

Meeting: Monday, February 22nd, 2021 7:00 PM

– Virtual Meeting >Join: <https://meet.google.com/yvi-egqr-zdf> (US) +1 409-698-0145 PIN: 387292368# (22 Attending)

Agenda:

1. Call to Order and Introductions – 7:05 PM

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting by Bryon, seconded by Jonathan. Motion carried by members present.

3. Treasurer's Report

- a. The beginning balance for the month of February was \$5,343.54. There were no expenditures or deposits this month, therefore the ending balance was \$5,343.54.
- b. Bryon reached out to an accountant for our annual compilations, which are required for our organization. The accountant he typically used is now retired so he referred Bryon to another CPA. Bryon asked if anyone has a recommendation for a CPA, as they can pass those recommendations along to him.
- c. Jonathan L. has a check from Community Solar for \$750.00 which he will pass along to Bryon.
- d. Motion by Mr. Vasquez to accept the treasurer's report as presented by Mr. Yoder, seconded by Jonathan L., motion carried by members present.

4. Neighborhood Safety and Security

- a. Any recent issues? You must call 911 and get a report number for an incident be officially reported. Sgt. Levy from Camden County Metro Police Department attending the meeting. He is the Community Outreach supervisor for North Camden. Sgt. Moss, Ofc. Matthews, Ofc. Nunez, Ofc. Sime, and Ofc. Sanchez are also present on the call as well. Sgt. Moss has a short presentation. The purpose of her joining this meeting is because Camden County Metro Police Department is starting a new program after they received assistance from a grant. Camden is the 5th highest municipality for pedestrian accidents. In the past they had safe corridor programs and DUI programs that did help with pedestrian accidents prior to 2019 and the number of incidents were declining. However, these incidents have now increased since 2019. They now have funding to provide additional enforcement with officers to conduct traffic stops. There are two components to this program: education and enforcement. They will be handing out flyers with more information about this program, which aims to educate both drivers and pedestrians. The funding also allows for CCPD to purchase more pedestrian crossing signs. The enforcement portion will start on March 1st, 2021 and go through May 30th 2021. North Camden is one of the areas with the highest amount of incidents, as 3rd/York and 7th/Pearl are high risk areas. Residents will see increased presence in these areas to enforce the traffic laws with drivers. The first few days, officers will be passing out brochures and flyers to tell residents where they can cross (as part of the educational component). The enforcement component means more tickets will be written for both drivers and pedestrians. There are other areas in the city that will also have increased presence (Broadway/MLK, Carl Miller/Broadway, etc.). Wants to make sure everyone is abiding by traffic rules (including pedestrians).
 - i. Jonathan mentioned that there are issues with the new traffic circle in North Camden. Sgt. Moss advised residents to put in a request to help with pedestrian safety in that area, especially when drivers seem to be driving the wrong way at this circle. Sgt. Moss mentioned that the previous stated intersections are the spots with the highest amount of incidents so they will be targeting those areas first with this new program.
 - ii. Resident asked about Front/Cooper stoplight – 99% of the time it is blinking yellow and is a safety concern for pedestrians. Jonathan mentioned that we kept getting the runaround about who controls that stoplight. It's a safety concern for Victor residents traveling to Johnson Park and students going to Rutgers. Sgt. Moss believes it's controlled by the Light Rail but she will look into it and get confirmation since Light Rail claimed they didn't control it. Sgt. Levy will also look into this.
- b. Jonathan mentioned that a resident was concerned several weeks ago about a house party in the neighborhood and reported it on the STOPit application– especially since it was getting late and there are COVID concerns. The response from the STOPit app basically told the residence to call Rutgers University PD, which was frustrating because it was unknown if the party was associated with Rutgers and in the past, Rutgers typically refers calls to CCPD. Sgt. Levy

mentioned that shouldn't be the response. He also mentioned that the STOPit application is NOT a reporting program, it is a TIP LINE. The application is not for emergencies or something that requires immediate attention needed. Sgt. Levy continues to reiterate that residents should call 911. Councilperson Reyes-Morton asked if residents continue to report a similar quality of life issue to the STOPit app (such as noise issues), will this help the residents will getting resources to the community? She doesn't want residents to get discouraged from using the STOPit application. She's aware that residents are more hesitant to call 911 for all quality of life issues (noise issues, etc.). Sgt. Levy restated that the STOPit application is not for something that requires immediate attention. Reports are not generated from this tip line platform. If you want an officer to respond, you need to call 911.

