

## **Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association**

Zoom Meeting Minutes, July 20, 2022

Facilitator: Dave Petrozzi

Secretary: Nadine Fiedler

**Board members present:** Nadine Fiedler, John Laursen, Paul Leistner, Brian Mitchell, David Petrozzi, Jim Pierce, Bing Wong

**Other attendees:** Nancy Chapin, Mo Klein, Midge Pierce, Julie Scherr

After introductions, the June meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Bing Wong reported a bank balance of \$5,961.50, including \$70 reimbursement from SEUL for CT-12 filing and SOS 2022 annual report. Liabilities include monthly Zoom fees and a not-yet cleared check to Stephanie Stewart for \$95.92.

### **Announcements and Neighbor Concerns**

Midge Pierce has concerns about fire in Mt. Tabor Park. Paul Leistner asked if there is a plan in case of fire in the park. John Laursen said that we can ask Goldann Salazar, from Comm. Mapps's office, when she attends our meeting in August, which the chief Water Bureau engineer will also attend. Bing Wong said that he sometimes sees firefighters near Reservoir 5; he also has concerns about parked cars blocking the Harrison St. gate, which would delay response time. Midge will reach out and try to schedule someone to address the topic at the September meeting.

Midge is also concerned about a letter to the SE Examiner saying that there should be buildings constructed where the reservoirs are and hopes that isn't a wider sentiment. John Laursen noted the opposition to the reservoirs and said that someone should write a letter in rebuttal. Dave Petrozzi noted a peer-reviewed research study showing the importance of "blue space" such as bodies of water like the reservoirs for positive mental health outcomes in urban environments.

Paul Leistner mentioned an email from Ascension Church about a family shelter they are sponsoring. He would like to follow up, since religious institutions are an important part of our community, and others agreed with that idea.

Bing Wong expressed concerns about rogue concerts in the park, even though the Wednesday night events are no longer taking place.

John Laursen asked if anyone would like to staff an MTNA table at the Mt. Tabor Seventh Day Adventist Church block party on July 31. John and Paul Leistner expressed interest.

### **Potential Speakers for Future MTNA Meetings: Brainstorm**

\* John Laursen wondered if we could get someone to attend from the Fire Bureau or Comm. Rubio's office to talk about parks. Midge Pierce will follow up.

\* Bing Wong said a good topic would be the broken gates at park entrances.

- \* Dave Petrozzi would like an air quality update, which Mo Klein has provided in the past.
- \* Paul Leistner said that we should ask our community what they are interested in, through email and social media, since we have the power to get guest speakers. People are still concerned about public safety, which may be a good focus for a fall meeting.
- \* Mo Klein wants to keep the Fire Bureau on alert and would like MTNA to ask them and the Water Bureau to come to meetings.
- \* Dave Petrozzi thinks a good topic would be an update from [name of organization] regarding the use of building codes to balance city development in a way that respects the historic and unique character of our diverse neighborhoods.
- \* Jim Pierce mentioned the city's charter reform, which will be on the ballot in November. What happens with the governance commission will have a huge impact, and we need to talk about it and its repercussions. Paul suggested a group forum with other NAs on the topic, perhaps at Warner Pacific, presented neutrally with both sides in attendance.
- \* Paul also suggested Urban Forestry as a possible focus: what does it mean to have a big tree on your property? The permit system to cut down trees is convoluted. Paul will investigate the possibility. This provoked a discussion about why Friends of Trees no longer has a tree planting contract with the city, and the importance of the tree canopy.
- \* Paul asked Julie Scherr what interests her as a new neighbor. She would like to know more about the neighborhood history and basics. Paul suggested targeting a meeting around those basics, and Dave suggested an annual new neighbor meet and greet. Paul and Julie will meet to discuss the possibility.

### **Mt. Tabor Reservoirs Follow-Up**

John Laursen provided more information following the visit in June of staff members from Comm. Mapps's office. When we asked Goldann Salazar about the binding resolution passed in 2015 to keep water in the reservoirs, she said it was the work of an earlier City Council. This was a concerning response, since the Water Bureau should not be able to override a binding City Council resolution. At the time of the June meeting, Goldann had not read John's 18-page report about the history of the reservoir controversy, but since then she has and said she appreciates it. John will send that report to other MTNA members.

John attended Comm. Mapps's recent town hall meeting and brought up the topic of the reservoirs. Mapps agreed to meet with a small group of people to talk about the reservoirs and about the Water Bureau being out of compliance. Besides the water issue, another notable area in which the bureau is out of compliance is that they had been charged with creating an interpretive project in the park, and they met for several years with John and others about signs in the park. The Water Bureau's outside consultant on the project removed the neighborhood association from the project. John is concerned about how the sign project is playing out and would like Comm. Mapps to become an ally in this project.

### **Southeast Uplift Report**

Paul Leistner announced that he is resigning his position as MTNA's liaison to SEUL. He is very concerned that SEUL is no longer a collaborative community builder, as was their original mission, and noted that it is now a top-down organization where the board has been sidelined and is not adequately involved in decision-making. He reported that after Jim Pierce, our former MTNA liaison, sent a mistaken email to SEUL's director, she reacted strongly and filed a public record request for the video recording of the June MTNA meeting to see what was said about SEUL. Paul said that SEUL can do great things, but the leadership is not taking responsibility for their own missteps. He hoped he could have a positive effect but believes that his continued service on the SEUL board at this time would not be helpful to the MTNA nor to SEUL.

Julie Scherr asked if there might be an opportunity to create a group of NAs that do something like what SEUL is meant to do. Paul replied that SEUL is funded by the city to play that role, but that people can connect with other groups to partner and bring about positive effects. John Laursen likes the idea of being mutually supportive of other NAs, especially since SEUL changed their bylaws so that they can refuse any NA representative. He noted that we should consider the idea of reaching out to other disaffected NAs to form a consortium or mutual aid society, which would be more welcoming and thoughtful.

Many others thanked Paul for his service SEUL and noted his positive attitude. Paul said that SEUL does great things still, such as grants and trainings, and although they will survive it is not a pleasant atmosphere there right now.

Nancy Chapin agrees with Paul and says it's a great concern right now. She's the SEUL board secretary and hopes she can help make things better. She also reported that the Sustainable SE Community Coalition, S2C2, has been formed.

#### **Friends of Mt. Tabor Park Report**

Bing Wong reported that the Friends will be confirming a liaison to the park's off leash dog area, and discussing what that entails, at their July 25 board meeting. They will report the liaison and alternate to the Montavilla NA.

The Concert in the Park featuring music by Grupo Masato was sponsored by FMTP and took place on July 14.

The next Weed Warrior work party is scheduled for July 30, and the FMTP members potluck picnic will take place September 12.