

Highland Park Neighborhood Association

Board Meeting – January 5, 2021

In Attendance	Absent
Roxanne Townsend, Chair Bob Thompson, Vice Chair Roger Ramsay, Treasurer Kiersten Shinrock, Secretary Mike Thompson, South Section Leader & Highland Hospital Liaison Dan Barnak, East Section Leader Stacey Bershod, North Section Leader Hank Wedow, At Large & Business Liaison Larry O’Heron, At Large	Deb Quinn, At Large

Agenda

1. Administrative Items:

a. Treasurer’s report – December and Year End 2020

- i. For the fiscal year that just ended
 - 1. Net Income is just under \$400
 - 2. As of today, there's \$11,796 in the bank account
- ii. Membership - Net income just over \$800
- iii. Calendars - Net income just over \$900
- iv. Mike has about \$100 to give Roger in cash calendar purchases
- v. Bob has a few outstanding expenses
- vi. Outstanding expenses from postage to mail them and the mailing from Roxanne
- vii. Should do a calendar summary to include lessons learned in case we do this project again.
 - 1. Include donation from Highland Hospital, sales for calendar only, and remove all calendar expenses.
 - 2. We should have charged \$10 for shipping and handling. In NY state was \$7.50 and out of state was more. Mike mailed it out at book rate and it was about \$3. They were about 1.79oz too heavy to go first class mail. Those are the kind of notes we should keep record of for the project.
 - 3. We have sold/distributed 157. We are missing 2 in the count. Mike has 20 with him and Roxanne has 15. At least 125 calendars were paid for at approximately \$20 each (some more and some less). We also gave some away. Membership is broken out. We likely wouldn’t have gotten memberships without the calendar sales.
 - 4. With the Highland Hospital donation we broke even. If this is meant to be a fundraiser, we really need to review the total expenses and what we could do differently.

b. Voting process for 2021/2022 HPNA Board

- i. Section VII of the bylaws describes elections
 - 1. Traditionally in the 4th quarter of an even year. But in 2018 it took place in January
 - 2. Only current voting members are eligible for office.
 - 3. The current board shall notify the voting body of the elections. This notification shall include a call for nominees.
 - 4. We haven't been doing #5
 - 5. #6 we cannot have an election meeting right now. Since 2016 we have not had a secret ballot either.
- ii. Last election was held in January, 2019
- iii. **Action:** Figure out how to accommodate the election for the next two-year term during COVID restrictions.

1. Specifically, for this election, Roxanne to put a form up with the officers listed. Have people either support the slate of officers or present an alternate slate of officers. Open to suggestions.
 2. The idea of having a rotating board instead of all officers elected or dropping off in the same year. But if we want to sustain and train new people to fill positions it might be wise to consider rotating officers on a 2-year basis. We need a bylaw rewrite this year and that should be part of it.
 3. In 2019 a slide was put up on a projector at the meeting. Those in attendance were asked to raise their hand if they agree. Mike noted that about 15 years ago one member in attendance was in the Monroe County Legislature and asked how they did it in the leg and he said if there are rules I am not sure we are following them anyway. The whole point is you don't want one group controlling everything.
 4. Transparency is key. We want our constituents to know that they have a voice in their HPNA and who is managing the money.
- c. Additional discussion of 117-125 Highland Parkway Variance (Maison)
- i. Bob found that in December when Maison applied for the zoning variance, they had not properly notified the tenants.
 - ii. This parcel was part of Colgate and is an IPD (institutional planned development). There isn't really a set rules for zoning that apply to that property. Because of this, all changes to the property need to be approved by a variance.
 - iii. Maison wants to do is add 6 apartments in the two buildings basement and attic areas. Believe there are currently 21 in two buildings. It created quite an issue when the tenants and the neighbors learned of this. It's been rumored that Maison hasn't been the best landlord for these folks and the tenant complaints were not public knowledge until the night of the zoning board meeting when they were all aired.
 - iv. The zoning board held a vote on this variance because of the neighbors' concerns. They recommended Maison come to some agreement with or endorsement from the neighbors. The ZBA also needs to sign off on a SEACR decision. The ZBA hasn't had to be the lead agency on a SEACR decision before. The neighbors want to come back to HPNA and ask if our endorsement should stand, go neutral or negative. Most complaints were landlord tenant condition problems. That is not something we as a neighborhood association can address. The concern regarding construction is parking, disruption to tenants, etc. We need to ensure that local neighbors have been chatted with or if weird zoning issues are attached before we make any decision.
 1. Mike - Has seen developers come to the neighborhood association to get an endorsement to bypass the neighbors and tenants. It should have been tenants first.
 2. Dan, Roger and Kiersten were all under the impression the tenants and neighbors were made aware and had their support prior
 3. Bob brought up that Maison needed to post a sign. The tenants don't get postcards we get as property owners and 4 days prior to the hearing is when the tenants found out because of the posting finally going up.
 4. Roxanne - we need to develop a checklist of things that they need to complete before we would be willing to discuss a zoning request.
 5. Bob - we can reach out and look for one from MNBN and post this on the website and such. Bob will get something to work from.
 6. Regarding it being an IPD we are in the middle of a rezoning and it will go away. It would be a lot of work for HPNA to address the IPD status. There could be value if the living conditions are code violations because one of our roles is to be a conduit for our neighbors to the city. You are more likely get a code officer to address something if the neighborhood association is a part of the conversation. Check to see if any of the issues

