



## **PPA Virtual Board Meeting Notes – June 22, 2020 -- DRAFT for Board of Directors' Approval**

The Prospect Park Association (PPA) held a virtual board meeting on June 22, 2020.

**Meeting participants:** The names that appeared on the virtual meeting platform were Kenzie Turner, Jan Nelson, Eric Amel, Lupe Castillo, Lynn Von Korff, Dick (Richard) Kain, Inspector Todd Loining, John Wicks, Lydia McAnerney, Jeff Barnhart, Amy Kaminsky, Ann Herzog, Becca Cowin, Benjamin Tuthill, Ami Naff, Christie Nelson MPD, CPS Nicholas Juarez, Dan Cross, David Frank, Deidre Meacham, Evan Roberts, Harrison Nelson, Jerry Stein, Jordan Winters, Judy Cornelius, Kyra Nygard, Laurel Neufeld, Britt Howell, Mary Britton, Nicole Bridgland, Patricia Klein, Sam Smith, Jenna Hoge, Samantha R Messina, Susan Larson-Fleming, Vera Marshall, Victoria Mercer, Britt Howell, Allison Bell, Joanne Kurhajec, Ann Sechter, Kory Andersen, Aloida Zaragoza, Jim Oberly, Nancy Kosciolk, Valentine Cadieux, Joe Ring, Peter Wagenius, Council Member Cam Gordon, and Laura Preus. Note: Names are not listed in any order, but generally as they appeared on a screen.

**PPA Board Members included above:** Eric Amel (President), Lynn Von Korff (Treasurer), John Wicks, Jeff Barnhart, Amy Kaminsky, Becca Cowin, David Frank, Britt Howell (Vice President), Samantha Messina, Susan Larson-Fleming, Joe Ring, and Laura Preus (Secretary).

**Call to Order/Quorum.** Eric Amel opened the meeting at about 6:35 pm and noted that we have a quorum.

**Introduction/Agenda.** Eric A. welcomed people to this virtual meeting that includes both board meeting business and community meeting conversation. He noted that PPA is one of the oldest neighborhood organizations in Minneapolis, that we have a role to play, and that we need to be in this for the long term. This includes conversation around the COVID-19, the tragedy of George Floyd and action that needs to occur, community involvement and safety. The agenda today includes many topics to begin these conversation, as well as committee meetings.

**Motion.** Eric A. reviewed the agenda and moved that we proceed with the agenda and also insert a requested topic from Minneapolis Public Housing into the community building topic. Amy Kaminsky seconded the motion and it passed.

There was a general question from a non-board member about who can participate in this meeting? Eric A. noted that official motions and voting is for board members, but there is a desire to have community members have opportunity to participate and chime in.

### **Announcements/Updates.**

**Welcome New PPA Communications Coordinator.** Kenzie (Mackenzie) Turner, new PPA staff member, introduced herself as the new Communications Coordinator. She has a passion for topics that have often been underrepresented. She is interested in community engagement and the idea that everyone's voice is important. Jan Nelson is working closely with Kenzie as she is beginning her work.

**Coronavirus PPA volunteer network status.** Lydia McAnerney had an update but had some technical issues with audio. Mary Britton stepped in and explained that Lydia M. spearheaded efforts and Mary has also been working on website topics. They have been monitoring people signing up to help, people asking for help, and then also connecting them as appropriate with the PPE list. Activity has slowed down in recent weeks. They will actively monitor for a few more weeks to see if people are requesting help, and then look to make updates on the website. There were compliments about the website. Mary B. also invited any further suggestions on how to approach the website at <https://prospectparkmpls.org/neighbor-support.html>

**Council Member (CM) Cam Gordon's Ward 2 Update.** Eric A. welcomed CM Gordon to the meeting. CM Gordon noted that he forwarded a report just before the meeting to PPA staff, so they can make that available.

