



# Grant Park

## Neighborhood Association

### **Board Meeting**

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Zoom, 8 p.m.

**Board Members Present:** Neon Brooks, Jane Comeault, Jessica Decker, Mary Cal Hansen, Marion Horna, Vivek Kothari, Laurene Mullen, Ron Laster, Ken Peterson, Stacey Tipp

**Absent Board members:** Lois Okrasinski, Marisa Morby

**Guests:** Carrie Luse, neighbor, Jamie Hurd, Project Manager, Office of School Modernization, Portland Public Schools, Dave Leland, neighbor, Pete Maxfield, Grant Park Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET lead) and neighbor

### **Agenda**

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:05.

#### **2. Officer Roll Call**

Quorum was achieved with a majority of Board members present.

#### **3. Vote on Proposed Bylaw Amendments**

Unanimously approved and effective immediately upon second reading. The bylaws are available on the website: <http://grantpark-na.org/the-association/>

#### **4. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

#### **5. Approval of Minutes of July 22, 2020**

The minutes were approved.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report**

Ron Laster presented a Treasurer's report.

#### **7. Central Northeast Neighbors (CNN) Report**

A one-year contract has been renewed between the Office of Civic Life and CNN. The contract depends on funding and several other things, but it is in place.

## 8. Land Use Update

### a. Grant High Softball Field

Ken provided the following information via email in advance of the meeting:

*“there is little of controversy about the actual proposed design. It is quite similar to the picture in our last newsletter, although the light placement has been slightly altered. Portland Public Schools (PPS) decided to move forward with the process and will hold a virtual interactive Town Hall meeting, probably on or about September 30 in order to share information with the public and obtain feedback. Here is an excerpt from a recent email from the PPS Project Manager, Jamie Hurd:*

*“We are also planning a virtual Town Hall / Community Meeting later this month. For those of you that participated in the Master Planning process last fall, you’ll remember that we held both DAG and community meetings, both of which were extremely helpful in understanding the priorities of the community regarding Grant Bowl. Due to Covid we are not able to host an in person event, like we did last year. This event will be livestreamed on YouTube, similar to other PPS broadcasts held in the last six months. I do not have the link yet, but when I do I will send it to this group for your own use or to share. The benefit is that it will be recorded and available on the PPS YouTube channel so anyone that was not able to see the live presentation can still have access at any time. Portland Public Schools and Portland Parks and Recreation are working together to notify neighbors and the school community about the Town Hall. Next week we will be mailing out about 200 postcards to neighbors, lawn signs will be posted the following week around the park and school, emails and texts will be sent to the school community and it will be posted on the Grant Bowl PPS website. The Town Hall / Community meeting will be held Wednesday, September 30 from 6:00 to about 6:45. The agenda will include a recap of decisions and Board of Education direction for the project to date, an overview of the design, including lights and sound, and will review public engagement opportunities through the Land Use process.*

*Speaking of Land Use, the design team is on schedule to submit the Land Use application in mid October. Land Use review is a robust and lengthy process. We are scheduling about 19 weeks for the process and expect to be complete sometime in early March 2021. I know that some of you are familiar with the Land Use process. For those of you who are not, the project will be reviewed by multiple City Bureaus including, zoning, stormwater (BES), transportation and public street (PBOT), Urban Forestry, Fire and other bureaus as identified. We are required to submit the project for a type III Land Use review specifically because of the addition of field lighting, so these will be looked at very closely. Portland's Land Use process is very inclusive for the public. There will be opportunities for the public to provide testimony and we hope that they are able to hear from multiple stakeholders; neighbors, school community, softball groups, the community of Park users, etc. This type of input will assist the City in their comments and guidance for the project to move forward. The Land Use process requires a good deal of public notification, so expect to see that in October. We will also provide more information about how to submit testimonies in the Covid environment.”*

*A neighbor who lives close to the field on US Grant has been active in the DAG and previously, and has submitted a list of proposals for consideration:*

