



P.O. Box 63675 · Philadelphia, PA 19147
Phone 215.413.3713 · Fax 215.627.7035
[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

SSHD Board Meeting

July 13th, 2022

10:00am

SSHD Office & Zoom

Board Members Present: Adam Shapiro, Rick Millan, Alison Hindman-Harvey, Katrina Johnston-Zimmerman, Doug Hager, Edward Garcia, Taylor Jenkins, Sara McCorriston, Nicole Wiegand, Elena Brennan

SSHD Staff: Mike Harris, Dana Feinberg, Sarah Cowell

Other Attendees: Captain McBride

AGENDA

1. Call to Order: 10:02 a.m.

2. Board Chair's Report: The process of approving new board members will take a few months, with nominees being sent for approval from the Mayor's office and City Council. City Council will hopefully take action in the Fall session for new members to be seated by January. Six board members present at this meeting to make a quorum. 12 seats are filled right now, with 11 vacant. By the end of the year, there will only be nine filled, leaving 14 vacancies. There are eight nominations, but the board is still open to accepting more. Nine votes from the board will be needed to accept the nominees. While awaiting City approval, the nominees are encouraged to continue attending board meetings and begin considering committees to join. Two board members, Chris Barnes and Francesca Rivetti, have already submitted their proxy votes prior to this meeting. Many nominees have been recruited because of their energy and participation. Each nominee will be taken individually, and the board members will vote.

- The first candidate, **Elena Brennan**, owner of Bus Stop Boutique brings experience and commitment. No one is opposed.
- **Edward Garcia**, co-owner of Queen & Rook, speaks on his 15 years of experience in the non-profit industry. No one is opposed.
- **Doug Hager**, owner of Brauhaus Schmitz, speaks on his care for the district and previous experience on the board. No one is opposed.
- **Taylor Jenkins**, new to the district, speaks on her experience in politics. No one is opposed.

- **Shannon Maldonado**, owner of Yowie, looks forward to the opportunity. No one is opposed.
- **Samantha Shaw**, not present, is owner of Sam Shaw's Treatery and has participated in previous meetings. No one is opposed.
- **Joel Spivak**, not present, organized a protest against an expressway and is a local historian. No one is opposed.
- **Nicole Weigand**, co-owner of South Street Art Mart, speaks on having managed Condom Kingdom for many years and her personal history in the district. No one is opposed.

3. Public Safety Update: Captain McBride from the 3rd District is providing an update in Lt. Long's absence. July 4th was uneventful with light crowds. The unfortunate incident in another part of the city required more attention from the officers. Crime statistics for early July include 18 incidents, one robbery resulting in an arrest, three simple assaults, one vandalism, one fraud report, seven thefts, one theft of auto. These numbers for South Street proper are much lower than the larger 3rd District area. Of those 18 incidents, only seven occurred directly on South Street. The street has been relatively quiet. Because of the massive presence of police officers in the district, there is an increase in the number of juveniles sent to the youth detention facility in Center City. South Street police officers are trying to work more with the 6th District and the 9th District partners instead of relying so heavily on the Center City facility to disperse youth after curfew. Dirt bike usage has dropped somewhat with police involvement.

A few attendees discuss methods of detecting counterfeit currency. Captain McBride requests business owners report fake bill encounters to 911 to file a police report, and the police will forward the evidence to Secret Service investigators. An attendee reports that some customers do not know they are using artificial money, if perhaps they had been given it as change at another business. Captain McBride recommends providing any video footage as well, as it could provide detail on the circumstances. An attendee recommends using the South Street business owner Slack channel to communicate about where these bills may be originating. A few days ago, a smoke shop found many fake bills. Captain McBride can't provide further information on this incident.

