

**Seminary Hill Association
Board of Directors Minutes**

May 10, 2004

The following Officers and Directors were present:

Frank Putzu, President
Joe Gerard, Vice President
Jack Sullivan, Treasurer
Cindy Gurne, Communications Officer
Laura Vetter (for Maggie Melson) Episcopal High School and Secretary
Tom Kerester, Area 2
Richard Hobson, Area 3
Carol Maxwell, Area 6
Bob Coulter, Area 9
Charles Ablard, At-Large
Mary Lewis Hix, Virginia Theological Seminary
Bill Dickinson, Past President

The April minutes were lost due to a computer problem and have not been recovered

Treasurer's Report

Jack Sullivan reported \$21,289

Police Report

Sergeant Bartlett reported crime overall is down. There is a trend in thefts downtown through unlocked front doors. Frank Putzu asked for status on the Nancy Dunning case. Discussion of gang violence ensued.

Area Reports

Area 1:

Lillian Patterson not present to report.

Area 2:

Tom Kerester reported that the 2nd Presbyterian site is busy with the Ethiopian Church activities.

Area 3:

Dick Hobson reported City Council unanimously denied the application to rezone Quaker View to townhouses.

Area 4:

Jack Hersey not present to report.

Area 5:

Dick Hayes not present to report.

Area 6:

Carol Maxwell reported nothing new to report

Area 7:

Pat Liddy not present to report.

Area 8:

Don Fullerton not present to report.

Area 9:

Bob Coulter reported traffic calming is proceeding on St. Stephen's Road.

Virginia Theological Seminary:

The Virginia Theological Seminary is on the agenda.

Episcopal High School:

Laura Vetter reported nothing new to report.

Planning Commission approved the site plan for the 2nd Presbyterian property with many conditions, including those set forth by SHA.

Virginia Theological Seminary

Gregory Tate and Laura Durham from Planning and Zoning to report on SUP request to build two semi-detached residences. VTS is zoned R-20. Plan is to consolidate faculty housing on campus. Building 2 semi-detached units, rather than 4 single family houses preserves more trees and open space. This plan preserves 90% of this particular site as open space. VTS has had very little activity in SUP requests or other improvements. The total square footage of this plan is 12,346 square feet. The units will be 30 feet high, so they are small in scale. The units will be composed of a mixture of brick and wood siding.

Bill Dickinson inquired about the ability to construct additional houses on the site. Some trees will be added to the site to replace some of the trees, which will be lost. The construction should take 12 months, according to architects, John Cole and Christine Hesse. The plan will go before the Planning Commission in June. Duncan Blair introduced the representatives from VTS: Mary Lewis Hix, Vice President for Administration and Finance, and the Very Reverend Martha Horn, Dean and President of VTS, and David Mutscheller, Director of Facilities. Duncan Blair explained that VTS requires its faculty to live on campus and this plan consolidates the faculty on the immediate campus. Joe Gerard asked about current and anticipated faculty housing

needs. This plan should meet their faculty housing needs for the next 10 years. Currently the building site is used to store wood. Bill Dickinson inquired about where VTS would store wood in the future. David Mutscheller of VTS said less wood would be retained. Architect John Cole discussed alternate sites on campus that had been considered for the housing. This site was found to be the most desirable. The housing is smaller than others on campus and designed for faculty with smaller families. RJ Keller, a civil engineer, with RC Fields & Associates, VTS' engineering firm, reported on water issues. The site is mostly flat and therefore has slow drainage, but some retention areas will be added. John Cole pointed out that the houses are set back from Seminary Road to maintain the view from Seminary Road to VTS, while allowing for backyards behind the residences. Carol Maxwell inquired about the chain link fence. John Cole was not sure how the fence would be handled. According to John Cole there will be a lot of screening with vegetation. Cindy Gurne inquired about guarantees from VTS to maintain open space in the future. Dean Horne responded that VTS has maintained a welcoming open campus for people to walk and jog through the VTS campus, rather than enclose the campus. Dean Horne explained that these 2 houses will meet the VTS housing needs for the next ten years. Dean Horne explained that very little construction has been done on VTS. Bob Coulter commended VTS for being a great neighbor.

Board discussion ensued.

Dick Hobson commented that this plan is consistent with VTS policy of having all faculty live on campus. Frank Putzu raised concern about setting precedent of semi-detached housing, but, Dick Hobson replied that there is another semi-detached residence on VTS' campus and R-20 throughout SHA does not allow semi-detached elsewhere in SHA. According to Frank Putzu, semi-detached units allow greater preservation of open space. There is no change that VTS can make without an SUP. Duncan raised the point that a dorm is a multi-family unit, but multi-family units are not allowed elsewhere. Frank Putzu inquired about securing guarantees of open space. VTS contacted adjacent neighbors prior to the meeting. Motion to support the plan passed. SHA will send a letter of support to the planning commission. Mary Hix abstained.

