

Pine Hills Neighborhood Association
January 16, 2020 Minutes

1a. PHNA Announcements & Notes

- a. Neighborhood Night Out at the Madison Theatre - Thursday, January 23, 6 p.m. followed by the film, 1917
- b. PHNA St. Patrick's Potluck - Tuesday, March 17, 6-10 p.m., 61 S. Lake Avenue
- c. Newsletter Editor volunteer sought - See Facebook & <http://www.pinehillsna.org> postings
- d.

Actions taken at PHNA November Board Meeting

Monday November 18, 2019 — 5:30 - 7:00pm -- Damien Center

Board members present: John Clarkson, Marilyn Douglas, Virginia Hammer, Eric Schadow, Ric Chesser, Leah Golby, John Hammer, Perry Junjulas, Carolyn Keefe, Laurie Lieman (absent: Paul Lundberg, Jonathan Duda)

ACTION: Motion to adopt Code of Ethics, Potential Conflicts Disclosure Statement, and Whistle Blower policies (Motion, Clarkson; second Carolyn Keefe), unanimous vote of approval by 10 Board members present.

NOTE: These policies – Code of Ethics , Potential Conflicts Disclosure Statement, Whistle Blower are required for NFP 501(c)(3) organizations, and drafts were provided online and at the October Annual meeting; the final adopted policies are now on PHNA website and saved on Board Google Drive.

2. Andrew Neidhardt, Walkable Albany -

Walkable Albany's mission is to make streets safer for everyone, including bicyclists and pedestrians who live in Albany and those who are visiting. One of its projects is to make Washington Park safer for families, cyclists, pets, etc.. WA is reaching out to NA's and other groups to see what they envision in terms of park safety. The group wants to build community support and hear about any big ideas that may be brought forth before an engineering study is undertaken.

Walkable Albany has a working group open to seeing where some ideas go as far as slowing things down in the park. Cars will stay...there is no talk about not allowing cars in the park. One idea is to redirect one way traffic, or possibly to revoke it. There are lots of options.

Other general safety issues are left turn traffic posing a danger to pedestrians and improvements to be made to traffic signals (beg buttons).

Follow Walkable Albany on <http://www.walkablealbany.com> and on facebook (Walkable Albany)

Patricia Fahy, Assembly Member for 109 Assembly District

Issues that Pat will be focusing on this session

- a. Bike lanes and traffic safety. Pat was able to procure a \$250,000 grant to upgrade and possibly relocate Washington Park playground, making it safer to access. Also, Sen Breslin supported Woodlawn Park upgrade.

- b. 787 Feasibility Study. Pat is calling for a detailed engineering study that would include costs estimates of removing part of 787 as well as estimates about what can be gained in terms of economic impact of retail, housing, waterfront expansion, etc.
- c. Pat definitely voted for and supports bail reform, with some technical corrections pertaining to sex abuse, hate crimes, and domestic violence.
- d. Reaction to State of the State: multibillion dollar deficit - \$4-6 billion Medicaid gap. - Governor will address in budget presentation.
- e. Support for lowering the tax rate for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- f. Supports allowing alcohol service in all NYS movie theaters as a way of supporting aging theaters.
- g. Environment - NYS has the most ambitious climate goals in the country. There are many bills relating to all aspects of reducing greenhouse gases.
- h. Protection of independent contractors - Lyft, Uber. These services impact bricks and mortar stores...need to balance workers' rights and other aspects of the economy.
- i. Other issues: Pat helped close bump stock loophole, there are bills relating to lowering drug prices, etc.
- j. \$12.5 structural gap in Albany's budget, It will be a tough year due to shortfalls, but is firmly committed to seeking these funds again. It helps for Albanians to write letters of support; probably won't know final result until end of session.

