

Historic Jackson Ward Association, Inc.
Membership Meeting
April 21, 2009
Club 533- 3rd and Jackson Streets
6:00 – 7:30 PM

Association Minutes

Call to Order by President Charles Finley at 6:15 PM

Introduction of Members and Guests Present

March Minutes – Approved as posted to the website.

Presentations

Maggie Walker Postage Stamp Campaign – Melvin S. Jones, Jr., President Maggie L. Walker National Alumni Association- Mr. Jones was not in attendance – no presentation.

Police Report and Gang Activity – Lt. Lisa Drew – Lt Drew reported that HJW has seen an increase in violent crimes - 3 robberies – 2 in the daytime, armed, one on Broad St and one on 2nd St and 1 home burglary. One murder, late night around 3 AM, person found on Marshall St and had walked through the alley behind the Skyy Lounge on Broad with two females. Under investigation. Lt. Drew reminded everyone to call the police to report any suspicious activity. 4th Precinct Officers still occupied with New York Chicken on Broad St.

Lt. Hamlin – Gang Activity - Spoke at length on the definition of Gangs and that according to Federal Guidelines we have Gangs in Richmond, however they are Sects that may have the Blood Gang influence. Gang groups embrace the “gangster” image and the money culture. The two groups mentioned were the Bloods and the World War Crew. He stressed the importance of reporting crimes and leaving the determination if the crime is gang influenced up to the police. He implied that a group of individuals can commit a crime and they are not necessarily gangs. He recommended that we continue to be active community members and maintain our vigilance in reporting crimes.

City of Richmond Code Enforcement – Ms. Rachel Flynn - Ms Flynn expressed her dismay over the loss of the Egelston Hotel. She noted that the owners of the Egelston Hotel did not apply for enterprise zone monies and as far as she knew did not apply for any additional assistance. The city paid \$25,000 for demotion and clean-up of the Egelston, with the owners expected to pay the city back. She answered questions relating to code enforcement and how to protect other historic buildings in Jackson Ward from falling into disrepair and neglect. She recommended we contact Terry Moore 385-0709 and David Cooper 363-5497 who are responsible for code enforcement in Jackson Ward, to report properties that appear dangerous and in violation of city building codes. Members reported individual properties to Ms. Flynn, notably on the 600 block of 1st and 500 block of Catherine. Ms. Flynn also spoke about the city’s use of Spot Blight and how it is very costly to remove property from an owner through the Spot Blight laws. Jermal Development has acquired 4 Spot Blight properties on the corners of

2nd and Broad and is in the process of renovating them.

Kim Gray - 2nd District School Board Representatives – Board voted to close Chandler Middle School and redistrict the children to Henderson Middle and Martin Luther King Middle School. Board is waiting on final School Budget with more detailed information. The Superintendent's Office is working on a more detailed format to present to the School Board.

The School Board is in discussion on Open Enrollment procedures. Parents are concerned that children are not being accepted. She concluded with the invitation to contact her with concerns, recommendations and issues.

Updates/Reports

Spring Clean-up Wrap-Up – Vicki Mollenauer – Largest participation, over 100 volunteers. All of Jackson Ward was cleaned and with the money received from Hands On Greater Richmond and Altria, plantings were done on Clay from Abner Clay Park to Belvidere. Some volunteer groups present were: Altria, Capital One and police employees, students from William and Mary, and members of Charles Finley's fraternity, Omega Psi Phi, Upsilon Nu Chapter. Lift Coffee Shop provided the morning meal, thanks to donations from Altria. Vicki reported that it was quite a success and all the members agreed that HJW is looking better. Vickie invited all to view the website for all the pictures and her thank you letter.

Maggie L. Walker Heritage Day – Charles Finley - Attended the opening ceremony representing HJWA. Event presented the work of the students from the College of William and Mary Sharpe Community Scholars Program. They worked at the St. Luke building to preserve history. They discovered original bank and Maggie L. Walker documents. They will archive and record the documents for 1 year and then return them to the National Park Service - The Maggie L. Walker House on Leigh Street. National Park Service Ranger Mike Andrus commented that it was a wonderful event and he thanked the neighborhood for its participation. The association voted to provide a \$500.00 grant to William and Mary to help defray their expenses for the project and program.

Business Items

Financial Report – Vicki Mollenauer Report submitted and accepted.

Special Use Permit Request for 21 East Leigh Street and 528 North 1st Street – Approved special permit formally. HJWA already sent in a letter of support to the city in the summer of 2008. Charles Finley will send the formal form the city requested acknowledging our support.

Community Concerns

Charles Samuels, 2nd District Richmond City Council Councilman – Spoke briefly regarding a \$150,000 budget cut to the Main Branch of the Richmond Public Library and asked for opinions. The plan may have to cut Saturday hours to save money. HJWA members suggested that perhaps the library could cut hours during the week to maintain some Saturday hours. Councilman Samuels clarified that the money slated for renovating the library is from City of the Future funds and not from the yearly city budget.

Announcements

Carver Community Day is Saturday, April 25th at the Commonwealth Cancer Center on
Marshall 11am- 2pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Marilyn Milio, HJWA Secretary, April 29, 2009