are code violations. The tenants or whoever is representing them can come to us and ask us to help with that. They can approach the HPNA Board and let us know. It is not a black and white thing. We can get involved if they aren't getting any traction or are afraid of retribution from the landlord.

7. Seems there are no code violations listed on the city website so those concerns are tenant landlord issues.
8. Hank - based on what I am hearing I would still like to see the units added but modify the letter to address how it was handled and should have been addressed with tenants first.
9. Bob - The zoning board came directly to Joe the architect (who is also an alternate on the zoning board of appeals) and were told to get with their tenants but as of today they have not done that.
10. Roxanne - we should acknowledge the meeting has not happened but can't be the ones monitoring whether or not it does. How can we support residents of the neighborhood?
11. Dan - remembered that they communicated with their tenants the parking disruption but made the assumption they had been transparent and above board.
12. Bob - we can amend the letter and acknowledge we didn't have a full understanding.
13. Roxanne - going forward these are what we are looking for and our expectation is these are going to happen in order for us to endorse this project. We like the adding of living spaces with minimal footprint disruption, but these things need to happen or we cannot endorse.

2. Actions from December Meeting

- a. Voting ideas from the Corn Hill Neighborhood when the group becomes a corporation. (Bob)
 - i. Bob spoke to a few folks in Corn Hill and another neighborhood association and a class of membership that is voting members. They can vote on their slate of nominees and have a nominating committee and they do stagger their officers. That leads us back to how we want to manage our membership here. We need to address the by laws about it. Two conditions - they are a paid member and that they live within the highland park neighborhood. Also, if they own property in the neighborhood.
 - ii. We can handle this with a bylaw rewrite.
 1. Voting member definition would be changed and also needs to be done for the 501c3
 2. There is nothing about having two classes of membership - residential and voting
- b. Post question about playground Gaga Pit on FB. (Karl) - **complete**
- c. Roxanne to send group Google account info to Hank so he can review notes that Alecia filed here from the 2019 application. (Roxanne) - **complete**

3. Fundraisers/HPNA Membership:

- a. 2021-22 Calendar – Wrap up, lessons learned
 - i. Mike will create a lessons learned document
- b. Local business discount card
 - i. Hank had no updates but will work on it this month but would like to schedule zoom with Roxanne and Jen Topa for a good starting point list.
 - ii. Judy Hay might be interested in rolling in Swillburg and other local groups.
 - iii. Roxanne suggests anyone who paid for a membership could get a card without any extra payment. If someone isn't a member they get it by buying the \$15 membership.
- c. Neighbor Good Grant
 - i. Hank took a look at the application online and ran into questions on the first page. Are we applying as a 501c3 but this question is on the first page. With that comes EIN numbers (HPNA has one and Bob verified they have it and we are a 501c3).

