

Northampton Civic League Minutes 07/05/2005

The July meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by NHCL President Bernice Jackson. There were 11 people present.

The President opened with a pledge to the flag.

Secretary Matt Asay read the minutes for the June meeting. The minutes were approved with no corrections.

Matt Asay provided updates on three recent issues:

- Matt reported that he raised the issue at the last Neighborhood Commission meeting of the intent and definition of "Fund Raising" for grant-funded Neighborhood Month projects. The response he got was not very clear or definitive but he felt there was no point in pursuing the matter further at this time.
- The presentation by the City of Hampton on their online geographical data base could not be set up in time for the July meeting. John Eagle, head of the city's Information Technology office said that either he or his head of the GIS division or both would be here to speak at our August meeting.
- Matt's 4-year term as District Commissioner will be ending at the end of September. The selection process for a new commissioner is underway. Karen Duncan has asked to be considered for the post. There will be another meeting of District 1 leaders and organizational representatives on July 28th.

Karen Duncan reported on the Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) meeting she attended. The topic of the meeting was future Rapid Transit systems for the peninsula. Three alternatives were presented. The target date for implementation of the chosen system would be 2013. Speakers are available from HRT to present these possibilities to various groups for their feedback. Karen offered to set up a presentation for our August meeting. The league agreed that this would be a good idea and she agreed to schedule it. Wendell Midkiff stated that he could arrange for a projector if needed.

The majority of the meeting was taken up with a discussion of the proposed Buckroe Beach Master Plan. We had speakers two groups with differing views on portions of the plan. The part that seemed to be most in contention was the plan to convert three city-owned lots near (but not on) the beach to mixed housing developments with some local shops.

Bill Earnst, a past president of the Buckroe Civic Association and member of the citizen's group that helped develop the overall plan spoke in favor of this portion of it. He talked about how the plan would help provide revenue to the city to support the other amenities planned for the Buckroe area. He stated that the area needs to support local businesses that are year round, not just seasonal. He emphasized that upscale development would preserve and even increase local property values.

Three other Buckroe area residents, Phyllis Flanders, and Trish and Nick Ferraro spoke in opposition to the development. Ms. Flanders did most of the presentation. They would like to see the land retained as part of the park or have most of it used for businesses and amenities to support people who come to the beach. She stated that their group now has over 6000 signatures on their petition asking the city to reconsider its decision.

Due to the large amount of controversy over this proposal, the city is scheduling a public presentation to the citizens of Hampton on the Buckroe Beach Plan. The presentation will be scheduled for some time in October. Both sides of the issue encouraged members of the civic league and the citizens of Hampton in general to attend the meeting. They will be able to get more information on the plan, ask questions and (possibly) provide their own input on the project.

The meeting was adjourned at about 8:37 pm. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 2nd.

Matt Asay, NHCL Secretary