

**Washington Square West Civic Association**

**Special Meeting of the Board of Directors**

August 9, 2022

A special meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of the Washington Square West Civic Association (the “Corporation”, “Association” or “WWCA”) was held via *Zoom* at 7:00pm Eastern Time on August 9, 2022, pursuant to notice duly provided to the membership and each of the Directors. The Special Meeting was called by the Zoning Committee for the Board to vote in public on the applications for zoning matters at hand. The following Directors were present:

Tami Sortman, <i>President</i>	Jonathan Broh	Leigh Ann Campbell
Casey Kuklick	Deb Sweeney	
Marisa Shaaban, <i>Vice President</i>	Drew Moyer, <i>Secretary</i>	

Sukrit Goswami, Robert Sher and Patrick Coue attended by proxy having delivered written proxies in advance of the meeting. Richard Le, Katie Low and Joe Pappalardo did not attend.

Ms. Sortman called the meeting to order, introduced herself and welcomed the Board and members to the meeting. There was a question from a member regarding the meeting form and the process by which Special Meetings are called under the Association’s by-laws. The Board confirmed that the meeting was called in accordance with the by-laws. Ms. Sortman reported that she had received written request for this Special Meeting more than five days in advance of the meeting date from Mr. Broh, representing the Zoning Committee, and including Ms. Shaaban, Campbell and Mr. Sher. Mr. Broh wrote to the Board on July 11, 2022, to state that he would request (at the regular Board meeting on July 12) that a Special Board meeting be called in August for the zoning matters. He followed this on August 3, 2022, with comments about the agenda for the meeting on August 9 and confirmation of the

Board's agreement to hold a Special Meeting. The number of Directors attending in person and by proxy provides evidence of the notice effectiveness. The Board noted that it was holding the meeting in public to be transparent because of the importance of Airbnb's to the community. Also, RCO requirements established by the Planning Commission require the Association to respond to variance requests within 45 days and thus the matters before the Board could not wait until the next Regular meeting in September.

Ms. Sortman turned the meeting over to Jonathan Broh, Zoning Committee Chair.

Mr. Broh described four (4) projects previously reported and reviewed by the Zoning Committee at its meeting on July 26:

1. 704 Pine Street – This project involves the construction of a rear garage, an addition to the residence and a roof deck. Variances are sought for refusals relating to maximum height; accessory dwelling units; rear yard setback; and garage depth. Mr. Broh reported that the property is also part of Society Hill, but WWCA is the coordinating RCO. There were concerns expressed about the size and massing of the project. It is under review by the Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC). The architect is also responding to requests from the Society Hill RCO. There will be a deed restriction to avoid the accessory dwelling unit over the garage being used as a residence or Airbnb. Final approval is contingent upon PHC approval. The recommendation of the Zoning Committee is for non-opposition pursuant to a deed restriction for the garage living space and final approval from the PHC.

Upon motion made by Mr. Broh and seconded by Mr. Moyer, the Board voted in favor of non-opposition. All ten Directors in attendance voted in favor. There were none opposed and no abstentions.

2. Two Airbnb matters were brought before the Committee and the Board:

- a. 335 S. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Apt. 2A – This is for a visitor accommodation which is prohibited in RM1 zoning district. The applicant is currently living abroad and desires to arrange short-term rentals of the property. It will be managed by a reputable short-term rental company, a representative of which attended the Zoning Committee meeting. Various issues were discussed including the process of vetting applicants, trash removal and cleaning. The applicant provided letters of support from the condo association
  
- b. 308 Quince Street, Unit 8 – This refusal is also for a visitor accommodation. The Zoning Committee, Board and members attending the meetings expressed concerns that were consistent with general opposition with Airbnb's. In this case there were also specific complaints from at least one neighbor regarding parking and blocking of access on Quince Street.

The Board and members discussed the two projects and Airbnb's overall. A strong consensus was expressed for opposition based on crime issues, nuisance, trash, lack of vetting or oversight of renters, the removal of permanent housing from inventory in the neighborhood and other problems associated with certain transient visitors in the community.

For 335 S. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Apt. 2A, the Board voted in favor of *non-opposition* conditioned upon a sunset provision in two years with automatic termination at that time. Upon motion duly made and seconded, all Directors attending in person or by proxy voted in favor of non-opposition except for Mr. Coue who abstained from voting on the matter.

For 308 Quince Street, Unit 8, upon recommendation of the Zoning Committee and upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously in

favor of *opposition* to the request.

Mr. Goswami joined the meeting in person.

3. 1231-1233 Walnut Street. – CMX 5 – This application is for a prepared food shop. Mr. Broh noted that the matter came to the Association based on a referral (not refusal) as a special exception is applied for a food shop and for food to go. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously in favor of this project.

Ms. Sortman announced that there will be a full discussion and open forum to solicit addition input from the community on Airbnb's. This will be held at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting and include special guests.

A member raised a question about whether open Board meetings will return to being held in person. The Board reported that it had discussed this issue and agreed to continue to conduct meetings via Zoom for the foreseeable future. In addition to the original public health basis for virtual meetings, they have proven to be more convenient and allow for increased member attendance and engagement.

Katie Low joined the meeting in person. The Board discussed a few administrative matters and concluded that no further business was required.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49pm.

Respectively submitted,

Drew A. Moyer  
Secretary