

Minutes
Summit Neighborhood Association
Board of Directors Meeting
January 27, 2020

Attendance: Erik Christiansen, Anneliese Greenier, Ethan Gyles, Christopher Lowe, Torin Mathieu, Britt Page, Read Porter, Laura Ramsey, Tom Schmeling

Guests: member Grant Dulgarian; Alexis Kierning from the Planning Department for Arts, Culture, Tourism in the Mayor's Office; Helene Miller, partnership for Providence Parks (ELI funds – underwrite performances & cultural experiences in parks, Earth Day); Emily Friedman, Planning Department of Providence

October & November minutes: minutes approved

President's Report: Ethan reported that the bubbler has been installed in Lippitt Park. The city will place a temporary sign there to indicate that it will be open in the spring. We will later put a more permanent plaque there to acknowledge donors. We can plan a celebration/ribbon cutting for the spring, perhaps on the first day of the farmer's market. Ethan will contact Rui David to get the date for the first market. Read suggested that we work on the lighting for the park. Ethan asked for a volunteer to take the lead on planning the bubbler event; Tom volunteered to collaborate on this with someone else but doesn't want to do it alone.

Ethan also followed up on the email conversation about the neighborhood association coalition, our relationship to it, its organization procedures and structures, etc. The leaders of that coalition are now running for city council, so it's unclear what will happen with the coalition. Therefore, we'll come back to this discussion if/when that organization is reactivated.

Treasurer's Report: Britt presented a comparison of year total spending for 2018 and 2019. We've paid \$5,873 for the bubbler project, but that will be refunded by Miriam once the proper paperwork has been submitted. A composter was purchased for the Community Garden for \$1600.

Program & Committee Reports:

Membership Committee/Bylaws: Tom reported that we have 103 current members. Only six people are expiring in the next few weeks. Tom is interested in material incentives (e.g., tote bags, coffee mugs) to join. Tom volunteered to be tote bag fairy to deliver bags to people who join online. Erik and Read suggested that we coordinate with the farmer's market to recruit members and distribute tote bags. Torin suggested we have tote bags available at the bubbler opening event. We still have some t-shirts left from several years ago, which could also be used as an incentive.

The bylaws committee is Tom, Ethan, and Read. Tom suggested a February meeting of the committee to go over the bylaws.

SNA Newsletter: Erik said that we will have a newsletter prior to the annual meeting. One article will be by Tom about the fall tree planting program (for which the due date is July). Erik suggested having something about the city schools. Read and Laura suggested asking the PTO presidents to contribute.

Grant suggested asking Nirva, since she is not up for reelection this year. Other article ideas are Earth Day, the bubbler (including related event), membership drive with tote bag incentive, update on community garden, new restaurants in the neighborhood (Avenue N in the old Cook & Brown, Little Sister offshoot of Rebelle Bagels). Articles needed by late February or early March.

Tom volunteered to figure out the Earth Day tree planting and other tree planting programs through the city, in preparation for a tree-planting story that is planned for the next newsletter. Deadline for spring is January 31 and the deadline for fall is in July.

Read is planning to send out another e-newsletter, so contact Read with any announcements to circulate. Current circulation is 138.

North Main Street Committee: Ethan reported that no movement on our North Main Street proposal has occurred, so we will reach out to MHNA leaders to finalize the document and take it to the city soon.

Community Garden Committee: Read reported that the bylaws have been reviewed and membership fees will stay the same this year. The garden manager is stepping down after two years, though a replacement has been identified and will hopefully commit soon. Annual garden meeting will be in mid-March, wherein we will give out seeds and introduce people. We will need ASL interpreters at that meeting to accommodate some deaf gardeners.

