



# Grant Park

## Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213

Fall 2023

### Neighbors and Grant High School Community Dismayed by Bowl Closure

By Neon Brooks

On August 12th, just days before Grant High School Soccer and Football training was scheduled to begin for the year, Grant athletes, their families, and the public were informed that the Grant Bowl field, located at the Southwest corner of Grant Park, would be closed for organized sports until further notice. The closure is due to safety issues with the cushioning of the field's artificial turf, which has reached the end of its lifespan. The field continues to be available for casual use; the safety issues were not related to the track surrounding the field.

The field, which is owned by Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) last had its turf replaced in 2013. The turf has an 8-10 year lifespan and had failed several safety tests over the past year, with attempts at maintenance and repair between each test. After the last test on August 10th, PP&R and Portland Public Schools (PPS) declared the field unsafe for student and organized community athletics. The announcement of this decision was the first notice that the public or the Grant Athletics community was given of the safety and maintenance problems with the field.

On August 21st, following public outcry about the abrupt field closure, PP&R and PPS announced a joint commitment to replace the field's turf and reopen it by Fall of 2024. However, this announcement did not provide any details of how this would be accomplished or any commitment from specific entities to fund the repairs, stating, "PPS and Parks will continue to work together to develop cost estimates, project roles, and detailed timelines for the turf replacement."

PP&R, who own the field, apparently did not have a maintenance plan in place to replace the turf. In their initial announcement about the closure, they noted a \$600 million maintenance backlog and the fact that they have closed and expect to close other parks assets due to lack of funding.

The Grant High School athletics community has sprung into action in response to this closure, with some parents and other concerned community members organizing into a Grant Bowl Community Coalition. In an August 22nd press release, the Coalition stated that PP&R should turn over ownership of the field to PPS through an emergency procurement process, and that PPS should immediately begin repairs to the field.

The Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) has been closely following this issue with the goal of making sure all community voices and perspectives are heard and considered. Currently, GPNA identifies the primary goals of (1) restoring safe access to the field for organized athletics; and (2) preserving community access to the field for casual use. On August 24th, GPNA sent a letter to the mayor and city commissioners, Grant High School Principal James McGee, the Superintendent of Schools and School Board, local press, and other relevant stakeholders highlighting the importance of the Grant Bowl for Grant High School athletes as well as other users of the bowl, families, spectators, and other park users who benefit from the activation of the space. GPNA urged PP&R and PPS to work quickly to find a solution to restore or replace the turf at the Grant Bowl to allow the safe return of organized sports, while also preserving continued public access to the bowl for both organized

*continued page 2*

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- October 10, 2023, 7-9pm
- January 9, 2024, 7-9pm

#### LOCATION:

We are now holding hybrid meetings. The in-person location for our Oct. 10 meeting is Grant Park Church. To obtain the agenda and the Zoom meeting link, go to the meetings page on our website, [grantpark-na.org](http://grantpark-na.org).

#### MEETINGS:

GPNA holds elections at the Annual Meeting in April. Necessary special or emergency meetings may be scheduled at any time. Meetings are open to the public. ALL persons living, working, or attending high school within its boundaries are members of Grant Park Neighborhood Association. If you need special accommodation, please contact a Board member.

#### GPNA

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD:

##### President:

*Stacey Tipp*

##### Co-Vice Presidents:

*Ramona Perrault and  
Molly Hamill*

##### Secretary:

*Kara Caselas*

##### Treasurer:

*Kara Caselas*

##### Land Use Chair:

*Neon Brooks*

##### Newsletter Editor:

*Stacey Tipp*

##### At Large:

*Mary Artz, Linda Burch,  
Jill De Rosa, Remington Evert,  
Tom Fawell, Gian Lozano,  
Veronica Lozano,  
Laurene Mullen, Jake Wicks*

##### Contact the Board at:

[general@grantpark-na.org](mailto:general@grantpark-na.org)

## ***Bowl Closure, continued***

sports and casual use.

The lack of a maintenance plan for the field and the resulting closure with no notice have had severe impacts on Grant High School athletes, with Soccer and Football teams having to bus to Delta Park and other fields for practices and home games this fall, in some cases requiring them to leave class early. Decisions about the future of the field have immediate and longer-term consequences for Grant High School students and families. The decisions also have the potential to have long-term impacts on public access to the field, as well as on potential future developments to the field such as lighting and bleachers.

