

PPA Community Building Committee Minutes, Monday September 16th, 2019, Approved 10-7-19

Attendees: Jerry Stein and Susan Larson-Fleming (co-chairs), Lydia McAnerney, Lynn Von Korff, Becca (Bex) Thomas, Nellie Jerome, Jan Nelson

Committee members received a tracking spreadsheet of the 15 or so listening meetings that have taken place so far with organizations and individuals in Prospect Park or serving Prospect Park. Nellie Jerome tracks the meetings that have taken place.

Jerry Stein walked the committee through examples of meetings and a few initial impressions. It is too early in the process for decisions or conclusions. An initial impression is that PPA is “out of balance” in that while volunteer energy was devoted to planning and development on the North side of University, other neighborhood issues got left behind. Listeners learned, for example, that there was no longer a Luxton Park Council. The Council served an important role at Luxton, particularly in advocacy for programs and services for children. Additionally, PPA has no standing committee addressing issues facing families and children.

The CB search committee performed a search, interviewed candidates and hired Bex (Becca Thomas) as temporary part-time staff approx 10-12 hours per week on Community Building, per plan approved by PPA board of Directors. The Committee offered a short-term independent contractor position to Noel Gordon Jr to work with us on program planning and a grant letter to design and help fund a project. The broad purpose of the program would be to offer civic training to underserved people in Prospect Park, such as people of color, immigrants, and students. The program might also include opportunities to serve on Prospect Park Association Committees,

Lynn Von Korff agreed to work with staff and Jerry to create Community Building job descriptions for Bex (about 10-12 hours per week) and Nellie (at least 10 hours of more).

Bex and Jerry will use our new Project Management software to help the committee keep track of required future action steps (following-up key after a listening meeting).

Several committee members were in contact with Cam to urge the walkway be repaired soon. Cam organized a walkway design meeting with public work officials and the neighbors adjacent to the wall. CB members attended and learned that public works had not been aware Pratt had reopened as a school. CB members emphasized that school children needed the walkway to get to school. Otherwise they had to walk all the way around in the snow, including in the street. Cam was supportive of getting it done. Public works and the neighbors agreed on design aspects and verbally granted additionally easements to work around the large tree that grows in the middle of the walkway. The neighbors on either side of walkway, Doug Vigoran and Jeff Gottleib, have been of considerable help moving the project forward. Public works said they could have a building design plan ready by early October. Lynn or Jerry will follow-up with Jack Yuzna at Public Works about progress on the walkway between Williams and Arthur Avenue.

CB plans to follow-up to help meet PP student needs by supporting Councilmember Cam Gordon’s proposed action on the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance to remove the ½ mile perimeter exclusion around the University of Minnesota. Becca Cowin, U of M student, informed Jerry about this issue when they met. Nellie got background materials and Lynn will draft a letter to support Cam’s proposal. She will loop in Becca, who is running for our PPA Board of Directors.

Ethrophic Burnett, “E,” is PPA’s new NCR neighborhood support specialist. Jerry, Nellie and Jan have met her and she’s terrific.

The next meeting will be held 4pm, Monday, October 7th, 2019.