

HPCC Community Zoom Meeting: Annual Business Meeting June 17, 2021

In Attendance: 20 Participants

Called to order by: Howard Degenholtz
At: 7:02 P.M.

Zone 5 Update: (Lieutenant Eric Kroll)

- Lt. Kroll did not have the monthly statistics with him but will forward to the HPCC within the next few days.
- Overall, "Things have been rather quiet in Highland Park."
- A question was raised by a participant regarding the recent theft of six planters from the HP business area. An update on status was requested. LT. Kroll will follow up with the HPCC.
- Reminders - lock and remove all items from parked vehicles; leave porch lights on at night; have 3" illuminated address numbers on homes.

HPCC Updates: (Howard Degenholtz)

Bryant Street Parklet

The HPCC is pleased to announce that it has reached an agreement with the HP CDC and the URA that will allow the HPCC to enter a long term lease to maintain the parklet as a park. The property will no longer be for sale & restrictions will be placed on it to prevent development in the near term. Thank you to the HP CDC and the URA for working with us to make this possible. Later this summer / fall, the HPCC will be seeking community input on possible improvements to the site.

N. Euclid Neighborway

The city is behind on Public Works projects. There are things DOMI has scheduled but are yet to be completed on the neighborway:

- There are a couple of roundabouts that still need to be installed
- Plants have been ordered and need to be installed at all circles

Traffic Study requested for Highland Ave & Jackson Ave.

Neighbors complained about speeding and accidents at this intersection, so a request has been submitted to DOMI to conduct a traffic study there. This spring DOMI has seen a huge increase in the number of such requests this spring so we are not sure when it will actually happen.

Reservoir Drive Safety Improvements

In January, a working group was formed to develop a pilot project to increase safety for park users along Reservoir Drive that incorporates public feedback from last summer's temporary

road closure while also allowing vehicle access at safe speeds. This group includes community residents, the Highland Park Community Council, City Councilwoman Deborah Gross, and representatives of several City departments. DOMI developed a design plan that emphasizes the recreational needs of park users while keeping the road open to vehicles; it included traffic calming elements such as new crosswalks, wider lanes for recreational users, and better signage and lane markings. Unfortunately it appears that the pilot will not be implemented this summer b/c of lack of funding. (7.13.21 *Update*: it appears that the pilot project will be moving ahead this fall).

Police Firing Range

The HPCC Firing Group met with representatives of the City last month. The most recent sound study conducted by the city found that all of the gunfire noise coming from the firing range is louder than acceptable standards in some parts of the neighborhood and park. Long term (8 or more years) the site will be closed and the city intends to build an indoor facility at the former VA hospital site as part of its new Public Safety Center there.

In the meantime, the city hired a range design firm that is investigating options to reduce the noise. There does not appear to be another range in the county that has capacity for the Pgh police officers to train, so closing it immediately and relocating the training is not an option at the moment. The HPCC believes that there are options that can reduce sound overall and is encouraging the city to look at many options, including sending officers outside of the county to train. The HPCC will not support any option that is expected to redirect the noise to other neighborhoods.

HPCC President Stephanie Walsh met with the Lieutenant who runs the firing range. He assured us that the range is only used to meet the safety and training requirements outlined in statute - there is no recreational use of the site and the site is only used by officers of the city's police department. They are committed to only regularly scheduling training on the range Monday - Thursday with occasional Fridays, and no holidays. They committed to starting no earlier than 8 am and ending as soon as possible in the evening. What sounds like automatic weapons is new officer side arm training; that training is almost complete for the calendar year - the last scheduled time is June 23rd at 5 pm.

DOD Training

The Department of Defense has been conducting some exercises in the upcoming week which will involve some aircraft in the Highland Park area.

Recent HPCC Events:

Bryant Street Parklet - Spring Cleaning: May 22

- Volunteers cleaned and painted the picnic tables, pulled out the winter debris, removed old tree stumps, and planted flowers. A neighborhood Girl Scout troop is maintaining the four raised beds in the back half of the site.

Sidewalk Chalk-a-Palooza & Summer Porch Concerts Launch: June 4 - 6

- We celebrated the launch of the porch concert series with sidewalk art throughout the neighborhood!

Summer HPCC Events:

Summer Porch Concert Series: Sundays 7 - 8 pm, June & July

- Back by popular demand! Neighborhood musicians are sharing their talents with their neighbors on Sunday evenings from 7 - 8 pm.

