

RGNA Architecture & History Committee Meeting Summary

At our first meeting on February 9, 2009 we met to discuss our committee and its' purpose in our neighborhood association. We all agreed that our general purpose would be to define our neighborhood within the bounds of Art, Architecture and Social History (the who, what and where). The group had many good ideas including a database for craftsmen, creating an historical and/or architectural brochure of our neighborhood, and offering various informational and educational programs for our members.

We discussed who from our community might be able to help us begin our research and came up with some names of people we might like to invite to future meetings. Some names that were mentioned were; John Harry, restoration expert (masonry); Frank Whelan; someone from the Allentown Preservation League. Committee member Chuck Canning is also very knowledgeable about our neighborhood and the city.

After discussing many ideas, we agreed that we must start somewhere and decided on the following areas to begin.

1. The craftsmen database: This would be something that our members could access online that would list roofers, painters, masons, and plasterers etc. who have been used by others in our neighborhood. Our homes are unique and require skilled and experienced crafts people who are not always easy to locate. We will investigate using a survey engine such as "Survey Monkey" to send out to our members to collect this information.
2. We want to develop an outline to help individuals research the social and architectural history of their homes. The committee decided to do some researching on our own homes and compile our efforts (who we called, how we found them etc) to create this outline. We will later share this outline at an educational seminar type gathering for RGNA members who are interested in participating in this type of research. These findings could then be later compiled in a brochure of some type.
3. Chuck Canning agreed to take the committee on a spring walking tour of the neighborhood. We felt that we could see how this went and that it might be a possible RGNA activity that we could sponsor some time in the future.

I hope I have covered everything we discussed. I am sure I have forgotten something, but I feel this was a good meeting and that we are all excited to bring our neighborhood and its history to life!

Our next meeting will be March 10, 2009 at 7:30 pm. The meeting will be held at Chuck Canning's home at 2938 Chew Street. Looking forward to seeing you all there!