4. Committee, Officer and Other Reports

a. Zoning and Code Enforcement - no report

b. Committee on University and Community Relations - Luke Rumsey

UAlbany students return January 22. Some burglaries over break, but many students signed up for APD vacation check. For first couple of weekends after students return, Luke will be riding with late night APD patrols. There was a recent code walk in student area with Luke, Carolyn Keefe, APD, DG and Codes. Will revisit in a couple of weeks to see what corrections have been made. Lights updated on Hudson, Hamilton and O'Leary. Improvement in terms of safety. New lights have smart nodes that can be used to lower lights. Need to let Judy Doeschette know. College of St. Rose lights are too bright and need to be lowered (these are not controller by the City of Albany).. Next CUCR meeting - February 12 at LaSalle.

c. Midtown Pine Hills Improvement Group - Carolyn Keefe

Next meeting: January 27. There is a group working on how to reduce the amount of litter and garbage in this area. Strategy includes a survey of residents in key blocks and to work with other stakeholders on possible solutions. Owusu Anane has spoken to the mayor and there will be a big clean up initiative in the spring. Another initiative is to work with city forester and DGS to come up with a plan to remove blacktop between curb and sidewalk to make it possible to plant trees in that space. Fundraiser is being planned to raise the rest of the money for a plan for Madison Park. Possibility of banners for Midtown. Community dinner sometime in March.

d. Upper Madison Group - Virginia Hammer

UMG working on 2020. Continued focus on block between W. Lawrence and S. Main - 4 more trees are needed, plus some sturdier planters. Grant will be written asking Price Chopper and Albany Parking Authority for their support. Plan for western end of DeWitt Clinton Park has been agreed on. There will be a 5' in diameter raised bed built between manhole and westernmost bed. Fred Ruff's family and friends have raised a significant amount of money for the project. There will be a small plaque in the bed in honor of Fred. Plans are also for the replacement of the historic marker with something more accurate. There are grants available for new markers -- UMG will apply. Other projects include: painting of benches from S. Allen to S. Main, free summer concerts on Elks lawn, Pine Hills Film Series, and Upper Madison Street Fair.

e. Public Safety - Officer Joe Aquaviva and Sgt. Tanya Alix-Hansen.

Joe's beat is Beat 9, which includes all of Pine Hills (Lake and Allen, Woodlawn and Washington). Other officers are Sheila Couch and Sgt. Hansen. There have been burglaries, with robbers getting in through back of houses. Area includes lower Western and Lake, and Quail. More details about transitioning to fewer NEU officers: NEU reduced from 33 to 19, doubling most NEU beats. There will be more opportunities for exchange of information between patrol and NEU officers. Issues related to recruitment, training, retirement and retention make it necessary to make changes to a different model. Residents are calling for better traffic enforcement. Traffic safety position was posted today.

f. Treasurer - Eric Schadow - Cash on hand. \$4389

g. Membership. - John Hammer. 177 members. Renewals and new memberships continue to come in. Deadline is for 2020 dues is February 15.

5. Recognition/Remark from Elected Representatives

a. Owusu Anane - 10th Ward Common Council Rep

City received \$1million in taxes from businesses located in Fuller Road technology building. The Millennial Cafe at 811 Madison Avenue will have an official ribbon cutting. Bike racks for Midtown Pine Hills donated and installed by Capital Roots. There will be a new fence in Ridgfield Park and a sidewalk installed on Woodlawn near Partridge.

b. Judy Doeschette - 9th Ward Common Council Rep

Task force created to educate residents about issues involved in Community Choice Aggregation Agreement which would give city more power to purchase renewable energy. Woodlawn Park needs to have stumps removed to make the park safer. DGS is in charge of park maintenance. Budget was passed with no significant increases. Major issue is still the lack of a Capital Plan

that meets legal requirements. Right now, it's just a list of items, without any narrative. Bonding (borrowing) for vehicles should be an operating cost.

c. Beroro Efekoro - Albany County Legislator

Beroro started a nonprofit, International Organization for Education and volunteers to help Albany High School students. He graduated from UAlbany. Focus in legislature will be on: vacant buildings, red X's, and homelessness. Land Bank is doing a good job and Beroro will be working on getting families into homes; helping senior citizens connect with services to help them remain at home; Youth and Family Services - shared County/City services; starting Pine Hills Neighborhood Education Fund to help students with higher education costs. Environmental issues? He will be reaching out to Doug Bullock, his predecessor, to talk about pending climate change issues.

Attendees:

John Clarkson, Kim Hills, Carolyn Keefe, Zach Simpson, Keith Irish, Christa Rivelli, Dannielle Melendez, Eric Schadow, Luke Rumsey, Stephen Holt, Jackie Gonzales, Andrew Neidhardt, John Hammer, Virginia Hammer, Marilyn Douglas, Owusu Anane, Judy Doeschette, Leah Golby, Joe Aquaviva, Tanya Alix-Hansen, Beroro Efekoro, Will Sikula.