

DRAFT AS APPROVED BY THE BOARD DRAFT AS APPROVED BY THE BOARD

**Special Membership Meeting** -- Admiral Heights Improvement Association special meeting  
Re: dock on Williams Drive & Boat Club lease  
Oct. 3, 2017

Called to order: 7:30 p.m. by President Jim Burdick at Germantown Elementary School

**AHIA board members in attendance:**

Jim Burdick, Mario Schiappacasse, Norm Crews, Martha Thorn, Maria Lebow-Little, John Leupold, Rachael Breen, Scott Gibson, Ed Cherneski, Brandon Wright and Grant Garcia. In addition, about 70 Admiral Heights residents attended the meeting.

**Not in attendance:**

Steve Fisher

**Opening remarks**

Burdick thanked AHIA board members and Boat Club members who spent countless hours defining the problem and coming up with solutions for the dock on Williams Drive and for the Boat Club lease.

**Boat Club remarks**

Jim Golden, Boat Club commodore, said that five years ago the general membership agreed on a Boat Club lease that called for \$25 rent and a \$500 donation. That lease expires in May.

He says the Boat Club has maintained the dock since 1972, and its lifespan is now due. Since April he's been getting bids and outlining the scope of work that needs to be done. He's been talking with Boat Club members to determine how much of the work they want to do and how much they want the contractor to do. The outcome is still up in the air, but he feels that the Boat Club has done a good job of maintaining and managing the dock and that leaving it in the hands of the Boat Club is the way to go.

He passed out copies of the Boat Club's financials and said that the club was willing to assume most of the cost, making it a win-win for the community.

**AHIA remarks**

Gibson said that in the present lease agreement the Boat Club pays \$525 a year, plus maintenance. In the new lease agreement it would pay \$1,025 upfront. The \$1,000 would be applied toward the cost of the dock which could range from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

AHIA couldn't afford to pay \$15,000 for a new dock. That would drain its savings.

Gibson proposed a 10 year lease for the Boat Club with the club paying for the bulk of the dock (70 percent) that is conservatively priced at \$10,000.

Gibson noted that AHIA's budget is barely enough to maintain its other properties and to take responsibility for downed trees.

He also suggested something new in the lease -- an annual inspection and communication between the Boat Club and AHIA about its maintenance efforts. Gibson called around to other local docks. He found the larger, more commercial docks charged more. He said that those like ours charged less and the Boat Club's charges were in line with those charges.

Gibson made a motion for the general membership to authorize the Boat Club and the AHIA to craft a lease between the two groups based on the terms handed out at the meeting.

### **General membership discussion**

Admiral Heights resident Sean Fahey said to maximize revenue on the small number of slips the Boat Club might want to consider an auction to establish fair market value for a slip.

Gibson said he looked at marinas in Annapolis Cove, Severna Park and Galesville. He said the Admiral Heights Boat Club's charge for slips was similar.

He said that AHIA's liability would be decreased by the proposed lease. The Boat Club would continue to pay for water and electricity.

It was pointed out that the number of slips might decrease over the 10 year period. Someone suggested dredging to increase the number of slips. The cost of this was estimated to be in the millions of dollars.

Alderman Fred Paone said that Weems Creek was moving up on the dredging list. He talked about the loss of revenue to the City as houses move from "waterfront" to "mud front." It was pointed out that dredging is usually just done in the channel so it wouldn't affect the number of slips. It was also pointed out that we've also moved down on the dredging list due to "emergency problems."

Dan Masterson pointed out that at one time everyone was on board to doing the dredging, but then it was stopped by one person's testimony. He said the Army Corps of Engineers didn't want to do the dredging.

Someone said a grant of \$9.4 million is available to Anne Arundel County for a restorative effort for the headwaters of Weems Creek west of Admiral Drive.

While dredging is on our radar because it affects property values, the cost is beyond our means. Some residents felt that slips go to the "privileged few" because it may take eight or more years to get one. Those who don't have slips considered mooring their boat or buying a kayak as alternatives. Some used marinas outside the community or paid for slips from neighbors. To give everyone an equal chance to get a slip, someone suggested a lottery for slips, but others asked what people would do with their boat if they lost the lottery.

