

# Park Place - Underhill Avenue Block Association

Approved Minutes

04/20/2022

## Attendees:

Mary Dale	Susan Metz	Ed Regan
Jill Frasier	Ethan Mulligan	Teddy Theoharis
Den Gordon	Katherine Patton *	Gib Veconi
Marc Gordon	Teresa Peacocke	Patti Veconi
Robin Ketchum	Diana Regan	Stacey Weinstein

\* guest

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order by Marc Gordon, co-president at 7:38 PM.

## Featured Speaker – Brooklyn Botanic Garden – Katherine Patton

Katherine Patton, who has worked at the BBG since 1990 and lives nearby on Plaza Street, gave a presentation which focused on plantings for containers, window boxes and tree beds. She recommended above all, plant what brings you joy. Her specific suggestions were:

### Window Boxes and Containers

- Watering can be a problem with containers or window boxes. Succulents such as yucca, sedum for cactus are a good choice if watering is an issue. When planting, consider sun and shade and the time of day when you do you get sun.
- Anything can be a container. There are some that are self watering. It is important to use container potting soil in a container. Consider how big your container plants will grow. Window boxes can be decorated for the winter using dusty miller and adding branches.
- As a rule of thumb, the earliest it is completely safe to put plants in the ground is Mother's Day – especially fruit bearing plants. Herbs are hardier. If you are planting vegetables or other edible plants you should consider having your soil tested. It may be safer to grow vegetables in a container with container potting soil.

### Tree beds

- The tree is the most important component of the tree bed and plantings shouldn't interfere with it. Suggested plantings for a tree bed are a ground cover like vinca or small plants like begonias. Ivy is not a good idea, nor are shrubs like boxwood.
- Tree beds should have compost added, but do not add more soil. NYC provides free compost to gardeners. Keep compost away from the trunk of the tree.
- Trees may need to be watered; young trees need 20 gallons of water a week.

The talk concluded with Katherine taking a few questions. Marc thanked her for attending the meeting and for the information she provided to our members. Documents and publications from the Brooklyn Botanical Garden she provided are available on the PPUABA website at: <https://www.ppuaba.org/growing/>

## Block Party Planning Update

Stacey Weinstein reported on the upcoming Plant Sale and Block Party. The permit has not been received from the city. Activities and entertainment will include a magician, ice cream from the Social on Washington Avenue, a knife sharpener, kids' crafts and music. The pot luck supper and grilled foods activities are still

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undecided. Volunteers are needed to put up No Parking signs before the event. Stacey asked people to email her if they can help.

### **DRAT Committee Update**

A report from the DRAT (Rat control) committee was made by Ed Regan. Ed commended Bruce McInnes for his tireless efforts working on the committee, even as the original membership dwindled. He reviewed the efforts of the committee. Starting in 2019 teams surveyed each house on the 4 blocks comprising the block association, and gathered 25+ relevant data points, such as cracks in the cement or vents that open for each house. To date, many of the issues have been corrected. The committee compared the member directory to houses with issues that could encourage rats and if there was no contact for a house with an issue, a letter was left for the person responsible for trash disposal to try to establish a dialog. Twenty-five letters were sent and there was one reply.

Theresa Peacocke is interested in getting a group of people together to hire an exterminator. Susan Metz recommends 'Top Class Pest Control' of Brooklyn.

Members were advised not to call 311 to report rodents as the city will issue a summons to the property owner.

### **PPUABA business items and announcements**

A motion to accept the March minutes was made by Robin Ketchum, seconded by Jill Frasier and passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

Gib Veconi gave a brief summary of the DOT proposals for Underhill Avenue. Plans are for neckdowns at intersections, an island in the middle of the street and bike lanes in both directions. Underhill from Atlantic to Pacific may be closed permanently to traffic. Bergen St. to St. Marks may be one way. In response to a question, Gib did not know if any parking spaces would be removed. DOT will hold events to present the plans to the public.

Den Gordon announced that tree logs and stumps from 304 Park Place were moved to the playground to be installed in the garden.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 with a motion from Jill Frasier, seconded by Stacey Weinstein which passed unanimously.