

**Bryn Mawr Business Association
Board Meeting
Bryn Mawr Hospital
April 11, 2019**

Present: President, Tim Rubin; Vice-President, Charlie Grafman; Secretary, Karen Barton; Treasurer, Dick Cuff; Lower Merion Commissioner, Scott Zelov; Lower Merion Township Economic Development Specialist, Eric Persson; Guest, Brenda DeFeo, Bryn Mawr Hospital; Guest, Nancy Scarlato, Ardmore Initiative; Bobbie McElroy; Maureen Hennessey; Michelle Greer; Alex Hanevich; David Broida; Charlie Scott; Carole Felton; Carol Smith; Melissa Wolfer

Welcome and Presentation on New Patient Pavilion at Bryn Mawr Hospital

Brenda De Feo, Vice President of Bryn Mawr Hospital/Main Line Health welcomed the Business Association to Bryn Mawr Hospital and made a presentation on the new 8 story, 256,000 square foot pavilion which opened recently after 10 years of planning and construction. The new building houses all new operating rooms, state-of-the-art equipment, a green roof, LEED design, new critical care units, all new maternity, labor and delivery rooms and a level III neonatal intensive care unit. The project cost was approximately \$253 million dollars including furnishings. Provision for growth in the number of beds and operating suites has been built in and additional floors can be added on top of the current roof. There are two concierge suites which have luxury accommodations. Patient rooms in the old building are being refreshed with cosmetic upgrades.

Tim Rubin emphasized what a great resource to the community the hospital is and what great resources to hospital employees, patients and visitors the surrounding businesses are. There was a brief discussion and an invitation to further exploration of ways to communicate to those who work in the hospital and utilize hospital services what is available to them in the community. Table tents in the cafeteria and strategic placement of the Business Association membership brochure throughout the hospital were among the methods mentioned.

Ardmore Initiative

Nancy Scarlato, Executive Director of the Ardmore Initiative (AI), explained the nature of her organization and encouraged collaborative efforts with the Business Association.

Unlike the Business Association, the AI is not a membership organization. It is a municipal authority funded by taxing property, not business, owners on the basis of the property's assessed value. In exchange, the AI provides street cleaning, streetscape improvements such as bike racks, benches and planters, and grants for facade improvements. While their constituents are owners, they work with business owners and the Ardmore Business Association to achieve overall success.

The AI promotes activities which bring people from outside the community into the town to spend money through eating and shopping. They conducted a survey in which a large number of stakeholders participated. The survey produced recommendations for strategies to improve business. These included “experiential retail” (interactive displays and speakers) and, for restaurants, providing choices of food types and a range of price points and atmospheres. There was wide agreement on the importance of providing family friendly opportunities for both retail and restaurants.

Like Bryn Mawr, Ardmore has old buildings with high rents and often absentee landlords. To counteract these less than desirable characteristics, the AI encourages building upgrades. Nancy reported on the many recently completed and projected construction projects which include parking, apartments and retail. Many new residents are expected including young professionals and empty nesters.

Plans for new development between Ardmore Avenue and Greenfield Avenue have been delayed as have bids for the new SEPTA station.

See destinationardmore.com for more information.

Approval of March Minutes

Karen corrected the new name of the former Home Properties apartment complex. It is now the Villas AT Bryn Mawr.

Treasurer’s Report

Dick Cuff reported that there is \$42,247 in the General account and \$25,682.86 in the Bryn Mawr Day account.

A deposit of \$10,000 has been made toward the cost of the holiday lights. The Township has applied for a matching streetscape funding grant.

A motion to approve a \$3,000 grant to Bryn Mawr Beautiful was made, seconded and approved.

Dick reported that we currently have no liability insurance for Directors and Officers. He recommended the current directors decide whether they wish to continue without coverage.

Commissioner’s Report

Scott Zelov repeated his suggestion that the Business Association consider holding a breakfast meeting similar to the one the Ardmore Initiative held several months ago.

Township officials and community leaders were invited and attendance was robust.

Scott suggested Tim talk with Nancy Scarlato of the Ardmore Initiative about the possibility of sharing street and sidewalk cleaning equipment and manpower.

Tim attended the Lower Merion Building and Planning Commission meeting on Wednesday to state the Business Association's support for the proposed Aqua building construction on Elliott Avenue. The project was approved at the meeting.

The new restaurant named Casablanca in the former Main Line Bistro space on Lancaster Avenue near Kelly's is up and running. The Mediterranean Restaurant space is empty. A sign in the adjacent Crust Pizza states they are now serving Persian food. The spaces have the same owner. There is a new restaurant named "Up Ryes" in the space formerly occupied by Mrs. Marty's. A food-related venture is negotiating for the former Erin Pub space currently undergoing renovations with an all glass front at 1005 West Lancaster Avenue. Avalon had its grand opening on April 1 and is up and running.

The "Let Them Play" Day Care Center is moving from Ardmore into the former investment advisor center on Lancaster Avenue. The Farmers Market will now be open every Saturday. Clover Markets has two dates set, April 28 and May 19.

The County Line Road Corridor Study is completed and the final report is on the Township website. Lower Merion and Radnor will meet to decide which, if any, of the recommendations they will accept and funding will be sought for those that are agreed upon.

Township Report

Eric Persson reported that the Big Belly which was removed from near the Pasha Boutique will be relocated close by with the agreement of Pasha's owner. Big Bellies are emptied when they are full, not on a regular schedule. There have been no additional comments from the public.

The Township is continuing its 0% loan program through which commercial property owners and leaseholders within Township commercial districts can improve the physical condition and appearance of their existing buildings. The funding is available through a partnership between the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and financial institutions within Lower Merion. Eligible projects include correction of exterior code conditions as well as structural and other improvements to building facades and major systems, including roof, electric and heating. Projects over recent years have ranged in cost from \$10,000 to \$135,000.

There is currently no funding available for the Commercial Facade Improvement Program which provides State money for a matching grant of up to \$5,000 for facade improvements. A recent application was denied. Check back after July.

Contact Eric Persson (epersson@lowermerion.org) or the Office of Economic Development for availability and guidance through the application process.

Old Business

Attendees were reminded of the Easter Egg Hunt which will take place at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 20. At the time of the meeting it was not too late for businesses to provide coupons for free or reduced price special offers to be included in the plastic eggs.

Tim reminded members of the Main Line Small Business Networking Event and Panel Discussion which will take place on Tuesday, April 23 from 8 - 9:30 a.m. at the Inn at Villanova. The event is co-sponsored by Villanova University, the Wayne and Bryn Mawr Business Associations and the Ardmore Initiative.

Dave Broida renewed his invitation to local businesses to sponsor the Twilight Concerts, now in their 13th year. There is a great economic benefit to local businesses when folks come from out of town to the concerts which feature local artists on a regular basis.

By unanimous consent, cool white was chosen as the bulb color for the Snowflakes.

New Business

Tim Rubin said he would like to explore development of a "Shop Local" concept in which shops would stay open late one evening a week with special activities to draw customers. Several businesses have reported business has spiked on Sunday afternoons and they have adapted their hours accordingly. Since the meeting had already run beyond its posted ending time, discussion on this topic was postponed to a future meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Barton
Secretary