*“The Neighbors are only asking for an agreement to mitigate impacts, such as:*

*No commercial signs may be posted on the US Grant Pl side of the upper field fencing  
A monument naming the field THE Debbie Egelstad [longtime GHS softball coach] Field is encouraged  
Develop comprehensive programing analysis illustrating practice and game activities, made available to neighbors quarterly  
As much as possible, the bowl should be the main facility for all activities  
The stands / dugouts are to be locked at all times when field not in use by OSAA activities  
Measure taken to prevent people from camping out in stands or gathering on top of dugouts  
PPS staff is to clean up grounds, dugouts, and stands within 30 minutes of the end of each activity.  
Sound systems and lights to be effectively oriented away from US Grant Pl and limited to games only  
No Parks use of lights and sound system to be allowed*

*Lights are available to Grant athletes only up to 7:30 PM (exceptions maybe allow based on discussion with neighborhood association.)*

*PPS to undertake study to determine how (and then implement strategies) to calm traffic on US Grant Pl*

*Additional landscaping to be installed as barrier between field and US Grant Pl*

*Agreement regarding penalties for violation of agreement*

*Other mitigation strategies should be implemented to reduce the impact of all activity on adjacent residential areas.*

*Everyplace in the city, there are residents close to commercial districts and zoning is used to reduce the impacts of the commercial uses on nearby residential areas. We suggest that the activity at Grant HS is similar to or greater than activity at many commercial uses in the city, and we ask that the city enact and enforce reasonable mitigation strategies to minimize the impact of school activity on the neighborhood."*

*The GPNA Board needs to determine whether to support these demands by the neighbors. A couple of options appear to me to be reasonable. If everyone agrees, we can support them. If there are concerns, we could wait until after the Town Hall meeting before deciding, and could appoint a committee to address the issue in conjunction with Pietka and other neighbors."*

In the meeting discussion, Jamie agreed that Ken's summary email covers the main points. She wrote the middle two paragraphs. She reiterated that there will be a joint PPS-Parks public town hall on September 30 that will be livestreamed on the PPS channel on YouTube. The City of Portland has a robust land use process and this project will require a type 3, which involves many different City departments. PPS wants something that really supports the community, and involving the City process helps to invite public input from as many people as possible. PPS co-owns the property with Parks and Recreation.

Ken gave an overview of Grant Park neighbor's concerns including trash clean up, lighting, who all will have access to use of the field? EG concerts in the park. There is a tension between establishing criteria and having an open process.

Ron shared some history around past processes around land use at the park. Specifically things were promised and then changed. Some neighbors who have lived through prior processes involving Grant Park might be skeptical about what is happening now. Jamie agreed. There is a very long history here, probably about 30 years of conversations. There are things managed by City processes, there are things that are hard to promise (e.g. MOU). PPS will do its best to respect all concerns. There are numerous parties involved.

Jamie clarified - this process is ONLY dealing with the upper field and getting softball up there - NOT the bowl. The upper field needs lights in order to accommodate both soccer, baseball and softball because of daylight hours.

Ken - there was a discussion about a good neighbor agreement. Dave Unsworth in GP talked to Jamie about a good neighbor agreement. Bret Horner explained to Jamie that the prior agreement was developed in 2009/ 2010 and since then parks has moved this into the land use review process in order to streamline. The land use review process is centered on livability so good neighbor is at the center of this process.

The town hall on Sept 30 is scheduled for about 45 minutes. This will be a presentation without any opportunity for interaction, there is not a great process to manage that on a Zoom call.

The obligation for postcards and notices will be sent to about 200 neighbors adjacent to the park. This follows protocol from Parks. Lawn signs will be posted next week. PPS will be sending texts and email to Grant families, posted on PPS website, and PPS has reached out to the Hollywood Star. Part of the role of the Design Advisory Group (DAG) is to communicate this event.

It was suggested that the September 30 event be changed from Town hall to community meeting or otherwise since there is no opportunity at that event to ask questions or weigh in. Jamie was agreeable, although the first set of postcard notices have been printed. There will be another event in October.

GPNA could post about the September 30 meeting on Nextdoor since PPS cannot post to Nextdoor itself.

The Board agreed to monitor this process before taking a formal position. It will remain as a standing agenda item until the process is complete.

Jamie offered to remain as available as we need her to be. There is information on the PPS website, she invited everyone to visit that site and to invite other neighbors as well.

#### **b. Streetcar Survey**

Ken was in touch with Portland Streetcar. They are still tabulating, they do not have any results to share except to say that the favored routes in order were along SE Sandy, then Broadway, followed by the Irving-Sandy combination.

