

Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association
Meeting Minutes for July 20, 2021
Submitted by John Laursen

Board Members Present: Nadine Fiedler, John Laursen, Sharon Nobbe, Nancy Norby, David Petrozzi, Jim Pierce, Stephanie Stewart, Bing Wong

Board Members Absent: Brian Mitchell

Others Present: Heather Parks-Huitron, George Sneath, Midge Pierce, Lisa Kirby, Kiley Yuthas, Jordan Haferbier.

Introductions:

The meeting opened with introductions led by Nadine Fiedler. The minutes from the June 2021 meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report:

We've received two small grants from SEUL, including \$60 to cover Zoom fees, and have just under \$6,000 on hand.

Neighborhood Issues:

Concern was expressed about the potential for City-sited homeless shelters under its "Shelter 2 Housing Continuum" at locations within the neighborhood that would be inappropriate for such use.

One concern was about the possibility of a shelter being placed on the Mt. Tabor Park Long Block, which seems unlikely given that it is part of Mt. Tabor Park, and the City has explicitly excluded park lands from the program. In any case, looking at the City's list online, this possibility could not be verified during the meeting.

A second concern had to do with the possibility of the City siting a shelter at the former YWCA building at SE 60th and Stark, where for a number of years now there has been a slow-moving City plan for permanent low-income housing. It seemed to those in attendance that it would be shortsighted to disrupt an existing plan for long-term low-income housing in favor of short-term use. This site is also close to Mt. Tabor Middle School, which raises security concerns.

A committee was formed – Stephanie, Midge, George, and Heather volunteered – with the purpose of pursuing two tracks: 1) This should not derail the low-income housing already planned; and 2) Given the proximity to the school, the City must take care to monitor sex offenders and other possible risks.

Stephanie moved that the MTNA authorize the committee to write a letter to the appropriate authorities and John seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Another issue was raised, concerning the possibility of fire hazard from what seem to have become regular Wednesday-evening dance parties in Mt. Tabor Park. The event appears to be quite positive, but the number of people in attendance and the dryness of the park landscape suggests that it would be good if, for instance, there were a fire truck on hand during these events. People can go to parkscan.org to report any park incidents.

Guest Speakers:

Kelly and Jordan from Transition Projects provided a presentation on the work of Transition Projects, which works to help homeless people – with a particular focus on homeless veterans – to meet their housing, income, and wellness goals.

RIP:

Midge Pierce reported that there have been some slight improvements to the RIP in terms of increasing the requirements for building affordable housing, but those are still insufficient. Much of the impact of RIP, though, is unclear. Midge recommended that we get someone from BDS come and speak to us at a future MTNA meeting. It was agreed that she will work to make that happen in October.

SEUL:

Jim Pierce gave a report on SE Uplift. Meetings have been suspended until September. There are five new at-large members – not representative of any organization – added to the representatives of neighborhood associations, a business organization, and other organizations that are part of SEUL.

The board of SEUL voted – apparently without a quorum – to split the position of executive director and make it two positions. It is not clear what this will cost or where the funds will come from.

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park:

Bing Wong reported that the annual potluck for Friends members will be Monday, September 13, at 5:30 in Picnic Area A.

The Friends' July board meeting had a guest speaker, Taylor Stewart of the Oregon Remembrance Project (affiliated with the national Equal Justice Initiative), who shared his vision for a permanent piece on Mt. Tabor remembering the City's history of racial injustice. His organization spurred Coos Bay to put up a large plaque memorializing a Black man who was lynched in that city by a white mob in 1902, and he would like to do

something similar in Portland, which was once home to the largest group of KKK members in Oregon. The website is oregonremembrance.com.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 7 PM via Zoom. Please register in advance at this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEpcuGgrjspGddfti13Fhts-nLv1DyixMs3>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

For more information, please visit www.mttaborpdx.org .