



the council crier

Meeting Location ☆☆ MUGSHOTS COFFEEHOUSE ☆☆ 110 Cotton Street

Manayunk Neighborhood Council meetings will be held at Mugshots Coffeehouse for April, May and June. Our thanks to Mugshots!

Waterford Apartments, 1 Cotton Street - On December 9, 2008, MNC opposed the zoning variance to build 205 apartments, on Venice Island, at 1 Cotton Street. On January 16, 2009 the zoning board approved the variance. MNC has appealed the variance. We are waiting for the appeal hearings to be scheduled.

On March 11, MNC board members met with Councilman Jones. We discussed, in depth, our concerns with the Waterford project. We discussed development in Manayunk, what we have supported and what we have opposed and why. We discussed the quality of life problems on Main Street, it's causes and it's negative affect on residents and retail businesses.

Bourbon Blue, 2 Rector Street -- Bourbon Blue is planning to build a deck, facing the canal. In order to create a usable space, the deck will overhang part of the tow path. In order to do that, Bourbon Blue needed permission from Fairmount Park. Fairmount Park needed legislation written to empower them to allow Bourbon Blue extend over the path. That legislation was introduced by Councilman Jones last June.

In 2005, MNC worked with Manayunk Development Corporation to create Towpath Design Guidelines. These guidelines set standards for businesses that wish to open to the tow path and canal. Bourbon Blue's proposed deck conforms to the guidelines.

In June 2008, MNC reached an agreement with Bourbon Blue on certain restrictions. The restric-

tions were designed to allow the deck to operate as part of the restaurant but not part of the destructive nightlife. The intent was to build the community protections into the legislation being introduced by the Councilman. In a surprising and disappointing last minute change of heart, the Councilman opted not to include the protections in the bill. The Councilman suggested that the provisions could be incorporated in the zoning variance that would also be required.



Proposed Bourbon Blue Deck

We asked for the following limits. The area under the deck will be adequately lit. No commercial banners on the deck. No live or amplified music on the deck. No cooking on the deck. Deck design will prevent spilled or dropped items from leaving the deck. Deck must be closed (no patrons) by midnight. Limited to 36 seated patrons with no high-tops.

The good news is that the zoning hearing was held March 17 and we got all we

asked for and more! Bourbon Blue is also subject to a restrictive agreement with the adjacent Canal House apartments. That agreement was extended to cover the deck. The restrictions imposed by Canal House went further than we had asked. The zoning board will include provisions incorporating all the relevant limitations. The zoning board has not published it's decision yet so stay tuned for specifics.

4338-4354 Terrace – As reported in the minutes (page 3) MNC supported a variance for the nine homes being built on Terrace. The homes were originally designed "by right". I.e. they did not need a variance. The developer modified the plans to include a roof deck. A variance was needed due to the height of structure housing the stairway to the deck. MNC was concerned with the Grape Street elevation. This, very visible, end of the project presented a large mostly featureless wall. The builder adjusted the design to include more windows and other elements to break up the wall. For those keeping score, this was the second project in the same day (Bourbon Blue was the other) that we were able to support. The zoning board approved the project.

Sapphire 4137 Main -- Sapphire, at the corner of Jamestown and Main is proposing to enclose their back patio with a four-story addition, The addition will expand the bar space and add three apartments (for a total of six apartments,



Sapphire Expansion from Jamestown Street

12 bedrooms). After meeting with the owner and reviewing the proposal, MNC determined that the project was overdevelopment of the small site and that the project would result in the expansion of a bar. The owner would not consider any operational restrictions on the expanded bar. MNC opposed the project. Zoning was scheduled for March 4.

The morning of the zoning hearing, Councilman Jones informed us he was supporting the expansion. This came on the heels of an extensive meeting with the Councilman on the issues of Manayunk and Main Street. We were surprised and disappointed that Councilman Jones would support a bar expansion and would do so without seeking our input.

Many of you responded to an alert email and contacted the Councilman. The Councilman responded by negotiating a continuance of the hearing to April 22. MNC will be meeting with the Councilman and the owner to discuss this project further.



