

MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE CIVICS ASSOCIATION MEETING
HELD ON JUNE 10, 2025
LOCATION: ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC LIBRARY
221 N. VILLAGE AVE, ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY 11570

PRESENT: President Meghan Kearns, Vice President Catie Carter, Treasurer Emily Kearns, Membership Director Rich Collett, Corresponding Secretary Kelly Wexlar and Recording Secretary Caitlin McEntee

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

UPDATE FROM PRESIDENT KEARNS ON THE FORMAT OF MEETINGS GOING FORWARD:

We will continue to move through the agenda first and leave the remainder of the time for open discussion. All questions for the board will now be taken during open discussion. The goal being to get through the agenda quickly leaving as much time as possible for questions and open discussion.

UPDATES FROM TREASURER EMILY KEARNS: So far dues have been collected from 32 members for a total of \$768.

UPDATES FROM MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR RICH COLLETT: Membership Director Collett will be walking around with flyers at Eat, Shop, Rock as well as the Village Firework show to recruit new members. We will not be prorating dues this year and all dues must be paid in full. Dues are \$24. President Kearns also added that when signing in for meetings, if members have already shared their contact information, they do not have to write it on the sign in sheet at each meeting. They just have to give their signature.

UPDATES FROM CORRESPONDING SECRETARY KELLY WEXLAR: The website should be live shortly and will be able to take electronic payments as well as be linked to a QR Code. Printed post cards to get the word out to residents are also being explored.

UPDATES FROM VICE PRESIDENT CATIE CARTER ON THE BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE:

- There was an existing beautification committee established in town that the Civics Association has now joined up with. It's comprised of business owners and residents as well as the President and Vice President Chamber of Commerce. There have been meetings with Mayor Murray as well as the Village Administrator Nancy Howard.
- There is a pilot area on North Village Avenue from the Long Island Railroad station to Merrick Road where some of the beautification ideas will be rolled out. There

were funds that had been raised previously by the existing beautification committee to be utilized.

UPDATES FROM PRESIDENT MEGHAN KEARNS:

- The New York League of Conservation Voters Fund a nonpartisan group reached out requesting to do a presentation. They have been speaking to various Civics Associations about environmental issues. Specifically electric cars, renewable energy and drinkable water. A group vote by voting members (members who have paid dues) was required to confirm whether we would like to host this presentation or not. Majority carried and President Kearns will follow up to schedule a date for the presentation.
- 24 South Park Avenue:
 - President Kearns has been in contact with the applicant's law firm and FOIL requested the documents pertaining to the development. The documents obtained are the application, a traffic study, and a denial letter from the BZA. Anyone who would like copies of the documents may email President Kearns for them.
 - A new plan has been submitted by the developer. The plan is still for a three-story building. The first floor would be restaurant space and the top two floors would be general office space (not medical offices). There will not be rooftop dining.
 - They will need a variance for the front yard setback. All new buildings need to be set back 10 feet per the Village code and the applicant is requesting a 0-foot setback. However, this would line up with all the other buildings on the street.
 - The hours of operation are not confirmed.
 - The traffic study commissioned by the applicant studied municipal lot 4 on the West side of Park Avenue South and the municipal lot 8 on the East side of Park Avenue South. They combined the two lots to make it seem like there is more parking than there is rather breaking out by lot usage throughout the day.
 - 42 parking spaces are required for the building. A provision in the Village Code from 2005 states that if an "interior" building (not freestanding), contains a restaurant and abuts a municipal lot, it does not need a parking variance. The 42 spaces they are asking for, are not inclusive of the restaurant's parking needs.
 - The Civics Association will vote on whether we want to take on this issue or not pending the applicant's attorney coming in to give a presentation to the group about the plans for the development. The earliest vote would be at the July Civics Association meeting.

