

East Kensington Neighbors Association
Monthly Meeting Agenda
Monday, September 18, 2023
Via Zoom Webinar and in person at PBC
Andy Ortega, President
Contact: president@ekna.org
www.ekna.org



Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM by Andy Ortega

Budget report - Catherine

August Main Expenses (\$32.39 Total)

- Squarespace: \$15.12
- Zoom: \$17.27

August Income (\$12.85 Total)

- Interest: \$12.85

Bank Balances as of August 31st (\$55,574.70 Total)

- PFCU Checking: \$19,991.97
- PFCU Money Mrkt: \$35,577.73
- Paypal: \$0
- PFCU Savings: \$5

Green Space Balance as of August 31st

- \$8,039.27

Zoning report - Andy

- 1941 Letterly St
 - Multi family rehabbing of structure with off street parking
 - Wanted to add 2 new units
 - Vote was 23 in favor, unanimously in favor of allowing variance
 - Developer, JJ is local to neighborhood, and has done several other small-scale projects

- Meetings will be in person moving forward at Fireball Printing
- November Sneak Peak
 - Large multifamily project at 2001 Lehigh Ave (157 units)
 - EKNA is not overseeing RCO, but has influence, so please attend if you are able
 - Details of community hearing will be sent out (November 6, 6:30pm, via Zoom)

NKCDC

- Talked about changes happening in the neighborhood
 - New toolkit was posted on their instagram (New Kensington Plan) to help local businesses and nonprofits
 - These include resources to helping folks form groups, local engagement, etc.
 - Question from audience on concern of cleaning up Kensington Ave without comprehensive plan to address other quality of life issues (lack of housing, drug usage, crime, etc.)
 - NKCDC will send another rep to attend next board meeting to update board on property portfolio in East Kensington, as well as update members at next meeting

Rails to Trails Program - Anya

- Context given for countywide plan (800 miles planned in the whole network in PA)
- 180 miles are currently ready for use by the public
- Richmond Industrial Viaduct Trail will be 8 miles total when done
 - 40,000 people live within a half mile of this stretch
 - Will be able to be used recreationally, but also enough width on trail for passive recreation
 - Anya, the rep from the national Rails to Trails Program, shared photos and renderings of what the space could look like
 - Potential to connect it to the Delaware River Trail, and up to American Street
 - Local organizations (ASE) created art along the trail
- Stressed the importance of new development to include space for the future trail
 - Maintenance agreements are tough and ongoing
- I-95 trail under highway could connect to Richmond Lehigh Viaduct Trail
- Local support is essential to compelling the city to support the project
 - Richmond Industrial Viaduct Trail is on the Master Transportation Plan for Philly, but low on the priority list
- They encourage EKNA residents to contact the Managing Director's Office at OTIS, council members to keep pressure on this project
- Cost of the trail and infrastructure around is not available yet (but would be many millions of dollars)
- Suggestion from audience on making a Friends of Richmond Trail group - Anya supported the idea, since local EKNA members leading advocacy will go a lot farther in terms of influence on city council
- America grants has a funding opportunity for a small landscaping project along the corridor, could spruce up corridor, show continued interest

Mini Grants - Andy

- Encourage folks, even individuals to apply for mini grants
- We want to spend this money in the community, offering grants for new projects
- Still determining how frequently we want to do these rounds with the community (bi-annually? quarterly?)

Elections - Andy

- Encourage people to run for open positions in November
- To run, members must have attended 3 general membership meetings (either in-person or virtually) in the past 6 months
- The election general membership meeting may count as the 3rd meeting

New Business

- Small Business Highlight: Vientiane!
- 26th District Police Townhall Taking Place later this month (details will be shared on social media)
- Philly Tree People highlighting cleanup on 9/30
- Food Bucks Update
 - Grab food bucks (worth \$2 each) to buy fresh fruit and veggies at participating locations! See secretary (Louis) after meeting for details and to get your Food Bucks
- FNA Halloween Party next month
- Weirdo Fest coming up in November
 - Looking for volunteers to help at EKNA table
 - Circus performances coming

July Minutes

- July minutes approved

Meeting Adjourned at 8:11 PM