

Wagener Terrace Neighborhood Association

August 21, 2023

Minutes

[Hybrid Meeting at Mark Clark Hall and via Google Meet]

WTNA website address: www.wagenerterrace.org

The August meeting was called to order at 7 pm by President Petar Lemajic. Stephen Rosenberg was present and introduced himself as the President of the North Central Neighborhood Association. He was attending with 2 other members of the NCNA Board. They are currently only having meetings quarterly and wanted to get a sense of what our meetings are like. He said that on October 11 at 6pm the NCNA is hosting all of the Mayoral candidates at Redux Contemporary Art Center on King Street for a Q&A session. President Lemajic suggested that we join forces and have that be a dual meeting with both neighborhoods, and Mr. Rosenberg readily agreed.

MINUTES: The previous month's minutes are posted on the WTNA website. Liz Bronneberg moved to approve the minutes from the July meeting as posted on the website. Gail Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the minutes were approved.

FINANCIALS: Ms. Thomas reported that we have \$5,950.58 in Checking and \$22,510.38 in Savings, \$17,500 of which is set aside for the Oyster Roast. She has created a proposed budget which will be available for review and voted on next month. She reminded everyone to pay their annual dues by dropping them to 354 Grove Street or by paying via Zelle at WTNAtreasurer@gmail.com.

CITY COUNCIL/POLICE/CITADEL: No representatives were present.

PRESENTATION: Doug Marcy with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office for Coastal Management was present to talk about climate change and the causes and impacts of sea level rise. He has worked with the City on their strategy. Mr. Marcy told us that the government does a climate assessment every 5 years, which has shown an increase in average air temperatures, more heat waves, and sea level going up. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said that the global average atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration is the highest that it has been in at least 2 million years, and sea level rise is happening at the fastest rate in 3000 years. Sea temperature and land temperature are both going up. In the US there is a higher trend of sea level rise than elsewhere in the world.

Mr. Marcy said that future temperatures will drive sea level rise. Sea level change can happen when Arctic ice melts and when the ocean warms, as it expands when it warms. He said there has been almost

a foot of sea level rise in Charleston, and they expect another foot by 2050. The 2022 Sea Level Rise Technical Report concluded that there will be more extreme tides and more damaging storm surges as sea level rises, and the amount of emissions really matters, as failing to curb emissions could cause an additional 1.5-5 feet of rise than would otherwise be expected. He noted that there are differences in the amount of sea level rise. For example, sea level rise is occurring at higher rates in Louisiana where temperatures are warm and ground is sinking. In contrast, sea level is going down in some places, like Alaska, where tectonic plates are lifting up the earth.

Mr. Marcy noted that the level of confidence in what will happen decreases that farther we look into the future. However, we know that sea level is going to exacerbate existing problems like drainage, and it is going to make the floodplain creep inland. Areas that are not in the floodplain now will become part of it. Water is coming up the storm drains because it used to be a gravity-led system, but now there is no gravity because there is no elevation change. The City is building tunnel and drain shafts, and they are almost done with the Fishburne watershed. Mr. Marcy also reminded us that there is a NOAA Sea Level Rise viewer where you can see which areas of the City will be impacted at which sea levels. The areas most at risk are the areas that were filled in years ago and that are now sinking.

LOCAL ISSUES

Travis Roberts introduced himself and said he has not been to a meeting in 10 years. He is concerned about the City lot on Gordon Street by 9th Avenue next to the remodeled duplex. This lot is public property and provides a nice view of the creek, but he said that neighbors attempting to access the creek there have been run off, and he has noticed that it is slowly being taken over by the owners or residents of the duplex, with machinery, trailers, and/or vehicles often being parked there. He wondered if this issue had come up at a prior meeting and if anything was being done about it. President Lemajic deferred to Blake Scott, who had already planned to introduce a memorandum on Community Water Access in WT.

Mr. Scott lives in the neighborhood and works at the College of Charleston. He said that he has interest in creek access both as a researcher and a member of the community. He noted that there is a lot of public access to the creek in our neighborhood, but none of it is marked or maintained by the City. Consequently, over time, certain private property owners have tried to take this public land over and run people off. He thinks we need to make it a community effort to delineate community access to the water. We can also create living shorelines with plants that will help create a buffer against flooding. He thinks that this can introduce more recreation to our area and will add value to our homes and neighborhood. He noted that all of the new developments are promising water access because it is a selling point, and in this case, the water access is technically already there for us, so the question is what we do to actually make it more accessible.

Mr. Scott delineated 7 locations where he thinks we should advocate for improved water access.

