

Park Place/Underhill Avenue Block Association

Approved Minutes
10/21/2020

Attendees:

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| Stephanie Rooker | Robin Ketchum | Bruce McInnes |
| Diana Regan | Ed Regan | Susan Metz |
| Marc Gordon | Den Gordon | Warren Fray |
| Mary Dale | Richard Roth | Gib Veconi |
| Stacey Weinstein | Ben Tyree | Sharon Combs |
| Peter Ketchum | Gillian Frasier | Patti Veconi |
| Frances Caroll | Fred Bendheim | Vi Nguyen |
| Daniel Deverell | David Whitbeck | Laurie Cumbo |

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

Den Gordon reported on the Growing our Committee tree bed cleaning event held last weekend. 83 tree beds were weeded and cleaned. Bulbs were sold for planting. Den thanked the volunteers which included old and new faces to PPUABA events as well as the NYC Sanitation Department. Also, earlier plantings on Vanderbilt Avenue are doing well. Information on indoor composting is available on the PPUABA website (ppuaba.org). A cleanup of the Underhill Avenue Playground is scheduled for this Saturday at 9:30. Next spring a plant sharing event is planned.

New York City Council Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo was the guest speaker. Marc asked her to explain what will be the likely impacts on the NYC budget as a result of the pandemic, what areas of funding will the Councilmember look to protect as a matter of highest priority and what channels will there be for us, as residents of District 35, to express our priorities regarding the city's budget. Ms. Cumbo expressed condolences to those who have lost friends or relatives to Covid. She explained 4 billion dollars in budget cuts are necessary this year and how difficult it is to choose what to cut. Aid from the NY State budget or Federal Government is uncertain. Budget hearings will be held and cuts or opportunities for efficiencies will be identified. She felt the greatest immediate need is to supply food to people who have lost jobs. One achievement was that the summer jobs programs for youths was preserved. Various options for defunding or retraining for the police were discussed. Ms. Cumbo felt efforts should focus on removing bad actors rather than broad cuts to the NYPD. Questions included one from Susan Metz about safety at the polls and if any political party was organizing poll watchers. This will be Ms. Cumbo's last term because of term limits and she reflected on her accomplishments. Marc thanked her for her service to the community and for taking time to speak to PPUABA.

Marc reviewed early and election day voting sites. This information is also available on the PPUABA website. Absentee ballots may be dropped off at any early voting site. He encouraged the members to ask elderly neighbors if they need any help getting to their polling place and offer assistance.

Marc made the following announcements:

- Please see the PPUABA website for guidance on Halloween celebrations in the time of Covid. Gov Cuomo issued guidelines Oct 20 and they can be viewed there.
- The PPUABA member directory was emailed to those on our mailing list on October 9th. If your details are missing from the list, please confirm your privacy preferences by emailing ppuaba.membershiplist@gmail.com.

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- Another email was sent Oct 7, with instructions on how to prevent PPUABA emails from going to SPAM or Promotions folders.
- Because of COVID, PPUABA will not solicit money from the businesses that sponsor the newsletter this year, but include their ads for free.
- PPUABA dues are \$10 per year per household. PPUABA now accepts payments through Paypal or Venmo, as well as cash or check directly to the treasurer, Ed Regan. Online payments should be sent to PPUABA.treasurer@gmail.com.

A new PPUABA initiative, Nourishing our Committee, was proposed by Marc. This would involve PPUABA members donating money that would be used to purchase food items for donation to one or more established local food banks on a monthly basis. PPUABA members could volunteer to donate, purchase and deliver food or help coordinate the effort. In the following discussion, it was suggested that we could instead join one of the existing Mutual Aid organizations in Prospect Heights or Crown Heights. A committee was established to discuss the idea of supporting a food bank composed of Jill Frasier, Frances Carroll, Bruce McInnes, Marc Gordon, Mary Dale and Fred Bendheim. Stephanie Rooker volunteered to investigate the Mutual Aid organizations in the area that we might support.

The minutes for meetings of May, June and September were approved unanimously.

New Business

Bruce McInnes announced there would be shredding event at this Saturday, 9 - 12 at 991 St. John's Place & Brooklyn Avenue.

Sharon Combs mentioned there is a new tea shop 611 Vanderbilt, Brooklyn High Low.

Warren Fray reported the side of his car was damaged with a key. He spoke about the difficulties parking a car with the new alternate side parking schedule of two days a week (one day per side). This schedule will remain in effect for the rest of the year, at least.

Gib Veconi reported a project to replace sewers and water mains on our streets will kick off soon. He will keep us up to date on details when they are known.

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 PM.