- ii. Hank to work on this and run it through Bob and Roxanne
- d. Spirit Contest
 - i. Stacey will make a phone call to Fleet Feet to see if the race and contest will happen this year.

4. Active Projects:

- a. 501c3
 - i. Incorporation paperwork has been filed. We should receive a receipt to have on hand so we can copy it in with the filing for the IRS.
 - ii. The IRS looked it HPNA up with the EIN and they said we are already a 501c3.
 - iii. If we get registered and the IRS says we are a 501c3 what is the downside to operating as one? Roger mentioned we need to make sure all the paperwork is inline. But it's really up to someone contributing money if they are going to take a tax deduction. We can advertise the tax-deductible contribution. Also, we can apply to the NY Preserve grant once we are a 501c3 which means we don't need an independent fiduciary and can apply for it directly for Ellwanger Barry historic district. The landmark society is willing to help us file the application.
- b. Historic Districts
 - i. No updates except we will have a kickoff fundraiser meeting the week of January 18th and then we will have more information.
- c. Local Business Archive
- d. Zoning Re-write
 - i. Still not a lot of input being had from the general public or the neighborhoods for that matter.
 - ii. It came up at NBN6 and there is a great deal of concern with Mt. Hope and some houses being torn down. The main concerns seem to be about what is specifically happening at Mt. Hope and problems with density and possible changes to high traffic corridors to R3 and building of high density housing.
 - iii. It is a very large undertaking and change. There are many aspects to zoning and it's a lot to learn and take on. Bruce is very good at finding issues and running them up the flagpole. Sometimes his level of alarm is hard to discern from a priority perspective. Roxanne is not able to single handedly do the zoning rewrite if we want extensive input. Bob cannot do it on his own. It's too big for any one of us to take on. But in the next couple of months we need to get our input sent in and start following up consistently with what we are asked for. I think we need a working group on it.
 - iv. Plan 2034 committee becoming a zoning rewrite committee. They are supposed to mesh but not sure how that will happen.
 1. How would S. Goodman be zoned and bigger corridors like South Ave and Mt. Hope? Transit corridors to be something similar to an R3 a three- family and higher. All those properties could be mixed use, small commercial, and apartments.
 2. The Zoning Department doesn't know how they are going to handle Highland Hospital, the former Colgate property, and other Planned Development Districts.
 3. Is there anyone at the city or on the zoning board for a roundtable discussion for the neighborhood? Bob noted they are supposed to have public input but ask Jill or Dorian. The city seems to be using the president's meeting as a zoning meeting. We could also invite Swillburg, Azalea, Lilac, and perhaps the South Wedge. NBN6 meeting dedicated to a zoning meeting. Jill said she wanted to hear concerns in writing so they can be addressed.
 4. We could advertise the meeting to the neighborhood and also solicit questions about the city/zoning.
 5. They have hired a consultant for a rewrite and to change some things to accommodate the 2034 plan. Jill (LAST NAME?)

6. Let's get an action plan and then divide and conquer on the steps in the plan. Bob to take lead and Hank and Dan loop in.
7. There are small neighborhood group meetings in the action plan but with COVID they haven't really executed that. It seems they are using the President's meeting and counting zoning attending that meeting as a neighborhood meeting.
8. Roger proposes we have a Zoom meeting on a neighborhood level. If we cannot do it in-person and then we can respond to their canned presentation.
9. Roxanne clarified that they believe most of the input from the neighborhoods came in Plan 2034. The consultant's job is to turn Plan 2034 into zoning speak. This leads to a concern and if we are not careful S. Goodman will look like S. Clinton. Those houses through our neighborhood are expensive homes and the chances of a developer buying and tearing down might not be a top worry. However, like Stacey mentioned, NBN6 was torn down to do something else and we don't know if there was a good house or a condemned house. We need to be very specific.
10. A good example of where this could go, the lofts at gold street on Mt. Hope that could happen pretty easily on two lots. The 2034 mandate wants to eliminate parking requirements. Right now, S. Goodman going north through our neighborhood is zoned R1 to Linden and then C1.

e. GaGa Pit relocation

- i. People who don't live near it are for it. I don't know what the final outcome is yet.
- ii. Roxanne living 2 houses from the playground with windows open can hear everything. Complaint is all they hear is the ball hitting the sides all day long.
- iii. Need to close the loop with the neighbor who had an issue and wants the GaGa pit removed and let them know steps to continue to pursue resolution with the city.

