**Seminary Hill Association, Inc.**

***Monthly Board of Director’s Meeting***

**Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 7:30 PM**

**Virtual Meeting Held Electronically**

**Police Report:** Officer Lennon was not available but he supplied the following data from June through August: June – 44 incidents; July – 50 incidents; August - 45 incidents. Most of the incidents were of a minor nature.

**Sheriff’s Report:** Captain Oliver was not available for the meeting.

**Program: SHA Priorities and Goals 2020 and Beyond**

Tom Fulton, Vice President, SHA, provided an overview of the proposed mission and goals of SHA. The Seminary Hill neighborhood core values were last developed in 1974 over 46 years ago. This is the document the City uses in order to guide its overall city-wide master plan for development. Residents of Seminary Hill frequently are now at odds on issues with Alexandria City Government, both elected and appointed. One way to find out what really matters to the residents of Seminary Hill would be to ask a series of questions on either our SHA Website or Face book Page – or both. Tom then provided a draft list of questions we might consider asking. The briefing was well received by the SHA Board of Directors.

**Minutes:** The June 2020 SHA Minutes were approved.

**Treasurer’s Report:** The 31 August balance was $24,077.21. Checks paid were $20 to the Federation and $125 for June and July Web Service fees.

**Area Reports:** Frances Terrell, Area 1, reported that the big oak tree in front of the concession stand has been cut down much to the dismay of area residents and they are still waiting on the court decision concerning lights at the TCW sports stadium; Bill Goff, Area 2, reported that he was still working with the attorneys on the TCW lights issue; Bill Rossello, Area 3, reported that one of the speed bumps on Trinity had been installed and the second one might be contested; Babette Smith, Area 6, reported that the Hawk Light on Braddock Road near Episcopal High School is being evaluated; Frank Putzu, Area 8, reported that there were some car break ins; Paul Judge, Area 9, said there have been more thievery issues in his neighborhood and would like to see more police presence. He also said the City is moving along on the Strawberry Run project and that the Seminary Ridge Board would be turning over in September; Loren Needles, At Large, wants to know what is going on in the Karig Estates issue (Mary Gibbs, the attorney for the owner, said delays were caused by Covid 19 issues); Christina Holt, Episcopal High School, said students will be coming back in early October and will be Covid 19 tested. She also said they have cleared 9 acres of trees for the ongoing build project but they would soon be planting replacement trees; Ross Kane, VTS, said classes have started and that the old Post Office is

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being used only for VTS mail boxes but the blue mail boxes mail is still being picked up by USPS.

**Old Business:**

**MacArthur School Rebuild Project:** Bill Pfister gave a current status of the project. The City voted to increase the Density/FAR from .6 to .75. This was needed to accommodate the MacArthur school size. It was agreed that any further increases to .75 for other build projects would require a separate DSUP. Bill then gave an overall description of the current plan. The MacArthur School Advisory Board is now in general agreement on the school design. Bill also stated that the projected enrollment would be about 850 students up from the current number of 650.

**New Business:**

**Seminary Road Affordable Rebuild Project:** This issue took up a majority of the time at the meeting. The Alexandria Housing Development Corporation (AHDC) has applied for a $250,000 loan from the city to explore replacing the city-owned vacant lot next to the Fire House on Seminary Road and 2 adjoining houses and replacing them with a 40 unit apartment building and 15 town houses. The proposal was presented to the City council on 8 September without any SHA or neighborhood prior input. President Flemming of SHA testified before Council and asked the City to defer granting the loan until city staff had used existing surveys and documents from a prior attempt to develop the site to determine if the site is actually buildable. The $250,000 loan will be forgiven if the site proves to be unsuitable. Frank Putzu also testified and provided photos of the steep terrain and drop offs on the site. Jon Frederick, representing AHDC, responded to the many questions from the Council members and residents. Jon stated that this loan was to determine if the project was feasible and that the planning was in the very earliest stages. Yon Lambert, Director of T&ES said city staff had reviewed the very preliminary plans and found no “show stoppers” that would stop the project. SHA residents testified about huge storm water problems they experience in this area and were very concerned that further development would cause even more flooding into their homes. In the end, Council directed city staff to provide a written report to SHA and residents answering the questions that had been raised before the $250,000 loan was released to AHDC. Jon Frederick agreed to send his very early plan to SHA so we could better understand what is being proposed., SHA board members expressed great concern about the project and distrust of city staff.

**Upper King Street Multimodal Improvement Project Grant:** The City has applied for a $40 million grant to completely alter the roadway in front of Bradlee Shopping Center to convert it to bike lanes and bus transit. No information about this grant had been shared with nearby civic associations or residents. Hillary Orr from T&ES said the staff was not prepared to come speak on this project since it was not finalized and they did not have the grant money.

**Duke Street Transitway Funding:** One of the big proposed changes here is traffic light settings. The City wants to have the settings so that first responders would be able to adjust the lights so they would always have a ‘green light’. This could cause a problem since there are so many traffic lights on Duke /Street that it could cause traffic backlogs unless they are synchronized properly. The city has received $75 million in funding to begin the design of this bus corridor. City staff assures residents they will be included in a community engagement process about this project.

**Taylor Run Stream Restoration Letter:** Tours are being arranged for residents to learn about the planning to reconstruct Taylor Run. The tours will be on Saturday 12 September starting at 10 AM at Chinquapin Park. If you are interested, contact Carter Flemming to reserve a spot.

**FOIA Go fund Me:** Fran Putzu is working with Chris Weymont on this project using Chris’ Facebook page. Funds are being raised to allow FOIAs to be submitted to obtain more information on how the Seminary Road diet decision was made.

**TC Williams Re-Naming Effort/Stadium Improvements:** The Re-Naming effort is expected to take a long time. The stadium improvement project will begin, but no work can be done to install lights due to the pending litigation.

**3120 Colvin Street Development:** We will get a briefing next month by the developer on this project which apparently concerns a used car lot business.

**Upcoming Meetings:** September 12th City Council Public Hearing at 9:30 AM

**Note:** the President proposed and it was approved that future SHA virtual meetings would start at 7 PM.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:02 PM

Richard J. Hayes, Secretary

**Attendees:** Carter Flemming, Tom Fulton, Nancy Jennings, Dick Hayes, Frances Terrell, Bill Goff, Bill Rossello, Richard Hunt, Jack Sullivan, Babette Smith, Jim Rowley, Frank Putzu, Paul Judge, Loren Needles, Chris Weymont, Christina Holt, and Ross Kane.

**Others in Attendance:** Bill Pfister, Dave Cavanaugh, Mary Gibbs, Jon Frederick, Sean Miller, K. B. Mcaffee, Ellie Briscoe, Jim Kitty, Travis (no last name), Kyle Knack, Maureen Muncey, and Kathryn Tatko.