TC Williams Construction Advisory Committee

Frank Putzu received an email from Carter Fleming about a committee being formed to be involved with the TC Williams High School renovation. SHA will have 4 representatives (Lillian Patterson, Carter Fleming, Steve Harness and Armenia Wood). 4 representatives will also represent North Ridge on the committee. A motion was offered to confirm the appointment of Lillian Patterson, Carter Fleming, Steve Harness and Armenia Wood to represent SHA. Motion was seconded and passed

Open Space Policy Issues

Quaker View

Dick Hobson thanked Cindy Gurne, Bob Coulter, and Charles Ablard for their work on Quaker View. The SHA Board has voted to recommend the site for open space protection. Dick received a call from Historic Alexandria about preserving this site for open space. It may be possible to ask City Council to condemn an easement for access to

the site. Market value of the property is \$216,000 and \$114,000 and \$98,028. Rob Krupricka thought it would require \$1.2mil to acquire the property. According to Cindy Gurne, the seller is eager to sell. Cindy said that the property would have to be held by a 501(c)3. Potential uses were raised by Bill Dickinson. Cindy Gurne foresees a neighborhood walking park. The adjoining church does not appear to be interested in acquiring the property, according to Dick Hobson. Dick Hobson wants to see SHA take a leadership role in organizing the neighbors to pursue this area for open space protection. Bill Dickinson suggested considering an arrangement with church for a right of first refusal for the city, should the church ever sell its property. The application for townhouses has been rejected by the city. Cindy Gurne believes that the city has six months to buy the property. Frank Putzu would like to write a letter to the city stating that SHA would like to see the property acquired as open space, and to form a committee of the neighbors and other stake holders, as well as an agreement for right of first refusal should the church on the adjoining property fold. Frank Putzu offered a motion to communicate the above issues and intention in a letter to the city. Frank Putzu's motion passed. Cindy Gurne asked Jack Sullivan, Joe Fischer and Bill Dickinson to represent SHA on this issue. Bill Dickinson cannot due his role on the open space committee. Frank Putzu requested from Cindy Gurne a proposed list of names to serve on the committee. The stake holders include: Mr. Webster, the church, and Quaker Village. Dick Hobson and Cindy Gurne agreed to serve on the committee. Dick Hobson also recommended Charles Ablard, Joe Fischer and Jack Sullivan.

Response to City Call to identify properties on Seminary Hill to be preserved

Cindy Gurne chimed in on the recent open space bus tour.

Bill Dickinson then took over. The open space committee was formed last October. Chaired by Eric Wagner and Judy Noritake. 3 citizens were appointed at-large by the city manager and others also on committee.

According to Bill, 30-40 properties were identified as having the opportunity for development at greater density levels.

Priority Sites include: Waterfront lots in old town, Mount Vernon waterfront alignment, the Wide Trail Park between Ivor Lane and Seminary Road, Claremont Road in Eisenhower Valley, Monticello Park expansion. There is a rumor that the GW Masonic memorial may sell the back part of its property for development. On the 2nd Presbyterian site 10 lots were approved, 2 of which will be donated to city. Bill believes that there is still the potential for city acquire an additional lot.

Frank Putzu proposed that SHA prioritize its open space properties. Cindy Gurne made the point that there are multiple definitions of open space. Bill Dickinson pointed out that we are dealing with private property and private owners.

Bond Issues

Frank Putzu reported on a movement for the city to undertake the issue of open space bonds to provide significant money to purchase open space. The city currently has \$2 million in its open space fund, but issuing bonds would make significantly more money available for open space acquisition. Franks Putzu asked whether SHA wants to take a stand on the issue of open space bonds and how hard does SHA want to push for the city acquire a third lot at 2nd Presbyterian. Bill Dickinson anticipates that it would cost

between \$620,000 and \$850,000 for the city to buy an extra lot. Bob Coulter raised the issue of foregoing property taxes by the city purchasing an additional lot. Bill Dickinson believes that SHA has garnered some goodwill with city council by advocating for the city to purchase one lot, rather than advocating that the city purchase the entire property. SHA may soon achieve 1.1 acres of open space at 2nd Presbyterian in addition to the 3 acres achieved at Battery Heights and therefore the City of Alexandria should come up with some money to purchase some open space on Seminary Hill. Bob Coulter has concerns that we need to prioritize the open space on Seminary Hill (i.e. between 2nd Presbyterian and Quaker View) Quaker View is approximately 1/2 acre. Tom Kerester raised the point that acquiring Quaker View as open space will preserve the hot right from Duke Street to Quaker Lane. Carol Maxwell believes that we should pursue both properties and Frank Putzu agrees. SHA will pursue both properties (Quaker View and the additional lot at 2nd Presbyterian) According to Cindy Gurne, Ivor Lane received a lot of attention from the people on the open space bus tour.

Ivor Lane

Bill Dickinson reported that Ivor Lane development is being recommended against by city staff on the grounds that the street will not be wide enough. There is a site plan in on the Wilson University site to build an additional house on the site, which staff is recommending against. Dick Hobson moved that SHA take stand that SHA is against the development. SHA to communicate opposition to rezoning Ivor Lane. Motion seconded and passed. Bill Dickinson proposed an amendment for the city to prepare a plan for a bike trail through the Ivor Lane property. The amendment passed.

SHA Matters

Cindy Gurne requested that material be sent to her to forward to the list serve. All sports facility: David Speck is chairing the committee responsible for raising the funds. The leading site is in Eisenhower Valley at Hensley Field. Eileen Fogarty said that no connector would be sought to support access to the facility. It is unclear what the public/private split will be. A Strategic Planning Meeting was held tonight. Bill Dickinson believes that these meetings are important and encourages everyone attend the future meetings. The next Strategic Planning meeting is scheduled for May 20th. Cindy Gurne brought up the electronic town hall meeting concept. Cindy Gurne announced that the Armenian Festival will be held this Saturday at Market Square.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura F. Vetter, Secretary