- i. Jonathan related that residents are still hesitant to call 911 for a house party, especially in the current climate. Residents don't want to flood the 911 call center with quality of life issues. Sgt. Levy related that an officer would still be required to come out and address the issue if a residence calls 911 about the quality of life issues.
 - ii. Jonathan asked if there could be more officers walking around the CGNA community, especially during the summertime. Sgt. Levy will forward this request but he doesn't see an issue with this once the weather gets warmer.
 - iii. Resident mentioned that he's concerned about the ATV/Quads on Delaware Avenue when the new park opens at the former Campbell's field site. Sgt. Levy related that this has been a consistent problem. Sgt. Levy related that they used resources last summer to track down some of these ATVs/quads and find out where people were storing/dumping them. They would then get either search warrants or other legal permission to confiscate these ATVs/quads – under what is permitted by Attorney General's guidelines. CCPD is not allowed to chase/pursue these ATVs/Quads. Sgt. Moss added that they are trying to make it harder for these individuals to ride these bikes by pursuing these issues.
- c. Emergency Call 911 or 24hr Tipline: 856-757-7042 or [STOPit Online Application](#) (Code: CAMDENNJ)

5. Old Business

- a. **Infrastructure/Roadway Projects** – (Cooper /Market/Federal/7th St/ North Camden/WRTC/Port Access Road Project)
Jonathan L. is presenting some information he received from Kathy Cullen. They seem to be moving along pretty well. There have been quite a few snow events this year.
 - i. Both Tiger grant projects are wrapping up (Cooper Street project with new traffic signals and the second project in North Camden). These are pretty important infrastructure projects for the city and the community. There were concerns with striping but Jonathan believes this issue will be fixed once the weather improves.
 - ii. Federal/Market Street project – The last survey for community input for different alternatives closed last Friday and those recommendations will be given to Mayor Moran to see how that project proceeds.
 - iii. There is also the Port Access Road Project for truck traffic and concert traffic (in relation to Ferry Avenue).
- b. **Community Solar Discounted PSEG Electric Billing** www.neighborhoodsun.solar/cgna - CGNA is partnered with Community Solar, who has a solar field on a landfill in Delanco. This project allows homeowners and renters to rent solar panels to get solar energy. This project works with your utility provider and you get credits from the solar energy to apply to your bill. This allows for discounts on your energy bill. There are incentives for neighbors who sign up as well as an incentive for CGNA. This program is open to residents in Camden, Burlington, and Mercer counties. There is no obligation to sign up and no fee to cancel. Community Solar is working with partners in Pennsauken for additional solar panel spots.
- c. **Campbell's/Rutgers Field** Update on the Community Access Agreement (Redd, Nash, Orlando) – (Former) Mayor Redd, Mr. Nash, and Mr. Orlando present at the meeting to speak on this project. Maggie McCann (Director of Camden County Parks) is also present at the meeting, along with Mike Sepanic (Associate Chancellor for External Relations at Rutgers-Camden).
 - i. Former Mayor Dana Redd – Currently CEO of Rowan University/Rutgers-Camden Board of Governors - Part of the partnership for the former's Campbell's Field/Rutgers Field project. She explained that tonight's meeting is not a full blown community briefing and presentation but she looks forward to presenting in the future (which is where they would be presenting the complete community benefits agreement). This is just a quick presentation to provide an update to the community.
 - ii. Camden County Commissioner Jeff Nash - serving as the Commissioner/Freeholder liaison to the Camden County Parks Department. He has spoken with Jonathan L. numerous times to ensure that the community has access to this project once its completed. He mentioned that was a meeting for the community at Rutgers prior to the pandemic. The community in CGNA and North Camden have made it clear that the community wants access to this field. Commissioner Nash spoke with Director Chris Orlando and the attorneys to start drafting a community benefits agreement. They are trying to incorporate some of the concerns/comments addressed at that meeting. The parties have tentatively agreed to allow Camden County Parks Department to oversee the permitting for the site. They thought this was fair and Parks Department already has the technology that is user

friendly, which they will be updating to include the new park. Everyone will have adequate access to the facilities. Rutgers will receive some priority placement because of their athletic programs but Commissioner Nash believes the community will have plenty of opportunities to access the field. He drove by earlier today and the contractors were working this morning, even during the snowstorm.

