

Oakcliffe Community Organization
Meeting Minutes– Wednesday, July 14, 2021

Opening

The regular meeting of the Oakcliffe Community Organization was called to order at 7:00 PM on July 14, 2021 by Dave Panasiuk. The meeting was a virtual meeting conducted on Zoom.com. It was recorded.

Present

Dave Panasiuk, Michelle Panasiuk, Elena Zaitsoff, Liz Gray, Geof Becker, Mark Oleniacz, Greg Fisher, Joan Dickerson, Alex Toner, Pam Lupinacci, Joann Cohen, Howard Stevens Jr, Ron Jardini, Eric Williams, Mavis Rainey, Derek Dauphin

Minutes

Minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting were approved. Elena motioned. Michelle 2nd. Unanimous approved.

Guest Speaker

Derek Dauphin – Project Manager for the Neighborhood Plan for Oakland

Continuation of discussion of zoning and local development projects from May meeting.

Mixed use zoning in residential area is concern. Urban design standards, controls, and height limits can be set. Most residential districts have limits but allow for special exceptions.

Plan does not include universities. They have their own master plan yet will have voting power in Neighborhood Plan.

Point system is not yet included.

Goals made by action team members who likely do not understand zoning.

Old Business

- a. OCO as a non-profit
 - 1. non-profit insurance – On hold for fund raising
 - 2. RCO application – In progress
- b. Niagara Parklet
 - 1. sign with new name- No update
 - 2. basketball court paint - No update
 - 3. ribbon cutting ceremony - No update
- c. Residential Permit Parking Survey - closed 4/25
 - Public meeting(s) to be held – none scheduled yet .

- d. Lawn/Ophelia Stormwater Retention Park – No update.
- e. City of Pittsburgh Capital Budget – Lawn Street promenade and cliff –
If you would like to help promote use following link to comment.
<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/2022budgets>

New Business

- a. Oakland Ave – Possibility of permanent closure of the block.
Oakland Ave is only with full street closure. Mavis believes closure may be extended temporarily. Not aware of any permanent closures.

New article referring to closures:

<https://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2021/07/09/pittsburgh-restaurants-outside-seats-street-seating-pandemic-restrictions-COVID-19-mayor-peduto-bars-businesses/stories/202107080143>

- b. 2610 Forbes Ave (Powell House) – city-owned, condemned house –
Could benefit neighborhood by demolishing and including in greenway.
Would be flattest/easiest entrance to greenway. Comments can be made at:
<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/pli-demolition-engagement>

Reports

a. University of Pittsburgh

Hyacinth Place fence – Car hit fence. Will install new fence and landscaping to bring to code.

Clutter for a Cause – July 26, Aug 9th behind Panera - next collection date for useable household items.

Workforce development career counselor – Roland Woods. – working to connect neighbors to jobs at Pitt.

Pitt Concern Connection – Direct concerns to correct departments. Can submit via call, text or email and they will be directed.

Block party Sept 7th Dan Marino Field

Field Day - Sat Aug 7, Dan Marino Field. All invited.

b. Office of the Mayor – Eric Williams

Federal Relief Budget: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/5053>

Website for Condemned Structures:

<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/pli-demolition-engagement>

Childcare Quality Fund: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/5064>

Electronic and Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events:

<https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/5061>

City Grants for Community-Based Violence Prevention and Intervention Initiatives:

<https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/5079>

Neighborhood Initiatives Fund Program:

<https://www.ura.org/pages/neighborhood-initiatives-fund>

Traffic Safety Haiku contest: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/domi/haiku-contest>

Community Youth Sports Programs:

<https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/5056>

City Staff to Return to Downtown Offices:

<https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/5021>

Paving List: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/domi/paving-schedule>

PWSA Interactive Map: <https://www.pgh2o.com/projects-mainten>

c. Rep. Wheatley's Office – Jessica Chau

Office fully opened. Offering unemployment compensation help. Rent rebates.

Aug 21st - 8th annual health and wellness event.

d. Oakland Transportation Management Association – Mavis

Reached out to DOMI for Scobi Scooters to be installed in S Oakland. Now in 4 locations in S Oakland should begin installation end of July.

Overgrown landscaping by parklet.at end of Ophelia- Should be maintained by Forestry Dept for City of Pgh. City has subcontracted work. Liz will follow up.

e. Oakland Planning and Development Corporation - Liz

Planning Community Land Trust houses on Lawn and Hamlet.
OPDC has owned for long time. Wanda to give more details in Oct.

Oakcliffe Community Garden – PWSA will provide water for free once application is put through. Greg has application. Oakcliffe will need to provide liability insurance for garden.

BlitzTalk will be about air quality in the area. Info on events calendar.

f. **Oakwatch** – Wednesday, July 21 at 6 pm via Zoom

g. **Neighborhood Plan for Oakland** - Elena

Suggestion has been made to change zoning in residential part of South Oakland.
Please comment on Draft Goal A2 #3 at

<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/index.php?cID=581>

Isalys/Panera/Zulema site – view workshop “Blvd and Zulema Workshop” results at

<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/oakland/workshops>

Closing Zulema Street is a popular theme; please comment.

Steering committee has couple months off to review.

Elena motions to write to letter in opposition of closing Zulema St. 2nd by Howard.

Ron and Joann Cohen vote against writing opposition letter and are in favor of possible street closure. Rest in favor of writing opposition letter and against possible street closure.

Round Robin Questions/Concerns

Ron – City tax revenues contribute to decisions to open or close roads. Ex. adding height to a building will add revenue for city. Closing Zulema Street will add buildings and revenue. Possibly direct traffic under building to avoid closure?

Howard – Houses backing Zulema. Walnut Capital is preparing to demolish. PITT will then take ownership of property. Currently no plans for development. Will go through community process when time is right. Demo to start in August. Anticipate work to take about 3 weeks. Will not be closing Bates.

Mrs. Cohen - Questioned process by which OPDC was granted conservatorship of Niagara St house and was referred to contact Wanda Wilson at OPDC. A resident expressed concern that CHS residents are entering the property.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, August 11 at 7 pm via Zoom.