

University Height Collaborative General Meeting

October 13, 2020

Meeting commenced at 7:00 pm via zoom

Attendance- Mickey Vertino, Mike Cartwright, Gary Loble, Candy Hayes, Chris Hayes, Lynne Hertienne, Ray Reichart, Linda Garwol, Gail Willsky, Dayna Overton Burns, Devin Zimmer, Susan Carpenter, Anne Tarantino, Darren Cotton, Steph Bucale, Ellen Harris Harvey, Dylan Steed, Chief Menza, Oswaldo Mestre

Report from Chief Menza

Reported on issues in the University Heights. On October 12 a woman was robbed and car-jacked by several men with a gun in front of her house on Englewood. Chief Menza indicated that stolen cars were becoming a big problem and to make sure you never leave your car running or keys in your car. Car thieves, even when located, often cannot be apprehended because Buffalo police are not allowed to engage in high speed chase for safety reasons. Another stolen car driven by an 18-year-old with a long criminal history sped away from police at high speed and hit a pedestrian also on Englewood. Police know who this person is and are looking for him. They suspect he is leading the current car-jacking ring.

The Chief reported that the Northrup-Winspear area still has a problem with bottle rockets and parties of 30 to 40 people in several houses in this area. Police are aware of these people harassing local residents and working with the residents and UB to deal with the problem. Houses at 45 Northrup, 58 Northrup and 76 Winspear have been the main location of these activities and problems in the area. Dylan said UB is aware of these issues and that they have been imposing enhanced penalties for off campus parties.

In addition, Chief Menza said E District police now have one of the newly assigned officers who are expected to deal with mental health related calls. The newly assigned officer is Jill Joseph who will go out with officers on calls where indicated.

Report from Mickey Vertino on local covid cases.

There are a number of houses in the University Heights (Students) who are under quarantine for covid. While we don't have information on the location, there is unlikely to be enforcement of quarantine and residents should be very careful of any close contact in the area. Dayna indicated there is an "ap" that you can download on your phone that will tell you if you are within 6 feet of someone who is covid positive for more than 5 minutes. Mike added that the ap is on "google play". It will not give you names or phone numbers but could alert you that the person is within 6 feet.

David Heraty from University Heights Historic Block Clubs is trying to compile and coordinate communication of the districts needs by linking with block clubs in the University District we need to connect him with local block clubs and let him know our issues, such as tree work, need for clean sweeps, pot holes or whatever issues your block faces.

Report from Oswaldo Mestre.

Oswaldo is continuing to work with Block Clubs in the District and is continuing the Friday 12 noon zoom phone calls. The city is continuing to do clean sweeps in the University District and elsewhere. They are

somewhat altered to provide safe interaction given the current pandemic but provide information and assistance to local residents as well as neighborhood cleanup.

He informed us that the Mayor had vetoed the Council's proposed change of the school zone speed limitations to during drop off and pick up times because the mayor believes there are children arriving and leaving and using neighborhood streets for school activities at other times and that the safety of our children is too important. He encouraged local residents to communicate their opinions on the issue to their council person. He indicated that this is not a financial "money grab" by the city and that many fines and fees have been reduced because of the pandemic even though the city is struggling financially.

Other Issues

Dylan indicated that UB has been imposing the enhanced sanctions that the SUNY system enacted to help curb infections among students from parties off campus.

Announcement- is that absentee ballot information is available on the Ourheights.org web site. Absentee ballots cannot be counted until 16 days after the election, but can be mailed or dropped off at any voting site. Early voting begins October 24, Gloria Parks is an early voting site. Times can be found on line.

Submitted by Susan Carpenter