

## **SOECA MEETING MINUTES: June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

\* Special Remote Meeting via Zoom \*

Prepared by Claire Zietz, Secretary

26 in attendance.

President Chris Reynolds announced the agenda for the meeting.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Membership had agreed on investigating how to incorporate for IRS compliance and SOECA has hired a company to help. Maryland Nonprofits has guided us with this endeavor and have been extremely helpful. Our current status: we are now officially a corporation and have begun the process to apply for 501(C)4, a nonprofit tax exempt organization sometimes called a social welfare organization. We may not hear back for almost a year due to how overwhelmed the IRS is with Covid forms and applications. Yearly paperwork to stay in compliance is a postcard sent in once a year.

### **TRAFFIC COMMITTEE REPORT & VOTE**

Chris Reynolds read the letter Jean Cavanaugh and the Traffic Committee wrote to address the speed racing along Sligo Creek. There was a question if we could also ask for speed cameras. Chris mentioned it is something the committee could look in to, as well as tech solutions for mufflers and sound.

Another question was asked, if we could look at cut through traffic at Springvale Road, Pershing Drive, as well as Bonifant Street and Worth Avenue.

With the interest in improvements to neighborhood traffic issues, Chris said that anyone interested in joining the committee should contact him at [soeca.board@gmail.com](mailto:soeca.board@gmail.com).

Chris then proposed a vote on the letter – it was unanimously approved.

### **TOPIC: BOARD ELECTIONS**

SOECA's current President, Vice President, and Treasurer all stood for reelection. Matthew Jahromi was proposed for the open position of Secretary. Matthew works in marketing for a real estate development firm. Alan Constantine, an active member of the Social Committee, was proposed for the second position of Vice President (Alan was not present and was therefore offered and voted on in absentia).

Chris proposed the motion and it passed unanimously – SOECA's 2021-2022 Board was elected in full.

### **SPEAKER: CHRIS BROWN of ZINNIA**

Chris Brown came to speak to the members. He is the owner of Zinnia, the new restaurant which is to replace what was formerly Mrs. K's Tollhouse.

The plan for opening has three phases: the first includes outdoor service with a tea garden, vintage umbrellas, patio furniture, stone walkway, all seated with full service.

Phase two includes seating inside (depending on Covid prescribed precautions). He is anticipating a café in the front room and seating in the 'fireplace room', the two rooms with higher ceilings. The main room would be either seating for the café or it would function as a local market place with sales for wine, beer, granola, etc. with an emphasis on local and craft food and goods.

Phase three would include the main restaurant portion, the terrace room, and would implement some of the old design elements from Mrs. K's.

For timing, phase one is to begin by the end of this summer/beginning of fall. Phase two is slated for the end of fall and phase three for next year.

Lynn Grodzki, as head of the Social Committee, said we would love to hold future neighborhood events there. Chris Brown said that would be possible and those would be outside. Indoor events would probably not be possible until October.

Scott Lasensky had a question about parking. Chris Brown wants to restrict parking on the street (Kingsbury Drive) and keep those spaces only for residents. He mentioned that he would like to have a parking attendant directing patrons. He also mentioned that the parking on Tollhouse Road would be 15 minute pickup only parking. And all the restaurant patrons would need to park in the parking lot.

A neighbor suggested tearing up some of the asphalt and replacing it with grass to mitigate some of the parking problems for neighboring residents. Chris Brown was open to this suggestion and would consider it.

There was another question about hours of music being broadcast in the garden. Chris said he anticipates just "Dave the piano guy", and has no plans (no equipment purchased etc) for the gardens. He mentioned that there could possibly be ambient music as to not disrupt neighbors. Live music would happen only if it works for the business and neighbors would not be disturbed. He would rather have light music that doesn't reach the neighborhood.

There was another question about a beer truck. Chris said he has abandoned the past plan, though he would like to use the truck somehow but said it will not go in the garden this season. It could possibly go in the parking lot as a supplement for food, but would not be in the back of the garden in this season.

He also said that Christmas tree parking lot sales are to continue.

Chris Brown ended his portion of the meeting by stating that he is happy to speak with anyone and meet for further questions. Please feel free to contact Chris or his restaurant manager at [chris@eatzinnia.com](mailto:chris@eatzinnia.com) and [justin@eatzinnia.com](mailto:justin@eatzinnia.com).

## **CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- President Chris Reynolds
  - Chris said that this was the last meeting until the fall.
  - Tom Armstrong asked about the status of the Bylaws Committee and volunteered to be the chair. Chris mentioned that the committee currently has four members and to contact [soeca.board@gmail.com](mailto:soeca.board@gmail.com) if anyone would like to join.
  - Chris also mentioned that he would like to revitalize the Downtown Plan Committee and to contact the board if anyone would like to join.

There being no further business, Mr. Reynolds adjourned the meeting at 8:10pm.