



NAC 11 Minutes – January 15, 2019 Meeting Location: Brewer’s Alley

Introductions

Julia Schaeffer opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and residents introduced themselves.

NAC 11 Coordinators Present: Darcy Richards, Bruce Albaugh, Julia Schaeffer, Darcy Richards, and Glen Ferguson. Phil LeBlanc was absent as he was attending the Mayor’s Strategic Opportunities Community Engagement session as a NAC 11 representative at the Bernard Brown Center.

Minutes: Darcy Richards

Police Report: Officer Present - Sgt. Tracey Wiles, Cpl. Andrew Alger, and Lt. Paul Beliveau.

- Crime Stats - Sgt. Wiles provided statistics on crime in NAC 11 since the November 16 NAC meeting. There were 1,309 calls for service between December 11, 2018 and January 14, 2019. The police report is at <https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11883/FPD-NAC-Worksheet-Jan-2019>
- Shortage of Officers The police department is still down in numbers of total police officers, experiencing the same shortage that is happening nationwide. Many of the academy recruits drop out before graduating. They are recruiting now for several types of police positions.
- Upcoming Community Events Sgt. Wiles reminded members of the following events:
 - The Women's March is ON Sunday, January 27th. It will be held on Carroll Creek from 1 to 4 pm. It is hosted by the Women's Coalition for Action. They are expecting 3,000 to 4,000 people. That will mean a lot of people and traffic downtown. There may be parking issues.
 - First Saturday is Fire In Ice, Feb 2nd. 11 AM – 9 PM in Downtown Frederick
- Open discussion items for Police:
 - Several residents asked about recent police activity on E. 3rd St. A person from the Georgetown Apartments was outside with a knife. When police arrived, he barricaded himself inside an apartment. Police negotiated an end to it and the suspect was sent to the hospital.
 - A resident expressed concern about the number of cars going through the red light at Church and East St. Another area of concern was people going the wrong way (driving north) from Maxwell Avenue and turning onto E. 5th Street. Sgt Wiles said she would look into these.

- Michele Bowman described that the police have partnered with RING, the doorbell security company. You don't have to actually own a Ring doorbell to participate. They encourage neighbors to download and use the Neighbors by Ring app.
- A resident pointed out that even when the cars are covered in snow, thieves are looking to steal things. She saw several cars which had circles wiped clean on the side windows, presumably so people could look inside and see if anything valuable was visible.
- Bruce Albaugh put in a good word for the Frederick Police Department app that alerted him that there was an issue on 3rd Street the day before. This app is available for Android and iPhones.
- A resident asked about the police recruiting problem. What is the minimum age? Michele reported that it is 21, and the academy is a 6 - 7 month process. You have to be a high school graduate. You work hard and sometimes that work ethic isn't there. In the last academy FPD lost half of the recruits before the academy ended.

Guest Speaker

Judy Briley, Chair of the Frederick Bocce Steering Committee, spoke about the effort underway to construct four Bocce Courts in Baker Park near the Carillon. She was joined by Skip Irwin, the Co-chair who talked about the fundraising effort. Judy tells us that a group of people started playing in Baker Park about 4 years ago and found that sometimes grass was too high or that hillocks interfered with play. They thought it would be nice to have bocce courts and formed a group and started talking to city. Eventually they partnered with Friends of Baker Park. Ultimately Friends of Baker Park signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the city. The city agreed to provide the land, permits, labor and equipment. Frederick Bocce committed to pay \$70K to pay for materials.

There will be four courts near the tennis courts are at W. 2nd and College Avenue. It will be attractive and the courts will be wheelchair accessible. So far as we know this is the only sports venue for wheelchair athletes in Frederick. They have been in touch with Special Olympics, Para-Olympics, and Senior Olympics. Frederick Bocce would like to see a bocce team come out of every NAC, police force, fire dept, county police, and others. The group started the campaign to raise \$70K on July 1. They now have \$29K. The city cannot start construction until they have reached the \$70K goal. Those among the first 100 donors and give \$150 or more will get a copy of the book "This Green Oasis: A History of Baker Park 1928 -2003". The group has an artist's rendering of the courts, a site plan, budget and scoreboard. A flyer is available for the fundraising effort, link below.

