

COOPER-GRANT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Meeting: **Monday, April 23rd, 2012**
The Victor Caruso Room, 1 Market St. Camden, NJ
(Main entrance at Market St between Front St and Delaware Ave)
7:00 PM- Food and drinks from Market St. Pizza
7:30 PM- Meeting starts

- Agenda:
1. Call to Order and Introductions: About 26 people attended the meeting.
 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Comments? none – Moved and all approved.
 3. Treasurer's Report – Sonia Rivera-Perez
 - a. Collection of voluntary contributions \$62
 - b. Monthly Report – March \$35,122 – deposited \$24 from March Collection, payments \$28 dollars for agenda printouts, Children's Garden \$60 for garden club membership, Balance \$35,058 - \$32.07 for cost for April's pizza.
 4. Communications
 - a. Other included below
 - b. Invite to Chancellor Pritchett - Chancellor wrote us a letter in return.
 - c. Letter to Gov. Christie regarding merger sent.
 5. Old Business:
 - a. Cooper-Grant Security / City Police – DCCB
 - a. Car stolen from 100 block of Penn St was found at 24th and high St. It was a Honda 95 Accord taken Monday night, found Friday night. Also a few other reports of broken car window and a stolen car on 3rd St.
 - b. Street Lights/ PSEG Update – Bill Hoag- PSEG has been great for repairs but not with vandalized lights – City is working on prioritizing which vandalized lights get fixed.
 - c. Greensgrow CSA – Deadline approaching –
 - a. Beth Grant was here past two months, Share applications are due.
 - b. CSA and farmer's stand at Friends and Penn St. Thursday Evenings – 3-7pm Starting early May until November.
 - c. www.greengrow.org
 - d. CGNA Tree Planting May 26th 9am-12pm sponsored by NJ Tree Foundation 10-12 tree pits, Need volunteers, meeting at the Community Garden Front and Penn.
 6. New Business – Jump to new business (ahead of old business bc of guests)
 - a. Rutgers-Camden/Rowan “merger” discussion, Larry Gaines:
 - i. Parties working on a compromise, a long process, University, SJ, Legislature, Governor must approve, R-C against Rutgers name being removed from SJ. Not an anti-Rowan thought. Have many possibilities with different schools for different strategic partnerships.
 - ii. Legislature has to approve the merger is Rutgers' opinion, not the governor. Christie said he could do it with Executive Order. It would go to court. – Deadline of July 1st, not sure what that means? The Plan could be in place by July 1st just not implemented.
 - iii. Rutgers understanding for the merger? Baer report says a combined Rutgers/Rowan will provide a more powerful University for South Jersey. Rutgers says removing the choice will create more flight of students to out of state schools.
 - iv. From Rutgers-Camden's point of view and central Rutgers both have supported the compromise.
 - v. R-C would like more autonomy with merger: That is different from status quo and from governor's position.

