

Highlands Civic Association (HCA)

- To strengthen the sense of community, responsibility, and livability in the Highlands for all residents.
- To protect, preserve, and further the residential quality of the Highlands area.
- To maintain an open line of communication among the Highlands neighborhood, the Borough of State College, the University community, and other Borough neighborhoods and agencies.
- To facilitate the exchange of information among HCA residents.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, January 12, 2022 7:00pm Zoom Video and Phone Conference

Meeting Convened at 7:05 pm.

Attendees: Mark Huncik, Eric White, Margaret Sebastianelli, Vinnie Scanlon, Jennifer Stahl, Theresa Lafer, Jacob Werner

Updates from Mark Huncik;

PennDOT (Pennsylvania Department of Transportation) public hearing will be held on Thursday, January 13, 2022, from 7:00 to 9:00 to present its reconstruction plan from Curtain Rd. to Westerly Parkway along Atherton Street. The plan calls for the removal of 50 well-established street trees between Westerly Parkway and Beaver Ave. in order to access underground systems that require maintenance/replacement. To date there is no evidence of a plan to plant replacement trees or to provide an alternate plan to protect and preserve the existing trees. Additionally, the plan does not provide for an arborist to monitor the project to prevent damage to the existing trees. State College is deemed a 'tree city' therefore tree protection and care is beneficial to the community's health and well-being. Keeping the trees helps to mediate flooding that occurs with weather-related water in the area. HCA feels it necessary to be represented in the discussion.

Pugh Street Student Housing project plan for the Days Inn/Mad Mex/Bottle Shop location is complete. The construction and student residents will be in the heart of the Highlands not in downtown as are other newly constructed high-rise complexes. Residents have concerns for the adverse change to the quality of life it may bring.

E. Fairmount Street Park project continues to be discussed by the Neighborhood Coalition, Borough staff and manager. DCNR has been slow to respond due to the pandemic but funding is expected as Spring arrives. Both playground and pavilion materials have been purchased and are stored awaiting placement.

HARB (Historical Architectural Review Board) will meet January 12 at 7pm to discuss a proposed demolition of a historical house at 420 E. Foster Avenue. Based on the Borough consultant's

report, the proposed demolition request has not met the justification for demolition based on information submitted by the property owner. The proposed demolition and construction would have an impact on the surrounding historic structures along the block and would be the only new and noncontributing structure in the immediate area. The current property is a rental property and holds a student rental permit. The planned use of the property is not clear, but is not part of the HARB review at this time.

Greek Life Focus Group: The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life coordinated a variety of focus groups with fraternity and sorority community stakeholders to gather feedback on the *2017 New Measures for fraternities and sororities at Pennsylvania State University* on December 14, 2021. The focus groups were to discuss progress and collect neighborhood feedback regarding the new safety initiatives. The new measures were to address the following areas in the Penn State fraternity and sorority community are:

- Disciplinary Process
- New Staff Resources
- Neighborhood Enforcement Alcohol Team (NEAT)
- University Monitoring
- Deferred Recruitment/Enhanced Eligibility Requirements
- New Member Process
- Greek Chapter Scorecard
- Relationship Statement
- Greek Membership Fee
- Parent and Member Education
- Survey for New Members
- No Tolerance for Hazing/Violation of Pennsylvania Law
- Social Restrictions

A report of the findings has not been forthcoming at this time.

Transportation Commission: Penn State's subsidized Lyft/Uber pilot for early morning rides from 2 am to 7 am from neighborhoods back to student housing. The rationale for establishing such a pilot is based on students' concern for safety. There has been no HCA involvement regarding the impact the pilot may have on permanent residents or what the safety issues are for those living in the neighborhoods. The congestion of idling vehicles parked along streets in front of houses waiting for a call does not feel safe for residents. Established parking areas for waiting vehicles should be part of the pilot.

General Discussion:

Property maintenance, its relationship to surrounding property values and the importance of ordinance enforcement was discussed. Also mentioned was injury to pets from de-icing materials used on sidewalks throughout the neighborhood. To facilitate a productive response from the Borough, download the **seeclickfix** app to make a report (including a picture of the problem).

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 7:00 pm, Zoom and Phone Conference

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Meeting minutes submitted by Margaret Sebastianelli, January 2022