

Park Slope Civic Council Committee Reports for February, 2016

Treasurer's Report: Erica Stauffer

As mentioned in last month's meeting, we need to understand our financial outlay for the remaining portion of the FY 2016 as well as understand what our financial commitments will be for FY 2017. Kindly submit your upcoming expense/associated revenue for those expenses for FY 2016 to me - REDACTED by February 15th.

Civic Sweep

House Tour

COT mailing for Self Nominations

Civic News Printing/Mailing

Any other items I am not remembering

Valentines Membership Drive and Scholarships have been submitted.

All Committees - the Excomm and other parties - will need to vote on the budget for the FY 2017 at the March/April meeting - please submit all financial requests to Erica - same email as above and same deadline - I have the Scholarship request already.

House Tour Committee: Candace Woodward and Darryl Cook, Co-Chairs

The 2016 Park Slope House Tour will take place Sunday, May 15, 12 noon to 5:30pm. Poly Prep will once again serve as the Starting Point and four beautiful homes are currently on the Tour. This year, the price of a ticket purchased in advance will be \$25; the price of a ticket purchased on the day of the Tour will be \$30.

Sustainability Committee: Candace Woodward and Cathy Sokil Milnikiewicz, Co-Chairs

Mulchfest was once again a success. A total of 2,546 trees were chipped at the 3rd Street and Park Circle entrances to Prospect Park - more than at any other chipping place in the city. Many thanks to Will Wolff of U-Haul for his loan of a truck and to David at 1-800-Mr. Rubbish and to PSCC members Kedin and Caitlin Kilgore for their efforts in getting trees to the 3rd Street entrance of Prospect Park.

The Spring Civic Sweep will be held on Saturday, April 16. We have invited NY Compost Project and Citibike to host tables. Purity Organic will offer free juices and teas.

Livable Streets Committee: Michael Cairl, Acting Chair

B71 Bus Restoration. We met separately and very positively with the staff of Council Member Laurie Cumbo, from whom we anticipate a formal endorsement very soon, and with the Park Slope Center for Successful Aging. Meetings with Council Members Steve Levin and Robert Cornegy, and with New York City Transit, are being scheduled. Thanks to Council Member Brad Lander's office for facilitating the meeting with Council Member Cumbo's staff.

MoveNY Fair Plan. Lauri Schindler and Michael Cairl will have a conference call with MoveNY staff on February 1 to discuss next steps.

Outreach Committee: Melinda Morris and Sarah Murphy Gersowitz, Co-Chairs

The Outreach Committee met in January and discussed its overall goals for the coming year, which include utilizing social media to increase membership and re-establish sponsorship, and also created the following calendar, which shows the committee's general focus each month:

February: small business "forum", membership drive valentines

March: social media drive, Spring newsletter

April: Spring newsletter mailing (early April)

May: House Tour

June: Food for Thought sponsorship, leadership award, walk-a-thon

July: Food for Thought sponsorship and restaurant outreach

August: Food for Thought restaurant outreach

Forth on Fourth Committee: Grace Freedman and SJ Avery, Co-Chairs

During the past month FOFA members have been very involved in two community projects – review of the Times Plaza design and support of community discussions about the 5th Avenue Key Food development proposal. Activities related to these projects are described below.

Report on Times Plaza Re-Design Meeting

Jan 27, 2016 6:30pm, YMCA Community Room

Following up on promises to DOT, FOFA reps helped publicize the meeting (see local press links below.) The meeting was very well attended with over 50 people in the room, including representatives from FOFA and local community groups, as well many local elected officials (Council Member Lander, Assemblywoman JoAnn Simon, Senator Velmanette Montgomery), and representatives from NYC DOT, Greenland Forest City, the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership and Stantec (a landscape design and construction firm.)

The design presented by DOT and Stantec included seating, planters, and in-ground solar lighting. The plaza construction costs are to be paid for by Greenland Forest City (no cost limits) under a legal agreement; maintenance will be provided by the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership.

However, the Times Plaza redesign was presented in absence of any broader context for safety improvements in that area, much to the disappointment of the crowd. When questioned about safety issues, DOT officials (Keith Bray) said that a comprehensive traffic Safety Plan for the area was under development and should be released “soon”, but was not available for discussion. Additionally, the DOT design presented covered only half of the Plaza space, because the other half is under MTA jurisdiction and the MTA apparently declined to participate in discussions about new design.