- **Covid-19.** In Minneapolis there were 175 deaths so far. In Prospect Park there have been 26 to 50 cases in this area. It is important to continue wearing masks to help prevent transmission. There were many more tests done recently, especially following the protests for George Floyd.
- **New vision for public safety.** CM Gordon also spoke about creating a new vision for how we do public safety in Minneapolis. He wanted to assure people that they could still call 911. The city council is also looking into a charter change – and there is a possibility there will be something on the ballot this November. Even if the council passes something, there will still need to be 150 days for review. He has given notice of intent to introduce an ordinance amendment. One of them has to do with an amendment related to the police department, and also one related to police oversight. CM Gordon is wanting to see a better early warning system move forward.
- **Walkability.** There has been some progress made in the walkability near Glendale. Minneapolis is still trying to function as government and advance work such as this, even in the midst of COVID. They are also looking at a crossing along Delaware and they are looking at ideas such as a pedestrian signal.

**Additional conversation around update topics.** CM Gordon addressed additional details. For example, he explained that currently the city council does not play a role related to policy and key topics for the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD), like they do for other agencies. An idea is that we could replace the MPD with another required department that would be much broader, such as a department of community safety and violence prevention. He noted that we seem to have unity around the idea that we can do better, and that we need to do better. The eyes of the nation are on us, and we need to work together on this. He said we're hopeful that if we can be open and honest we can listen to each other and end up with something that is better, where everyone can feel safer and is safer.

- Amy Kaminsky asked about the police union, news of a pause in negotiation, and their legal standing. CM Gordon described how in general many are supportive of unions, but may have a feeling that in this case the union is not doing helpful work. CM Gordon noted that labor unions encompass many topics and laws. The labor laws often send issues to arbitration, and this may not always lead to progress forward. Council members are trying to understand the legal issues and work through these topics. There are many nuances, such as many supervisors and staff are members of the same union, which is not the case in most other agencies within the city. He noted they need advice from labor lawyers. Inspector Todd Loining thanked CM Gordon for his comments and noted that the distinction between supervisor and staff is part of their union.

Lieutenants and staff under lieutenants are in the union. Inspectors are appointed and not part of the union.

- There was a community member question about the role of police officers being a part of the meeting and in what capacity they are in the meeting. Eric A. clarified that this has been a long-standing tradition to welcome neighborhood police officers to PPA meetings for information sharing. Inspector Todd noted that he was at the PPA meeting as a long-standing officer with the 2<sup>nd</sup> precinct and as a civilian too. He is wanting to engage and understand what happened with the tragic death of George Floyd. His primary goal is community relationships with the second precinct. They also do crime analysis and look for patterns of crime. He noted that as we move forward, his job may or may not be a part of the future vision.
- There was a question from another community member, Vicki M., who was attending a PPA Board meeting for the first time, and appreciated the Zoom opportunity. She had attended a Powderhorn meeting, and wondered how to follow up with CM Gordon regarding topics on defunding the police. Would there be opportunities to meet? Office hours? Other venues? CM Gordon said capacity is an issue, but he is willing to engage with everyone who is willing. It could be holding a meeting with people here, or others, etc. He provided his e-mail, cell phone and an invitation to reach out. [cam.gordon@minneapolis.mn.gov](mailto:cam.gordon@minneapolis.mn.gov).
- CM Gordon noted his willingness to continue to engage. He has been open to cutting the MPD budget, and also wants to know the essential services that must be provided. Eric A. suggested there may be interest in some kind of community meeting with Cam and PPA.

#### **Organizational business.**

#### **What now? PPA response to George Floyd. Support for justice and racial equity.**

Eric A. noted that the Ward 2 update discussion and this topic related to each other and we were continuing the conversation.

- There were more questions related to possible legislation, and how input is taken into account as Minneapolis and the city council considers this issue. CM Gordon noted they have been getting a lot of input from individual e-mails. There was an organized effort at Powderhorn Park to invite council members to address the topic. There is direction of city staff to do a year-long community engagement process on this issue. They would likely contract out to help do that, so Minneapolis residents could get educated about it. CM Gordon expressed his interest in stepping back to listen to others, especially people of color, so they can understand the next steps to take. Department heads will be asked to put forward a preliminary recommendation for next steps later in July. He is sure that they will also be wanting to involve neighborhood organizations.
- Community member Lupe C. noted she has mentioned having a safety and awareness organization with neighbors, property managers, and stakeholders. We could carry on that original intent, while also centering voices in people who live in those areas. It is important to center around voices of black, indigenous and people of color.
- Another community member, Dan C., asked if everyone's views are welcome? Dan noted that many people may not be engaging, e.g., older people who cannot participate due to current social distancing climate.
- A comment about not being hasty by intentional, and listening to those who speak.