- vi. R-C wants Camden to maintain Rutgers name and all degree and tenure, but with more financial autonomy, and ability create synergies with Rowan.
 - vii. Autonomy means – more involved in decision making of what students and faculty want locally without asking New Brunswick. Do not want to be completely cut off.....
 - viii. Not enough seats in SJ for our population: want greater resources build more classrooms, more space for student as in the past has not had the opportunity to grow at the pace need to keep up with the potential student population in SJ.
 - ix. Question about funding – Does 55cents stays in R-C and 45 cents goes to central Rutgers? Yes but it is offset by some state subsidy, they also provide some central services, do we get our fair share?
 - 1. \$64m tuition collected by R-C budget allocation was only \$58 million, while the state subsidies an additional \$274m for all of Rutgers after tuition.
 - x. Already damage from merger talk? Possibly - Less applicants for law school and less acceptors, less faculty willing to commit to a tenure track in R-C bc of uncertainty. Some short-term effects but that could be turned around quickly.
 - xi. \$7 million of Rutgers Bond money was spent on rehabbing properties on Cooper St. that was from a total \$365m bond floating by Rutgers. R-C is historically underfunded compared to New Brunswick. \$35m to build law school only \$11m came from State.
 - xii. A point: Rowan is not research institution, it is a teaching University, Rutgers faculty are the same system wide. Cooper Med is attached to Rowan. Rowan would get research status; all state Universities get research status.
 - xiii. Is R-C a Research University? – R-C is bc it is a part of Rutgers, it is not by itself. 3 million volumes in library, but sponsored research is important, indirect cost recovery rate for Rutgers is a high rate. Name has prestige. Both are public institutions and let both work together to build and grow. 12k students at Rowan 6,600 students in R-C
 - xiv. Will there be a loss of sports programs because same Division 3 opponents?
 - xv. 4th St dorms are on time, two leases signed for retail space. 7-11 and Subway, 3k ft2 left, Southwestern restaurant ran by the dining services.
 - xvi. WWAC is on track, Willna is the contact – should be ready for the fall.
 - xvii. Red Cross Building may be the Rutgers Alumni Office in future.
 - xviii. Building next to Chancellors office, we need funds to rehabilitate the building which is a National Registered Historic Site.
 - xix. Plaza Hotel? – Privately owned out of NY, some remediation – he wants to demolish and turn it into a parking lot because of parking revenues... Planning and development side issue.
- b. Phase II cleanup – Dresdner-Robin Presentation by Geoffery Forrester and Michele Christina
- Bryon Yoder gives a brief history – Jeff Forrester follows up.
 - Update/Comments on decisions to remove dirt and cap brownfield site, CRA has received 3 \$200k grants from EPA equals \$600k. Setting up a CRA document trail for DEP and EPA. The choice was made by the community years ago, lots were not to have a deed restriction on the properties, to have unrestricted use, that is why we are moving forward in this direction. CGNA made the decision years ago. 12feet of dirt removed and refilled with clean fill. The park will be deed restricted as it will be capped. Some dewatering needed as water table is very close to the 12ft depth. The cap will be a 2ft clean fill layer. Historic fill: soil and other materials used to raise the buildings above flood grade. Common approach. One foot cut out and 2 foot replaced for the park. 1 Month for the bid to be out on the street, lowest responsive builder. Assuming we have the money to cover the cost. EPA has to review after public comment. Bid should go out in June. August CRA review of bids. We may not have enough money once the bids come back in. Deadline for grants Sept 30th

2013 but we can get extensions so no issues bc we are moving along in the process. Once project starts, how long? 4-6months if done at one time.

- c. Development Committee report – Bill Hoag –
 - i. Dresdner-Robin was here explaining the cleanup of Phasell
 - ii. Trying to get NRTC grant funding with the help of Coopers-Ferry
 - iii. We need a neighborhood plan in order to do this, starting to work on it
 - iv. Meetings are 2nd Thursday of each Month at 8pm email Bill Hoag at development@coopergrant.org Please come out.
 - v. 120 Linden St. creating a package to rehab the boarded up home. Hoping to use some of our Phase I funds to rehab and sell the house to a owner/occupier/
 - vi. Motion to enter into a MOU with Coopers-Ferry to start the process of a talking about the plan. Coopers-Ferry is a non-profit and has the funding capacity. Frank moves, Bill second, 1 abstention, all other approve.
- d. New website – we will present month while we project it on the wall, www.coopergrant.org
- e. Fundraising Events for 2012 – June 29th Riversharks Game
- f. Coopers-Ferry new building on Riverside Drive. C-F is currently in DRPA building, 3 story building to be built in the fall. With restaurants on the 1st floor. Needs the UEZ funding to subsidize the restaurant tenant. C-F requests a letter of support for the new building.
 - i. Liquor license, pay taxes, attracting new tenants?, deadline for support

7. Announcements

- a. Want neighborhood updates/announcements via email? Please e-mail secretary@coopergrant.org with your name and address
- b. Next CGNA Meeting - Tuesday May 29th, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. Camden City Library Branch of the Camden County Library – 5th and Penn St. (Rutgers-Camden Campus)

8. Adjournment

The area served by CGNA: “Cooper-Grant” is defined as the area contained within the following boundaries: Northern Boundary – the Ben Franklin Bridge; East - Friends Avenue (extended) south to Cooper Street, extending east to the West side of Fourth Street; South - the south side of Market Street; Western Boundary: the Delaware River.

For more information, call Bryon Yoder, President of CGNA: (610) 462-2909

*****This is our 31st year as an organization*****

Cannot attend CGNA Meeting?

Want updates, meeting minutes and agendas?

To get on the email list:

Email Jonathan Latko: secretary@coopergrant.org

www.coopergrant.org