

2020 Board of Directors Candidate Profiles

Packet Revised – 8/31/2020 – Total 9 candidates.
View the candidate profiles for the 2020 Board of Directors Election.

AMY KAMINSKY

BEN TUTHILL

DAN CROSS

JENNA HOGE

JOSEPH RING

KRISTA OSTROM

LAURA PREUS

LYNN VON KORFF

RACHEL COFFIN

Meet the candidates at our annual meeting on September 21 at 6:30 PM. Meeting will be held virtually. Check PP E-List, the PPA website, and the PPA September newsletter for Zoom details.



Amy Kaminsky

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

The beauty of its old trees and streets, its sense of neighborhood, and its dynamic mix of homeowners and renters.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

I want to help continue the work of making our neighborhood welcoming, livable, and pro-active about the dynamic changes we are currently living through as a neighborhood, as a city, as a state, and as a nation.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

I have been on PPA Board for a year, so I can now hit the ground running. I work well with people. I am a retired educator with a fair amount of administrative experience.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

Community building and University-neighborhood collaboration

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

I value the opportunity to work with and for our neighborhood. In the year I've served on the PPA Board, my admiration for the progressive work PPA does has grown, and I want to continue to be part of that effort.



Ben Tuthill

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

I like the sound the bugs make this time of year - and I like that it wouldn't take long to find a neighbor who could help me identify each bug by its sound and explain to me why they're all making such a racket.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

Neighborhood organizations are important - they're among the only spaces in our world where we can witness direct democracy in action. That can only happen if we're all in, all included, and all ready to put in work. I'm running for PPA board to help make that work possible for every resident of Prospect Park. We live in a majority - renter neighborhood with a board that, like our majority-renter city and our majority-renter world, is overwhelmingly majority-homeowner. As a renter, I'll use my seat on the PPA board to advocate for the 67% of Prospect Park residents who live in precarious housing situations. I'll work to allocate our neighborhood resources toward mutual aid and community building, and I'll fight to include all underrepresented groups in the process of making our neighborhood organization more equitable, representative, and democratic.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

I'm a special education teacher at Avalon School in South St. Anthony - we're a cooperatively run school with a diverse array of student needs, so arguing out the nuts and bolts of equitable action is my day-to-day work. I've participated on the PPA Transportation and Safety Committee for the past year, and this summer I've worked with my neighbors to build up structures of mutual aid and communication on my 100 block of Bedford. I grew up right across the Emerald border in St. Paul and have been exploring these streets since I was a kid - I still find alleys that I've never seen before, so I guess I'm not an expert yet.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

As we move on from this summer of activism, it's essential that we don't lose the momentum that exploded into action in the wake of the murder of George Floyd. This summer I worked with neighbors on the Transportation and Safety Committee to remove Neighborhood Watch signs and to commit to neighborhood-wide community-based safety conversations. I plan to continue that work moving forward - community safety can't happen without honest conversation, and honest conversation can't happen unless we create spaces where all neighbors can share their voices. I'm also committed to expanding on the work of the Community Building Committee regarding renters' rights and advocacy, especially in regards to the health and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether we acknowledge it or not, we are standing on the brink of a nation-wide eviction crisis - a crisis that could impact 2 in 3 Prospect Park residents. Both initiatives can only happen if we as a neighborhood take an honest look at our motivations and first principles. We can place equity, antiracism, and mutual aid at the core of our mission, and we can allow that mission to guide our neighborhood programs and actions. That will require some serious conversation and re-imagining, but we are living in a moment that expects no less from us. I'm excited to dig into it, and I'm excited to do it in the neighborhood where I live.

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

I have tons of excess milk kefir grains - if anyone needs a COVID, Season 2 project and is looking for microbial companionship, a kefir SCOBY makes a great, low-maintenance pet. Will trade for laundry quarters.



Dan Cross

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

Community strength and commitment.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

There are changes coming to the neighborhood that I am passionate about and uniquely able to help shape.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

MIDTOWN GREENWAY COALITION 2017 – PRESENT Board of Directors, & Treasurer • Designed preferred option for rehabilitating and sharing the Short Line Bridge with rail, bicyclist and pedestrians

MPLS PARKS & RECREATION BOARD RIVER GORGE MASTER PLAN 2018 – 2019 Community Advisory Committee – Public collaboration informing the Board on park improvements • Created a plan for enhancement and preserving the Gorge Park including sighting mixed use trails.