## Committee Reports.

**Transportation and Safety Committee update.** Committee Chair Evan Roberts gave an update on a MN Department of Transportation (MNDOT) topic related to Hwy 94 and potential changes. There has been consulting with MNDOT and neighborhoods. There are many topics under discussion including crossings over the freeway, livability around freeways, carpool lanes, exits, number of lanes, environmental considerations, etc. Eric A. also brought up a consideration of the history of Hwy 94. There is a written summary/flyer that outlines many of the problems around parts of the current plan (“Neighborhood Rethinking MNDOT’s plan to widen I94”). People of color and young people with asthma often suffer disproportionately to nearby freeways and we should continue to attend to those issues. Dick K. wondered how people learn about what is going on with the Transportation Committee work. There was also a question about how previous MNDOT community engagement input had been used. E.g., early input determined there was overwhelming support for a land bridge for the Rondo neighborhood. There was a discussion about land bridges and if they could possibly be used in the Twin Cities.

There was a vote to call the question that was supported.

**Motion.** The Transportation Committee moved to ask for PPA’s support of the written document about the coalition of neighborhoods along 94 (“Neighborhood Rethinking MNDOT’s plan to widen I94”). Susan LF seconded. The motion passed. There was one abstain; John W. noted that much of this dealt with St. Paul issues.

**Motion.** Evan R. also brought forward the transportation committee topic related to neighborhood watch signs. They moved that PPA supports neighbors removing the eight Neighborhood Watch signs in Prospect Park that read: “If I don’t call the police my neighbor will.”

This opened a significant community member conversation on the topic of the signs.

- As explanation of the why the motion was brought forward, it was noted the signs are over 30 years old and damaged, appear threatening with multiple symbols of eyes, and focus on calling the police. Originally the signs were supposed to be about the community coming together, but in light of recent events and the murder of George Floyd, we know that people of color are targeted by police. Community members Kyra N. and others wanted to bring this sign topic forward.
- A community member, identifying as a person of color, further noted that the signs could be perceived differently by people of color to be threatening. This community should accept that we will disagree.
- Aloida Z. talked about how we can be looking out for each other as a community without this particular sign. Aloida would like to see the signs gone. We can create a new sign.
- Amy K. also spoke to the issues and how we are living in a moment when these signs can be gone. Threats to call the police are not how we want to be as a welcoming community. Strongly in favor of removing the signs.
- Judy C. expressed concerns about safety if we get rid of the signs, and that everyone needed to band together to look out for each other.
- There were several back-n-forths around this topic.

- Harrison N. provided some history about the signs. They came out of an era of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). Mary Alice Kopf and others had catalyzed efforts to develop block clubs and leaders. They wondered how will potential criminals know that a neighborhood is organized? Thus it was recommended that they consider watch force signs to indicate the neighborhood was organized around crime prevention.
- Brit Howell talked about the importance of looking at this from the perspective of black, indigenous and people of color. She noted that no one saying you shouldn't protect your neighborhood, but that no one should be this tone deaf. It is not welcoming. Protecting the neighborhood is fine, and at the same time those particular signs – from 27+ years ago – can go. They don't work for today's world. We can find a better way to say that on a sign.
- Allison B. brought up some points about who will be able to do this and the specific action steps.
- Laura Preus referenced Aloida Z's earlier suggestion about how we can look out for each other without those particular signs and create a new sign. We are taking down signs, and now what do we want to build up instead? We can think about our proactive community message to be a welcoming and safe community.

**Motion repeated.** The motion was repeated that PPA would support neighbors in removing the neighborhood watch signs that say "If I don't call the police my neighbor will." The board voted and the motion passed unanimously.

The discussion catalyzed further conversation around next steps and topics related to public safety.

**Motion/suggestion.** Eric A. built on the discussion and suggested that we have a task force that looks at what does neighborhood watch mean in the year 2020 in Prospect Park. In the absence of the signs, what is the next generation of what it means to look out for each other and take care of each other.