Someone suggested having boat slips at Dewey Dock. Evidently, room exists for five boat slips, but the membership voted against doing this in the past.

Someone conjectured that the wait list here is probably about the same as in other neighborhoods.

The Boat Club has about 35 members. About 80 to 90 percent of the attendees at the meeting had been to the dock recently.

Bert Collins said it's an amenity to have the pier, kayak racks, and the ability to walk up the street and wash off the boat. He said the lottery concept was flawed because who wants to buy a boat for a year and then sell it? He also asserted that mooring is a better deal. He feels that the Boat Club and the improvements it has made have increased property values.

Different regulations exist for mooring in the county and in the city. County mooring is free. In the city boaters have to pay for mooring. The city has agreed to enforce nautical laws in the county. It receives no compensation for this. No fees increase for those who moor along the creek.

Sean O'Neill, a former AHIA president, said the dock was built in 1967. He said the original lease was for a dollar because the club had built it. In the '80s the rent went up to \$25. About 10 years ago the Boat Club made a \$500 donation so improvements could be made to Dewey Dock. These improvements included building more kayak racks and redoing the path.

Gibson said that the world is different now. There's more liability, more people using the dock, and more kayak racks. He said that because of this, AHIA has to be more involved and play a more active part in the building and maintaining of the dock.

Margaret Aha, who walks her dog in the Admiral Heights parks, said the docks were a community asset – a place for residents to meet and bond.

It was noted that repairing the dock on Williams Drive would either have to be done by the Boat Club or AHIA. AHIA has been more focused on Dewey Dock, the circle and the other properties in Admiral Heights.

A motion to close the discussion was made and unanimously approved. A vote was taken on the motion to give the AHIA board the authority to finalize the lease with the Boat Club based on the terms handed out at the meeting. The motion passed with a vote of 45 in favor and 25 opposed.

**Fall Membership meeting** – Burdick called to order after the special membership meeting.

### **Minutes**

The minutes for the March meeting were approved. Former board member Mike Minear said it would be helpful if the draft minutes could be posted to the web prior to the meetings. The secretary said that she prefers posting them after they have been approved. That way if she made some horrific mistake it would hopefully be caught and corrected before the posting.

Minear also said that the minutes were running a couple months behind in the posting. The secretary and web master felt that they were doing a good job of posting them in a timely manner and at most they might be a month behind.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The newsletter generated about \$425 in revenue. The treasurer has a stack of envelopes where people have mailed back the membership form from the newsletter. Each \$30 paid brings us closer to the amount that we budgeted as receiving from membership dues.

Under "Office Supplies" we bought a new version of Quick Books. We thought we could use the old version a little longer, but we couldn't. Also, we still need to pay for the insurance.

Last year's block party expenses didn't get paid until this year. We are trying to hold all the events that were approved in the spring. However, AHIA has been operating at a deficit. The Naval Academy Class of 2003 has invited us to their tailgater. In return, we are giving them a donation of \$200. This savings will make up some of the deficit, but next year we may need to raise dues more than \$30.

Increase in prices, fallen trees, rebuilding Dewey Dock, and the circle have contributed to the negative cash flow which will need to be addressed in the next budget.

### **Events**

Naval Academy Class of 2003 and Admiral Heights tailgater - Saturday, Oct. 21, 1:30 p.m., Class of 2003 tent is located below the F-14 jet on the south corner of the stadium (Taylor Ave.) They are in the last row inside the walkway, closest to the Navy jet. Beer and main meat course will be provided. Admiral Heights residents are asked to bring a side dish, snacks, or dessert.

Candidates forum – Tuesday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m., Germantown Elementary School

Halloween party - Friday, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m., Germantown Elementary School

Create your luminary for older children – Saturday, Oct. 28, 1 – 3 p.m., Studio 39, Germantown-Homewood Civic Association event

Luminaria parade for older children – Saturday, Oct. 28, - 7 p.m., meet at the playground & Germantown athletic fields, Germantown-Homewood Civic Association event

Santa Run - – Sunday, Dec. 10, 4:45 p.m., Halsey Park

### **Grounds Committee**

Garcia has served as groundkeeper for 1 1/2 years. He's enjoyed meeting residents at events. He praised Nina Fisher for her work on the Porter-Sampson Circle. She has searched for native plants, 20 inches or under, that can be left unattended for life.