Players may borrow Bocce balls from the lower desk at the Talley Rec Center. It will be free to use the courts unless you want to reserve a spot then you have to pay \$10. This reserves a court for several hours. The Frederick Bocce club sends out emails to encourage others to come and play.



- The Frederick Bocce web page, and place to sign up. www.frederickbocce.org.

- The flyer <https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11890/Boccee-Flyer-and-Form>

Interest Group Updates

- Alley Safety - Bruce Albaugh – There is nothing new to report. We are still in a holding pattern for completion of the alley project. If you haven't sent an email yet, please take a look at the simple one attached and email to the Mayor, Aldermen and Zack Kershner. The attachment has everyone's email. Encourage these officials to set aside funds and find time to build upon what is already a success. The alley lines have been of benefit and makes city more attractive and safer. Bruce asked Michele to ask Zack Kershner to come back and revisit the subject in the spring. Please note in your emails that it's a public safety project, not cosmetic, and gives pedestrians a dedicated safe space to walk. It's a quality of life issue.
 - Sample email of support to Mayor and Aldermen: <https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11891/Support-Email-Alley-Project>
- Litter Group- Julia Schaeffer – Current efforts focus on two initiatives. The City's Sustainability Committee has indicated a growing interest in an anti-litter ordinance which calls for property owners to be responsible for cleaning their sidewalks. Related to that, the litter group and Kara Norman (DFP) are planning to meet with Zack Kershner to explore funding required for the City to install and service additional trash cans for downtown. The DFP has purchased almost all the nicer downtown trashcans with grant funds over past years. Danielle Doll (DFP) reminded the group that the trash cans were purchased with funding from Comcast. The more volunteers who come to the annual Bring a Broom Saturday in April, the more funds are donated by Comcast.
- Short Term Residential Rental – Darcy Richards reported that the Short Term Residential Rental group had submitted its report to the Mayor and Alderman. The report and the memo that goes with it are available to the public on the City's website under NAC 11 December 2018 minutes. Roger Wilson is looking to put a task force together to explore the issues. Links to the report are below.
 - City's NAC 11 Website: <https://cityoffrederick.com/345/NAC-11>
 - Short Term Rental Report <https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11660/November-STRR-Report-December-2018-rev>
 - NAC 11 Coordinator Memo with Short Term Rental Report <https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11659/November-NAC-11-Memo-STRR-Report>
- Blight Committee – Darcy Richards announced that the first Blight Group meeting will be held on January 23rd at 2:15 at the City Annex at 140 W. Patrick Street, Room B. She will be the NAC 11 Coordinator liaison, but a group leader will be needed. One resident asked why we are bothering to look at this issue when 20 years of concern, discussion, and committees have had no effect. Darcy replied that a number of residents wanted to revisit the issue and the new administration may be more amenable to solutions. Julia mentioned that we know nationwide other cities have

used blighted and vacant registries as a tool. We hope to take a look at how others are reducing blight. Further, the Mayor has indicated that he is interested in curbing long term vacant buildings, which is at the heart of blight.

Bruce mentioned that we need to look at taxation structure for blighted and vacant properties. Brunswick is using a rule that requires vacant properties to be inspected after 2 years for safety, public health, and systems issues. We must stop demolition by neglect.

Old Business:

