

***East Kensington Neighbors Association (EKNA) General Meeting  
October 17, 2011 Chairperson: Jeff Carpineta  
Location: Philadelphia Brewing Company  
In attendance: See attendance record.***

***Welcome*** from Jeff C. and thank you for coming- he comments that the audibility was mentioned to him previously, that the comments were taken very seriously and tonight we are trying out a new microphone and amplifier to improve hearing ability for everyone.

***Intros and Acknowledgements:*** Jeff gave introduction and thank you's to other leaders in the organization. Dan Scholnick: Vice President. Pat McHugh: Treasurer. Kevin Maguire: Secretary. Andy Barrera: Zoning committee chair. Amy Miller: Secretary of zoning committee. Josh Cullen: in charge of email notices. Claude Schrader: updating website. Kim Konopka: Emerald Park maintenance.

***Pops Playground:*** There has been vandalism at Pop's Playground. The basketball poles/backboards in the center of the court were cut down by criminals. With unexplained speed, the City came and removed the pole/backboards. Although the playground is was decommissioned by City Dept. Parks and Recreation, the City has said they will replace the equipment within 6-8 weeks. Friends of Pop's Playground is an active group to take care of the playground, and interested people can join them. Robin Semmelroth, who lives nearby and helps with the playground, spoke on the issue. This destruction was likely a racially motivated attack from local residents, who have made threats before. Robin does not think the situation will escalate, but instead may do the opposite because of opposition to the destruction.

***Email newsletter:*** EKNA is working on cultivating a email newsletter for members, similar to what Northern Liberties, Kensington South, and other civics do. This may be a weekly or biweekly digest so there are not separate emails for each event.

***Fall Clean-up:*** This Saturday, October 22, there will be a neighborhood-wide clean-up with NKCDC and surrounding civics. EKNA will be participating and groups will be sent throughout the neighborhood to clean. One group will go to Emerald Park. There will be a cookout afterwards at the Brewery in yearly tradition. Thanks to Bill and Nancy Barton, owners of the Phila Brewing Company. The meet-up spot will be Leotah's at York and Coral, 9am.

***Foundation support*** may be coming at year end from a charitable foundation in Delaware. As reported in summer at CSAH, a foundation member encouraged EKNA to apply for support in response to the Emerald Park campaign of 2011. Potential support would be to complete the Emerald Park campaign of 2011 plus park programs and support of the Green Spaces initiative to preserve green spaces in the neighborhood. The foundation sponsor will give guidance on budgeting.

**Officers Development of Administrative Documents:** The officers have set a goal that by the end of 2011, a suite of documents will be completed, including guideline on donations, memorandum of understanding relating to financial support, expenditure guidelines, anti-discrimination statement, a grievance procedure, and possible revision mission statement of EKNA.

**Request for crime report:** Bernie the 311 liaison spoke about having made a request for a crime bulletin from the 26<sup>th</sup> District. Bernie lived in Northern Liberties for many years and was used to getting a similar bulletin from that police district Captain Korn. There is an Incidence Report and Philly Stat. Bernie spoke with Captain Cram, who was interested in providing EKNA with similar information. This information allows residents to understand what specific crimes are occurring so they can look out for more specific things. Jeff explains that Everyblock.com is another resource, but it is cumbersome to use- you have to search by category and if you want more detail on a given crime you are taken to another site.

**Emerald Park:** There have been some issues at Emerald Park lately with illicit activity and a man sleeping there at night. One challenge here is to deal with this with compassion while stemming crime. Earlier in the year, police chased a suspect who fled over the fence into Emerald Park. Police arrested the man but in order to exit the park, they twisted the gate off its hinge, damaging the hinges. Jeff and some volunteer Evan Cairo and Nic Esposito have fixed the gate. Gate to the park will be locked at night and unlocked in the morning.

**Bandit signs** are a problem around the neighborhood. These are illegal ads on telephone poles, which advertise: buying junk cars, houses, roofing companies etc. They are totally illegal, but the law is not enforced. We are told that the City has 2 only 2 people to enforce this issue across the entire city. Tom Potts of NKCDC NAC helped arrange a meeting of interested members of civics to address this issue. One person set up a website called banditproject.org which has elaborate reporting mechanisms and is aimed at causing the city to take more action and identifying who the people are using these ad tactics.

**Minutes from the September meeting** were reviewed and approved by the membership.

**Officer John Levy of the 26<sup>th</sup> District** spoke. October is Crime Prevention Month. He handed out booklets with helpful information and tips on preventing crime, such as putting up a sticker to remember to remove all items from cars so they aren't stolen. People can also register their security cameras with the police so that the videos can be consulted if they were to catch a crime. Another tip is to record the serial numbers of things that are likely to be stolen, and then they are more likely to be recovered.

