

LINDEN HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting, September 1, 2020

LHiNC Board Members present: Adam Beck, Ed Bell, Steve Birch, Leah Fish, Peter Gilbert, Judy Hornbacher, Barbara Lunde, Elizabeth McDonald, Bjorn Olson, Linda Picone, and Wendy Ponte

LHiNC Board Members not present: Robert Haider, Tom Harlan, Lauren Linderman, and Abdi Sahal

Executive Director: Becky Allen

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The September agenda and August minutes were approved.

N2020 Focus and Funding Letter - Steve Birch

Several neighborhoods (Whittier, Fowell, Elliot Park and NENA) worked together to draft a letter asking the city to increase the budget for neighborhoods by \$3M, allowing the proposed Neighborhoods 2020 Guidelines proposed by CURA to stand but provide neighborhoods with a \$20K base. So far, it's been signed by Armatage, Elliot Park and Loring Park. Whittier, Longfellow, Standish-Ericsson, Corcoran, Powderhorn, Fowell, and NENA will also be taking it to their boards for approval. They are asking LHiNC, along with all Southwest neighborhood organizations, to sign on. The deadline to add LHiNC's name is September 12.

Board member Linda Picone noted that the letter made nice arguments about why neighborhoods are good places to address equity and justice and asking for the same amount of money. She also asked if there was a downside to signing it. Steve Birch said the only contextual downside would be that the city probably couldn't afford it. Elizabeth McDonald made a motion to have LHiNC sign the letter. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Financial Report - Steve Birch/Becky Allen

Treasurer's Report – Steve Birch

LHiNC finished last month with \$58,580 in checking and almost \$41K in savings. This is consistent with where LHiNC has been moneywise at this time of year. Steve Birch said that the board will revisit the budget, after the city makes its decision about Neighborhoods 2020.

NRP Update - Becky Allen

This summer, the board approved \$130K in NRP housing funds for PROPEL's affordable housing working capital program, which provides loans to nonprofit housing developers to develop affordable housing in the city. That contract has been finalized and signed by PROPEL, LHiNC and the city. Also this summer, LHiNC approved \$12.5K for Lake Street Council and \$12.5K for WBC and Northside Funders to support businesses on Lake Street and on the Northside following the unrest after George Floyd's murder. That funding has been approved by the city and delivered to the organizations noted above.

October Elections and Annual Meeting - Elizabeth McDonald and Steve Birch

LHiNC's Annual Meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday, October 6 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Board elections will be held online, beginning during the meeting and lasting till October 20. Below is the proposed agenda:

- State of LHiNC
 - o Accomplishments
 - o Current financial situation
 - o Goals for the year
 - o Upcoming events
- Treasures of Linden Hills
- Board Candidate Statements & Election Timeline

Board members who are up re-election:

Elected 2018

Adam Beck

Peter Gilbert (on Jane)

Robert Haider

Thomas Harlan

Judy Hornbacher (ran 10/2018; brought on 12/2018)

Elizabeth McDonald

Wendy Ponte

Abdi Sahal

Please contact Becky to let us know if you are going to run for another term.

Jess Birken, the lawyer provided to us by the city, has drafted a resolution that allows neighborhood organizations to move meetings and events online, in case of potential conflict with by-laws. We would like to consider this resolution before the annual meeting. The motion had been provided to all board members prior to the meeting for their full review.

After discussion, Board Member Wendy Ponte made a motion to approve the resolution; it was seconded and passed unanimously.

Community Forum on Policing - Steve Birch

The Events Committee is planning a Community Forum on Policing to be held in the new year. Meetings have brought together board members and people from the neighborhood. The committee wants to present a panel of people with diverse views to discuss the different sides of the issue. Questions they plan to ask panelists– what is your vision? What are the impediments to your position? What inhibits the change? Where would you go from here? The committee plans to meet again after Labor Day.

Committee Reports

Community Engagement – Wendy Ponte/Peter Gilbert

- The committee will meet with two Linden Hills residents, Carla Manzoni and John Benda - about their proposed project: Community-building Conversations on Empathy and Allyship. The committee also wants to spend time focusing on what LHiNC's goals should be in this area.
- Update on Immigrant and Refugee Speaker Series – The first talk featured Michelle Rivero, the Director of the Minneapolis Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs. The event had 12 participants and has thus far had 36 views on YouTube. The next talk in the series will be on September 17 featuring Veena Iyer, the Executive Director of the Immigrant Law Center of MN. Please join us, important for the board to show our faces.
- Postcard - Becky is designing a postcard to be sent to the entire neighborhood to publicize the annual meeting and to ask people to subscribe to the e-news, since we are no longer providing the printed newsletter.
- E-news policy discussion - The committee has reviewed and revised LHiNC's E-news Policy and guidelines. Thank you to Linda Picone, who wrote the guidelines base on conversation in past meetings.
- Upcoming projects - We will be working with Metro Transit as they begin collecting feedback on their new E-line bus routes and stations. We will also partner with MPRB to publicize a survey on a playground re-design at Linden Hills Park.

Zoning and Housing - Bjorn Olson

The Zoning and Housing Committee - Bjorn Olson, Judy Hornbacher and Gerry Albanese - met last month. Three variance requests came through:

1. Linden Hills Dentistry presented a non-conforming sign request. The business is removing a billboard and replacing it with a stone sign to indicate “patient only parking”.
2. A property owner on Chowen requested variances to build a new garage.
3. A property owner on Abbott Ave requested a subdivision. It’s a single level on a double-wide lot; the owner is requesting to split the lot in half and replace with two single family homes.

The committee voted to support all requests. Their next meeting will be September 14.

Environmental and Sustainability Committee - Leah Fish

The committee is planning two events this fall: 1) Invasive Species Pull in William Berry Woods led by Connie Pepin, and 2) a Youth Workshop at the LHiNC Healthy Soil Plot on the Trolley Path led by Ginny Halloran – in person, with masks and social distancing; to be held on a Saturday, potentially October 17.

The board discussed legal coverage for in-person events. Since the Invasive Species Pull is a park event, everyone signed a waiver. It was decided that Becky Allen will check with the city-provided attorney Jess Birken about COVID preparedness for in-person events (do we need waivers, etc).