

# Haverford Civic Association

## February 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**Attending:** Hala Imms, Tom Wilkinson, John McIntyre, Patricia O'Halloran, Mona Slomsky, Charles Ault, Jen Pavao, Barbara Cohen, and Michael Talarico. Anne Mezey, Charles Davis, and Mary Beth Scattergood attended the meeting late due to the change in start time. Present by video were Robert Bocchino and Jason Young. Lee Tabas took the minutes until Secretary Anne Mezey arrived.

The meeting began at 7 p.m.

The minutes of the December 13, 2022, meeting was approved.

**Introduction:** First Vice President Hala Imms chaired the meeting and welcomed the members as President Mo Gillen was not present. She reported on the annual meeting which was attended by approximately 60 people. Tom Wilkinson commented that the speakers were interesting, and the meeting was a good success.

**Treasurer:** Lee Tabas reported a balance of \$2,446.22 in the First Trust bank account as of January 31 2023. This is the time for member dues to be paid. Lee encouraged those present who have not paid to pay at this time.

**Federation of Civics:** Since Anne Mezey had not yet arrived, the presentation was tabled until next month.

**Website:** Since Andy Orr was not present, no update on the website and Facebook was provided.

There was a brief discussion about **LM redistricting**. Lee Tabas stated that Commissioner Scott Zelov told him that Montgomery County had rejected Lower Merion's plan, so at the earliest any redistricting would be in effect for 2024.

**Haverford Train Station:** Hala Imms and Lee Tabas stated that the Haverford Civic Association has been working to get the station renovated and occupied for some time, and the efforts may be close to bearing fruit. A developer, Philly Office Retail (Ken Weinstein), has toured the station and may be interested. They rent the commercial space in several train stations in Philadelphia from SEPTA, and then they sublease the space to tenants. Our station is owned by AMTRAK, but there are similarities. Any renter has to be prepared to spend a considerable amount, as AMTRAK wants to turn over the station in AS IS condition. We have connected with Greg Prichard, historic preservation person with Lower Merion

Township who is helping and like us, is interested in seeing the station returned to good condition.

**Montgomery Ave Traffic Calming:** Tuesday January 31, a neighborhood meeting was arranged at Saint Luke's church (568 Montgomery Ave) by Commissioner Anthony Stevenson which specifically targeted high speed traffic on the stretch of Montgomery Ave between Pennswood Rd and Old Lancaster Ave. Mo Gillen (president) and Anne Mezey attended the meeting as did many residents who live in that particular section of Montgomery Ave. Commissioner Zelov and two police officers from the Lower Merion Township police traffic safety unit led the meeting. All present presented their views and discussed the perilous traffic speeding issue. Mo Gillen encouraged the residents to attend the Haverford Civic meeting and present their situation. As a result, several of the residents attended the February 14th Haverford Civic Association Meeting.

The issue was described is as follows:

1. When traveling westbound on Montgomery Ave, soon after passing the Montgomery Ave/Woodside Rd traffic light, the speed limit increases from 25 mph to 35 mph.
2. Continuing westward, the next traffic lights are at Montgomery Ave/Haverford Station Rd and at Montgomery Ave/Old Lancaster Ave/Grays Ln intersection. Following the Old Lancaster Ave/Grays Ln intersection is a traffic light at Montgomery Ave/Pennswood Rd. The .6 mile road between Montgomery/Old Lancaster/Grays intersection traffic light and the Montgomery/Pennswood intersection traffic light is a "drag racing track" where vehicles move well over 45 mph.
3. The high speed condition is extremely dangerous at the Montgomery Ave/Booth Ln intersection and at the Montgomery Ave/New Gulf Rd intersection. There have been recent accidents and close calls.
4. Residents who live on the south side of Montgomery Ave between Old Lancaster Rd and Pennswood Rd are terrified when pulling out of their driveways into Montgomery Ave, and when turning from Montgomery Ave into their driveways. Residents who work full time inside their homes can see and hear the very fast moving traffic on the "drag racing track" segment.

Suggestions presented to calm the speeding included but are not limited to:

5. Implementation of a speed study, followed by the possible addition of a traffic light at the Montgomery Ave/New Gulf Rd intersection; or at least place stop signs at that intersection. Also, possibly lower the speed limit on the "racing track" from the current 35 mph to 25 mph.

6. Will it help if motorists know how fast they are driving by the placement of a speed display on the road?
7. Residents emphasized the need for more police patrol on Montgomery Ave.
8. It was suggested Haverford Civic Association contact the homeowners' associations of the condominium buildings on Montgomery Ave and involve them with the planning of a speed calming process.

**Sharpe Park Tree Planting** included a discussion on a number of trees that must be removed and new trees planted. There are areas of poor water drainage that are a big issue. There is accumulated wood debris along the SEPTA chain link fence; especially bad is the area of the fence where statues are located. Haverford Civic Association member Jennifer Pavao recently walked through the park with Derrick Dohler, and Joe MacNeal of the Shade Tree Commission. Caroline Belsinger of The Garden Workers and past president Hala Imms late last year walked through Sharpe Park with Derrick Dohler and Joe MacNeal for insight. It was stated that the revitalization of Sharpe Park requires a solid plan to implement green maintenance, green infrastructure, and long term maintenance. A member suggested that research be done on possibly including a small playground for children. Hala reminded those present that Sharpe Park was deeded to Lower Merion Township as a bird sanctuary.

**Neighborhood Event 2023:** There was discussion on potential dates to schedule Art in Sharpe Park this May. It was noted that May 13 is the Ardmore Beer Festival and thus May 20th was suggested. Comments were made that there is not enough time to plan an Art in Sharpe Parke event for May 2023. It was instead suggested that HCA should start planning for a September 2023 Neighbors Night Out event. The date needs to be decided to allow for planning and fundraising. The last Art in Sharpe Park event required \$2500 of contributions and HCA costs to hold the successful event.

### **Additional:**

Hala also noted the Lower Merion Historic Restoration Guidelines; a document developed over 3 years and over 100 pages long, would be presented to the Commissioners but has not been shared with any residents of a Historic District or home for valuable input.

Hala briefly commented on the Commissioners' reports.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00.

The next meeting will be March 14, 2023 at the Merion Cricket Club.