GPNA is committed to hearing and elevating the voices of all community members who are affected by the field closure and plans for its repair. The GPNA board has informed PP&R, PPS, and the Grant Bowl Community Coalition that we are willing to help facilitate a community

forum on the Grant Bowl issue. We encourage neighbors, students, families, and other community members to reach out to us by email at [general@grantpark-na.org](mailto:general@grantpark-na.org) to share thoughts and concerns regarding this matter. If you would like to be informed of future community events related to this issue, please let us know by email or join our mailing list by filling out the form at [grantpark-na.org/contact-us](http://grantpark-na.org/contact-us)

The GPNA's August 24th letter and other news is available on our website, [www.grantpark-na.org](http://www.grantpark-na.org).

**UPDATE:** Just prior to publication of this newsletter, the Grant Bowl Community Coalition announced that at the September 5 PPS board meeting a board resolution to "Fix the Field" by this Fall (not Fall 2024) would be on the agenda. The resolution also calls on the city for a long-term lease and future improvements that PPS helps fund. The coalition exhorted the community to come out in force to demand action on this issue.

## **Do you like walking in your neighborhood?**

We need volunteers to help deliver this newsletter to homes and businesses in Grant Park. The average route is 30-40 homes, and the newsletter is published quarterly. If interested, please e-mail us at [general@grantpark-na.org](mailto:general@grantpark-na.org).

## **Notification of Proposed Bylaw Change**

*By Stacey Tipp*

At the June 27, 2023, meeting of the Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA), the board voted to add one more meeting to its annual schedule. Beginning in 2024, the board will meet in January, March, May, September, and November. This plan adds one additional meeting per year, increasing meetings from four to five meetings annually, and leaves summer months open for community event opportunities.

Our annual meeting, where neighbors can vote on the election of officers, has been held on the second Tuesday of April of each year. This date is set down in our bylaws. Therefore, at the next GPNA meeting on October 10, the membership will vote to amend the GPNA bylaws to move the annual meeting to March from April. To preserve maximum flexibility, it is proposed that no specific date in March be set down in the bylaws for the annual meeting (simply that the March meeting will be the annual meeting).

## **Contributing to this Newsletter**

For information on letters to the editor and how to submit an article to this newsletter, as well as newsletter advertising and advertising rates, please go to the newsletters page on our website: [www.grantpark-na.org](http://www.grantpark-na.org)



**Grant Park**  
Neighborhood Association



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Your information will be kept confidential and never shared.

## Land Use Report

By Neon Brooks

### Update on the Gordon's Fireplace / Aircraft Factory Building at 33rd and Broadway

Since this past March, GPNA representatives have been holding bimonthly "problem solving" meetings organized by the Portland Public Environment Management Office (PEMO). At these meetings, GPNA and surrounding neighborhoods share neighborhood concerns with representatives from the city offices that deal with trash and graffiti abatement, illumination, traffic, policing, and public safety. GPNA has consistently brought up concerns about the Gordon's Fireplace building at these meetings, including concerns with trash, access to the building, and broken glass. At our request, PEMO Director Christine Leon provided the following update on the city's work with the property owner/developer to address these concerns and facilitate development of the site:

*The Aircraft factory building, formerly Gordon's Fireplace, is being developed by 3300 NE Broadway LLC/Grant Park Parking LLC. A building permit was issued with the required fees and SDCs paid, however that process took longer than anticipated (eight months became 14 months). According to the developer, costs increased due to the structural requirements for housing, plus city redevelopment requirements and extended timelines, causing the Aircraft factory development project to coincide with price escalation and increased interest rates. The currently vacant building has been a repeat target for graffiti, break-ins, trespassing, property damage, broken windows, and the accumulation of debris and trash. While many property nuisances and nearby issues are addressed with temporary, reactive solutions (i.e., glass swept from sidewalk, access doors resecured, overcrossing fencing and gate secured), our long-term proactive strategy, and highest priority, is to stabilize the site for development. PEMO is therefore working on addressing the issue in two phases with the LLC and*

*assistance from other city bureaus: stabilizing the building and, a pipeline to development. PEMO is assisting with graffiti removal from the upper floors of the building, while imposing aesthetic and security-oriented repairs, such as mural restoration, boarding-up window glass, and the securing of loose masonry. PEMO has put the developer in contact with Prosper Portland on phased development ideas, as the monetary expense to bring an unreinforced masonry building, such as Gordon's, up to code for residential use is high. The timeline to complete the exterior work per the draft agreement is mid-Nov. If not complete, PEMO will hand over control of assistance efforts to BDS (Bureau of Development Services) enforcement.*

Thank you to concerned neighbors who continue to report safety concerns regarding this property to the city and to GPNA. To report code violations at the property, including trash/debris on the exterior of the property, illegal occupancies, a vacant structure open to entry, or other safety concerns, contact the Portland Property Compliance Help Line at 503-823-2633 or [codec@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:codec@portlandoregon.gov).