- iii. Director Chris Orlando (Camden County Improvement Authority) – Interim Executive Director – provided a construction update. Constructure has been going extremely well. There were some delays due to historical components located in the ground that predated even Campbell's Field. They are hoping to have the construction completed by August and plan to be open for the 2021 fall athletic season. It has been a successful partnership between Rutgers and the other joint parties involved. These will be modern multi-use fields to support both Rutgers Athletics and local athletic programs. The stakeholders had a meeting today about security with Camden County PD and Rutgers PD about anticipated security concerns. Security will be handled by the county (Camden County PD) as it's a county space and they will have assistance from the county park ambassadors. They did request an anticipated sports schedule from Rutgers for the fall so that Maggie McCann of the Parks Department can open spots for permitting in the fall and get that program up and running. That program will just be for permitting for specific events. This park will be open from dusk to dawn for public access, just like all the other parks in the county. Even when athletic teams are using parts of the facility (either through permitting or Rutgers Athletic), the other parts of the park will be open. This will be another piece of the overall county parks system. They wanted to have that security meeting to make sure all parties involved have the same vision on safety and security.
- iv. Maggie McCann – Camden County Parks Department Director – Attended the security meeting as well. The county currently doesn't have a soccer field like this so this project will be a great asset.
- v. The county has been working on multiple parks within the city (at least seven different parks) and investing money in these parks (Von Nieda Park, Dominick Andujar Park, and the Camden gateway system). This new park project will be the crown jewel and golden addition to all the city parks currently existing.
- vi. Jonathan L. asked – in relation to the original plans presented – has there been anything done regarding concerns about the crosswalks on Delaware Avenue?
 1. County engineer has been involved in this project – she will be reviewing and putting a plan together for traffic easing with this project. She will be using her professional expertise and the county will be going with her recommendations. She will do whatever is safest.
- vii. Neighbor had a question - can this community benefits agreement be applied to the current existing fields with Rutgers-Camden? There have been multiple attempts for an access agreement since these existing fields have Green Acres funding. Looking for routine open access to the current existing fields as well. There were promises made years ago and they were not fulfilled, according to longtime neighbors.
 1. They will need to talk to Rutgers in more detail about that. The Campbell's field is a bit different since the county is more involved with this new project. They have discussed this opinion preliminarily but would need to discuss further with Rutgers. The current fields are connected to the city, not the county. The county is stepping up with many of the city parks and investing in those (maintenance, permitting, etc.) so they need to have a more detailed conversation. Mike Sepanic (Rutgers) agrees that this is the time to have the conversation with Rutgers about community access to the current park space.
- viii. Former Mayor Redd proposed a tentative presentation for CGNA's March 22nd meeting – will check with other stakeholders' availability and get back to us.

6. New Business

- a. **EJ Challenges:** [EMR Fire](#) / Covanta / [Camden for Clean Air](#) / [1-877- WarnDEP](#) – There was a large fire in south Camden several weeks ago. It severely impacted the Waterfront South neighborhood - to the point that residents had to be evacuated and put up in the local hotel (Hilton Garden Inn) for several days. If the winds were blowing a different way, our neighborhood would have been severely impacted.
 - i. If you smell something odd, please call the above-listed number and the DEP **has** to respond. If we don't report it, then nothing will be done and the air quality will continue to be impacted. There's a lot of traffic and idling in this city as well, which also negatively impacts the air quality. Jonathan L. is asking for residents to be more cognizant of these smells and report them because it causes health issues (short-term and especially long-term). Reporting these issues allows the DEP to investigate and hold companies responsible for anything that is negatively impacting air quality. This is an environmental injustice. There is another meeting about the recent fire that Waterfront South neighborhood is holding this Friday. Residents in Waterfront South still have smoke seeped into the walls of their residences. EMR and other facilities are routinely fined for violating DEP regulations and polluting the area more than they are allowed. Residents are really frustrated because to these companies it seems like the fines are just the cost of doing business, while this impacts residents' health.

