

University Height Collaborative General Meeting Minutes Via Zoom

September 7, 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, Erricka Willard, Susan Carpenter, Oswaldo Mestre, Chief Menza, Tess Morrissey, Anne Tarantino, Pam Landel, Jim Rozanski, Darren Cotton, Marie Moy, Allen Gaerert, Linda Young, Sharon Green, Steph Bucale, Molly Poremski, Brandy Loveland

Report from Tess Morrissey, UB Community relations

Tess reported on Covid 19 cases in the University population. The current status is available on-line updated every day. The most current cases in the community are among off campus students (100). The rule is if there are 100 cases on campus the school shuts down in person classes and everything goes remote for 2 weeks.

Report from Chief Menza

The Chief reported that the party situation in the Heights has been much better than in past years from the nuisance party perspective but there have been problem parties from a public health perspective that the police have had to break up.

Pam Landel asked Chief Menza about a party at 99 Englewood. He reported that they had responded to the party and told them to be quiet and when they didn't respond a second time and broke up the party. Tess Morrissey indicated she had 2 reports about that party and asked the community to notify her of parties that appear to pose a health risk even if they don't rise to the level of warranting a 911 call. Her email is Tessmorr@buffalo.edu

Oswaldo Mestre who lives in the Hamlin Park neighborhood near several houses of Canisius College students where parties have been a problem and E District has been very responsive in shutting down those parties as well. They have had to come back several times and he has been very thankful for their prompt and effective response.

Both Oswaldo and Tess note that both UB and the City have found PBD to be very helpful and responsive in dealing with student parties. The community is encouraged to call 311 for less serious issues or to call 911 when a police response is needed and to email Tess Morrissey when incidents involve students. Calls are logged in and resolution is tracked so its important for the City to have a record of issues and their resolution.

Oswaldo noted in addition that the student party health issues are a big concern for the city. If infection rates go up the city could face having to shut some businesses again and many are struggling to survive and could not survive another shut down.

Report from Mickey Vertino on the Hertel Ave protests.

Peaceful protests of Black Lives Matter were met with hostility and heckling from some patrons of MT Pockets bar one of whom met protestors with a knife in his hand. BLM protestors initially expressed concern that the police did not respond to the man with a weapon, but they did follow up later and

arrest him. The next night the BLM protestors returned and the bar owner had organized some of his patrons to confront the protestors and yell racial slurs. A fairly heated discussion followed between that group and some of the protestors who reached some resolution and are scheduled to attend a restorative justice circle at the Cantilician Center lawn to continue the discussion. \

Other Issues

Porch Pirates- Lynne Hertienne reported there was a guy going up on porches and taking stuff and string it in a vacant house on Northrup. She thinks police arrested him. Menza said he knows there was some guy arrested about a lawnmower.

The City has safe-cam program. If you have a camera showing what's going on outside your house you can register it with the city and they will ask to check it if there is a problem in your neighborhood. Register is at Buffalo Safe Cam on line.

There has been a problem with food deliveries this fall. Food that was ordered from a restaurant is just left on the door step and often it seems to be at the wrong house and there is no way to track where it should be. Anne Tarrantino said she knows some of the companies that control distribution locally and she would be happy to see if it can be resolved.

New Board of Block Clubs-The Board of Block Clubs reminds all Block Clubs to register. Block Clubs are supposed to reregister every 3 years. There will be a registration on line and the city will help the Board organize the web site so clubs can register on line. The City would like to help Block Clubs hold meeting remotely and allow various city officials to "attend" remotely to answer questions and respond to issues.

Linda Young announced that the plant and seed exchange cancelled this spring will take place this fall. The exchange will be at the University church parking lot on September 26 from 10 to 2.

Submitted by Susan Carpenter