

Park Place -- Underhill Avenue Block Association

Approved Minutes

03/17/2021

Attendees:

Phyllis Brody	Den Gordon	Richard Roth
Sharon Combs	Marc Gordon	David Whitbeck
Mary Dale	Al Bass	Teddy Theoharis
Jill Frasier	Robin Ketchum	Gib Veconi
Frances Carroll	Susan Metz	Rowie Samaco
Ed Regan	Diana Regan	Stacey Weinstein

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order by Marc Gordon, co-president, at 7:30 PM.

Rowie Samaco, a guest speaker from the NYC DEP did a presentation on Rain Gardens (also known as Bioswales). We learned they divert water from running into sewers while purifying the air, helping pollinators, improving drainage and helping avoid runoff in the Gowanus Canal watershed. Maintenance of rain gardens is necessary, such as weeding and removing trash. The NYC teams tasked with performing these functions have been subject to budget cutbacks. There is a Rain Garden Stewardship Program run by the city which has a goal of educating and involving the population in their care. Participants are given support and tools to help care for the rain gardens. The Stewardship program has various levels of involvement and would be appropriate for PPUABA to participate in as we have several rain gardens on Park Place. Training is available as well as plants for the sites. Marc Gordon thanked Rowie for her presentation.

Susan Metz spoke about forming groups of members for some activity, for example watching and then discussing a movie. She said there is interest in expanding this into the creation of informal groups around a variety of interests such as cooking, learning a language, etc. A proposal about how this could be organized has been written and will be presented at the next meeting. Dee Regan mentioned another existing organization, Good Neighbors of Park Slope, which is well established and has similar programs. The Good Neighbors of Park Slope link will be added to the PPUABA website.

Gib Veconi spoke about the 2021 Open Streets program. Underhill Avenue will be closed to traffic, Monday Thursday, 8AM-8PM and Friday, 8AM-4PM. Volunteers will move the barricades to close and open the streets. Open Streets – Restaurants will see Vanderbilt Avenue closed Friday from 4PM to 11PM and Saturday and Sunday from 11AM to 11PM with hired staff to maintain the opening and closing. The closure will begin at Atlantic Avenue. A Go Fund Me page has been set up to collect money to defray the cost of the operation. NYC does not allow amplified sound in the Streets area and storefront owners haven't donated storefronts for gallery space, both of which have impeded the ability to include artists in the program.

Richard Roth presented the decisions from the Grant Committee, which was tasked with allocating \$1000 among three proposals. The committee was Richard Roth, Jill Frasier, Stacey Weinstein, and Teddy Theoharis. The presentation was followed by a vote on each grant. The grants allocated were:

\$500 Friends of Underhill Playground for preserving the trees– passed unanimously

\$250 PS9 PTO Outdoor Art Gallery – passed unanimously

\$250 to Public Assistants – passed 15-1

Jill Frasier reported on Nourishing our Community. Since the last meeting we have delivered fruit to CHIPS and food donations from CHIPS to Chance for Children. Our next delivery will be fresh vegetables purchased from Foodtown to Chance for Children on March 26th.

The minutes from the February 2021 meeting were approved unanimously after one change which was requested by Sharon Combs. She wished to include a statement made by Gib Veconi, thanking Marc Gordon and Robin Ketchum at the previous meeting following the co-presidents' mid-term review.

Marc Gordon made a request for volunteers to form a nominating committee for officers for the 2021-2022 term. Bruce McInnes, Frances Carroll, and Sharon Combs volunteered. The slate will be presented and voted on at the May meeting.

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Den Gordon announced that the trees in the Underhill Playground will be examined by the Parks Department Brooklyn Horticultural Manager. On March 24'th there will be a walk through and he will advise us what needs to be done to support the trees.

After discussion, Saturday June 5'th was chosen for the Spring Stoop Sale.

There will be a Prospect Heights Cleanup on Saturday April 10'th.

The archive donated to the Center for Brooklyn History will be named in honor of Robin Ketchum.

Gib Veconi spoke about an application to rezone the lot containing the McDonalds at the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Vanderbilt Avenue, requesting an up zone to build a much larger building than the Community Board 8 board supports. This is additionally important because a precedent may change what is permitted further east on Atlantic.

People interested can attend online meetings of Community Board 8. The rezoning application will be discussed at the next CB8 Land Use Committee meeting, April 1. Information on attending the online meeting can be found at www.brooklyncb8.org.

A motion to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 9:30.