New Business:

- a. City 5-year Consolidated Plan Presentation and Feedback Session from Emily Freedman
 - i. Consolidated plan governs how city spends \$30 million from HUD over 5 years
 - ii. In the process of updating goals & priorities – plan submitted to HUD by June 2020
 - iii. Grant application available on Feb. 3 and grant workshop on Feb. 10
 - iv. Question posed by presenter: what are the priorities for our neighborhood and beyond the neighborhood?
 - i. need more affordable housing
 - ii. abandoned commercial properties on North Main Street
 - iii. mixed use properties with grocery store anchor
 - iv. need grocery store (that will service SNAP) in walkable distance
 - v. Question: Are there adequate services provided in the neighborhood and do neighbors have access to all they need?
 - i. more relevant to Mount Hope Neighborhood Association
 - ii. seniors well-served
 - iii. panhandling/homelessness on North Main and Hope
 1. encampments seem to be moving further out from the city, which makes it challenging to figure how many people are experiencing homelessness and how to reach them for services
 - vi. Question: other areas of need?
 - i. lack of community space (e.g., library community room is booked 3 months out)
 1. could be a good use for the fire station, which is currently city storage
 - ii. problems with Miriam Hospital being strained since the closure of Memorial Hospital
 1. only other options is East Side Urgent Care
 - iii. bike lanes on North Main would be nice if North Main were being redeveloped

- iv. North Main is not welcoming to pedestrians
- b. Ely Grant Presentation from Helene Miller and Alexis Kierning
 - i. Ely Neighborhood Performing Arts Celebration requirements
 - i. can be any kind of performance
 - ii. Event between July 5 – October 31
 - iii. Make sure there is inclusivity
 - iv. \$50-2000
 - v. Panel reviews applications
 - vi. Can collaborate with other organizations
 - vii. A series is recommended to increase engagement
 - viii. Events must happen in a park and be free and accessible to all
 - ii. Examples of what they have funded: parties in Billy Taylor Park, Halloween party at Vincent Brown Rec Center, Trolley Series on Blackstone
 - iii. Workshop on Feb. 5, 6pm-8pm, 444 Westminster
 - iv. Applications open until Feb. 10
 - v. Laura will look into using these funds for the movie nights
- c. Earth Day mini-grants presentation from Helene Miller – Saturday April 25
 - i. Examples of mini-grant programs in the past: community wide clean ups, events at Kerry Kohring Park related to the community garden
 - ii. Mini-grant deadline is around February 17
 - iii. can volunteer to plant trees on Earth Day
 - iv. workshop about volunteer recruitment at United Way of Rhode Island, 12pm-2pm, Wednesday, January 29
- d. Insurance question raised by Chris – Chris asked whether SNA has insurance and what our liability is during events. The issue came up when trying to book MLK for the education event. Historically we had insurance for the Summit Musical Festival, but we have not had it in recent years. Ethan said he will look at past paperwork and previous emails from Dean to see what we used to have and if it can be reactivated.
- e. 2020 Calendar made by Chris distributed to the board – the long-term goal is to have better communication to the public about our events and to plan ahead ourselves when organizing the events. This could include grant deadlines that often seem to come at the last minute.
- f. Equity document circulated by Ethan – Climate Action Rhode Island is looking to coordinate with other organizations on climate change issues. Board members should review the statement and next meeting we will vote as to whether to sign on to the circulated statement.

Ongoing Business:

- a. Events:
 - i. Speaker series organized by Chris
 - 1. Education Forum: Chris reported that another group organized an education event that was very similar to ours, and so he shared information with them and we will no longer host that event.
 - 2. Living Green Forum: coming up, will circulate more information via email
 - 3. Getting Old in Providence: focused on looking at ways people can be more connected with the neighborhood, collaboration with the Providence Village
- b. SNA neighbor pamphlet refresh: no update
- c. The Avenue Concept public art planning update: Torin found out that none of the businesses have any say over what happens to the buildings, because they do not own the buildings. She is now looking into who the landlords are, and Ethan offered to research this. Frog & Toad is the

first choice, side of CVS that faces the ballet company is a second choice, Lucky Kitchen is another option. Chris suggested the old Cook & Brown, which Avenue N is coming in.

- d. "Keep Summit Beautiful" signs: no update
- e. Snow brigade: no update because there's been no snow!

Next meeting is February 24th.