

Meeting Minutes

Location: Fannie's Café, Bakery, and Boutique—5044 W. Montrose Avenue

Time: 7:00 PM

Attendance: 29

1. Welcome

Ryan Richter, JPF President, kicked off the meeting and welcomed the group. He made the following announcements:

a. Events

i. Neighbors Night Out

JPF participated in its first Neighbors Night Out on Monday, November 7 at Old Irving Brewery. 80 people were present across all of the neighborhood associations. Sponsored by Old Irving Park Association and Portage Park Neighborhood Association, Neighbors Night Out (NNO) is a way to get neighbors across the 45th Ward together to meet other neighbors within and outside their organizations. For Past NNOs, each neighborhood association hosts at a bar or restaurant in their neighborhood. JPF will now become a part of NNO and will be hosting the next NNO in February 2017.

ii. Holiday Sparkle

JPF will be participating in Holiday Sparkle, a holiday event at the Jefferson Park Transit Center on Thursday, December 1 at 5 PM. Our partners include Alderman John Arena's office, Fannie's Café and Gale Street Inn. During Holiday Sparkle, JPF will be passing out candy canes, cookies and cocoa. We will also be lighting the trees around the transit center, singing carols and greeting people. Santa Claus is scheduled to attend. All are welcome to join us.

iii. Update on 4907 N. Milwaukee

4907 N. Milwaukee is the former Edward Fox Studios across from the Jefferson Park Transit Center. JPF has been made aware that the owners of the building, who also own a three-story building next to Jefferson Inn on the same block, have finally received their construction permit. The owner is planning to build two stories above the existing one story masonry building. Apartments will be above a ground level retail store. The

increase in density on this site is permitted under existing zoning. Nadig Newspapers had an article earlier this year about a planned business that included a café and bar.

b. JPF Response to Central/Giddings pedestrian incident

JPF has been coordinating with other neighborhood groups and non-profits on a unified response to the tragic death of Noah Katz (age 2) by a driver turning left from Giddings Street to southbound Central Avenue near the Jewel. During the 45th Ward participatory budgeting process, 45th Ward voters approved of bumpouts near Central and Leland. These bumpouts require the removal of parking restrictions along Central Avenue from Montrose to Lawrence, which Alderman Arena has proposed in an ordinance currently in front of City Council. At this time, it is unclear if Alderman Nicolas Sposato is in favor of the removal of parking restrictions as Central Avenue south of Eastwood Avenue is in the 38th Ward. Discussions are ongoing between Alderman Arena and Alderman Sposato. JPF has been discussing the issue with Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association, Portage Park Neighborhood Association and several other community groups in Jefferson Park. JPF is strongly supportive of measures to keep our streets safe including the removal of parking restrictions and the construction of bumpouts.

Alderman John Arena was present at tonight's meeting to provide more details on the accident, the Chicago Department of Transportation's role in building the bumpouts and his conversations with Alderman Sposato.

2. Guest Speaker: Mary Ellen Guest, Executive Director, Historic Chicago Bungalow Association

Due to family circumstances, Mary Ellen Guest was unable to attend our meeting. JPF will reschedule with her in 2017.

3. Finance Update

Robb Van Hook, JPF Treasurer, provided the update. JPF currently has 85 paid members. These include 67 regular members, 11 business members and 7 associate members. Our bank account has \$1,150 and we have no outstanding debts.

JPF is planning on a membership drive soon. Our goal is 200 members.

4. JPF Committee Updates

a. Community Development

Dennis Davis, JPF Board member and committee member on the Community Development Committee, provided the update. Committee member Pete Czosnyka also contributed. Most of the meeting was dedicated to the discussion of the Central/Giddings accident.

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The committee is also planning to host salon discussions where people will meet over drinks to discuss and debate a topic of interest related to urban planning, economic development, architecture, etc. The first salon will begin in January, though a date has not been announced yet.

Jeff Fest is coming back to Jefferson Memorial Park. It will be held on August 4-6, 2017. While the Jefferson Park Chamber of Commerce organizes the event, JPF has been and will be an active member of the planning committee. We also expect to have a booth and to run a beer tent (this year JPF raised \$450 for our organization).

Ryan Richter announced a planning grant that JPF is pursuing to close the alley that runs between Higgins Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue adjacent to the Popeyes restaurant. JPF has been in discussions with Alderman John Arena's office and various planning groups for some time about closing part of the alley to vehicles in order to create a pedestrian only portion. The grant is through the Project for Public Spaces and is open to non-profit organizations engaged in planning or community work.

b. Fundraising & Services

Sam Wertime, Chair of the Fundraising & Services Committee, had no updates. Ryan Richter and Sam Wertime met with a board member from Hands to Help after the meeting to discuss a role for JPF during a fundraiser for Hands to Help this winter. More details are forthcoming.