An attendee notes that it has been a month since the shooting incident, and though he is appreciative of the police's effort, their overwhelming presence is preventing people from visiting the district. Captain McBride says the presence will remain through the summer. Some barricades could be moved until Labor Day weekend to create more space. The way that the police are milling around creates a sense of impending danger and anticipation of a violent event, when there may not be one. Captain McBride mentions transportation difficulties. The police are assigned to a block, and though they could be moving around and engaging with the community, nothing prevents them from standing still and using their phones for the majority of their shifts. An attendee suggests that since these officers are assigned to a given block, they should be getting to know the business owners and other stakeholders on that specific block. Captain McBride says that these officers are from other parts of the city and not motivated to engage the community. Adam notes that these officers aren't familiar enough with locations and details about the area to provide adequate assistance when they are approached. In the meantime, their stationary presence is keeping customers away. Walking up and down the

street would be an improvement. Rick notes the feedback that the area seems like an uninviting crime scene. Captain McBride will bring that information to the deputy commissioner.

Nicole mentions the sheer volume of police officers and its impact on the physical space where customers need to travel. Bus waiting areas are overcrowded with police officers. In the past, it has been mentioned how detrimental loitering is to creating a welcoming environment. Now, the police are that detriment, because although they have a stated motivation for being there, they are still a stationary, imposing presence which gets in the way of pedestrians and shoppers. When Zipperhead was in business, the owners had relationships with the officers assigned to their zone. Now, the officers are transported in from other areas and have no desire to connect with citizens on a meaningful level. Mike also brings up the difference between night force and day force. On the weekends, more officers are brought in. The daytime force is not what it used to be, having only two beat cops on detail.

An attendee notes that the incident of more counterfeit bills being found at the smoke shop the day before was mentioned on social media, and could have led to specific action by the police department in terms of deployment of officers. The City will be consulted on these issues of distribution of police forces. An attendee recommends using notebooks and log books to keep track of officer involvement. Nicole, as a resident and business owner, does not feel comfortable with the amount of police officers in the area and believes many of their customers feel that way. Edward would like to see an assessment of crowd populations to set an appropriate ratio of police officers to citizens. Captain McBride suggests the crowds are unpredictable and deployment plans take more time.

An attendee named Anthony reiterates the importance of community engagement with police officers. Business owners also must talk to the police, in addition to the police talking to them. The police presence has been here for years. He promotes positive energy above blaming the officers. Nicole asks who makes the decisions to deploy numbers of officers. Captain McBride and his bosses above him use their available data to disperse their police force. An attendee asks whether the police monitor social media for information about flash mobs. Captain McBride says they have a division that looks at social media, but they are restricted to only publicly available information and not allowed to entrap users for information. The police department's website has a place to submit tips, which anyone could use to provide information that they've found on social media.

Mike was on the street with Captain McBride on the nights of these incidents and commends his work. An attendee asks about upcoming changes to the curfew, which will begin at 10:00 p.m. for anyone up to age 18. If a person is found out under age, they are escorted to a police center with volunteers until their parents arrive to pick them up. City Councilmember Katherine Gilmore Richardson passed this curfew law which will be in effect through Labor Day. It applies to the whole City, not just the district. There are exemptions if a child is out for a school event, First Amendment activities, et cetera. More information will be available on the South Street website. Adam suggests adding information about the counterfeit currency to the website.

Mike thanks Sarah for setting up the Slack, which businesses seem to be using. For counterfeit issues, use Slack to communicate in addition to filing the police report. Mike met with an arborist for the City to raise canopies and clear lights on the 300 block, pruning trees away from light poles. Dana has been working with the Department of Licenses and Inspections about illegal sales on the street. It would be helpful if the illegal activity occurred during an inspection,

but SSHD will keep pushing for more effective enforcement. Illegal sales were happening on the block of the SSHD office. Street sweepers are used, closing down specific streets, and neighbors have begun to complain about their noise instead of complaining about ATVs, which is considered progress. There will be more police cameras on the street at certain intersections.

There is a new mural on the 200 block at the site of the June shooting. Dana and Mike also had a conversation with the business district in Orlando that were involved in the Pulse nightclub shooting of 2016. They discussed their nightlife and downtown area management and will follow up with them about best practices. The City will soon be announcing its night manager position. Michael Fishman, a professor at Penn who wrote an op-ed about promoting nightlife safety, is working with the district. Billy Penn published a long article about South Street being the safest commercial corridor in the City. Perception and reality are very different, so SSHD will work to improve the perception as well as the reality. SSHD has been very busy. Steve mentions seeing Mike's television appearance.