**CLI Institute 2011:** Jeff C. highlights that Amy Miller and Claude Schrader recently attended the Community Leadership Institute in Kansas City, Missouri. Every year for the past few years, neighborhood leaders in ORCA, EKNA, and FNA are sent to these conferences at the invitation of NKCDC. Amy and Claude will report more next month.

**Zoning Updates:** Andy Barrera spoke on the zoning committee updates. He wanted to thank everyone who attends the meetings. He thanked Henry Pyatt the newest member of the zoning committee. 2213 Amber Street was approved by ZBA and it will be developed into two houses, one facing Amber and the other facing Martha. 2125 Abigail was also approved by the ZBA and will be developed into a single family home. This will be a three-story home, although the community supported a two-story home. There are some upcoming cases. 2607 Martha Street is proposed to be a two-unit home with living space in the basement, which is not a good idea. 2146-50 Hazzard Street is proposed to be used as a garage, which is what it is currently used for illegally. There has been issues with it in its current state as an auto repair garage. 2418 Trenton/2417 Frankford Ave will also be addressed, but we don't have information yet on them. A house at Amber and Dakota had been stalled for a while, but has now resumed work. It was built as right without zoning.

**Cookout / Farmraiser review:** Nic Esposito spoke about Emerald Street Urban Farm and the recent EKNA cookout / ESUF farmraiser. ESUF raised over \$700 from the event, which they will use to build an Urban Greenhouse Earthship, which will be the only urban earthship. They are having a Halloween event. From 5-6:30 they will be doing mask making and other kids activities, and at 6:30 they will be showing the Goonies. Jeff C thanked all the helpers at the cookout/farmraiser and the great time that was had.

**Nonprofit Technology Resources, (NTR)** Bernie spoke about the Nonprofit Technology Resources, or NTR, which has been around for over 20 years. It is a technology recycling and education center. People can drop off old or broken electronic equipment and it is refurbished by community members and volunteers, who are taught IT skills. There is also a thrift store with refurbished machines. All nonprofit members, such as all of us in EKNA, are eligible for a 10% discount. Bernie is a volunteer board member of NTR. Anders Morholt spoke about the e-waste drive that is happening at the Frankford Garden Center on Oct.20 from 4-7. Location of NTR is Brandywine St. between 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> street

**Tree Survey:** Amy Miller gave an update on the tree survey initiative, which is almost finished. Trees and empty pits are being catalogued, and we expect a massive tree planting in the spring initiated by the City with local groups as partners. The city has a goal of 300,000 new trees by 2015. Some will be planted by volunteers, and others will be contractor planted.

**Kensington Community Food Co-op:** Peter Frank gave an update on the food coop. They have 199 members, and hope to get to 225 to begin shopping for a store location. They have a buyers club for members and discounts to local businesses, such as at PBC.

**NKCDC Business Directory:** Henry Pyatt spoke about the NKCDC business directory, which encourages shopping locally. Ads for the directory are due by the end of the month.

**Walking Fish Theater** founder Stan Heleva spoke on the current activity of the theater. They are a nonprofit theater company. Hella Fresh Fish is their upcoming performance.

They have an educational outreach program at Mariana Bracetti Academy, which won a Barrymore Award last year. They have an annual bilingual holiday show, as well as a burlesque show in mid-November. Walking Fish is also growing its leadership now and looking for new board members to expand its reach into community / expand its programming.

***December Holiday Cheer:*** Jeff C. announces that the December EKNA meeting, like last year, will be a short 20 minute meeting with a holiday party to follow.

***Open Forum:*** Jeff C. invites residents to discuss matters of interest, things to be worked on by the Association or things for the Officers to be researching.

-----Richard Zurlnick said he is bothered by the practice of AC Auto to park cars all over the public right of way at the intersection of Trenton and Frankford. He feeling is that the historic 26<sup>th</sup> District police building will never be renovated with the surrounding area looking like it does with junk cars everywhere. John Theobald, Stan (walking fish), and others credited the business of AC Auto for providing low cost service to residents. Henry Pyatt said he frequently speaks to them about leaving cars everywhere, and though he gets a sympathetic ear from them, nothing changes and it is very frustrating. Jeff C. comments that this a complex issue, and EKNA does not want to be viewed as opposing or judging an individual business, but perhaps the issue can be addressed with joint discussion of FNA and NKCDC. Anders suggests that someone could draft a neighborhood-wide code of conduct for building owners and business owners. Andy said that in terms of the proposed new auto business, it is possible that there could be a one-year allowance of the auto use that would need to be renewed after a year.

-----A resident spoke about a suspected landlord abuse issue on the 23XX block of Emerald Street. People there are allegedly using Access (food stamp) cards for rent money. A resident leader said that this has always happened in the neighborhood, and Frankford Ave used to be all rooming houses where such situations were common.

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***8:40 Meeting is Adjourned***