000 people living in greater Charleston, 40,000 on the peninsula and 2,700 south of Broad Street. Mr. Seekings encouraged CNA members to contact him with concerns. His email address is listed on the CNA website.

The next order of business was for Mr. Gates to summarize the committee reports. The Streets Committee continues to work with Robbie Sommerville, Assistant Director of Traffic and Transportation on a street sweeping program and on limiting parking along parts of South Battery and Murray Boulevard. The Litigation Committee reported that with regard to the cruise ship lawsuit, Judge Newman recommended that the South Carolina Supreme Court dismiss zoning and environmental permitting claims, but not dismiss claims of public and private nuisance related to congestion, pollution, noise and scale. The Cruise Ship Task Force reported monitoring administrative review of the OCRM pilings permit and a federal lawsuit challenging the federal pilings permit granted without public hearing under an exception for "maintenance" projects. The Crime committee recommended attendance at the Team Two citizen's advisory group meetings, which occur on the first Thursday of March, May, July, September and November at the Charleston County Main Library at 6:30 PM.

The next order of business was for Mr. Gates to outline the preliminary master plan presented to the Board last month by the

First Baptist School. The plan is for the high school to remain and to maintain school size at its current capacity. Phase one is to rebuild 24 Water Street. Phase two is to improve the parking court to include a pedestrian walkway from Meeting Street to the arch in the Churchyard. Current bus parking and maintenance would be eliminated in the court. The CNA Board opposed the proposal of a bus stop on Meeting Street. A later Phase three could include renovating the three-story school building and adding a Fellowship Hall. Mr. Gates asked that any comments or suggestions regarding this project be sent to him.

The next order of business was for Mr. Gates to introduce Eric and Michelle Champ of *South of Broad Living* magazine. The Champs encouraged CNA members to contribute and to utilize their sponsors. The meeting ended with a few additional comments by Mr. Seekings on city services.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Margot Rose  
Secretary