If anyone knows of a local charity that needs fundraising assistance or help in any way, please email Sam Wertime at fundraising@jeffersonparkforward.org.

c. Livability & Attractiveness

Marie MacDonald, JPF Secretary and Chair of the Livability and Attractiveness Committee gave the update. JPF Board Member Doug Grom also contributed.

The Livability Committee recently held a Neighborhood Beautification survey for JPF members to vote on businesses that positively contribute to Jefferson Park via their outdoor flower and planting displays. Out of a number of businesses, Windsor Tavern won the award. A certificate of appreciation will be presented to Windsor soon.

Livability is currently assisting Holiday Sparkle by building a sleigh for Santa. Special thanks to committee members Marie MacDonald, Doug Grom and Marty Vander Vaart for the construction and to Jill Arena, who will be painting the sleigh.

Livability is still investigating how to build a dog park in Jefferson Memorial Park and is looking for ways to express support. The Committee will begin putting together an online petition to show support.

Committee member Doug Grom mentioned that the Jefferson Park Metra station is getting dirty again. Whereas previous “Twitter campaigns” have seen improvements from Metra, we need them out again. Owen Brugh, Chief of Staff to Alderman John Arena, has been in contact with Metra and the committee has also reached out to Standard Parking, the operator of Metra’s commuter parking lot along Northwest Highway. Alderman Arena said that his office would also contact Standard Parking regarding cleanup of their facility.

d. Social

The Social Committee will be planning JPF’s Holiday Party, to be held in January 2017. The party is open only to members and we will not be making any public announcements on our website or social media pages. Instead, JPF members will receive an invite via email. More details will be released in December. People interested in joining us that are not yet members can still become members of JPF via the website at www.jeffersonparkforward.org/subscribe/.

JPF will also be hosting the next Neighbors Night Out, which will be held in February 2017. Since it is our turn to host, with invited guests from JPF, OIPA and PPNA, the location will be a venue within the JPF boundaries. Details will be announced in January.

5. New Business and Announcements

- a. Year of Public Art program.** Alderman John Arena announced a city-wide Year of Public Art program, a partnership between all 50 aldermen and the City’s Department of Cultural Affairs. Aldermen donate \$10,000 of their menu money towards public art and the Department of Cultural Affairs will solicit an internationally known artist to create public art in each of the wards.
- b. Tree Saplings.** Alderman John Arena has 25 tree saplings for free in his office. Some have suggested using these saplings as a part of future beautification efforts.
- c. Metra Station activity.** Complaints of teenage loitering, vandalism and drug use have been made to Alderman Arena’s office. Last month, the Alderman’s office hosted a walkthrough with the community and 16th District Police to identify problems at the Jefferson Park Transit Center which includes the Metra station.
- d. Long/Argyle Update.** The Long/Argyle apartment building project will go in front of the City Council Zoning Committee on Tuesday, November 29 at 10 AM at City Hall. Zoning meetings can be long and there is no way to tell where Long/Argyle is on the agenda.

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Alderman Arena supports the project and encourages the community to voice their opinion on it “on the record” in front of City Council.

- e. **Car Dealership.** A public meeting will be held by Alderman John Arena at the 16th District Police Station on Monday, November 21 at 6:30 PM regarding a proposal by the Marino auto dealer to assemble parcels of land on the site of the old Gateway Chevrolet property and adjoining properties on the east side of Milwaukee Avenue north of Paterno’s Pizza. A zoning change is needed for some parcels to a C1-1 zoning which supports auto dealership uses. A nameplate for the dealership has not been awarded, but car manufacturers like to see a dealer have the land assembled with zoning permission granted before giving permission for a new dealership.
 - f. **45th Ward Hoedown.** Alderman John Arena announced a 45th Ward Holiday Party at the Filament Theater (4041 N. Milwaukee Avenue) on Friday, December 2 from 7-11 PM. Tickets are \$40 per person.
 - g. **Copernicus Party.** JPF Board Member and Community Development Committee chair Susanna Ernst announced that Copernicus Center will have a free movie on the Friday after Thanksgiving. The party will begin at 2 PM and the movie begins one hour later at 3 PM.
6. **Adjourn**
7. **Next Meeting: Thursday, February 16, 7 pm. Location TBD.**