

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.

AGENDA

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

7:00pm

Zoom Video and Phone Conference

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm

1. Introductions: Mark Huncik, Eric White, Margaret Sebastianelli, Theresa Lafer, David Stone, Elizabeth Shirey, Clare Hinrichs
2. Annual Dues Collection - \$5 per household (arrange with HCA Treasurer, Vinnie Scanlon, at mvinnies@icloud.com); account balance \$1,494.67
3. Ukraine Support – Sister-City Agreement Update:
 - a. Development process:
 - Met with Mayor Ezra Nanes to introduce the sister-city concept and garner support for an official agreement between the city of Nizhyn, Chernihiv Region, Ukraine and State College, Pennsylvania
 - Presented concept to Borough Council President, Jesse Barlow
 - Presented concept to Council twice in open forum
 - Garnered support from Penn State Ukrainian Student Association with 250 student signatures and stimulated student interest in supporting the initiative
 - Formed a 501(c)(3) corporation to facilitate receiving community donations and distributing funds to Ukrainian recovery
 - Final action needed to complete the process: Borough Council's open discussion and approval
4. Borough Staff/Neighborhood Coalition meeting on Dec. 1:
 - a. Members agreed to meet based on Council's activity or as a minimum quarterly. Recent meeting on December 1 included the discussion of:
 - PSU F8 report documenting police intervention of student behavior activity in the first 8 weeks of fall semester – data continues to be collected for FA22, activity report is forthcoming
 - Keven Kassab, Borough Inspector and Health Officer, reported on the positive outcome of the mobile clinic located in the Martin Luther King Plaza providing

COVID inoculations and boosters and FLU shots; also reported that the quality of life in State College is rated high by the LGBTQ community members

5. 2023 Borough budget:

- Residents may expect a tax increase from 1.50% to 1.623% (approximate increase of \$105 on average)

6. Short-term Rental (STR) licensing:

- Letters to 180 online applicants requesting STR property status (license renewals included) have been mailed; a 30-day period is allowed for review and response
- The Borough website has information about the process, the application form and standards to be met for approval

7. HARB case in the Highlands – E. Foster Ave.

- Owners of the 500 E. Foster Ave. property have applied for a HARB renovation and additional structure plan to the existing house review, project architect presented a schematic plan of the proposed addition to the existing home and construction of a detached 3-bay garage; concerns include possible out-of-scale change for the size of the lot (.33 acres fronting E. Foster Avenue and along Hetzel Street) and failure to meet the ordinance rule that all sides of the structure fronting a street and/or an avenue maintain the historical integrity of the original structure as examples
- A professional consultant will review the plan to determine if it is in sync with the ordinance (what works and what doesn't work) and provide feedback to the architect
- The Zoning Board may be asked to review the proposal in regard to current and anticipated changes to zoning in the area
- To be considered is the purpose for the change as it relates to a current or future intent to request approval as a short-term or long-term rental status

8. Other items and discussion:

- Sigma Chi Fraternity (currently functioning as an independent) property, fencing and large white bundles of unused renovation materials is causing neighborhood concern. Ordinances that specify garbage, clutter and disarming litter to yards should be enforced

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Minutes submitted by Margaret Sebastianelli, December 2022