Sapphire Expansion from Main Street

Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:30 Terrace 4338 - represented by Bill O'Brien. The owner wants to build a 250sq. ft deck and it requires a stair tower which would be enclosed. The zoning code allows 35' but the staircase on average will be 40' high, thus a variance is needed. In response to MNC suggestions, the end unit was modified to add windows and other changes to break up a large wall space.. A motion was made, seconded and passed to support the design.

4137 Main Sapphire - Zoning was scheduled for today (March 4). The Councilman had announced he was supporting Sapphire's expansion. MNC had put out an email alert asking members to contact the Councilman and ask him to reconsider his support. The Councilman responded, negotiated a continuance of the hearing to April 22. MNC will be meeting with the Councilman and the owner to discuss the project.

Several board members met with Councilman Jones Friday February 27. We had a substantive and wide ranging discussion of our positions and goals regarding Manayunk and Main Street. In particular we discussed the Waterford Apartment project (currently under appeal by MNC), what we felt were it's problems and what could be done to fix it.

Alan Butkovitz, city controller, addressed the group at the meeting. He is running for reelection as city controller. He explained the watchdog roll of the controller and highlighted several of his accomplishments.

Mr. Butkovitz noted Police, Fire and prison constitute 40% of the city's payroll.

He answered question from the neighbors. The

first question regarded attempts being made to collect past due real estate taxes. Mr. Butkovitz explained the city has outside law firms trying to collect outstanding taxes. Mr. Butkovitz felt they were doing an ok job, but could be better.

The second question involved the ten-year tax abatement which he explained has created much business growth and development in Philadelphia.

Next was a question about the pension fund. Mr. Butkovitz explained the current proposal is to fully fund the pension fund by 2050. The pension fund is currently funded at about 50% and is adequate to meet expectations. Questions were raised about how many fund managers should be employed. Mr. Butkovitz explained a diversity of strategies was the goal, He also explained the process for selection of fund managers has been to some degree depoliticized, and felt it was operating prudently to minimize losses and fraud.

Questions followed about accountability for city departments: specifically L&I which many believe could increase revenue by enforcing city ordinances. Mr. Butkovitz agreed with that assessment. He pointed out L&I is understaffed possibly because it is an invisible cut the city can make to reduce expenses. He describes L&I as a punching bag for the controller's office because it is 50% understaffed to meet their own schedules and is working under a six-month backlog. He pointed out how landlords are building illegal apartments without any fear of being caught. Mr. Butkovitz supports a beefed up L&I which could enforce city regulations, increase revenue, and make our city a safer, saner place to live.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45

MANAYUNK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP FORM
January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009

<input type="checkbox"/> \$5 Student/Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Household	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Patron
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Business or Supporter	\$_____ Other
Name:		Phone:
Address:		Email:
City, State, Zip:		Date:
Signature:		

Please make check payable to Manayunk Neighborhood Council & mail to PO Box 4667, Philadelphia, PA 19127

EVENTS

April 1 - MNC meeting, 7:30 pm at Mugshots, 110 Cotton Street

April 4 - 2009 Philly Spring Cleanup, 9am to 2pm, all over the city. The following local cleanups will take place on the 4th.

- Friends of Ivy Ridge Trail and Friends of Manayunk Canal are combining forces to clean up the tow path and the proposed trail. They will meet at 10am at the Ivy Ridge Train Station (Parker and Umbria) or Canal View Park (Main and Gay).
- Neighbors will be cleaning the steps at Cotton and Boone and Roxborough and Boone.

MNC BOARD

Kevin Smith, President	Rob Lamendola, Sgt/Arms
John Hunter, Vice President	Charlie Hewins, Trustee
Susan Shimp, Treasurer	Hilary Langer, Trustee
Keith Newman, Rec. Secretary	Erika Orsulak, Trustee
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www.manayunkcouncil.org

Stay informed of current events by joining the MNC email list: www.manayunkcouncil.org/email.html

Contact us at mail@manayunkcouncil.org if you would like to receive the newsletter by email.

Otherwise

Please Read and Pass along to Your Neighbor



courtesy while visiting

thank you for your

**CLEAN
SAFE
QUIET**

our neighborhood

**HISTORIC
MANAYUNK**

Manayunk Neighborhood Council
www.manayunkcouncil.org

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, April 1
7:30 PM
Mug Shots, 110 Cotton St.

PO BOX 4667, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19127