5. E-newsletter

a. January topics

- i. HPNA Elections
- ii. Last chance for calendars (?)
- iii. S. Clinton food map
- iv. Historic Districts Updates
 1. Might not have an update until February
- v. Highland Hospital Construction – promote sign up for HH Facilities Blog
- vi. Brief summary of 2020 Board Activities?
- vii. Use the Instagram handle for South Clinton Merchants

6. New Projects

- a. Update HPNA Bylaws to accommodate changes to a corporation, add online options, and any other items that need updating.
- b. Increase email list Section leaders will tackle this question in early 2021. (Stacey, Mike, Dan)
 - i. Nextdoor could be used to sign up on the mailing list - Mike will invite folks
 - ii. Pushing out the invitation on Facebook in HPNA.
 - iii. Section leaders coordinate this effort. Sign up for the email is on the right-hand sidebar of the website on all the pages.
- c. Website updates
 - i. Updates to neighborhood history on website from Facebook Group discussion
 - ii. Safety page – add PDF info documents from RPD
 - iii. Membership page – update to include option for using PayPal for membership payments
 - iv. COVID page updates – is all info up-to-date

- v. Local business page – can start by adding the S. Clinton food map to the stie
- vi. Create volunteer page – need copy and how to archive volunteer information
- d. “History Trail” – contact Michael Tomb for archive of street histories

7. Other topics?

8. Updates from other groups

- a. MNBN
- b. NBN6
 - i. Crime Report. The usual car larcenies, package thefts etc. There is an aggressive solicitor in the area. It is a scam where the person is going into businesses, and looking for someone to Venmo money to them. They will not leave. Request is to call Police if you feel that in the situation it is necessary.
 - ii. Skate Park-Positive feedback when opened. Closed due to Covid. Friends of Roc City Skate Park are looking at future programs such as a skate camp. Working with the City on parking. Want to make the Park year-round. The project is not completed.
 - iii. Zoning-Conversation focused on Mt. Hope which brought up concerns with the 2034 plan and if the city is changing the current policies. Need to be proactive with the City in regards to zoning. A question that came up was is there a new city policy to permit someone to demolish a property if it is in good order and a stable structure? Also, before any single-family home can be demolished the neighborhood organization is supposed to be notified. Is this still happening? Also, there is a concern that there could be a change to R3 for higher traffic corridors so denser housing can be built. Concerns about rooming houses, student housing and homeowners being approached about selling their homes to developers/landlords.
- c. PCIC – 12/10/2020
 - i. Ongoing issue in HPN on Seager Street – NSC, RPD, and close neighbors are working together and bringing issue to the Nuisance Advisory Board on 12/17
 - ii. Crime stats are up overall – some categories can be attributed to the riots and lotting this past Spring
 - iii. RPD hands out “Positive Tickets” for good deeds – redeemable for pizza!
 - iv. NSC has a drop box available
 - v. RPD advises that there is an “Aggressive Solicitor” in the Southwedge area
 - 1. Selling items and wants money up front paid through Venmo
 - 2. Targeting small business
 - 3. About 60 years of age
- d. City Presidents Meeting – 12/15/2020
 - i. Entire meeting focused on coronavirus information available on the city website.
 - ii. Reviewed coronavirus preparedness plan published by the city.
- e. SCMA (S. Clinton Merchant’s Assoc.)
 - i. - @sclintonmerchantsroc ☑ new Instagram account to promote local business
 - ii. - Cinema is closed until further notice
 - iii. - Former Goldcrest building is rumored to be a deli of some sort
- f. Other meetings?