- b. **Community Health:** [COVID Vaccines](#) / [Food Access](#) – Jonathan L. compiled a list of 30-40 community members that tried to get a COVID vaccine and were unable to get an appointment. Jonathan submitted these names and some of the residence received a call to go to the KROC center and get their first dose of the vaccine. KROC center may be taking walk-ups for the vaccine.
- c. **Community Street Lamp Outage Reporting** [PSEG](#) – Jonathan mentioned that there was a light that was out and asked Rutgers to look into it. Jonathan asked if anyone still sees the CGNA Christmas lights on the poles, if they can take them down and save them. There is a link above that residents can click to report streetlamp lights that are out. There are multiple lights on Pearl Street that are out (between 3rd Street and 5th Street). We technically pay for these lights as residents through tax dollars. In order to report the light issues, you just need to get the pole number and the approximate location. Mike Sepanic will try to help with this issue (since some of the lights are near Rutgers campus).
- d. **Planning Committee** (Grants: [Bread & Roses](#) , [NRTC](#), Cooper Foundation)
 - i. **Bread & Roses** - Montrell will present his research to CGNA next month regarding community access to public spaces. The first year of this grant is up in March and we need to present these findings
 - ii. NRTC – Bryon has not heard back from Joe Myers about our submission. Trying to get this plan in ASAP to be eligible for the next round of funding.
 - iii. Cooper Foundation grant project is on hold due to COVID-19. We still have the 5k grant to use on a community project in the future.
- e. **Development Committee Report**
 - i. ABC Barrel Lot RFP Posted (<http://camdenredevelopment.org/Real-Estate/RFPs.aspx>) - This is a huge deal because this is in our backyard. The market is very hot right now. The property values have been up and properties in our neighborhood have been selling in days instead of months. This will be one of the last major build-ups in our community. If anyone knows any developers, please share this RFP Jonathan invited CRA Director Olivette to this meeting- she will be attending next meeting.
 - ii. M&M Partnership @ The Pierre building (<https://hestaliving.com/thepierre/>) – Still moving forward. One concern related to this building– there is a business on Market Street (Camden Arts Garden) that is asking for an expansion for licensed premises. There are several residential properties around there (Rutgers student housing, The Pierre Building, Senior Housing on 300 block of Market Street, etc.) and there has been lots of feed back from these residents about late night bass/loud music in the “piazza” of that business. While we appreciate that a business is trying to be successful during the pandemic, this business was presented as a low-key beer garden and now it seems to be functioning as a night club. Councilperson Reyes-Morton is aware of this. The last city planning board meeting was postponed due to lack of quorum. She is encouraging residents to attend next month’s meeting. Residents can also write a letter to the planning board about their concerns.
 - iii. Waterfront Development - See update about Campbell’s Field project. Resident asked who is responsible for snow removal on the county promenade/walkway? Not exactly a priority during snow storms but it appears that the waterfront walkway has not been salted or plowed during or after any of the storms this winter. Resident is wondering if the county could look into snow removal, at least after the storm passes? It’s a liability issue for residents out for a stroll or walking their dog.
 - iv. [County Microgrid Project](#) - Still moving along. Taking a second look at other energy options instead of solely relying on Covanta.

7. Announcements

- a. [Hilton Garden Inn](#)/Water Street Grill 2nd Thursday Live Jazz Nights – Rocky told Jonathan L. he attended one of the jazz sessions and it was really good music. They seat people at the restaurant (socially distanced) and you can order food from a limited menu. Jonathan intends to invite the hotel general manager to one of our meetings to tell us more about the hotel.
- b. Tamie Pettiford of RE/MAX– Mentioned that she is aware there are people/properties in the neighborhood that are on a real estate wholesale list. In real estate wholesaling, a wholesaler contracts with a seller, then finds an interested party to buy the property. Wholesalers are not licensed real estate agents. They have been looking up potential investment properties in the area and then calling/texting the owner of the property to see if they want to sell. This has been happening more and more often in Camden. Tamie is asking people to spread the word (especially with senior citizen residents) about these random wholesalers calling them up or texting them. The wholesale process can cause a lot of confusion and she doesn’t want residents thinking that these random calls/texts are coming from a licensed real estate agent. People can be taken advantage of by wholesalers in a real estate market where home values are rising in areas that have previously not been high in the past. Camden is a prime example of this type of area. She is encouraging residents to reach out to a trusted relator about selling their property. She mentioned that not

every wholesaler is bad but people have negative experiences with them and this can cause confusion, especially with elderly residents.

- c. Bryon (CGNA Treasurer) is moving out of the city after 13 years. Congratulations! He will still be working in the area and still be present in the community. Thank you for everything.
- d. [Virtua Mobile Market](#) Tuesdays: 12-1:30pm 520 Market St (Roosevelt Park)
- e. Immigrant Family Survey (https://rowan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dma94PLxzJ7JSCx) This is a Rowan study that can be shared with anyone who knows an immigrant family.
- f. Free Tax Return Prep Assistance: <https://cwfp Philly.org/> (215) 454-6483
- g. Rutgers-Camden Community Fields are scheduled to be open to the public on Sundays from 10AM-4PM.
- d. 2021 Zone 1 Parking Passes are available www.camdenparking.net
- e. COVID Vaccine Appointments call <https://www.cooperhealth.org/camden-residents-vaccine-site>
- f. Next CGNA Meeting will be held **Monday, March 22nd 2021** at 7:00 PM (online)

8. Adjournment – 8:36 PM. Motion to close by Jonathan, motion carried by members present.

The area served by CGNA: “Cooper-Grant” is defined as the area contained within the following boundaries: Northern Boundary – the Ben Franklin Bridge; East - Friends Avenue (extended) south to Cooper Street, extending east to the West side of Fourth Street; South - the south side of Market Street; Western Boundary: the Delaware River.

For more information, e-mail CGNA Board at info@coopergrant.org

*****This is our 39th year as an organization*** Cannot attend the CGNA Meeting?**

**Want updates, meeting minutes and agendas? Email: secretary@coopergrant.org & like our Facebook page: @coopergrantneighbors
www.coopergrant.org**