

March 10 General Meeting of the Riverton Neighborhood Association

25 in attendance.

Steve Aylward presiding

Opening comments and introductions

Rail Trail Forest Ave. Traffic Calming completed after compromises with the city and neighbors.

Castine Pines saved through agreement with the city, a developer and the Land Bank.

Steve noted the RCA is a volunteer group. Mentioned difficulty getting the word out. Hope to re-establish website possibly linking to a BLOG to facilitate ease of communication.

Steve would like to investigate holding “virtual meetings” .

Possible committees for members to join

- Preservation of Grange Hall
- Riverton Gateways, The Trolley Park and Morrills Corner (keep buildings neighborhood friendly so we maintain our residential look.
- Garden Walks and Awards – possibility of having neighborhood garden walk since there are so many lovely gardens in the neighborhood.
- Thank you to Chip Edgar for offering to maintain the school sign and keep it current.

Rail Trail report - Steve Aylward

- Background and detailing of Land Bank and other donations
- Thanks to all the volunteers who have worked on the trail
- Developer made land swap with city to extend trail and donated \$65 thousand to City
- City has helped with heavy equipment and hauling trash. They are happy to offer help when volunteers are willing to donate time to a project.

Caroline Wagner – Community Garden report

- Working with Greg Lapin/ Community Gardening and Jeff Tarling, City Arborist
- Location in front of Tennis Courts
- Attending Friends of the Park meeting on Thursday. Chip Edgar will be going as well.
- If City agrees, it will cost \$1.00 a year to lease the land 10x12 foot plots will rent for \$35.00
- Caroline’s dream is to have the gardens reach out to the refugee community
- Mike Bobinsky wants evidence of community support. Some plots are already spoken for.
- Flyers will go out through Portland Housing Authority, Neighbor’s paper and word of mouth.
- Water – submeter installed at school for now. Goal is to collect rainwater. Looking for 50 gallon barrels. Mike Morin said he has access to those. Claudia Risbara offered other ideas for collecting water.
- Caroline is looking into the possibility of applying for a Community Block Grant.

- Handyman Rental has offered free use of tillers. Make sure to thank them if you go there.

Q and A

- Ken Capron asked about RCA part in Trails. Ans. Our Trails and Open Space Committee works with Portland Trails and the Land Bank.
- Kevin Murphy expressed his appreciation for the Trail and all the people involved. He has volunteered as well.
- Ken Capron asked how to stay informed about trails. Ans. There is a Geocities web site. Rivertonrailtrail.
- Claudia Risbara informed us Risbara's Greenhouse is planning a composting workshop
- Concerns about possible vandalism of gardens expressed. Richard Bellafiore suggested talking to the people in charge of the summer baseball league schedule about littering.
- John Coyne, City Councilor shared his enthusiastic support for Community Gardens.
- Kevin Murphy likes Caroline's idea of encouraging international gardening.
- Questions about the fading lines on Forest Ave. Ans. Forest Ave scheduled for repaving then lines will be repainted.
- Richard Foster raised concerns about accidents and problems turning at Avalon Street due to the raised bed there. Says city is unresponsive.
- Morrill's corner problem with traffic where two lanes of westbound traffic merge into one.
- Paul Connally raised concerns about communications. Questions how city handled the final meeting about Forest Ave traffic calming. Noted our website is inactive. Could RCA do more to get the word out? Lack of communications. Marydee Stinson asked if he would please give us his email address for our mailing list. Conversation about reviving the website and the possibility of a BLOG followed. William Laliberte offered to help out with this endeavor.
- Ken Capron also raised the issue of communications. Thanked Steve Aylward for letting him know about the HCD meeting in the fall. Ans. Clarified that the fall HCD meetings are held throughout the city every year and have nothing to do with the RCA. We did send out an FYI email. The City puts ads in the paper and on its website.
- Ken Capron noted that the RCA has been dissolved by the State because we didn't file an Annual report. Ans. Marydee read a letter from Janice Carpenter explaining the work that she and Peggy Morin have done. The RCA is grandfathered to the law prior to 2003. It has been suspended, not dissolved. All of the paper work is completed and the check is ready to go to the Sec. Of State. Both Janice and Peggy have been in contact with the Sec of State's office to ensure this is worked out satisfactorily. Denise Harlow will mail the check and documents.
- In order to address the problems with communications, Chip Edgar proposed we schedule monthly meetings, possibly taking the summer months off unless there is a need.
- Paul asked if there are published notes from the monthly meeting with the City Manager. He is concerned that the RCA may be perceived to speak for everyone

- in the neighborhood. He expressed support of a BLOG to help with communications and ensure that all interested parties are heard.
- Motion was made to meet the second Tues of each month. After much discussion, motion carried and dates were set for April 14 and May 12. There will also be a June meeting.

A Nominating Committee formed in accordance with the By-Laws. Richard Bellafiore, Denise Harlow and Richard Foster. They will present a slate of nominations at the April meeting. The slate will be published via email. Elections will be held at the June meeting meeting.

It was discussed and noted that members must pay dues (now set at \$5.00 per family annually) to vote. (in accordance with the By-Laws) Ken Capron would like to look at changing this in the future.

Dues will be collected again at the upcoming meetings so all interested members have the opportunity to vote. Any dues paying member 18 or older is eligible to vote

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Marydee Stinson Sec.