

Prospect Park Association Community Building Minutes, July 17th, 2020

Attendees: Jerry Stein and Susan Larson-Fleming (co-chairs), Amy Kaminsky Lydia McAnerney, Vera Marshall, Kaaha Kaahiye, Lynn Von Korff, Jeremy Schlitz Kyra Nyguard and Ben Tuthill

Community Building First Year Report: a draft report was distributed to Community Building members and subsequently to the PPA board. Jerry incorporated suggestions he received. There were only minor changes. Jerry noted that the final phase of critical parking changes in Glendale still need to be completed. **Motion:** Approve the First Year Community Building report with minor changes, as described. Lydia made the motion and Amy seconded. The committee unanimously approved the report. **Jerry summed by noting that many good things took place this past year and thanked committee and board member and staff for their work. Amy added that Jerry and Susan had done an amazing job leading the team and making all this good work happen. Everyone agreed.**

Updates:

Mutual Aid Project: Community Building (CB) partnered with Defend Glendale to help fund the purchase and distribution of pandemic supplies to every household in Glendale. PPA contributed \$2,000. Kaaha wrote a grant to Prospect Park Coop Legacy Fund (PPCLF) for \$3,000. CB members who also belong to PPCLF helped advocate for the PPCF grant. Kaaha updated the committee: The last shipment of supplies arrived Monday and volunteers have spent the week packing bags for households—about 100 are packed so far. Volunteers will distribute the bags to households next week. Some of the additional funds—raised on “Go Fund Me” --were used to purchase \$35 gift cards for each household.

Rock the Tower/student voter registration: This event, scheduled for October 3rd, has been cancelled for this year due to COVID. Amy volunteered to see if PPA could still deliver on the student voter registration component—and agreed to take the lead on suggestions made at the meeting. Lydia will bring her up to date. Ideas included: talking to Jan about any discussion with Kendra, connecting with Jeremy after the U’s outreach and engagement group meets next week to discuss student voter registration plans. Prior to that meeting, Lydia will connect Jeremy with the League of Women’s Voters who are continuing voter registration efforts. Jeremy will check with the MSA President. Amy will check with Becca Cowin, PPA board member, to see what MSA is planning, if anything.

National Night Out: has been postponed until September

Student interviews: temporarily on hold during COVID. Some students are nervous about ICE.

Tenants’ Rights Project: Kaaha is creating an online course for renters (changed to online in response to COVID). The online course is about 80% complete. Kaaha will distribute a draft to committee members in the next two weeks or so for feedback. Ben volunteered to review the draft and help distribute the final version to renters.

The course includes sections such as:

1. Steps to take before you lease: application fees, screening, pre-lease, rental costs, security –
2. Type of leases: periodic lease versus fixed term
3. Common illegal features to watch for in leases
4. Renter tax credits
5. Maintenance and repair issue
6. How to change and terminate your lease – notices, security deposit refunds

Some sections will have quiz questions and include mixed media available from other sites. There will also be an index to define key terms. There might also be a bonus section on subsidized housing: public and affordable. Lydia suggested a section on roommates, possibly to be added later.

Jackson Project: This project came to CB's attention when TPT aired a show called "Jim Crow of the North," documenting a demonstration in Prospect Park in 1909 to try to get the Jacksons who purchased the property on Franklin Avenue to move. Jerry and Susan have been doing research and Jerry visited family members in Michigan to learn about their lives over the decades in PP neighborhood and thereafter.

There is an opportunity to link this project with a proposed updated/remodeled Pratt playground. This coincides well with Jackson family history because the dad created a fabulous playground at their home on Franklin, attracting neighborhood children over the years. The remodeled Pratt playground could honor the Jackson family, but with more than a plaque. They are considering including a study curriculum. Nancy Vague, Pratt principal, thinks children will be very interested in their story. Jerry and Susan are working with Nancy Vague and Allison Bell. They contacted a landscape architect connected to Pratt who works throughout the city. The hope is to design a playground that's more than just typical playground equipment. They want to serve children who need sensory or other interventions because Pratt will have two new classes for children with special needs next year.

There will be a series of presentations to bring staff, parents and neighbors along, so they are creating a visual presentation story. Allison is key because she is working with parents. Kyra, a new committee member, who is a photographer, has offered to help with the presentation – Jerry has hundreds of photos given to him by the family. Kyra is on board to help tell the story visually. Helen, the Jackson's second daughter, has two daughters living and they are excited to be part of this project. We have given them veto power over anything we propose.

Glendale Public Housing: CB and the PPA board strongly support Glendale public housing. CB has been working hard to build connections with Glendale residents—will continue to do so and will increase in those efforts. Historic designation is only one of many approaches we are taking to protect Glendale. It's a critical problem that public housing is being sold to private developers ("RAD"). People can read the history on "The Glendale area of Prospect Park" at: <https://www.prospectparkmpls.org/neighborhood/areas/glendale.html>. CB members noted that no one would will allow public parks or libraries to be sold off, but the City is selling public housing to private developers. Many other neighborhood organizations belong to the "Keep Public Housing Public" coalition. PPA could join this coalition.

Learning Dreams in Glendale – This project was requested by mothers in Glendale. It was delayed due to COVID but might be back on the schedule this year for fall. Online learning during COVID is a challenge for many children, particular children in Glendale whose parents have fewer economic resources. Learning Dreams could provide curriculum assistance, arts and other creative projects. The next step is to assess the level of interest for this reframed Learning Dreams project

Glendale Security: Community building and PPA's board supported Glendale residents by asking MPHA to meet with residents to hear their concerns about lack of security—prompted in part by gunfire in Glendale several weeks ago. Three members of Community Building attended that meeting on July 16th. We will follow-up. The committee will also follow-up with Glendale parking issues.

Next meeting: 4pm August 21.