4. Marketing and Public Relations: Crash Bang Boom is having their 17th anniversary celebration on Sunday at East Passyunk. Saturday, Good King Tavern is having their Bastille Day party on 7th Street. Outdoor dining under the Shambles continues. More events are being prepared and will be announced. An attendee asks about the location of the Crash Bang Boom party. In event of rain, they will not be able to use the Shambles. Mike spoke with Stephanie about this, and hopefully it will happen on Passyunk. Punks love the rain. Dobbs will host the event if it rains. The second floor of Paddy Whacks may also be available. Mike doesn't want the noise to bother neighbors with an outdoor concert. It's a 30% chance of rain, so the hope is nothing will have to change.

Steve suggests organized buskers and magicians for an upcoming festival. Sarah mentions that no upcoming events have been announced, because the events take a lot of planning. Many different initiatives are in the pipeline, including shopping promotions, dining events, and more. They're also working on promoting services, which involve different marketing challenges than dining or shopping experiences. There will also be a music series tentatively planned for August. Since the shooting, SSHD have adapting their plans. Dana mentions current events happening at galleries. Steve mentions a boutique clothing store that had an anniversary party recently. There were sandwiches and a variety of cheeses. The parents of the brother and sister who own the business are in a band that Steve likes. They were at the party until 1:00 a.m. Steve also points out that some other businesses he can't remember the names of had many benches on the street on a Saturday night. He likes this idea and suggests that businesses provide benches outside. Fourth Friday has not been happening for a long time. Winter Solstice was celebrated by many businesses. Social media posts about weekend events are being shared by SSHD on Instagram.

5. Strategic Design and Planning: The committee met the day before this meeting and discussed an article about street closures in neighboring boroughs with City support. There will be a meeting on Monday about street closures in the district and moving forward with the project. A goal will be to learn what made the programs successful in other districts with City support.

6. Real Estate: Busking will have to be evaluated in relation to zoning regulations. The board would like more voices to be heard on real estate topics. While one may want South Street to return to what it was like years ago, many would like to see changes, and those voices should be heard in this context. There is an initiative to beautify vacant storefronts with support from landlords. After the shooting, many ideas were brought up, and the real estate committee met to distill these ideas into more manageable terms, which includes looking at zoning overlay for use and zoning for physical development. There may or may not be changes to those concepts, but they will be strategized about.

New banners will be put up on South Street and potentially surrounding blocks. An attendee asks about how incoming grant money is being used. The \$30,000 grant for corridor public safety enhancement is in place, and its application yet to be determined. Rick calls for another meeting to pitch commercial agents to bring down vacancy rates and speak on the direction the district is heading. Dana has been keeping the list up to date, and there is only a 10% vacancy rate, much lower than Center City. All upcoming committee meetings are on the printed agenda. New board members are encouraged to attend those that they feel are in alignment with their interests.

7. Finance: In Ken's absence, Mike reports SSHD is at 65% of income collections on the revenue side. Since the festivals have not happened yet, those events will be reflected later in the year than previously. Expenses are at 47% of budget, so revenue is over expenses. The full report is available.

8. New Business:

- The landlord of 328 South Street, formerly The Boyler Room, is activating the property as a restaurant.
- A salon is about to open.
- 623 South 4th Street has been updated.
- 436 South Street will open as a business called Status, selling clothing.

Steve Ramm asks if the restaurant at 328 South Street will be the same restaurant that was there before it closed. It will not. The type of restaurant remains unknown. He also mentions that an issue of Society Hill Reporter included unfavorable mentions of South Street. The article is online and copies of the paper are available at Acme. Another attendee mentions an art exhibit's opening and reception on Saturday.

7. Adjournment: 11:16 a.m. Rick requests a motion to adjourn, seconded by Adam Shapiro. The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 10th.