The very clear message from the community was “safety first” should be the rule in this area and that it was not possible to comment on the design, much less approve it, without also discussing broader safety improvements. Attendees also stated that it was unacceptable that the MTA refuse to participate in safety design discussions, and requested that elected officials apply pressure to the MTA to be a better community partner. At particular issue is the placement of the bollards which “protect” the station house but functionally reduce the sidewalk and push pedestrians next to the traffic lane.

DOT finished the presentation saying that the feedback from the evening would be brought back to their agency and the development partners. Initially, the next step in the process was for the DOT to incorporate community comments and present the plan to Brooklyn Community Board 2 and then to the NYC Design commission for approval. Given the refusal of community members to approve the landscape architecture design absent a safety plan for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, the next steps

are a bit less clear. In the meantime, Mr. Bray said the current plan would be placed on the DOT website” That link is <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/about/current-projects.shtml#plaza-program>

Meeting promotion links

DNA Info <https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20160126/park-slope/give-your-input-on-redesign-of-dangerous-intersection-near-barclays-center>

Park Slope Stoop <http://parkslopestoop.com/blog/announcements/public-workshop-for-future-development-of-historic-times-plaza-to-be-held-wednesday-january-27/>

Report on activities related to 5th Avenue Key Foods Development Plan

FOFA has participated in the Fifth Avenue Committee (FAC) efforts to form a stakeholder group around the proposed redevelopment of the 5th Avenue Key Food by Avery Hall Investors. The stakeholder group included the Fifth Avenue Committee, Baltic Street Block Association, the Fifth Ave BID, Park Slope North HDFC’s from St. John’s Place, Families United for Racial and Economic Equality, Public Housing residents from Wyckoff Gardens, Warren Street and Gowanus Houses, as well as the Boerum Hill Association, Park Slope Neighbors and local resident Anita Bushel who started the Save the Fifth Avenue Key Food petition and Facebook group. Additionally, representatives from Councilmember Landers office and Craig Hammerman, CB6 District Manager, were involved in stakeholder discussions.

Avery Hall made a presentation about their proposed plan to the stakeholders group, who responded with significant concerns about providing for an affordable and sizable community-oriented supermarket in the development plan, ensuring that the 25% of project rentals projected as affordable be permanent and deeply affordable, and meaningful community input into design and operations.

Avery Hall made no definitive commitment to meeting those concerns, but indicated an eagerness to present their plan to the larger community and welcomed stakeholder assistance in scheduling such a meeting; it will take place at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, February 9th at PS 133 (4th Ave, between Baltic and Butler). Councilmember Levin, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, State Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, and State Senator Velmanette Montgomery have joined Councilmember Lander and other members of the stakeholder group (including “Forth on Fourth – a Committee of the Park slope Civic Council”) as hosts of the meeting.

A flyer about the meeting, and additional information about the history of the site, are attached to this report.

Next FOFA Meeting

Tuesday Feb 9th at 7:45am, Fifth Ave Committee offices.

Topics to include reports on Times Plaza meeting and Key Food development plan, as well as discussion of plans for a repeat of “A River Runs Through It”, and strategies for supporting more cohesive design on Fourth Avenue.

Prospect Park Alliance Community Committee: Candace Woodward, PSCC Representative

At the January meeting, the 78th Precinct reported that 15,000 people attended the New Year's Eve Fireworks in Prospect Park. Scott Schulman of Upsilon Ventures, which manages LeFrak Center, described the training methods used to train guards assigned to LeFrak Center, with an emphasis on service and courteous interaction with many kinds of visitors. Guards are at this facility 24 hours a day. Safety is considered crucial, there is an EMT on hand at all times, as well as a rescue boat for the lake, and a water feature attendant. The Alliance has proposed a \$2 million project to create two new entrances along the Flatbush Avenue perimeter of Prospect Park, and reconstruct a third existing entrance that is in poor condition, the Willink entrance, to make the Park more accessible and inviting. To support this project, go to the Parks Without Borders website. The DOT has partially paved the West Drive. Funds have been received from Brad Lander's participatory budget program to repair the Dongan Oak Monument path.