



FOREST HILL HOME OWNERS INC.

August 12, 2020

Zoom

Attendance: Officers: Gretchen Mettler, President, Sam Kohn, Secretary, Tom Winston, Chair of Standards, Tony Rupcic, Treasurer.

Members: Tess Givens, Mark Madland, Beryl Tishkoff, Bob Charlick, Chris Hubbert

Absent:

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 by Gretchen. No one offered corrections to the minutes. The minutes were adopted as submitted.

Beryl agreed to serve as chair of the board following Eda's resignation. Chris moved to appoint Beryl as Chair of Board of Trustees of FHHO, seconded by Tom. The appointment was unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

Tony reported that since the July meeting, FHHO has received 3 more donations, bringing 2020's total to 84. Tony is working with Gretchen and Mark to reach out to the nearly 200 people who have given in the past, but who have not given so far this year. FHHO still needs \$6,711 to break even this year.

Cottage Maintenance Report

Ohio Waterproofing provided an estimate of \$73,000 to lift the Cottage, dig a footer for the foundation and place it on a foundation. In addition to neighborhood fundraising, FHHO will need to look at grants. Consider the Cleveland Restoration Society, Rockefeller Foundation among others. We should also coordinate with Forest Hill Preservation for raising funding (they are a 501c3 corporation).

The board discussed the estimate and expressed some feelings in support or opposed to continuing to fund the Cottage.

Tony offered that applying for damaged property exception might be possible to reduce the tax bill temporarily.

The board discussed the zoning of Blue Cottage property if it were to be sold. That parcel is zoned Commercial.

Written reports submitted:

Bylaws Committee Report

By laws is now working on provisions governing the member voting process. Chris expects to be prepared to distribute proposed bylaw provisions governing membership requirements, member meetings and member voting for wider review in early September.

Sign Committee Report

Mark has made good progress mocking up a sign design and obtaining a quote. Cleveland Heights official contact was discouraging and suggested we find a different way to celebrate the 70th anniversary of FHHO for legal reasons. We will continue to work with CH on pursuing this matter.

Preservation Committee

Tom reported on two new permit applications received since the July meeting. A home on Westover had a concrete patio approved. A fence project on Rutherford is still under review.

Fund Raising

Beryl reported that to date, we have sold only 20 tee shirts. Additionally, Beryl is working on getting an article about FHHO's 70th anniversary in local publications such as The Sun Press, Heights Observer, and Cleveland.com/Plain Dealer. Finally, Beryl is trying to gather information about the black dove statues/finials that are appearing on street signs.

Survey Committee

The committee has finalized a survey which is being mailed out to residents with the outgoing newsletter. A pre-paid envelope is included for residents to mail their responses. Residents can also respond to the survey online. Thank you again to everyone who helped get this survey off the ground. The next major steps are data collection, presentation, and analysis.

FHHO History

The majority of the meeting was devoted to this topic was facilitated by Bob Charlik to discuss FHHO History regarding race and discrimination. This is an issue that had been discussed by Trustees via email throughout the summer.

Bob asked the following question to The Board: should we as other NGOS and organizations are doing point out and make public that fact that in its early years the Rockefeller enterprise in Forest Hill was discriminatory? Sam added a follow-up question: does the evidence suggest FHHO actively pursued a policy of discrimination?

The Trustees generally agreed that there were discriminatory practices in the Forest Hill neighborhood in the past. Chris reminded The Board that there are several eras of history to consider, each having varying degrees of inclusivity and exclusivity. He also pointed out some of the philanthropic activities of The Rockefellers in the areas surrounding Forest Hill. After further

discussion, there was general consensus that the home buying was clearly designed to be exclusionary, and that FHHO should try to acknowledge this historical fact.

Tess asked what the hope would be on how to communicate that to our community or broader community. Bob responded by explaining that right now in America we are opening up cans we have previously never looked at. As a society, we need to recognize how we have excluded certain groups, and that in keeping with the current trend in the United States, FHHO should do the same, though he wasn't exactly sure how to communicate these facts to the community.

Tom asked The Board if the current restrictions, having a history of being used to discriminate, are still discriminatory. Tom explained that we can recognize a discriminatory past, and celebrate how we've evolved. He understands that it's uncomfortable for folks to address this issue because first you have to admit that it was wrong, and some people have an advantage because of that. Nevertheless, Tom and most other Trustees expressed that the deed restrictions in and of themselves are not now discriminatory and should continue to be enforced.

Bob and Sam volunteered to work on creating some sort of a statement on race and the history of race in FHHO. Some members of The Board wanted this statement to frame FHHO's history of discrimination as a celebration of how far we've come regarding inclusivity. The conversation concluded with further affirmation that most Trustees do not view the deed restrictions as discriminatory and further, they are the key reason why they moved here and continue to enjoy the neighborhood.

Other Business

Before adjourning, Tom and Bob reported that they are working on addressing Swim Club property.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30

Sam Kohn, Secretary