

Park Place - Underhill Avenue Block Association

Approved Minutes

03/16/2022

Attendees:

Diana Bowers-Smith *	Marc Gordon	Ed Regan
Sharon Combs	Robin Ketchum	Richard Roth
Mary Dale	Eric Koskinen	Gib Veconi
Christiana Dittman	Bruce McInnes	Stacey Weinstein
Jill Frasier	Danae Oratowski	Elizabeth Welch
Den Gordon	Diana Regan	David Whitbeck

* guest

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order by Marc Gordon, co-president at 7:40 PM.

Featured Speaker – Center For Brooklyn History – Diana Bowers-Smith

Marc Gordon introduced Diana Bowers-Smith of the Center for Brooklyn History who gave a presentation on her organization. Center For Brooklyn History was originally part of the Brooklyn Public Library, but merged with the Brooklyn Historical Society in 2020. Her presentation is included in the PPUABA website at <https://www.ppuaba.org/ppuaba-meeting-minutes/> and includes information on the collections and contact information.

Block Party Planning Update

Stacey Weinstein gave an update on Block Party planning. The event will be held from 12PM to 5PM on Saturday, May 7th. Confirmed tables are: Plant sale, tag sale, book sale, and bake sale. There will be pickle ball, a magician, and music by Al Bass. Other activities are still in the planning stage. Some food related activities will be evaluated closer to the event because of Covid. Volunteers are needed to support the many activities.

Grant Committee Report and Vote on 2022 Grants

Sharon Combs presented the grants recommended by the Grants Committee. They are:

- Nourishing our Community - \$1350
- PS 9 PTA - \$150

The committee made two recommendations:

- Add a date and time of application received to the grant application forms
- Outreach to the neighborhood to seek more applicants

During the discussion that followed members pointed out that we are a small organization with limited resources to give money and to evaluate grant applications and therefore advertising the availability of our grants is not a wise idea. Also, some people felt the current member driven approach, where members must sponsor the applicants, is an important component. Dee Regan made a motion to make the grants proposed by the committee, to accept the first recommendation of adding date and time to the application and to better publicize the availability of grants and the grant process among the PPUABA membership next year. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Formation of Nominating Committee

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to identify and propose a slate of officers for the 2022-2023 year. The following people volunteered to be on the committee: Bruce McInnes (chair), Robin Ketchum, Stacey Weinstein.

Nourishing Our Community update

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Jill Frasier reviewed the contributions made by neighbors to Nourishing Our Community. She stated inflation is a major problem; prices for produce have increased by 20% from January 2021 to January 2022.

DRAT Committee update

Bruce McInnes reported that the rat mitigation committee met last week. The issues of rats and the disposal of garbage in light of the current construction projects on some of our streets was discussed. The contractor is supposed to move the trash to openings in the fence, but the trash is often put out after the workers leave. The pickup is frequently before they come to work the next morning so the process doesn't work. The trash on the street is attractive to rats who will rip open the bags. Possible solutions are having residents put trash out before 4PM or scheduling the sanitation pickups later in the morning so the trash can be moved in the morning. Marc Gordon said he will speak to the project coordinator about what might be feasible. In addition, promoting the use of mint scented trash bags, which repel rats, was discussed.

PPUABA business items and announcements

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 2022 meeting was made by Jill Frasier and seconded by Eric Koskinen. It was approved unanimously.

New Business

Saturday June 4th was chosen as the date for the Spring Stoop Sale.

Marc Gordon asked neighbors make their annual contribution to PPUABA.

Den Gordon announced an organizing meeting for the spring activities at the James Forten Playground to be held this coming Saturday, 3/19. Den is seeking people to help coordinate the playground activities as she transitions from this role. On Saturday, April 9th there will be cleanup at the playground, focusing on the tree beds. Eric Koskinen offered to help publicize events via his children's school network.

Gib Veconi announced that Open Streets on Vanderbilt Avenue will run from April 1st to November 20th. Vanderbilt restaurants are helping to fund the effort. Input on what kind of programming is wanted is being sought. In May, proposed designs for new street configurations will be presented for Vanderbilt and Underhill Avenues. Public workshops regarding these designs will be publicized. Questions were raised as to why Underhill Avenue closures weren't suspended during the sewer replacement project.

Eric Koskinen said he is part of a project to increase diversity in computer science education and asked the attendees if they know any high school students who would be interested in the program.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37pm.