

Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association

Zoom Meeting Minutes, December 14, 2022

Facilitator: Dave Petrozzi

Secretary: Nadine Fiedler

Board members present: Nadine Fiedler, John Laursen, Paul Leistner, Brian Mitchell, Dave Petrozzi, Jim Pierce

Other attendees: Nancy Chapin, Franklin HS student Helen Dreasher, Midge Pierce

After introductions, the meeting was announced as a special strategic planning session, since MTNA does not usually meet in December. Paul Leistner presented what other NAs had prioritized in their planning meetings.

HAND: reaffirmed their mission and purpose as a voice for the community.

- Reviewed their past goals, prioritized engaging the entire HAND community—people, organizations, and institutions, and sought ideas for reaching out and engaging their community.

BEAUMONT-WILSHIRE also reaffirmed their mission and purpose.

- Reviewed their topics and activities: neighbors in need, neighborhood clean-ups, NA volunteer days, fun events, family-focused events, block and street parties, Dog Days costume parade, beautification (graffiti etc.), safety, fundraising, micro-grants to the community, and board member social meetups.

Planning Brainstorm for Coming Year

Midge Pierce suggested partnering with schools or their PTAs, and perhaps a scavenger hunt in the park.

Dave Petrozzi said there are many ideas, but asked if we are well organized enough. Our strengths include lack of bureaucracy, with board members free to follow their own interests. We should also address what happens if we lose a board member. Can we deepen our bench and still stay organized and vibrant? We should continue talking about communication strategy: is our outreach working? We should continue social events. We need a broader community policy so we know what we want to do and can prepare.

Paul Leistner said we should assess each year what we can do and what is important out of a bigger list. He thinks we should connect with Franklin HS parents and students: what do students care about? Jim Pierce agreed and asked how we reach out. Helen Dreasher replied that student body presidents can reach the whole school.

Brian Mitchell said that now is not the time to focus on succession planning. He suggests making a long list and picking a few items to prioritize. Dave P. said he's mostly concerned about board attrition because of the tasks we're obligated to do.

Midge thinks we should focus on schools and safety. We need to look at the reservoirs as a strength; the commonality being students, parents, and families who use the park. We don't do enough with the Friends of Mt. Tabor Park. The other communications gap is that we have no one to answer our email: can we have student interns?

John Laursen noted that our board is small right now with a lot of attrition: new people came when they were upset or had an issue, but they then burned out. They did find out that the NA was good for civic engagement and community. We need to figure out how to expand the group of people interested in board membership for continuity and expanded bandwidth, and for

staffing events.

Jim thinks we should talk about communications, focused on building membership and reaching the community at large to create a strong MTNA.

Midge agrees with that, but asked how we can do that: who can do communications? We need a new generation: do we need to re-energize and get the word out to students and parents? It has been frustrating for her to try and reach school administrators to talk about safety and emergency preparedness.

Paul said that NAs are struggling with membership because the NA decides what they want to work on instead of what the community wants. We should build relationships and personal connections and work with the community.

Dave thinks that it would be good to have a speaker on the topic of safety around the schools, since there have been shootings recently. When we have a big audience we can inform people about the NA and how it works. Our processes are scattered right now. We should continue in the roles we have right now, and try to elucidate a framework for communication. One of the top priorities is having someone to maintain the email account. This remark sparked some discussion about how to find someone who could fill the role with suggestions including recruiting someone from FMTP, searching for a social media director by presenting the issue at the next board meeting, and including a blurb in the SE Examiner meeting roundup.

Jim asked if SEUL has funds to help with this, although our communication funds were cut in half. John clarified that our Zoom fees use up the communications budget, and that we need a volunteer because the email account is important. FMTP is also stretched thin now.

Paul replied that we need to map out where our email and website messages are coming from. Trying to recruit a “social media director” may appear like too big a job for many community members to take on; suggested advertising for “someone just to check emails to MTNA” might seem doable to more people.

Dave agreed and said the email checker doesn’t have to reply but can alert the board when an important email needs attention. We need a communications flowchart so we understand what needs to be monitored more actively. He asked if we can try to re-establish contact with SEUL and re-appoint a SEUL liaison.

Jim said this is a very important question and perhaps we should reconnect. A lot will depend on what happens with the restructuring of the city charter and how it will play out.

Midge asked if Warner Pacific students might help with email. Paul replied that he is our liaison to WP, and students are probably not interested in that but a student project might include identification and assessment of our points of contact.

Nancy Chapin, a member of the SEUL board, said that SEUL is working hard to become more acquainted with the community now, and it would be good to have an MTNA liaison who can attend meetings. She agreed with Midge’s suggestion that we can rotate responsibility for attending SEUL meetings and reporting back to MTNA. Paul agreed with the importance of having an MTNA liaison on the SEUL board so that our neighborhood has a voice. Paul and Nancy discussed the problems that previous MTNA liaisons have had with SEUL. John noted that he had attended some SEUL meetings and witnessed disturbing hostility towards NAs, and that the false history of NA racism perpetuated by the OCCL is now embedded in SEUL leadership. Nancy said that the new leadership is changing that view. Midge said that she attended SEUL meetings as a reporter and that she can attend the meetings.

Dave suggested talking about specific speakers for 2023.

- He suggested charter reform as an ongoing topic.
- Midge thinks a speaker on emergency planning and preparedness would be a good idea for the January meeting. Other topics: school safety and transportation safety .
- Paul would like us to reach out to schools and see what they care about, then we can host a forum. Helen said that school safety is an issue for Franklin students. Midge will try to reach out. Paul said we can ask for help on the Mt. Tabor Google group, which contains many parents.
- Dave would like an update on the reservoirs. John said we can do an update in February and discussed the present state of the investigation of the reservoir leakage: we'll want to know as soon as there is a final analysis and allocation of budget money. It's unclear who should be the speaker since commissioners may be reassigned. We will want a representative from the City Council or Water Bureau. A short discussion followed about people who want the reservoirs replaced, but John said there's a binding city resolution to preserve the reservoirs.
- Paul said the new commissioner appointments and responsibilities could set a new direction for the community and civic life office. He has suggestions for future meeting topics such as the history of the neighborhood, how to research the history of your home, and reaching out to Franklin students about school safety.
- Dave mentioned Adopt a Block and stressed the importance of beautifying the neighborhood. This is always popular with the community. He's fascinated with Beaumont-Wilshire's practice of community micro-grants and thinks it's a perfect way to target issues of inequity.
- Jim said he participated in a meeting about community history, where people brought photographs that became an exhibition; home history is a good beginning point.
- Paul suggested a whole session on volunteer opportunities in the neighborhood.