Reservoir of Jazz: Each Sunday in August, 5-7 pm

- The city only decided to hold summer park concerts earlier this month so details re: performers are still being worked out

We would love feedback on what to do with the Summer Porch Concerts in August

- We don't want to compete with the Reservoir of Jazz on Sunday nights
 - Participant response was elicited but nothing was decided. Two participants voiced an opinion that porch concerts should end in July and resume in September,
- Would people attend if we moved the concerts to Friday or Saturday night?
 - Two participants suggested that the porch concerts be moved to another night in August; one was a porch concert performer.

Highland Park Garden Tour: July 11

- This new event is being organized by the Highland Park Garden Club and is sponsored by the HPCC. More details can be found elsewhere in the newsletter and at hpgcpggh.org.
- Nancy Shultz from the Garden Club reported that 250 tickets have already been sold.
- There will be an upcoming article about the event in the Post Gazette; ticket sales are expected to increase when the article is published.
- Since two of the gardens featured are on dead end streets, fliers will be sent out that direct attendees in vehicles to parking spots.
- Volunteers are needed to assist on the day of the Show.

Highland Park Yard Sale: Sept 19

- This neighborhood favorite will be returning on September 19. The sign-up sheet is elsewhere in this newsletter and will also be available on-line later in the summer.

Possible HPCC Events: Participant feedback was requested on:

In-person Community Meetings

- Outside while the weather is nice, maybe with a social theme (wine tasting? picnic?)
- All expressed that virtual meetings should not be totally dismissed, especially in colder months.

- All in attendance were in favor of an outdoor August meeting at the HPCC parklet weather permitting.
 - Bring your own chair
 - Questions arose regarding a wine tasting at the parklet venue, specifically, is a liquor license required?

Fall events

- Maybe **pumpkin patch** again?
 - Unanimously supported! Was a huge success!
- Would people be interested in neighborhood-wide **scarecrow building**? A popular event in some communities is that the neighborhood association sells scarecrow “kits” (stakes and burlap bags) and neighbors use them to create their own scarecrows - sometimes in themed scenes. The HPCC could post a map and even have a scarecrow contest.
 - Not much enthusiasm for this idea.

Light-up Night

- Kick off the December holiday season with a celebration of lights throughout the neighborhood
 - Unanimous support! Another huge success.

Finance Committee Update (Mac & Howard)

- The HPCC ended FY 2020 with approximately \$35,000 in its checking account, \$75,000 in its investment account, and \$39,000 in the SuperPlayground fund. The 2020 year was under budget due cancellation of several events. The proposed budget for FY 2021 was approved by the board at its May meeting. The total planned expenses are \$29,950 and revenues are \$22,310. The difference will be drawn down from the investment account. This includes the one-time cost of replacing the 2 of the 3 "Welcome to Highland Park" signs.

Membership Committee Update (Sabrina)

- HPCC currently has 211 active Household Memberships.
- Kate Balboni is now the “New Neighbor Welcome Committee” representative. Welcome to Kate!
- An email was sent out to members with lapsed memberships yesterday as a reminder.
 - There was a small glitch with the Neon software which occurred but has been corrected.
- The Committee is asking for ideas for possible membership perks, e.g. discounts for Yard Sale tables.

Nominating Committee / Vote (Judy & Howard)

- Officers (no proposed changes)
 - President: **Stephanie Walsh**

- Vice President: **Betsy Rogerson**
- Treasurer: **Howard Degenholtz**
- Secretary: **Judy Beck**

- Board members stepping down
 - Thank you **Mac Lynch** who is finishing his 3 year tenure on the board but will continue to be involved as the Chair of the Finance Committee.
 - Thank you to two the other board members who had been in the two other seats but stepped down before their 3 year term was over
 - **Betsy Rogerson** - became HPCC Vice President summer 2020
 - Another person stepped down due to other commitments

- Nominated for board seats
 - We have 3 individuals who all joined the board to fill interim positions in the last 18 months - we're happy to have them starting full terms on the board
 - **Kathleen Paola**
 - **Becky Marinov**
 - **Justin Bhagat**

- **VOTE:**
 - **Moved by: Bob Staresinic**
 - **2nded: Jim Blakely**
 - **Results:**
 - **Yeah's - 20 (unanimous)**
 - **Nays - 0**
 - **Abstentions - 0**
 - **All nominations APPROVED as presented.**

HPCC Recruitment:

- **Newsletter Editor**
 - The editor of the newsletter is responsible for soliciting materials to be published, setting and enforcing deadlines, making a final determination about what will be published in each issue, and overseeing the layout and design & proofing of each issue. For more information, please email editor@highlandparkpa.com

- **Website Manager**
 - The website manager updates the website and posts and announcements provided by the HPCC board. There are usually 1-2 posts per week and bigger updates 1 - 2 times / year. For more information, please email HPCCPgh@gmail.com.

Meeting adjourned at 8 P.M.