We have renewed our contract with Undercuts, the company that does the mowing.

We've replaced the lights at Dewey Dock with LED photocells. Hopefully this will improve our electric bill. We've also replaced the bulkhead, repaired the kayak racks, and got rid of derelict boats at the dock.

People have come to Garcia with ideas for Halsey Park. We will look at these ideas at the spring meeting and answer the questions, "Is Halsey Park what you want it to be? What do you want us to do with it?"

Glenn Smith noted that the post office box opposite the circle has been moved and turned around.

Jim Leanos said that some residents weren't maintaining their homes, yards and sidewalks. "How do we deal with people who aren't taking care of their property?" he asked. It was suggested that he talk to the mayor and alderman and check to see if the properties met the city code. Alderman Fred Paone said he could direct Leanos to the right person.

### **Neighborhood Watch**

Next Neighborhood Safety Council (Neighborhood Watch) meeting - Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m., Annapolis Police Department, Taylor Ave.

Thorn spoke with Bill Givens of the Naval Academy Athletic Association today. He said that the major events at the stadium would be posted to NavySports.com within the next couple of weeks.

### **Weems Creek Matters**

Cherneski wrote an article about the Planning and Zoning meeting where the 39 Hudson Street project was discussed. It was printed in the Admiral Heights fall newsletter. Although many positive changes have been made to the site designing plan, it's still under review.

Cherneski praised the efforts of those in the community who helped call attention to the negative environmental impact that could have resulted from the original design. He asked those who were interested in joining the environmental effort to see him after the meeting or use the contact information in the newsletter.

Burdick said that he and Kurt Riegel represent Annapolis on the Severn River Commission which advises the city and the county on all things to do with the Severn River. He said the county has allocated \$9.3 million to cleaning up the area right below 39 Hudson Street. He said developing the area around the 39 Hudson Street project would put more silt in the creek because of the removal of trees and because the slope is prone to erosion.

### **Traffic Calming and Public Safety**

Crews said he has seen people speeding and not stopping at traffic signs. While delivering the newsletter, he noticed screen doors open and doors unlocked. He said there was a tendency to not lock front doors when you're home. He said an unlocked door was an invitation to thieves. He also emphasized locking car doors and not leaving valuables in cars. "The bad guys are just looking for an opportunity," he says.

Someone said the Farragut and Cedar Park Road intersection was particularly hazardous because of walkers, bikers and strollers going to the stadium.

Burdick noted that kids were back in school, which means drivers should be particularly careful. He mentioned an accident at Windell Ave. and Cedar Park Road. No vehicle was involved but the bicyclist got a sprocket from his bicycle caught on the curb and received a traumatic head injury. He asked that drivers be careful when school lets out and be careful as it gets dark earlier in the evening.

### **Mom's Club**

Leupold gave the report on behalf of his wife and Keren Lotfi. The Mom's Club holds Wednesday and Saturday walks and Mom's Night Out on Thursdays. For updates, moms can go to the Mom's Club's Facebook page or to the website, <http://www.admiralheights.org/>. They can also send email to [info@admiralheights.org](mailto:info@admiralheights.org).

### **WNAV property**

Bozzuto Homes has contracted to develop the WNAV land. The contract expires at the end of October. The developer plans to build 30-40, \$600,000 homes. The company is protective of its brand which has a good reputation in the Annapolis and Baltimore areas and with the state. The feeling is that it's the company's prerogative to buy and develop the property.

However, the community is opposed to the company tearing down a house on Cedar Park Road to make an egress through Cedar Park Road instead of Admiral Drive. The egress would connect to Halsey Road. It would involve residents losing frontage to widen the road and to create sidewalks. It would also mean more traffic and increased possibility of accidents.

