

RNA Community Meeting Minutes

January 29, 2024

7:00 p.m. at Salem Lutheran/Riverside Third Space (hybrid in-person/virtual)

Board Members in attendance: Rich Badmington (President), Jen McLaughlin (Vice President), Joelle Woolston (Treasurer), and General Members Rachel Wagner, Jeff Brown, Jackson Fisher

Members absent: Becca Charlton (Secretary), General Members Jeff Dewberry, John Pare (immediate past president)

Welcome

RNA President, Rich Badmington called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., welcomed approximately 18 residents, and introduced the RNA Board members.

Rich introduced Connor Eagleson who has been nominated to join Board as John Pare's successor. The Bylaws call for approval by a vote of the Board of Directors, which Rich noted would take place following the meeting.

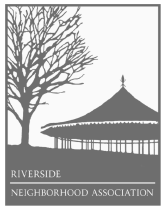
Public Safety/Police Update

Sargent Rivera and Officers Smith, Pritchard, and Owens introduced themselves and provided recent crime statistics for the Riverside area.

Councilman Costello

Councilman Costello took questions from the audience, which included:

- Recent news about the Department of Transportation charging to plant street trees; he noted that efforts are underway among Council members to reduce these fees.
- The approval process going forward for the redevelopment of the Inner Harbor; he noted that zoning bills have passed and that no changes have been authorized on the south side of the harbor.
- Funding of Park Rangers in Patterson Park and elsewhere, potentially including Riverside Park; he noted that the funding these staff positions through private grants is not a viable solution and that this is the responsibility of Rec & Parks. In his role in the budget process, he is advocating for funding for these roles.
- The Councilman's endorsement for the upcoming mayoral Primary Election (5/14/2024); he provided his rationale for his previously publicized endorsement.



Friends of Riverside Park (Jackson Fisher)

Jackson gave an update on the City's ongoing Riverside Park construction project:

- Work has begun on the "Red House."
- The current estimate for project completion is Summer 2024.
- Friends of Riverside Park continue to partner with student volunteers from St. Ignatius on park improvements. Jackson invited others to participate.
- Again this year, Friends of Riverside Park obtained a significant number of shrubs and trees from the Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (MANTS) at the Baltimore Convention Center. This is a special effort by Jackson and other volunteers who invest substantial time and effort to collect these donated plants for later use in the park.
- As always, anyone interested in volunteering in support of the park can reach out to RNA to be put in touch with opportunities.

Parking (Jeff Brown)

Jeff updated the status of petitions to expand Residential Permit Parking (RPP) in Riverside:

- 300 Block of Randall – petition complete
- 1700 Block of Jackson – currently circulating

Jeff noted that City is working on new street signs to update the hours of parking restriction.

Crime & Public Safety (Rachel Wagner)

Rachel discussed recent complaints about off-leash dogs in Riverside Park and reiterated RNA's longstanding position that dog owners should comply with City ordinances that prohibit off-leash dogs.

Development (Rich)

Rich reported that there is no update on the possible redevelopment of 1302 Key Highway.

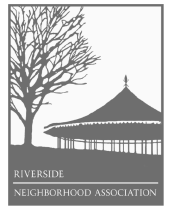
Rich reported that the Park Bench Pub liquor license has been transferred and that, based on his discussion on site with the landlord and operator, the restaurant/bar is expected to reopen under a new name with family-friendly offerings later this year. Work continues on necessary building repairs.

Rich reported that the MARC train administration has agreed to periodic meetings to keep the community better informed about the operations of their facilities adjacent to the Riverside neighborhood.

Rich reminded attendees of the upcoming deadlines to apply for South Baltimore Gateway Partnership grants.

Riverside Neighborhood Association Inc.

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Rich reminded attendees of the previously-announced upcoming changes to the cadence of RNA meetings, including: regular business meetings in Jan., Feb., Mar., May, Jun., Sep. and Oct.; a social meeting in Apr. and Jul.; and our combined celebratory meeting in Nov./Dec.

Placemaking (Rich)

Rich noted that the ad hoc Placemaking Committee did not meet in January, and that it will continue to move forward with plans shared in the Nov./Dec. meeting, including street banners and a brochure funded by a SBGP grant. Subsequently, focus is likely to turn to ways we can increase opportunities for residents to gather. The revised RNA monthly meeting schedule (to include social gatherings) reflects this direction.

Other Business

Peninsula Post publisher Steve Cole noted that the latest edition of the paper would be released on the coming Friday.

A participant noted the upcoming Federal Hill Chili Cook-off.

Jen McLaughlin noted the upcoming Baltimore Museum of Industry Bull & Oyster Roast.

A participant asked about the recent hit-and-run incident at Randall and Webster. Nancy Mead noted the Department of Transportation is working on intersection improvements.

A participant asked if parking tickets are currently being issued in the Riverside RPP. Jeff Brown indicated that enforcement is spotty.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn and concluded the meeting passed

*Respectfully submitted,
Jen McLaughlin (for Rebecca Charlton)
February 10, 2024*