

Minutes of the June 2005 meeting of the Cleveland Park Citizens Association

Meeting date: Saturday, June 4, 2005

Location: Cleveland Park Public Library

3310 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC

The meeting was called to order by President George Idelson at 10:19 a.m.

After announcements, the members disposed of two pieces of new business:

Election of Officers: without debate, members elected by voice vote the following slate of officers for 2005-06, which was presented by Isabel Furlong, chair of the nominations committee:

President, George Idelson

1st Vice President, Peter Espenschied

2nd Vice President, Barbara Beelar

Recording Secretary, Edward Cowan

Assistant Recording Secretary, Gregory New

Corresponding Secretary, Jean van der Tak

Treasurer, Jill McCannon

Assistant Treasurer, Ana Aldama

In addition, the members approved two slates of delegates:

To the Federation of Citizens Association of DC: George Idelson, Ann Hume Loikow.

To the DC Federation of Civil Associations: George Idelson, Gregory New, Carol Phelps, Mary E. Lofton-Manning.

George Idelson opened a discussion of concerns that some Cleveland Park residents have about the possible consequences—traffic and parking congestion, noise, loss of trees--of proposed construction and other changes on the grounds of the National Cathedral. The Cathedral and its affiliated St. Albans School contemplate the construction of a performing arts center and the enlargement of athletic fields. Noting that there has been friction and even “antagonism” in the past between the Cathedral and its neighbors, Mr. Idelson said the association hoped to avoid problems by anticipating them and by persuading the Cathedral authorities to modify their plans. He said talks had begun in the preceding week “and may drag out into September.”

Peter Espenschied presented a draft resolution (attached as an appendix to these minutes) that lists several changes or modifications sought by CPCA. Mr. Espenschied said that the Cathedral has applications pending before the Board of Zoning Adjustment and the Historic Preservation Review Board. If the association cannot reach an agreement with the Cathedral authorities, then the association’s executive committee is authorized by the resolution to submit pleadings in opposition to the two boards. “So far,” Mr. Espenschied

said, “there appears to be a spirit of co-operation on everybody’s part to reach an agreement.” He expressed the hope that the Cathedral would ask the boards to defer consideration of the applications while the Cathedral and CPCA negotiate. In response to a question, Mr. Idelson said it was not inconceivable that if an agreement is reached, CPCA might affirmatively endorse the two applications “to demonstrate that co-operation works.”

The resolution was approved by voice vote without dissent.

Minutes of the May meeting were approved without objection.

The membership then heard a talk by a Cleveland Park neighbor, Donald E. Graham, chairman of the board of the Washington Post Company. He discussed efforts by the business community to raise money to help needy DC public school graduates attend colleges outside the District. Putting financial assistance in a larger context, Mr. Graham said that in DC high schools, the number of 12th graders is half or less the number of 9th graders. In other words, there is a high rate of attrition as students drop out.

Lobbied by Mr. Graham and executives from several corporations (Mobil, Lockheed, Bell Atlantic, AOL, Fannie Mae among others), Congress has authorized Tuition Assistance Grants of up to \$10,000 a year to graduates of DC public school graduates (but not charter schools) to cover the difference that DC residents must pay elsewhere between in-state and out-of-state tuition. Mr. Graham said that President Bush’s budget for fiscal year 2006 asks Congress for \$33 million for these grants.

In addition, the DC College Access Program sponsored by the corporations gives students up to \$2,000 a year for five years towards their college expenses.

Mr. Graham answered questions about DC public schools and other matters before the meeting adjourned at Noon.

The next association meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Cowan
Recording Secretary