MPRB EAST OF THE RIVER PARKS MASTER PLAN 2018 – 2019 Consultant – Pedestrian and Bicycle-Friendly (CROW) Roundabouts • Proposed alternate bike friendly roundabout design and was appointed as consultant on future project.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FRANKLIN AVE E, RIVER PKWY INTERSECTION STUDY 2009 Hennepin County – Shaped the course of intersection redesign plans • Derailed plans to construct an inappropriately motorist centric intersection and won committee support for my design of a Pedestrian and Bicycle-Friendly Roundabout

MINNEAPOLIS NRP (Neighborhood Revitalization Plan) – Minneapolis, MN 1995 – 1998 A government program to facilitate and implement neighborhood established priorities. Transportation Committee Chair Lead factious task force to develop and implement strategies to address neighborhood transportation goals. • Achieved consensus agreement of 9 contentious stakeholders on major parkway intersection redesign. • Formulated a project plan with a new roadway intersection design, schedule and \$500,000 budget. • Maneuvered the plan through 6 government agencies, secured approval and obtained full funding. • Improved intersection safety 80% compared to proceeding 10-year period.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

Transportation, Land Use, Gorge Park, Grand Rounds ERP Link completion

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

I am an engineer with experience in automation, design and testing, in OEM, medical, automotive and consumer product industries. My exceptional combination of management competency, engineering acumen and, hands-on technician skills, efficiently delivers innovative solutions for a broad spectrum of difficult, complex, time-sensitive and mission-critical engineering projects. I am lauded for exceptional leadership and mediation skill, finding common ground and keeping teams moving forward and accomplishing impossible goals. I've lived in Prospect Park since 1980 and care greatly about protecting and improving the neighborhood.



Jenna Hoge

What do you like most about Prospect Park? I moved to Prospect Park for simple reasons--I wanted to be close to public transit and the river, the commute to work was reasonable, and a few friends lived nearby. As a resident of the neighborhood, however, my priorities and my appreciations changed. The physical boundaries of the neighborhood--the freeway, river, and thoroughfares--create a special circumstance for the Prospect Park community. Each boundary creates an opportunity for a smaller community to develop and flourish. Community, relationships, and caring for one another are, in my mind, primary components of a good life, and they are components which the Prospect Park Association has the potential to strengthen and enhance. I believe that Prospect Park residents have a unique potential for further exploring and developing our neighborhood to facilitate a good life for all who live here. I still love the river, appreciate the transit, and the location within the city, but what I like most about Prospect Park is this community.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association? I want to serve on the board of the Prospect Park Association to increase the board's engagement with the residents of Prospect Park and to use this engagement to foster a healthier and more equitable neighborhood. Almost 67% of Prospect Park Residents are renters (mncompass.org), but there is little representation for renters in the neighborhood association. As a renter myself, I have experienced the inconvenience, difficulty, and in some cases, danger of a negligent landlord; I have experienced how difficult it can be to advocate for a safe and functional living space, and I have developed skills for navigating renter protections. I hope to share these resources with renters, especially since many of us share a landlord. I am interested in reaching out to renters specifically to increase our engagement with the Prospect Park Association. A safer living space for renters improves the neighborhood quality in numerous ways; for example, nicer looking yards and exteriors both increase property value and promote community and connection. I hope to apply these same principals - connection, communication, education, equity, and engagement - to all topics considered by the Prospect Park Association to improve the quality of life and community for all Prospect Park residents.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA? In my professional life, I am a health educator and public health worker. I have skills in listening, educating, activating, and organizing. I have been described and identify as a "solutions-oriented activator." To me, this means that when a problem is identified, I am energized by and focused on implementing a solution. I am also a future public policy/affairs student; my interest in neighborhoods and community is a growing skill set. I would also bring the renter experience and perspective to the board conversation. Although I do not have the valuable history of a tenured homeowner, my commitment and interest in Prospect Park is undiminished; I, too, want to live in a vibrant and healthy community. Because of my experience as a renter, I have developed skills for both communicating with the city, with landlords, and with my neighbors and renters, whether it is to plant a garden, resolve a gas leak, share a tool, participate in a night watch, or pass along helpful neighborhood updates. As I have learned about and attended PPA and committee meetings, I see these conversations happening there, too.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on? So far, I have attended transportation committee meetings, but I am interested in being a part of the Community Building committee. I want to ask the question "who lives here but isn't at the table?" then work together to make the table bigger and more welcoming, to open up a space for those who aren't at it yet, but deserve to be. Regardless of my board member status, I plan to initiate a neighborhood tenant rights education campaign. Community Building also overlaps with the current movement around the police and public safety. These conversations are happening in many of our homes, through the Prospect Park email list, within the various PPA committees, between neighbors on sidewalks and in yards, and with Representative Gordon. I am eager for the PPA to facilitate conversation so we can listen and learn from one another to identify ways for public safety to best function for all of us. These are the issues that immediately come to mind, but I remain curious about the topics to which I am currently unaware. As an educator and public health worker, I am passionate about supporting, elevating, educating, and empowering; these are the core values with which I would approach all initiatives, topics, and events facing the board.

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors? I did not know about the Prospect Park Association when I moved into the neighborhood. Since learning about the organization, I have found involvement to be both interesting and meaningful. I am eager to share this experience with all who are interested in our neighborhood community and I look forward to partnership, conversation, and learning.



