

# Washington Park East Neighborhood Association

March 10, 2020

## Board Meeting Minutes

### Board Members Present:

Lance Musselman, Leslie MacRossie, Tim McHugh, Bill Tracy

### Board Members Not Present:

Christine Franck

Quorum? Yes

The Board meeting was brought order by Tim McHugh at 6:45 p.m. at St. John's

Approval of agenda.

Introduction of Board members.

Tim announced that Lee Berkey submitted his resignation from the Board of Directors of Washington Park East Neighborhood Association, effective March 9, 2020. Lee's resignation was accepted and Lee is thanked for his service to the neighborhood.

### **Presenters:**

#### Crime and Safety

DPD did not provide a Community Liaison Officer this evening; the department has issued a policy telling officers not to attend nonessential public meetings.

A volunteer with the Cop Shop at Broadway and Alameda (near the Pep Boys shop) presented information about Cop Shop, which is staffed by volunteers and keeps irregular hours. The next event at Cop Shop will be a book reading for children on March 21st.

#### Dog Parks

Tim opened discussion about the proposed dog park for SE Denver by announcing that FANS does not support this for Washington Park and has asked WPENA to take a position.

There are three or more levels of dog parks, ranging from Dog Runs to Destination parks, and Washington Park is one of the sites being considered.

Tim reviewed the pros and cons considered by FANS in their discussion. Pros included:

- Proximity to WPE (convenience);
- Socialization (for the dogs and maybe the owners);
- Feeling of safety for the dogs and owners if there are no off-leash dogs in the rest of the park.

Cons included:

- Projected utilization – more people and animals;
- A minimum of two acres would need to be carved out of current park;
- Dog waste – pick up and smell; city workers will not clean up the waste, but will haul away the trash bags;
- Impact on traffic and parking;
- Aesthetics;
- Noise;
- Alternative sites.

Owen Wells, District Planning Supervisor for Denver Parks & Rec, and Paul Kaufmann, City Councilperson, took questions and suggestions from the audience:

- Don't other parks have multiuse areas? Yes, like baseball field being used as a dog run.
- Dogs should be allowed to use the water areas (lakes, ditch) since they love being in the water and fence off an area for them. A water engineer in the audience stated that runoff and pollution from dog waste would ruin the lakes and the ditch.
- Can Brest Park off Colorado and S. Cherry Creek Drive be used? It has parking and is close to the Cherry Creek trail. It could.
- How will the final decision be made? A committee will make recommendations for locations and there will be public discussion – what the city calls a community driven process.
- What influence does WPENA have in the process? RNO's can influence through petitions and letters of support.
- Wash Park is a beautiful park and well utilized. Dog parks may bring in too many more users.
- Is more than one dog park possible? Maybe.
- What is the cost? For a Dog Run (.10 acre) about \$300,000 minimum; for a half acre run, about \$400,000 to \$500,000.

- There are lots of dogs running loose in the park now, and I don't feel safe. Rangers are responsible for enforcing leash laws- contact them.

At the end of the discussion, Bill asked for a show of hands by the audience. Those in favor of a dog park in Washington Park were (1) and those against were (approximately 15).

Paul Kashmann, City Councilman

At this point in the COVID-19 scare, Denver has lost two conventions cancelled due to the virus, costing Denver an estimated \$60-70 million in lost revenues. DPD has ordered officers not to attend meetings.

Gun violence continues to be an issue, especially among ages twelve to thirteen. Thirty guns were stolen last year from homes and cars in District 6 alone, 500 city wide.

Paving projects this year will include Downing, south from Alameda, and some resurfacing in WPE. Paul believes that Veterans Park is a better choice for a dog park, which has two half-acre sites that are suitable. There are about 150,000 dogs in Denver.

There were a lot of questions about zoning, particularly for the Bonnie Brae (three stories) and S. Gaylord (two stories) business districts. The buildings that house Wish and BB Tavern are under contract, and the developer plans a three story building with retail (2 restaurants) on ground level and condos above. On the opposite side of University, the building immediately south of Ink coffee is also under contract. In both cases, the only objection available is on the basis of historic value.