### Broadway Businesses Damaged by Vandalism

On July 13th, a man smashed the windows of seven businesses along NE Broadway between 30th and 33rd avenues with a rock. The man was arrested and charged with criminal mischief. We encourage neighbors to patronize the affected businesses, including Center for Chiropractic & Wellness, Nicholas Restaurant, Purple Moon Preschool, Just Right Awards and Trophies, the Verizon store at 3004 NE Broadway, the State Farm Insurance office at 3118 NE Broadway, and Fred Meyer. We also encourage you to patronize the other excellent businesses on Broadway between 33rd and 37th.

## Grant Park NET News

By Molly Hamill

The City of Portland Bureau of Emergency Management oversees an organization that is responsible for helping residents in the event of an emergency: the Portland Neighborhood Emergency Teams. Research on the resilience of people after an unusual event, as small as a storm or as large as a regional disaster, depends on the strength of the interpersonal relationships with your neighbors.

Grant Park Neighborhood encompasses 1,366 households with 4,139 residents (2020 U.S. census).

This number does not include the number of students, teachers, or day care attendees that are here during a normal school day. Grant Park NET currently has between 6 and 10 active members trained and ready to help when the need arises. We need more of you to join us!

More information is available at [www.portlandoregon.gov/net](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/net) or email us at [grantparknet@gmail.com](mailto:grantparknet@gmail.com)

## Take the Grant Park Neighborhood Livability Survey!

**Editor's Note:** We are re-running this survey in this issue so that more neighbors have the opportunity to provide their input and make sure their voices are heard.

There is a growing number of residents and businesses interested in making improvements to create a safe, thriving neighborhood that everyone can enjoy. We need your input to make sure our planning and actions reflect our residents' values. Complete the GPNA survey and have your voice heard! Scan the QR code to take the online survey. If you need a paper copy to complete and send back to us, please contact the Grant Park Neighborhood Association:



[general@grantpark-na.org](mailto:general@grantpark-na.org)

Or mail us a request at:  
P.O. Box 13102  
Portland OR, 97213

Thank you for completing the survey and providing your valuable feedback. We will be compiling the results and reporting back later this year.

# SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION!

Would you like to contribute to our efforts in supporting local projects, driving community initiatives, organizing engaging events, and upholding the vibrancy of our neighborhood? You can make a meaningful difference by making a donation through our PayPal account. Visit us at [paypal.me/GPNApdx](https://paypal.me/GPNApdx) to show your support.



## Grant Park Church

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## Meet Your New At-Large GPNA Board Members

There have been some recent changes to our board. Aaron Druck resigned from the board as an at-large member but has graciously agreed to stay on our Land Use and Transportation Committee. We're grateful for your service, Aaron! We also gained two new board members, Jill De Rosa and Remington Evert.



**Jill De Rosa:** *My name is Jill De Rosa. My husband Tom and I have lived in the same house in the Grant Park neighborhood since 1990 and we have witnessed many changes, both positive and negative. I am a member of an Adopt a Block trash pickup group, and we also deliver the GPNA newsletters. Both activities are also good ways of meeting people. You have probably seen us over the years walking our two feisty little doggies, Noodle and Maddy.*



**Remington Evert:** *Hello everyone. My name is Remington Evert and I joined the GPNA this past spring after attending one of the quarterly meetings. I have lived in Portland since graduating from OSU in 2007. I have spent time in Beaverton, Pearl, Brooklyn and settled into Grant Park after moving in with my current partner in March 2020. If I am not relaxing at home, you can find me out hiking, backpacking, trail running, or camping. I am excited to be part of the GPNA and appreciate my fellow board members' warm welcome. I look forward to becoming a more active part of the community via the GPNA and to helping our neighborhood continue to thrive.*

## Successful Neighborhood Spruce Up

By Ramona Perrault

On July 8, the Grant Park Neighborhood Association, in partnership with SOLVE and Adopt One Block, hosted a neighborhood spruce up. Volunteers equipped with buckets, gloves, grabbers, and special paint remover scoured the neighborhood for garbage and graffiti. After all that hard work, we celebrated our success by enjoying some delicious pizza and each other's company at a long-standing local business, Blind Onion Pizza. Stay tuned for more opportunities to beautify our blocks.



*A volunteer hard at work sprucing up Grant Park.*

# Be a Part of Our Community

**Attend an upcoming  
Grant Park Neighborhood  
Association meeting:**

- October 10, 2023, 7-9pm
- January 9, 2024, 7-9pm

**LOCATION:**

We are now holding hybrid meetings. The in-person location for our October 10 meeting is Grant Park Church. To obtain the agenda and the Zoom meeting link, go to the meetings page on our website, [grantpark-na.org](http://grantpark-na.org).

