

CASGED
Community Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Meeting was called to order at 6:37pm.

Public Officials/Representatives:

Councilwoman Darlene Harris spoke about community issues:

1. Weeds, grassy lots
2. Trash Receptacles: more have been ordered. The reason some have been removed is due to residents dumping personal garbage into them. If you see this happening, please report it to 311. (See info below.)
3. Abandoned houses/Nuisance Houses: 2221 & 2235 Spring Garden Avenue are slated for demolition. The definition of a nuisance property can be found on the city of Pittsburgh website, "Disruptive Property Ordinance". If there are 3 citations (excluding domestic) for the same property in one year, the property goes in front of the Board of Community People, and the owner can be fined. The citations do not have to be for the same offense, and can range from high weeds to drugs to noise. If the disturbance is from tenants, the landlord will get an eviction notice. The community group can contact landlords directly, but is unable to force any action.
4. Increased drug trafficking, loitering: Darlene is working with Pgh Police and Narcotics Squad. It's important to get detailed information to the police, ie. vehicle make, model, license plate, time of day, clothing, detailed description of person committing the crime.
5. Gas Meters on Chestnut St: Peoples Gas has been installing new meters on Chestnut. Several are on the sidewalk, which are not only unsightly, but are potential hazards and may not follow ADA regulations. Darlene is in contact with Peoples and is making sure the brick pavers are re-installed. She informed us that it is the property owner's choice of where to locate the meter. They can be installed inside. Peoples sent her an email stating that it is following PUC orders to put meters on the exterior. Someone asked if they could have Peoples change meters that are already installed. He was instructed to call Darlene directly.

Public Safety/Zone 1:

Raphael Walton, Public Safety Chair has been working on the recent rash of drug activity on Suismon & Peralta. Zone 1 Commander Raglin & Officer Wright were present. Commander Raglin reported that his officers are paying attention and patrolling the area. 6 arrests have been made, 1 drug sale, 1 firearm. This year the city has surpassed the non-fatal overdoses (700), and 150 more are fatal. The best way to help police is to give officers the most detailed description you can: exact address, clothing, vehicle and time. Zone 1 fields at least a dozen 311 complaints per day. If someone reports "these 2 guys were fighting", it's very difficult to identify. The crime stats can be found on Zone 1's facebook page. [Zone 1](#) Another good website is burghseyeview. Commander Raglin had flyers to distribute with instructions on what to do in case an emergency or to report a crime, along with Silent Complaint Forms. He said that overall our neighborhood has little crime and is safe. Darlene said if anyone is uncomfortable calling 311, they can call her office and make reports. Narcotics phone number is 412.323.7761, if you see anyone "peddling the poison".

Spring Hill had the narcotics squad attend their meeting and they were extremely knowledgeable. It is recommended that CASGED have them attend a meeting.

RuthAnn thanked Chris & Tammy Waracks for tonight's sandwiches. The Waracks have opened up a new "Kaffeehaus" on the corner of Chestnut & Spring Garden Ave. RuthAnn asked that everyone please make sure to sign the sign-in sheet, with an email, so CASGED can build its community engagement

and keep you informed.

City Steps Program: Angela Martinez from the city's newly established Dept of Mobility & Infrastructure spoke about the city's initiative to analyze all 800 city steps. The city received a grant to assess and analyze all of the city's steps. To take the city survey and/or find out more info: click here: [city step survey](#). The city would like to know who uses the city steps and how. Once completed, they will plan an investment strategy to improve the most important sets of steps. The current annual budget for city steps is \$200,000: not enough to repair one set of steps. Make sure our steps get top billing and respond to the survey. Helpful links can be found on CASGED's website: [ca-sged.org](#).

Development Update: Tom Pierce informed that the Dept of Public Works is ready to build the retaining walls at the Gateway Site. CASGED has been working on the Gateway site for 6 years. CASGED has raised approximately \$200,000 for beautification at this intersection of Rt 28 & Chestnut Street; not nearly enough funding, so having the city provide labor & materials for the wall, at an estimated value well over \$100,000, is extremely helpful, allowing CASGED's funds to be spent on plants and other materials.

Hotel: Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is still underway. It is possible the closing will take place in 2017.

Residential Development RFP: Nancy Noszka has been working on developing an RFP for residential properties that CASGED is/will acquire through the city's vacant property process. Several parcels still have to clear the title process. Once completed, CASGED will send the RFP out to prospective developers, individuals. The process will be public and impartial, and based on the ability of the person(s) to complete the development. Several of the properties CASGED is concentrating on are on Peralta or Suismon, which is in need of public intervention.

Public Safety Appreciation Day: Eric will be holding an Appreciation Day for our public safety personnel on October 7th at Noon, at the Town Square on Chestnut & Tripoli. Volunteers are welcome. This event is in its 2nd year.

Spring Garden Walking Tour: will be held on Saturday, Sept 23. [Walking Tour](#)

Chestnut Street Zoning: The community involvement process to re-zone Chestnut Street has concluded. Property owners on Chestnut Street and CASGED Board ratified the decision to re-zone Chestnut to Local Neighborhood Commercial (LNC). Some homeowners objected, and CASGED is working with City Planning to exempt those properties from the zoning change.

G3 Committee: Joe Valorie updated on the "Gardens, Garbage & Graffiti" Committee: they are working on keeping weeds down, picking up litter. On Saturday, October 21, Univ. of Pgh students will be on hand for a litter clean-up day. Several residents expressed concerns over "needles". They were instructed not to pick them up, they are dangerous: Report the needle location to CASGED, via email & Joe will see to it that they are picked up.

Communications: Jeff Wuerthele asked for community feedback on how to improve communication. We are using NextDoor, Facebook and Mailchimp, and a printed copy quarterly newsletter. The CASGED website is also a source, but CASGED could use a volunteer (4 hrs/month) to help upload and disseminate information. To boost e-newsletter sign-ups, CASGED sponsored a raffle, those who signed up were entered to win a \$25 gift certificate to Kaffeehaus. The winner was picked randomly!

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 10, 2017 6:30 pm: Location change: Wigle Whiskey Barrel House. Meeting Adjourned at 7:42pm.