- Sidewalk Repair – Darcy Richards worked with Todd Himes to create a flyer that explains the process and resources for repairing city sidewalks. Residents can report a damaged sidewalk to the city, or they can request their own sidewalks be repaired. The flyer will be available on the city’s NAC 11 website under the minutes. There is also a full package of information required by the city when the resident is undergoing repair of their own sidewalk.
 - Sidewalk Repair Flyer
<https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11884/sidewalk-repair-flyer-final>
 - Sidewalk Repair Package – City of Frederick -
<https://cityoffrederick.com/DocumentCenter/View/11885/Sidewalk-Repair-Package>
- Weinberg Center Signage Project – The January 22 Board of Zoning Appeals 7 pm meeting at City Hall will include the Weinberg Center’s request for a sign variance ZBA18-1018V. In accordance with Section 313, the Applicant is requesting four variances to Section 864 of the Land Management Code (LMC), entitled, Sign Regulations. (NAC #11)(Collard)
<http://www.cityoffrederick.com/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/3544>
- Panhandling - One resident complained about the aggressive panhandling that occurs when she walks on Carroll Creek. Others have complained to her about similar conduct. She believes there are more panhandlers than there used to be, and she is not seeing a strong police presence. She has heard that panhandlers come from Hagerstown and other places. Michele indicated that there is a police unit downtown. She asked that residents bring up police issues early in the meeting when the police were present. There was a discussion of the landscaping and wrought iron fencing that keeps people from sitting on the wall at the Market Street entrance of Carroll Creek Park. Another resident said panhandlers now sit along the walls and wait for you to approach, making cat calls, and asking for money. Another resident responded with another point of view: he has lived here since 1977 and does see police downtown on segues, bikes, and walking. Police have a personal rapport with some of the panhandlers and homeless persons. Michele reminded us that it is not illegal to be homeless. Unless the person grabs you or interferes with your progress when asking for money, it is not illegal.

Julia mentioned that some residents may want to look into how other communities are dealing with panhandling. Michele said if you do look into this, then meet with Sgt. Carr and Lt. Beliveau. They are the experts on this. Bring it up next month when they are here.

Jim Schmersal reported that some solutions are underway. It had been worse on Mullinex Park, and it has gotten better there because of cameras. Now the FCCA has a day shelter and the homeless don't have to be on the street. Structures will be putting up cameras as well. Another resident pointed out that business owners are getting upset. Michele said there were 3 arrests on the Creek today. Whatever landscaping and wrought iron fences will be done for the when the budgets is available. Danielle Doll mentioned that the DFP is looking at what can be done besides the wrought iron fencing,

New Business:

- **Strategic Plan** - Next month, we will hear from Marc DeoCampo, the Mayor's Executive Assistant for Administration, on the creation of the city's strategic plan 2030. There is one more opportunity on January 22 at 7:00 pm at the Burck St. Community Center to have your voice heard. There is also an online survey you can fill out to raise your concerns if you cannot attend a strategic plan session in person. Marc is leading the effort. You can find out more info about the strategic plans on city website:
 - City of Frederick Strategic Plan <http://www.cityoffrederick.com/1252/Strategic-Plan>
 - Strategic Plan online questionnaire: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/phase01>
- **NAC 2.0** In February or March, Gayon Sampson, Executive Assistant to the Mayor, will talking about NAC 2.0, a re-envisioning of NACs that came out of the Strategic Opportunities task force.
- **Parking lines.** In response to the request by residents to reinstate the faded parking lines on 3rd Street, DPW reports that the downtown parking lines repainting will begin in the sprint.
- Danielle Doll from the **Downtown Frederick Partnership** would like to present the DFP's attic fire separation program to NAC 11. On Jan 23rd they are going to Mayor and Board for the workshop to present this issue. There will be some info online once they present to mayor and board.
- One resident reported that **Stephen Parnes** had resigned from the HPC after many years. He has done a great job. HPC is a great organization and process and he has spent many years being a part of it. Residents should know he applied for reinstatement and heard nothing from the administration. Residents in positions like this often put in 20-30 hours a week no pay. He suggests the NAC send a thank you letter to Stephen for his service. The coordinators said they would do that.

- Ricardo asked if the **Goodwill** could be asked to speak to the NAC 11 about the development project. We will check to see if April is a good time for them.
- **Q & A with the Mayor** - Julia reminded us that residents can chat with the mayor on January, the 25 at 7:30 am to 9:30 am at the Mountain View Diner at 1300 W Patrick Street, Frederick MD 21701. **THIS HAS BEEN CANCELLED**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 19, Brewers Alley, 2nd Floor. We expect to have the developer and planner for the Visitation Academy redevelopment on hand to answer questions and discuss the site plan. [NOTE: The location of this particular meeting may change due to a need for a larger space. Please watch for an announcement closer to the meeting date.]