- Ideas about what this could look like were further discussed. Allison B. suggested that we could think more broadly. Could we consider a community meeting with Cam Gordon or others about alternatives to policing? We could be building our awareness. Let's go broader than neighborhood watch. Possibly a series of community meetings and include the young people who brought this to our attention. We could consider broader anti-racism topics.
- Britt H. noted that we can start and then from there have the next conversation. Conversations need to start with anti-racism as a lens and we can move from there. We can have genuine conversations with each other and be respectful of everyone's culture. It's really not that hard.
- Lupe C. thought we might be able to make a broader statement. We could consider how do we our work with this task force, and re-envision it as beautifully inclusive and in a racially equitable environment. We need to apply a racial equity lens to all of our work and dismantle racism in all of our work. Rather than one specific topic and idea and committee – maybe we step back and have an anti-racism framework and lens that is embedded in all of our work. Amy K. further noted that having a place where you focus on a particular thing makes it possible for people to get things done. It could incorporate this lens, and be its own thing as well.
- Lupe C. further spoke to it being the cornerstone of our values. We all come from different places and histories. But if we have anti-racism as a lens to which we interact in our work, it would give empowerment. Have it centered in indigenous and black and brown voices.

**Motion.** Eric revisited the suggestion around the task force and moved that PPA resolves to also develop a racial equity framework for all of our work as a community in Prospect Park Association. There is much to do so we can leave the development and details to the task force or the next meeting. We are being invited to consider how this should be. Britt H. seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Eric A. asked and Britt H. offered to lead the task force. Those who are interested in the task force were asked to put their names forward in the “chat box.” Britt H. would be able to determine next steps for contacting. Lupe C. has worked with Britt H. and also contacted businesses and neighbors to gain a level of interest in public safety.

**Environment committee.** Mary Britton, Chair, invited people to join the committee. She also noted there will not be a meeting this month. She described how it is hard to address climate change during COVID, but resiliency continues to be key. Mary also noted she reached out to Britt to coordinate on how we do our work. Mary B. remains interested in working with data and how we measure our progress. She would like to think about how we communicate and include all people, and how we reach them. She also noted it is pollinator awareness week.

There was a discussion about the PPA website, PPA list and PPE list. Sometimes PPA communications are submitted to also be shared onto the neighborhood PPE list.

**Land Use Committee.** John Wicks, Chair, gave an update on three topics from the last Land Use Committee meeting.

1. Wallis Vermilion Project. The developer Ari Parritz indicated that the project suffered a delayed start due to coronavirus, but hoped it would begin construction in the late summer or early fall. There were no changes to the design since it had been most recently communicated to PPA. They anticipated approximately a 20 month construction schedule. For the near future any issues could be brought to John Wicks and he would forward to Mr. Parritz for a response.
2. Jeff Barnhart had given an update about the extended stay hotel project. When the coronavirus hit the project was put on hold. He hopes for it to begin this fall if economic conditions are positive, and noted he hopes it would be completed by 2022.
3. John W. also described the work that Jeff Ellerd and Dick Gilyard are doing regarding two projects. The food hall project and distillery project are moving forward. They also discussed an energy project and a discussion of geothermal energy possibilities. Eric Amel noted the legacy of our grain storage and milling history in Prospect Park. There are deep aquifer wells that we can harness for geothermal energy. It connects with the Towerside Innovation District. Eric A. also shared a letter of support for the work of the Towerside Energy System Project. We can make a big impact in our own neighborhood.

**Motion.** Eric A. moved to adopt a PPA letter of support related to geothermal energy to Council Member Gordon and Eric Hanson (who directs this kind of work for CPED in MPLS). Lynn Von Korff seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

There was question if there has been any update on block with Schneider’s? No, John W. has not heard any news lately.

**Community Building Committee.** Jerry Stein, Co-chair, noted there had been gunshots near Delaware and Williams Ave. Following that event, Glendale residents had reached out to community building members and asked for PPA support on this topic. They suggested a meeting with Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) could be a good idea, and it may be helpful to have PPA demonstrate support for such a meeting through a letter. There were also positive comments and confidence in MPHA's willingness to meet even without the letter.

