

Hillcrest Community Civic Association
Monthly Meeting
July 5, 2003

Minutes

Pastor Senger called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. After an Independence Day reading by Chaplain Hawkins, and approval by voice vote of the June minutes, First VP Vince Spaulding reported that the Board had decided to add two standing committees (Marketing and Garden Tour); had asked the Marketing Committee to consider new Hillcrest T-shirts; and had approved donations to the Serenity Players as well as to two families who suffered recent losses.

Dennis Logan's Treasurer's report, showing a balance of \$821.69, was approved on a voice vote. Vince Spaulding said that HCCA might send a letter of concern about the lack of progress at the new Rec Center site. Faye Lyles reported that the Crab Feast would be September 13, at \$40 per person. Marvin Bowser reported on the successful Garden Tour, which netted the Association more than \$350 over costs, and garnered ample positive media coverage for Hillcrest. Membership chair Gloria Logan reported 395 households, including one new member. Safeway Assistant Manager Mark Morrison asked for feedback and said that the store would be opening a Starbucks counter as well as beginning beer and wine sales.

Carrie Thornhill thanked Members for their support in her new role on the Board of Education. There was discussion by several members about whether HCCA should take a position on the voucher issue, which Mrs. Thornhill said she would not recommend at this point.

Vince Spaulding said the Legislative Committee must become more active, particularly in view of the voting records of at-large Councilmembers.

ANC7b Chair Kathy Chamberlain reported that DCDOT will do a traffic study of Branch Ave. between Alabama and Southern, as a result of HCCA's traffic recommendations; that the District has begun condemnation proceedings on the nuisance property at 3608 Alabama Ave.; and that the Board has approved a voluntary agreement with Alabama Express on litter abatement and other issues at the liquor store site.

Dennis Logan announced details of Night Out Against Crime, scheduled for Tuesday August 5. Sgt. Bouknight presented the crime report, noting 8 fewer crimes than the prior month and saying that with fewer external details, manpower should be back to normal. In response to his comments about the continuing problem of stolen autos, Kathy Chamberlain urged Members to join the "Watch Your Car" program offered by MPD. Carrie Thornhill, noting media reports of younger perpetrators and little support infrastructure in some areas of Ward 7, moved that HCCA call on the Mayor to create an

interagency team to rectify gaps in services to youth. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

Vince Spaulding introduced guest speaker Mary Williams, the Clean City Coordinator. She outlined three principal objectives: education about litter and other problems; empowerment of residents, including already signing up 530 clean-up volunteers through local outreach; and enforcement – which she said is critically lacking. She said there is a chronic lack of coordination and support coming from the Department of Public Works. In response to questions, she urged Members to be vocal in demanding performance from city agencies, and stressed the importance of having an independent voice, such as her office, that can hold agencies to account.

Felix Patterson of Washington Gas then spoke about the rate increase of 7% that will likely go into effect this November. He said the increase was in response to escalating costs of doing business in the District, driven in part by fee increases that have helped cover the city's budget deficits. In response to a question, he said that any aging pipeline infrastructure that needed to be replaced in the Hillcrest area has largely been taken care of.

Miles Steele spoke briefly about the Neighbors Through Art initiative, and said that the rebuilding of the Francis Gregory Library is in the city's FY05-06 capital plan. He said he does not support Councilmember Brazil's idea of mixed-use development for library sites.

Carrie Thornhill said that the Board had agreed to a celebration of HCCA's 15th anniversary next year, and that Mark Johnson has agreed to chair it.

Members were reminded that Serenity Players will be celebrating their 20th anniversary at the Lincoln Theater on August 16th.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm, with 48 Members and guests in attendance.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nelson Smith
Recording Secretary*