Joseph Ring

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

The wonderful diversity within Prospect Park.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

I would like to continue to work to help produce a plan for the future of our community to move forward to improve its opportunity and diversity of its residents and businesses. I would also work for the goal that the PPA organization provides careful deliberations to actions that may possibly damage proven assets and identity of Prospect Park.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

PPA Board member since 1995 and two term past President.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

Land Use Committee



Krista Ostrom

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

It's a welcoming, diverse, friendly community, and I especially love the walkability, access to beautiful trails for exercise, and the easy access to public transit.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

My family and I are new residents of Prospect Park, and I am anxious to get involved and help our community any way that I can, and look forward to meeting more of our neighbors.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

My background is in fundraising & development, communications, and social media. I also have experience in office administration, including at the UofM and in a legal setting.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

I would be happy to put my fundraising and communication skills to work for PPA, but am open to serving in other areas as well.

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

I am thrilled to be a resident of this beautiful community, along with my husband (Matt) who works in information security, my daughter (Lily) who is an 8th grader and a competitive rock climber, and our Newfoundland dog (Sam) who is a giant slobbery goofball.



Laura Preus

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

I love the people, the places, and what we all bring together. We are a river neighborhood next to the mighty Mississippi; a city neighborhood in the heart of the Twin Cities; a thoughtful neighborhood next to universities and schools; a green neighborhood with parks and trails; and a friendly neighborhood where we learn from each other and help each other out.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

Neighborhood organizations can play an important role in helping communities stay connected and address issues of collective interest. Public service is important to me and this is one way to help pitch in to help PPA and the neighborhood be successful. I see there are many serious challenges facing our city, neighborhood and PPA, and we will need to work together. After serving one term, I'd like to continue to apply what I've learned.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

I joined the PPA Board two years ago and have served as the PPA secretary. In my professional life I work in the arena of parks and trails where I have also focused a lot on public engagement and involving people in decision making. I attended graduate school here at the U of MN where I got my Ph.D. in Conservation Biology with a minor in Conflict Management. Around that time I also spent about two years living in Costa Rica where I was able to learn Spanish and get a better understanding of how much there is left to learn in this world! These life experiences have taught me about the importance of respect, inclusivity, innovation, curiosity, and persistence. It's also important to mention my family. I live in Prospect Park with my spouse, Michael, and nine -year old twins. I also help with my parents in their nineties – they lived in Prospect Park for over 60 years! This gives me some perspective on intergenerational topics.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

This past term I worked on issues related to public engagement in the Land Use Committee, feedback on city initiatives, Board work including a racial equity policy framework, and presentations to Minneapolis commissions. I would like to continue participating in the Land Use Committee and wherever most needed.

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

We've been through a lot of challenges this past year all together. I hope that PPA can play a positive role in our neighborhood for whatever comes next and that we can work together on this!



Lynn Von Korff

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

Working with neighbors on projects that make a difference, Pratt Ice Cream Social, and walking in the neighborhood.

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

To advocate for affordable and public housing and for tenants' rights; to listen, respond, and work with those who have been under-served or excluded; to continue to work with and on behalf of our neighbors in Glendale Townhomes Public Housing; and to help PPA through the upcoming Neighborhood Community Relations (NCR) funding transition.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

I care deeply about Prospect Park. I returned to live here as an adult, having attended Pratt as a child. I have over 20 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, including finance and administration. More recently I was a researcher/lecturer at the U, where I helped students understand how race, class, and routines and rituals play a role in community and family life. I have served as PPA's Treasurer for 20 months. It's been rewarding to undertake exciting initiatives and to ensure the organization is on a solid financial footing.

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

I will continue to serve on Finance/Admin, Land Use, Community Building, and special projects as needed. If elected, I'm willing to serve as Treasurer again, if the organization so chooses.

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

I will work hard as a volunteer on behalf of our neighborhood. I'll welcome and encourage broad participation. We need diverse voices to accomplish PPA's mission.



Rachel Coffin

What do you like most about Prospect Park?

I love mixed nature of our neighborhood! We moved in as very poor graduate students. Having access to this welcoming neighborhood with excellent and historic architecture, while struggling financially, brightened our lives. Additionally, the community has been supportive and receptive to me coming out as trans. I treasure the feelings of safety and belongingness when I walk my dog or am out and about. My former upstairs neighbor was trans too- I've never known a neighborhood to be so welcoming to queer people!

Why are you interested in serving on the board of Prospect Park Association?

I care deeply for this community. I'd also like to represent the trans and queer communities in our neighborhood- visibility is so important for me! I want queer folks, especially kids, to know this is a safe place. I also hope to represent renters and students- my husband went to med school at the U of M and I finished grad school at UST.

What experience and skills do you bring to PPA?

I feel as though my experiences as an educator in a diverse community (St Paul Central HS) positions me as an excellent advocate for young people and LGBT folks. Having experience as a low- and higher-income person makes it easier to relate and advocate for all different kinds of folks. I'm also attuned to the needs of families as well as younger folks!

What committees, task forces, projects, events, or initiatives do you commit to work on?

I'm deeply committed to racial justice in our community. George Floyd's murder and the ensuing protests greatly affected me. I feel as though access to a neighborhood as safe and welcoming as this one is very important to oppressed people, specifically people of color. I would be excited to work on any projects that bring the community together- the more we see one another, the more we can care for one another.

Is there anything else you want to share with your neighbors?

Just that I love them and this community! I'm so happy to live here.