209 SUNRISE HIGHWAY (CREATIVE CHILD) VOTE: A group vote by voting members was held to decide whether we would like to support or oppose the development of 209 Sunrise Highway. Majority in favor of the project carried. President Kearns also clarified that this vote is being taken to decide whether she will go and speak on behalf of the Civics

Association regarding this issue. Members are always welcome to go to any meeting to speak on any issue.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN ROCKVILLE CENTRE:

- The next Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) meeting is to be held on Wednesday June 11, 2025 at 7:00PM at Village Hall. The 209 Sunrise Highway development is on the agenda, the 24 South Park Avenue development is not on the agenda.
- A presentation on historic preservation will be given by the Historical Society at the Sandel Senior Center on Thursday June 12, 2025 at 7:00PM.
- Village Elections are on Tuesday June 17, 2025. Voting is being held at the Recreation Center.
- St. Agnes Bazaar Thursday June 19, 2025-Sunday June 22, 2025.
- Eat, Shop, Rock hosted by the Rockville Centre Chamber of Commerce, Saturday June 21, 2025.
- A Board of Trustees meeting is to be held on Monday July 7, 2025 at 7:00PM at Village Hall.
- A Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) meeting is to be held on Wednesday July 9, 2025 at 7:00PM at Village Hall.
- The Village Firework show will be on July 12, 2025 on the Village Green.

PRESIDENT KEARNS ON THE FORMAT OF OPEN DISCUSSION:

- President Kearns and Vice President Carter will moderate. If there are any topics members would really like to discuss during open discussion, please email or speak with President Kearns ahead of the meeting.
- Please remember to follow the house rules:
 - Members must wait to be called on.
 - Must stand to speak and must introduce themselves.
 - Please keep comments brief.
 - No name calling or trashing other members.
 - School board issues and neighbor on neighbor issues will not be addressed.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

- Discussion about membership and how we are engaging people. Is there a way to give some people more insight into what Civics Association meetings entail i.e. put more information on the flyers that we're passing out? Secretary Wexlar suggested a google sign up for people who wanted to get involved with membership recruitment. Other suggestions included having a table setup at the Village Fireworks, asking the Village to put the link to the Civics Association website on the Village website like they do for the Chamber of Commerce, working with the PTA to have our upcoming meetings announced at PTA meetings.
- What is the status on the La-Z-Boy vacant lot? The lot has been leased but what specifically is going there?
- How can we prioritize filling existing buildings that have vacancies rather than just putting up new buildings? Has a survey been done of office vacancies in the

Village? We can always reach out to corporations of businesses we would like to see in town to help the process.

- General discussion on beautification:
 - Must keep in mind the distinction between building owners and tenants. Building owners are not required to reside in the Village and many do not. Some do not even live in the country. Lease terms also vary and “beautification” or upkeep falls solely upon the tenant. The tenants end up getting fined by the Village. How can fines be redirected to building owners rather than the tenants?
 - The Beautification Committee is piloting having “captains” on each block in which various business owners hold each other accountable for their respective sections of the downtown area.
- Discussion about what direction we want the Civics Association to go in. What are the goals? A suggestion was made of sending out a general email to the membership, “What do you want for Rockville Centre?” “What do you want to see in Rockville Centre?”
- Public Safety: Desire expressed for automated walk signs where pedestrians don’t have to press a button to get the walk sign. It depends on which roads are in question. If they are county or state roads, then we cannot go to the Village, we must contact our county and state representatives. Start by making a list of the roads where people would like to see this implemented to differentiate whose jurisdiction each falls under to make sure that we reach out to the right people.

MINUTES: A motion to adopt the minutes from the May 13, 2025 meeting was made by Vice President Carter, seconded by Secretary McEntee and carried.

VILLAGE ELECTIONS: The Village Elections will be held on June 17, 2025. Incumbents Emilio Grillo and Kate Conlon are running unopposed. Judge Mindy Roman is also up for reelection.

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS DURING CIVICS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS: No presentation is scheduled for July. For the August 12, 2025 meeting, a group from the state will come in to do a presentation to educate us about the Open Meetings Law. It will cover public hearings for any municipal governments within NY State, (village board meetings, zoning meetings, planning meetings) and the public’s ability to speak.

UPCOMING CIVICS ASSOCIATION MEETING: To be held on Tuesday 7/8/25 at 7:00pm at the Rockville Centre Public library.

MOTION TO ADJOURN – Motion made by Meghan Kearns, seconded by Catie Carter and carried.

Please email any questions and concerns to RVC.Civic@gmail.com