To be fair, Minear gave some pros to the development. He said we could work with the developer to improve the narrow, windy road. A traffic study could be done to determine how to make the road safer and have it meet certain standards. He said it might improve the value of homes. It might also contribute to creek improvements and other improvements to the critical area.

Another resident presented an opposing view, feeling that property values would go down, the quiet of Admiral Heights would be destroyed, and the community would be changed forever with the community having more traffic and less privacy.

Someone said that the idea of connecting Admiral Heights to Admiral Drive had come up when the Steffey's were developing the area. The City Council voted on it and the proposal was defeated by one vote, so Steffey didn't connect the two.

Paone and Burdick said the developer didn't have a plan yet and if the majority of people opposed the idea, he wouldn't go forward with it.

One resident wanted to hear "the facts" directly from the developer and was upset that the developer had been denied the opportunity to speak to the residents directly.

One resident wanted to know what would be involved in straightening out Cedar Park Road. Another emphasized that Cedar Park Road wasn't a thoroughfare, but rather a place where his son and wife walked and his sister-in-law jogged. That brought up the question, "How many walkers, joggers, dog walkers, strollers and bicyclists use Cedar Park Road?"

Aha questioned the environmental impact of the connecting road. What would happen to the animals, the trees, storm water runoff, etc.? Paone said that an impact study would be done and there were strict standards on how many trees would have to be replaced. However, he said a myriad of things could affect the outcome of the study.

One resident noted that a traffic study was done to widen West Street in the '60s. The resident questioned how much West Street had been improved. "Nothing was done," he said. "The study was filed."

The process of selling the property to make a road was also questioned. Paone said you could sell to whomever you want to, but as far as making the road, there would be traffic studies. The health, safety and welfare of residents would be considered. In fact, Paone was requesting a study of the amount of traffic and its speed. "If everyone's going fast now, think of how fast they'll go if the road becomes a straightaway," he said.

He also noted that the new road might be a "private street" like Randy's Lane. "In the future, they might want the city to take over maintenance of it, but the city probably won't want to do it."

It would also mean more trucks taking down more lines at Ford Circle.

Paone said that a lawyer has volunteered to do some preliminary research about our community's covenants. So far it looks like the laws are on our side. He suggested that the association, residents and a lawyer write letters to Tom Baum of Bozzuto Homes (6406 Ivy Lane, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770 or [TBaum@Bozzuto.com](mailto:TBaum@Bozzuto.com)), letting him know that Admiral Heights residents are opposed to the road. He also suggested AHIA hire a lawyer to represent the community's interests.

He suggested that the letters not be ranting but rather succinct and to the point. In addition to Bozzuto, letters should go to the mayor ([mayor@annapolis.gov](mailto:mayor@annapolis.gov)) and Steve Hopp of WNAV (236 Admiral Drive, Annapolis, Md. 21401 or [SteveHopp@wnav.com](mailto:SteveHopp@wnav.com)). Paone recommended sending a strong message.

Paone says builders are allowed to construct six individual residences per acre. Bozzuto has 7.4 acres so six times this would be the number of houses the company is allowed to build. However, not all these acres are buildable.

Paone also said that the process should be transparent. Ideally, there should be no connections between the people involved with the process and Bazzuto. If there is a connection, everyone should know about it.

Burdick and Paone cautioned that the development might be inevitable. “If not Bozzuto today, there may be someone else tomorrow,” they said.

Gibson made a motion for the board to make our opposition to the egress known and to also be authorized to retain counsel. The motion was passed unanimously.

Both Paone and Annapolis Mayor Mike Pantelides went on record as being 100 percent opposed to the cut through.

**To do**

Research five houses to see if they already belong to a community - Burdick  
Send pdf of approved March minutes to Leupold for posting on the web – Thorn  
Post approved minutes to web - Leupold  
Proceed with plans for Candidates Forum – Burdick  
Finalize lease agreement with Boat Club – Gibson, Breen and Schiappacasse  
Provide list of those who haven’t paid for their racks – Lebow-Little  
Give Lebow-Little the wording for the rack invoice – Gibson  
Write letter to Bozzuto about the cut through – Gibson  
Retain counsel - Gibson

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Submitted by Martha Thorn - Secretary