## Commissioner Dan Ryan Community Meeting

By Stacey Tipp

On July 25, 2023, our district coalition, Central Northeast Neighbors, and the Office of Community and Civic Life (OCCL) organized a community meeting with Commissioner Dan Ryan. The meeting was held at Grant Park Church and was well attended with perhaps 35 participants in person and others on Zoom. Ryan currently serves as the Commissioner of Culture & Livability and is responsible for OCCL (the bureau that oversees the neighborhood association structure), the Office of Equity and Human Rights, Portland Parks & Recreation, and the Portland Children's Levy.

Ryan brought several key city employees with him, including Bob Cozzie, Director of the Bureau of Emergency Communications (911); Lieutenant Chadd Stensgaard of the Portland Police Bureau; Bobby Lee, Chief of Staff to Mayor Ted Wheeler; Mourad Ratbi, the interim director of OCCL; and Jeremy Van Keuren, the Community Resilience Manager of the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management.

Ryan gave an optimistic, but appropriately realistic, appraisal of the current state of Portland and its potential for the future. For example, Ryan expressed his hopes for a revitalized downtown with thriving businesses and pristine public parks and squares, like other major U.S. cities. However, this transformation will only occur if people feel safe again and start coming downtown in numbers. Low ridership on public transportation is a key problem. Many people, including Ryan's own spouse, are fearful of riding the MAX because of safety concerns, including possible exposure to fentanyl. As for the unhoused community, Ryan praised the seven Safe Rest Villages now operating, where houseless individuals and families can be connected to services and start building resilience. Ryan has personal experience with the issue: his own brother, who suffered from addiction and mental health issues, died homeless on the streets of Portland.


It's hard to summarize a meeting with such a wide array of topics. Issues ranged from what's going to happen to the toppled statues of George Washington and other historical figures? (Ryan's answer: the goal is to restore the statues in a properly curated setting where children can learn an honest history); to why can't the acres of empty office space downtown be quickly retrofitted into community space for the houseless? (Ryan's answer: it's expensive); to why is Ryan trying to override the will of the voters by supporting a mayoral veto for the new form of city government? (Ryan's answer: just like at the national level, checks and balances are important between the different branches of city government).

The city employees who accompanied Ryan offered helpful information as they took audience questions in their differing subject areas.

Here are some of the issues presented by these experts:

- Street Racing:** Lieutenant Stensgaard noted that street racing is a national problem, not just a Portland problem, with events happening up and down the west coast. Events are heavily publicized on social media and can include hundreds of cars and spectators. The sheer number of people and cars at the events makes shutting them down next to impossible once they are underway, even with assistance from the Oregon State Police. Crowds have intervened violently when police or the public get involved, and it becomes an issue of officer safety. Police efforts are now focused on prevention of the events before they start, especially by monitoring social media. Other prevention efforts include legislation to make deterrence a real thing. Lieutenant Stensgaard believes the best deterrent would be forfeiture of the car-crazy participants' souped-up vehicles.
- 911 System:** Bob Cozzie explained how 911 call volume is a barometer of our community. All cities, not just Portland, have seen the same trend, with substantially increased calls since 2018. This year, in Portland, 911 calls are 5% higher than last year, with street races and shootings helping drive the increase. While the non-emergency number 311 has helped take the pressure off 911, the Bureau of Emergency Communications is currently testing a phone tree robot to help screen out non-emergency calls. A key piece of practical advice: IF YOU CALL 911, DO NOT HANG UP! The emergency operators will always call you back if you hang up, so you are really wasting their time.
- Natural Disasters and other Emergencies:** Jeremy Van Keuren of the Bureau of Emergency Management noted that in all natural disasters, as many as 95% of people are rescued by their neighbors not professional responders. Van Keuren urged people to join their local NET team to get the training they need to help if disaster occurs. See the related article on the urgent need for more Grant Park NET members on page 3.





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## Surprised By Joy. And Llamas

By Susan Long



Susan and David Long and friends

We watched from our kitchen window as a large white van parked in front of our house...not an Amazon delivery but even better. The driver, in red shirt came around the side and opened the sliding door and out they filed. In a short time, our yard filled with fancy trimmed and costumed llamas and alpacas. They were from the Mountain Peaks Therapy Llamas and Alpacas farm and prepared to march in the Junior Rose Festival Parade. We went out to meet them and the staff. I'd never expected to hug a llama, but "Napoleon" seemed pleased to put his head on my shoulder. Nice.

I'll contact them next year and save them a parking space. An annual llama visit is worth waiting for.




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