Zoning can be changed upon request and justification. Check zoning for specific properties at [denvergov.org/zoning](http://denvergov.org/zoning). Suggestions and questions included:

- What will be the impact on traffic on S. University from the proposed condos?
- What are the proposed standards for group living? Eight unrelated in a home up to 1600 square feet, with one additional for each extra 200 square feet. Quirks in the existing code include requirements for connected smoke detectors if five or more unrelated people live in the same house, and sprinkler systems for ten or more.
- The city should present both the pros and cons in their presentations of the process.
- This is a horrible idea with probable consequences to safety and water.
- Enforcement by the city will be modeled after its enforcement of Air B&B regulations, which was well thought out and is weeding out property owners who are not complying. For example, applicants who entered false information that the properties were their primary residence have been charged with felonies, making it easier to get them to give up their licenses.

Miceala Capelle, Sunshine Home Share

Sunshine Home Share is another program to help seniors age in place. SHS specializes in matching senior who own their homes, have an extra bedroom or living area and need assistance with people who need a place to live. The homeowner gets someone who can help with chores and the match gets affordable housing. Most contracts are month by month and last a few years. SHS provides screening for both the homeowner and the match, including social, behavioral, criminal and financial. SHS conducts quarterly home checks for follow up.

The minutes for the February 11, 2020 meeting were accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Bill Tracy reported on revenues and expenses for the past month. The balance of the WPENA bank account is \$12,449.28. The report was accepted.

Bill and Tim told the Board that planning for the Fourth of July event has begun, and WPENA needs approval from the Board to act as the banker for the event, which is cosponsored by West Washington Park Neighborhood Association. Lance Musselman made a motion to allow this; Leslie MacRossie seconded; all voted in favor.

**Old Business:**

**Future Speakers:**

April: Denver Water Lead Reduction Program

Other: Donna Morganstern, candidate for State Board of Education

Tim O'Brien, City Auditor

Beth McCann, Denver District Attorney

**Happy Hour:**

Leslie MacRossie has set the next Happy Hour for March 19<sup>th</sup> at the Campus Lounge. Sponsored by Casey Miller.

**New Business:**

Certificate of Demolition Eligibility has been issued for 715-731 S. University, the building south of Ink Coffee.

## WPENA Boundary Signs

Discussion turned to a proposal by Lori Poole, a former Board member, to consider purchasing four signs for installation by the city that would identify our neighborhood as Washington Park East. Estimated cost for the four signs is \$600; the locations of the signs would be determined later. Bill Tracy made a motion to support this proposal and ask Lori for more information; Leslie MacRossie seconded the motion; all approved.

## Community Transportation Network, South Central Open House

Stakeholders mtg 2/19

### 5G cell towers

Concerns about locations for the towers in the neighborhood are well founded. Federal law allows these to be placed wherever the company needs them.

## **Committee Reports:**

### Communications: Christine Franck, Chair

Christine reported via email that the communications committee is doing well.

### Zoning: Biddie Labrot, Chair

No report. However, a variance request was received the date of this meeting from the United Methodist Church regarding an external A/C unit that has to be moved. This will be investigated by the zoning committee.

### Park/FANS: Tim McHugh, Chair

Pickleball court possible where the old basketball court used to be, after the area is used as a staging area for ditch maintenance by Denver Parks & Rec.

### Membership: Ellin Rosenthal, Chair

The membership committee met to discuss recruitment.

INC: Tim McHugh and Susan Payne, INC Representatives

INC cancelled its next (March) meeting out of concerns about the corona virus.

Traffic: Bill Tracy, Chair

Bill will attend a presentation on parking on March 12<sup>th</sup>, presented by Transportation Solutions.

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 by Tim McHugh.

Lance Musselman

Secretary

Washington Park East Neighborhood Association