

Washington Park East Neighborhood Association

March 9, 2021

Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Lance Musselman, Christine Franck, Tim McHugh, Bill Tracy, Adam Meltzer

Board Members Not Present:

Leslie MacRossie

Quorum? Yes

The Board meeting was brought order by Tim McHugh at 6:30 p.m. online.

Approval of agenda with the addition of discussion about sidewalk shoveling, which is must be shoveled after the snow stops falling (within 4 hours for businesses and 24 hours for residences).

Introduction of Board members.

Other sign ins to meeting:

Dixie Strange	Biddie Labrot	Melissa
Scott Balderman	Ellin Rosenthal	Kate Young
S. Howe	goberlag	Paul Kashmann
Liam	Jessica Dewey	Pam Rothberg
Laurel Clark	Shane Binder	

The minutes for the February 9, 2021 meeting were accepted.

Presenters:

Kate Young, Community Resource Officer, DPD

Officer Young reviewed recent stats for WPE, noting that there were two burglaries – both from commercial properties – four car thefts, thefts of catalytic converters and thefts from garages accessed via the garage door openers taken from unlocked cars.

Anti theft license plate bolts are available for free from the DPD, but the steering wheel clubs are on order.

Outdoor lighting is the easiest crime prevention tool. DPD officers will come out and walk your property with you to assess that and other measures you can take.

Dixie Strange, Case Manager, Open Up

Open Up is an organization that matches homeowners willing to lease or rent part of their homes with vetted tenants needing housing.

Denver has a 90% deficiency in affordable housing, but there are an estimated 442,000 unused living areas. This program arranges for homeowners to rent them at affordable rates on a month-to-month basis. Homeowners meet the clients before finalizing the agreement and lease, and stay an average of six months.

Dixie's email is dixie@letsopenup.org.

Questions:

- Is there a cap on rent? The average rent is \$600, but the homeowner sets the rent.
- How are you advertising? Website and presentations to RNO's
- How are you paid? Donations and grants.
- Is there any liability for the homeowner? Leases are month to month to reduce the likelihood of nonpayment; renter's insurance is recommended.
- How old are the renters? Must be 18 or over, oldest is over 60.
- Can you change your mind? Month-to-month lease allows changes.
- Can COVID restrictions be accommodated? Yes. Lease can specify masks, social distancing, etc.
- What is your track record? About half work out. Open Up manages proactively to avoid conflicts.
- Are some neighborhoods more cooperative than others? Most are on RTD routes, few are in the north areas of the city.
- Have you tried posting on Next Door? Not yet.

Scott Balderman, DPS Board member

Elementary students are receiving their education in person, while middle and high students are hybrid, depending on availability of teachers and on student choices. All teachers who want to be vaccinated have been vaccinated at this point.

The search for a new Superintendent is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the school year.

Scott is involved in a process of restructuring school administration and Board relationships, reflecting concerns about Board involvement in school administrative issues.

Question: Are teachers required to get vaccinated? Laws restrict employers from requiring anyone to get vaccinated who has health issues or religious objections.

Paul Kashmann, City Councilman

Neighbors living near Veterans Park are asking whether a dog park will be built there. DPR has put the decision on hold for now, along with mulching in the parks.

Discussion about ADU's and their role in WPE brought up Blueprint Denver, which supports ADU's. Paul stated that Denver has insufficient affordable housing and ADU's could help with that problem. WPENA is discussing a zoning request concerning an illegal ADU and looking at it both as a neighborhood issue and as a zoning issue; ADU's are not allowed under WPE's zoning. Paul encouraged WPENA to discuss this with the city Planning and Development Office.

Treasurer's Report:

Bill Tracy reported on revenues and expenses for the past month. The balance in the WPENA bank account is \$18,242.99. Bill noted that we received only \$100 in membership dues last month, but the newsletter is now in the black with the addition of a new advertiser.

Tim reported that Parks and Rec has stopped accepting donations for mulching because of perceived equity issues, and won't mulch any of the parks until they have enough funds for all the parks that need mulching. Therefore, WPENA's \$500 donation for mulch is on hold until this is settled.

The report was accepted.

Committee Reports:

Zoning: Biddie Labrot, Chair

Zoning change request from homeowner to rezone property from U-SU-C to U-SU-C1 to allow an ADU above the alley garage. Discussion included both the concept of spot zoning and whether to allow ADU's in WPE.

