

Hudson/Park Neighborhood Association
Minutes of January 19, 2011 Meeting 7PM
Held at: Israel AME Church – 381 Hamilton Street, Albany, New York

Officers

President: Ellen Picotte
Vice President: Elizabeth Griffin
Treasurer: Richard Brash
Secretary: Sherron Winkler

Members Present: Ellen Picotte, Rich Brash, Rich Nagengast, PK Miller, Jo Anne Dolan, Richard Conti, Dennis Bagley, John Pirrin, Steve Goodman, Alan Lanier-AFD, Kevin Reedy – APD, Tracy Condon – APD, Matt Montesano - APD, Alex Lord, Mac Mowbray, Lina Ruff, Terri Silverman, Steve Silverman, Kathy Bilos, Todd Nelson, Chris Higgins, Laura Castelli, Chris Higgins, Claude Graener, Doug Ponisi, Sherron Winkler

Introductions:

Ellen Picotte introduced the police officers who will be walking our neighborhood as part of the new initiative from the Albany Police Department. Kevin Reedy will have the 10am – 6pm shift and Tracy Condon will be working the 4pm – 12am shift.

Secretary's Report – Ellen Picotte distributed the minutes from the December 15, 2010 meeting. Motion to accept by Steve Silverman, seconded by Rich Nagengast, all in favor, accepted.

Upcoming Events :

Mac Mowbray discussed the HPNA Neighborhood brunch (a free event) that will be held on Sunday, January 30th at the Senior Services Center in the lower level of the center (entrance on Morris Street) from 10 - 2pm. There was a sign up sheet sent around to volunteer to assist with set up/clean up and/or make a food contribution to the event. Matt Montesano from the Albany Police Department discussed the possibility of issuing safe child ID cards during the event. He will look into it.

Announcements:

- The Neighborhood Resources Center is looking for nominations for their 2011 Community Service Award
- SUNY Albany has invited representatives from various local areas to attend a meeting at the University on Thursday January 20 to discuss cultural aspects our community. Ellen Picotte and Rich Brash will be attending and will report back.
- The Lark Street BID office will be holding a focus group regarding safety in the neighborhood tentatively scheduled for January 31. Ellen Picotte and Sherron Winkler will be attending and will report back.

General Discussions:

- The issue of allowing residents within the city limits to have chickens on their property was discussed. It is the discussion point at the city level at this stage. It was decided to invite the people who are spearheading the movement, to our February 17 meeting to discuss.
- There was a discussion of the rumor regarding a change in bar closing times in the County of Albany. Mayor Jennings has just had informal discussions with bar owners regarding a voluntarily at 2:00am closing. A decision was made to discuss this issue further at our next meeting as things develop.

Speaker: Dennis Bagley re: parking on his properties on Jefferson and Elms Streets

- He attended the meeting to address the concerns about people using his land on Jefferson and Elm street as illegal parking lots. He is not renting spots and does not want people parking there.
- He has been in contact with the Albany Police Department (APD) regarding the issue. On the advice of the APD he has now roped off, (as best he can, given the frozen ground) his property and has added no trespassing signs to the area. If people park there now they will be able to be cited (if they are seen) and possibly towed. Residents in the neighborhood were asked to keep an eye out and let him know if there are any continued problems.

Albany Police Department Introductions:

- Kevin Reedy (kreedy@albany-ny.org) and Tracy Condon (tcondon@albany-ny.org) introduced themselves as our new beat cops that will be permanently placed in our neighborhood – walking the area from Washington to Park Avenue and Lark to Swan Street. The best way to contact them currently is via e-mail. It is expected that they will be given police issued cell phones in the future.

Albany Police Department Report:

Matt Montesano:

- There have been a couple of robberies and burglaries in the area along with multiple car break-ins in the month of January. The person responsible for the robbery was arrested.
- Crime statistics for the year are down, we are in the first month of the new report..
- Update on Lights in the Park – all special nights benefiting charities including the PAL toy/helmet drive and the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society were very successful
- The City has updated their neighborhood watch signs – he had one with him at the meeting. If the neighborhood is interested in starting one let him know.
- The APD has started an anonymous text tip line: **847411 (Tip411)**.
- The new appearance tickets have arrived, they are just waiting for the sign off from Chief Krokoff – the tickets will expedite the process of ticketing violators (examples include trespass, open container, public urination etc...)

Emergency Services Report:

Alvin Lanier:

- The Albany Fire Department application is due January 26, 2011.
- 419 Madison (which is actually 421 Madison on tax maps) - was cited for overgrowth. **Update: they have applied for an extension due to the weather conditions.**
- 300 & 302 Lark Street - 300 has been cited **No update: they are still trying to locate the owner of 302**
- 341 Madison Avenue – has been cited
- 384 Hamilton Street – the repair of the large hole in the sidewalk has now been turned over to the Department of General Services. **No update: still waiting for DGS.**
- He will look into the vacant house at 280 Lark Street.

Due to AFD budget cutbacks this will be the last time he will attend the our meetings monthly. It is unclear what the schedule will be for future attendance – could be every 6 months. In the interim the best way to contact him with issues is via e-mail: lanier@ci.albany.ny.us

City of Albany Common Council Report – Honorable Richard Conti

- Mayor Jennings State of the City address is Thursday, January 20 at 6:30pm, City hall
- Permit parking task force is still working on creating the new system (they are redoing the whole program – not just updating the old). The pilot program is for 2 years but the clock doesn't start ticking until the program starts.
- There are board openings for two important commissions. See the Common Council website for details.
- The Council is working on other various issues including Cable access and a Solid Waste Management Plan.
- Lark Street BID's Public Safety Committee meetings dates may be changed to allow for greater participation.
- State Census numbers will be coming out in February. The results may impact the number of Council Members, County Legislators as well as polling locations.

Albany County Legislative Report – Honorable Chris Higgins

- Has put out his recent newsletter with updates on County initiatives. It can be found on his website.

IZA/HRC Reports:

- Permit for coffee shop at 330 Madison was approved – the façade must be restored.
- A letter was written in opposition to the installation of white vinyl windows for a residence (which is in compliance with city regulations).
- A letter was written in opposition (based on listserv comments and Steering Committee comments) to the special use permit application of the Lark Street Pub (formally Tandoor Palace) to operate as a tavern. Original hearing date was cancelled due to snow, rescheduled for January 26.

Treasurers' Report – Rich Brash: Motion to Accept, passed

House and Garden Tour 2011 – Elizabeth Griffin

- It's a great way to highlight the community and is a wonderful fundraiser for the neighborhood association.
- Looking for volunteers to work on the committee, the day of the event and houses are needed to be toured
- It will be held in late June, exact date to be determined. More information to come.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,
Sherron Winkler, Secretary