1. The Longborough Dock area, which is technically still private because the City did not act in a timely manner back in 2019, which apparently resulted in the property reverting back to the Longborough homeowners.
2. Halsey Creek, along 10th Avenue, which is already public but which Mr. Scott thinks should be cleaned up, have a bench installed, and have native plants planted. He noted that area of road is collapsing because the creek is trying to reclaim it.
3. The lot at Gordon Street and 9th Avenue, which Mr. Roberts previously mentioned. Mr. Scott said that the area is about 60 x 100 feet, and he thinks it would be a great spot for a bench and maybe a crab dock. He estimates that there is likely about 8-10 hours each day where there would be enough water for someone to launch a kayak.
4. The end of St. Margaret Street at 5th Avenue, which has overlapping ownership between Patrick Properties and the City. Representatives of Patrick Properties have already said they want to help clean it up.
5. The area at 3rd and Wagener Avenues, which includes 60 feet of public land on the corner, plus a public right of way.
6. The end of Grove Street, affectionately known as Raccoon Point, which is public but not documented as public. He said it seems like the owners tried to obstruct access at some point, but Mr. Scott thinks it should be cleaned up and have a sign saying "Wildlife Habit, Tread Lightly."
7. The end of Dunneman Avenue, which is four acres owned by the Citadel and has been used as an area to dump stuff. Mr. Scott proposes that the cadets and the neighborhood collaborate to develop a living shoreline. The college would maintain ownership but allow community access.

Mr. Rosenberg thinks the memorandum is a good idea and should be phrased as "this is what we expect" rather than "this is what we would like." VP Jarett Nicholson thinks public areas should be clearly and consistently marked in a way that ensures neighbors cannot run you off. Mr. Scott moved that WTNA use his research to create a comprehensive document on the public accessibility points to present to our representatives. Ms. Thomas and Susan Cale seconded. All were in favor. VP Nicholson said he would work on drafting up the document.

Mr. Scott also welcomed everyone to participate in the Department of Natural Resources's 34th Annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep on September 16. This event is SC's largest litter-cleanup event on our waterways, and there is a WTNA group that will be meeting at 10am at the corner of 5th Avenue and St. Margaret Street where they will begin walking each street to clean up. DNR will be providing all of the supplies.

NEW CONCERNS

Savannah Brennan, the Director of Programming with Charleston Moves, was present. She reminded us that Charleston Moves is a local nonprofit which advocates for safe and equitable mobility with a focus on bike and pedestrian access. She asked us to consider donating a set of Oyster Roast tickets to the silent auction being held as part of their fundraising event on November 9. VP Nicholson moved to

support this event with 2 tickets, contingent on us having the Oyster Roast. Bill Smith seconded. All were in favor. VP Nicholson will connect with Ms. Brennan in the coming weeks regarding this donation.

COMMITTEES

1. Yard of the Month – There was no August YOM.

2. Sunshine – Dr. Valerie Kinloch grew up on Dunneman Avenue and went to Burke High School, and her mother still lives on Dunneman. She recently became President of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina.

3. Environment – Nothing to report.

4. Publicity/Membership – The new WNTA meeting signs were purchased. Owen Meislin has one that he will put up by Hampton Park, Ms. Bronneberg has one that she will put up near Hester and Mt. Pleasant Streets, and Secretary Nancy Wilson has one that she will put up near Rutledge Avenue and Maple Street.

5. Zoning – Nothing to report.

6. Oyster Roast - VP Nicholson informed us that Lowndes Grove will be undergoing renovations again this winter, so we will not be able to have our annual Oyster Roast there. They are donating \$5000 to us again to support our holding the Oyster Roast elsewhere. VP Nicholson thinks this year will go more smoothly since we already laid the foundation last year, but he does hope to get more volunteer involvement and have a co-chair help lead the process. He also announced that Lowndes Grove is hosting Brew with a View on August 30 from 5:30-7:30p. He wants us to have more of a WNTA presence at the event than we did last year, which will include flyers and a signup sheet.

Ms. Thomas moved to close the meeting, and VP Nicholson seconded. There was a unanimous vote to close the meeting. Meeting closed at 8:07 pm.

The next WTNA Meeting will be September 18, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Handy Contacts:

Wagenerterrace@wagenerterrace.org

Police Dispatch (non-emergency) 843-743-7200

Lowndes Grove MOD 843-708-4314

Code/Livability 843-805-3226

Councilman Gregorie: 843-327-7900 (Mona Lisa), personal #: 843-819-6619

Councilman Sakran (District 3) 843-819-0507

City of Charleston Citizen Services Desk 843-724-7311

BOD: Petar Lemajic, Jarrett Nicholson, DonnaMarie Patten, Jeanie Knowlton, Tyler Hueter, Susan Cale, Nancy Wilson, and Anna Turner