Biddie presented the issues to the Board, describing an addition above an existing garage that was constructed without a permit by a resident for use by the baby sitter. The Zoning Commission had decided to allow her continued use for three years, after which it could not be used. The three years are up now and she is asking for rezoning of her parcel to allow ADU's and has brought the addition up to current standards. Her neigh-

bors did not object to the original addition when it was built. The WPENA Zoning Committee wants to recommend that the Zoning Commission not approve the request for rezoning.

Discussion centered around issues of whether the WPENA should support this because it might encourage others to ignore zoning permit requirements.

Christine offered a motion that the Board not support the request to the Zoning Commission; seconded by Bill. The motion passed, four in favor and one abstention. Biddie will prepare the report for the Zoning Commission.

Demolition of possible landmark at 800 S. Franklin St.

An application has been received by the city for designation of this house for historic landmark status. Christine has posted this on the WPENA website.

Park/FANS: Tim McHugh, Chair

DPR survey released to gather feedback about how the community would like to see the area around the old playground developed. Virtual meeting scheduled for March 18th.

DPR is looking to save money by replacing the dumpsters in the parks with carts, like those in residential use.

The goose population in Wash Park has been reduced by roughly 2000. There are no more goose culling activities planned for the park. Four of the seven city golf courses are using dogs to drive the geese away.

Communications: Christine Franck, Chair

Christine reported that she is going to try to get the monthly emailer out at the beginning of each month, in time for the Board meetings.

Website

Website and social media sites are up to date on information about the Chapter 59 Bridge Amendment, the March meeting about a new playground, bikeway designs and DOTI designated Safe Routes to School.

Christine has looked into problems that were experienced by Bill and Lance with PayPal and website notifications, which are usually automatic. A new advertiser was unable to get PayPal to process his ad payment. Christine is also looking for quotes for someone to redesign the website to improve functionality and remove the old website at wpenaonline.org.

Traffic: Bill Tracy, Chair

Channel 7 news story “What’s Driving You Crazy? The intersection of Downing and Louisiana at the corner of Wash Park” was discussed. Bill noted that changes to the timing of the traffic lights at the intersection had made it safer for pedestrians, but harder for cars to get through the intersection.

The Downing Street corridor improvements are scheduled to begin this year.

Bill suggested a photo contest for the worst sidewalks, with the winner receiving one of the neighborhood welcome signs we can’t use.

Membership: Elin Rosenthal

She has Bill’s list of neighbors who did not renew their membership dues, and a list from Leslie with the names of people who have recently moved into WPE. Christine offered to send emails to neighbors on the lists for whom we have addresses.

Crime and Safety: Leslie MacRossie, Chair

(See information provided by DPD Community Resource Officer)

Sustainability Committee: Adam Meltzer, Chair

Neighborhood rankings of Denver show that WPE is seventh in recycling at 25%. Adam is ready to begin a neighborhood campaign promoting composting, and needs a budget.

Adam also discussed having a webpage for sustainability where resources can be listed.

The committee now has about a dozen members and more are expected to sign up. A suggestion was made for Adam to do a video interview with Leslie and Christine for posting on the website.

Events Committee: Leslie MacRossie, Chair

No report.

INC: Tim McHugh and Susan Payne, INC Representatives

INC has been involved in the sustainability discussion. The Council is also involved in the marijuana delivery licensing discussion involving minorities; encouraging minorities to get licenses would promote equity. Existing stores would not be allowed to begin delivery until the startups have been approved.

Old Business:

Future Speakers:

April: Myleah Coleman, Denver Animal Control

May: Ashlee Grace, DOTI Community Design, Project Manager, Marion Street Bikeway project

Other: Deputy D.A.; Tim O'Brien, City Auditor; Sara del Valle Ruiz, Community Engagement Specialist; Bernie Miller Director, Community Engagement, Denver Sheriff's Office.

Voting for Board members

Several ideas were discussed for voting during COVID, including sending hard copy ballots to all Class A (voting) members; sending emails to the membership list; and using Survey Monkey, which may not allow the number of votes for our purpose.

July 4th event

WWPNA has decided not to hold the event.

WPE neighborhood signs

Nothing new to report.

New Business:

Whether to resume meeting at St. Johns church.

St. Johns is reopening its space for meetings, with restrictions. Due to ongoing COVID restrictions requiring masks and social distancing, and better attendance with Zoom, it was decided to continue meeting online.

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m. by Tim McHugh.

Lance Musselman

Secretary

Washington Park East Neighborhood Association