**Motion.** Susan LF moved that we support a letter to MPHA about meeting with Glendale residents. Lynn VK seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Jerry shared a draft summary report of the work in this first phase of Community Building, acknowledging that there is much more to do. Jerry said no action tonight was needed, but they asked that people read the executive summary to learn more about this good work.

**Administration update.** Jan Nelson, PPA staff, gave a grants update. She reported on the Prospect Coop Legacy fund for Dan Marshall for a small exhibit project for love and isolation in COVID times, and also on the \$350 funds for Rock the Tower project if that goes ahead (depending on COVID topics). Also \$1000 to Pratt PTO for funds that would have gone to that organization had Ice Cream Social proceeded. Also other projects such as planters and more. She also gave an update on SE Seniors and that they are moving to Pillars.

**September 2020 Board Election - paving a way for a remote election.** Lynn VK described a consultation with Mission Guardian, PPA's legal counsel service, about how we do our elections. The consultation noted that we are doing virtual meetings, that we are combining board meetings and community meetings, and that we can't hold our typical annual in-person meeting because of COVID mitigations. Lynn VK summarized the resolution (available in the board packet). We would be doing a virtual meeting on Monday, September 21, and voting by mail with absentee ballots. The Board meetings will continue to be held online, and association members are invited and encouraged to attend online board meetings. Given the uncertainty of how long COVID will last, this will be a new way of doing business until the context changes and we come up with a future approach.

**Motion.** Lynn VK moved to support the resolution and the remote election that will be conducted with an online association meeting on Monday, September 21, and by all-mail absentee ballot. Susan LF seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Neighborhood 2020 guidelines and PPA's response.** Amy Kaminsky described how the new guidelines will result in significant base funding reductions for neighborhood organizations, including PPA. Amy highlighted the key points of PPA's response to the proposed changes. Proposed cuts for 2021 reduces PPA's funding from \$64K to \$20K the first year (70% cut) and then base funding drops to \$10k by year three, an overall cut of 84%. With this level of funding, PPA will not be able to cover current fixed costs or continue with community building and other program initiatives. The City suggests that fundraising, grants and 18-month partnership engagement program grants will serve as major funding sources to accomplish neighborhood goals. The amount of effort required and short (18-month) time frame were identified as key obstacles to the success of this funding plan.

In PPA's letter we describe needing some basic stability for fixed costs for basic staffing needs. We also emphasize that Prospect Park has thousands of students in our neighborhood and we are doing

community building efforts among student renters, Glendale residents, and other work. We recommend that Neighborhoods 2020 support a funding structure that allows us to work on these goals with a minimal level of base funding, that they do not add a new grant infrastructure program in NCR, and that they consider the timing of their funding reduction actions in the middle of a pandemic. We also ask them to lengthen funding time periods for 2-3 years rather than a brief time period, e.g., a short time line or grant funding will not allow us to keep consistency in staff.

Lynn V. reminded us that the changes to the City funding plans have been delayed by a year. During this past year, the City engaged CURA to develop the "equitable engagement funding" formula to calculate funding for all associations. Lynn V. is available to answer questions about this process.

Corrections were noted in the document section regarding resident counts and these will be made before submission. Jerry Stein explained that the written comments submitted would be augmented by conversations with Cam Gordon, NCR staff and others. Eric A. provided thank you's to the background work that was put forward by Lynn V, Amy K., Jerry S and all who worked on these recommendations. Comments are due to NCR on July 15.

**Motion.** There was a motion and second to approve the PPA feedback letter. It was unanimously approved.

**Board Candidate Recruitment and Nomination Committee Update.** Eric A., Committee Chair, announced that PPA will be filling 7 seats this fall. We plan to reach out to existing board members and find ways to cast a wider net. Mackenzie T. will work on expanded social media and outreach. Links to the Candidate Profile submission forms will be published in the July newsletter and posted on PPE-list.

### **Other Business**

The minutes for the April 27 Board Meeting, June 9 Community Building and April 26 Environment Committee meetings were presented for approval.

**Motion:** Susan Larson-Fleming moved to approve the consent agenda. Lynn Von Korff seconded it. It was unanimously approved.

Next Board Meeting: Monday, 7/27 6:30pm Virtual

Meeting adjourned: 9:43 pm

*Notes respectfully submitted by Laura Preus, PPA secretary.*