#### **c. Gordon's (Aircraft Factory)**

The major change to this building is the artwork on the first floor. The art is meant to extend to the upper levels, it was also supposed to have lights installed. Ken is in regular contact with the graffiti manager at the City and she is doing her best, though overwhelmed with work.

#### **d. Chase Bank**

Ken stopped by the new Chase Bank to introduce GPNA. He invited them to advertise in the GPNA newsletter.

There was discussion about whether people would be in favor of food carts in the parking lot? It seems to be a large parking lot for a small building. Unclear whether there is space and whether immediate neighbors would be supportive.

Stacey suggested that we write a profile about Chase Bank in the next newsletter.

**e. CVS Pharmacy**

Construction has started at that property.

**f. Burger King**

No news to report on this property. It is an eyesore. Neon offered that food carts might be a good fit there. The realtor had reached out last year asking what the neighborhood would like to see in that space. We never heard back after offering suggestions.

**9. Discussion of Possible Future GPNA Sponsored Community Dialogue Concerning Systemic Racism**

Jane, Vivek, Neon and MaryCal met as a subcommittee. They talked about starting dialogue at a smaller scale - e.g. Board - before going to a neighborhood scale. It would be helpful to establish a common framework to talk about these issues. Neon's workplace hosted something similar, they watched a one-hour video together and had a follow-up conversation. The subcommittee recommended that the Board hire a facilitator to lead the discussion, allowing everyone to participate.

There was concern about holding it virtually instead of in-person.

The subcommittee could organize an event to which all board members would be invited. It would be voluntary. There was a debate about whether the Board should spend money on something not offered to the community. It could be seen as "self enhancement". Board members felt that we should only organize a Board dialogue as a precursor to a community dialogue. Others felt that it serves our community for the board to be informed about these issues.

Carrie - as a parent at BCS, person in community, she feels that our community would be in support of the GPNA Board being more informed. She suggested possible facilitators who are involved at BCS.

DEI consultants would likely want at least a 3-4 hour commitment for the work to be meaningful.

Carrie is going to join the subcommittee.

There was a question about whether it is useful when many people on the Board have already read the books etc. Carrie shared her experience having similar dialogues with a variety of groups and each time it is different and extremely useful.

The City has an Office of Equity and Human Rights. Maybe a resource we can tap into? Subcommittee will follow up.

Ron made a motion for the Subcommittee to make a recommendation including next steps, an overall goal for the process, and a budget, for the Board to approve via email. Marion seconded it. Motion passed.

#### **10. Discussion of Future Newsletters**

This has been a source of frustration for Ken. He is getting burned out by all of the activities he leads on behalf of the Board.

We need a new designer because the previous designer resigned for personal reasons, Ron found someone to replace her.

Majority of newsletter delivery volunteers are happy to continue during COVID, so delivery is not an issue. Laurene volunteered to do the newsletter count/ dispersal to delivery people.

Carrie volunteered to write an article.

Potential articles: Grant Park softball field (ken), update on GPNA donations (Neon), neighborhood during COVID (Stacey), NET? (Pete), Banfield Hotel is a homeless shelter - work that Carrie did, had neighbors write welcome cards (Carrie), recipe (Stacey), 33rd and Knott protests (Mary Cal, Stacey), Chase Bank (Stacey), art at Gordon's (Ken) approx 250 words, up to 500.

Articles due to Ken by September 30.

#### **11. Election of Officers-When and how?**

The by-laws state that elections are held in April. If elections were held at any time other than April then we would need to provide notification 30 days in advance, and possibly have them again in April. The key point is the need to give adequate notice. Jane agreed to remain Secretary for now.

#### **12. New Business**

Ron - the commissioner in charge of Parks, Amanda Fritz wanted to talk about the three Bond measures before the vote. We did not have room on our agenda and won't meet again before the vote.

Jane - raised a pedestrian safety issue at NE 33rd and NE Grant. The Beverly Cleary School PTA is advocating for improvements through PBOT. The advance walk signal was already put in place. Other requests are forthcoming and the Board was interested in supporting the effort to improve safety and send comment to PBOT.

Stacey - traffic speed on Knott is an ongoing concern. There was discussion about forming a subcommittee about traffic safety. Stacey would volunteer to serve on that committee.

#### **13. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm.