



# AHNA



## Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association A Neighborhood NRZ

### AHNA General Meeting (Virtual – Zoom & Phone) Minutes – December 6, 2021

#### Board Members;

Jackie McKinney  
*Chairperson*  
Nancy Rion  
*Secretary*  
Louisa Barton  
*Dugway*  
Janice Castle  
*Treasurer*  
Mayor's Office  
Sarah Adanti  
Georges Annan-Kingsley  
Wayne Benjamin  
Domenic Ciavaro  
Natalia Crispin  
Esther Gonzalez-Torres  
Ken Johnson  
Lynn Johnson  
Marian Leist  
Elender Mathis  
Michelle McFarland  
Jeanine McMahon  
Maxine Nugent  
Paul O'Mara  
Barbara Robbins

#### Executive Director

David MacDonald

**Board Members Present:** Jackie McKinney, Nancy Rion, Sarah Adanti, Paul O'Mara, Wayne Benjamin, Lynn Johnson, Georges Annan-Kingsley, Janine McMahon, Maxine Nugent, Esther Gonzalez-Torres, Ken Johnson, Louisa Barton Duguay, Barbara Robbins

**Board Members Absent:** Marian Leist (excused), Dominic Ciavaro (excused), Natalie Crispin, Kolsie Mathis, Michelle McFarland

**AHNA Staff, City Representatives and Members Present:** David MacDonald, Bernie Michel, Ted Carroll, Jesus Lopez, Andrene Bent-Campbell, Doug Ovia, Grace Yi, Sue Carey, Barbara Carmen, David Corrigan, Barbara Morton, Katherine Anne Simcic, Kiera Steele, Sonsearae Sawyer, Lynn Webber, Cathy Zeiner

**Visitors:** Alexis Dwyer, Debi Martin, Joanna Figueroa, Cydoni Fukami, Nat Gale, Kay Mackey Small, Chion Wolf, Judge Michael Wu

The meeting was called to order by Jackie McKinney at 6:15. Thirty five people introduced themselves on zoom or the phone. Jackie read the AHNA mission and the statement honoring native lands.

**Executive Director's Report:** David reported that The Community Breakfast on Nov 17 was well received. At the event, AHNA honored Jennifer Cassidy and Yvonne Matthews; both women served the neighborhood in many ways and both chaired the AHNA Board. AHNA honored The Hartford who has contributed so much to the neighborhood. David thanked the Village and Immanuel Congregational Church who recently contributed to AHNA's efforts to raise \$30,000. At the breakfast, details of the Strategic Plan were shared. Initial action steps involving composting, identifying blighted properties and work on Farmington Ave have already begun. David shared a new video about Asylum Hill, created in partnership with The Hartford. David also reported that Santa recently visited S. Marshall St bringing over 200 gifts for the children. The event was sponsored by the S. Marshall Coalition.

Financial Report:	balance for Dec 6	\$3,431
	Recent deposits	\$2,298
	Recent expenses	\$3,582

AHNA members were encouraged to make a monetary contribution to AHNA.

**City Update:** Andrene reported a coordinated effort to collect toys that will be available to residents on Dec 18 from 11-2 at City Hall. Leaf collection continues until Dec 12 (details on website). Andrene will follow up on concerns expressed about Sigourney St.

**City Planning Report:** Grace Yi announced there will be a Complete Streets Meeting on Dec 13. The City received 19 applications from Asylum Hill last month.

814 Asylum Ave., Hartford 06105

Fire Department Report: Jesus gave the November report. He urged residents not to leave the stove unattended when cooking. He reminded residents to water their live Christmas trees.

Community Court Report: Judge Wu said the focus of the Court is on quality of life issues involving lower level crimes. He wants to focus on getting to the causes of these crimes and providing services to break the crime cycle. Doug Ovian said that UCONN law students are now involved in helping with the work of the Court.

November Meeting Minutes: approved

#### Committee Reports:

- Quality of Life: Janine announced the next meeting will be Dec 15 at 6 PM. Their goals include reconstituting Friends of Sigourney Park, beginning a monthly cleanup of Asylum Hill, and creating a schedule of events.
- Economic Development: Wayne reported that NINA is proposing to renovate 279 and 285 Farmington Ave as single family homes. Plans for the Comet renovation have been modified and sent to the city for approval. The Chamber of Commerce is working with the City to provide incentives to improve small businesses.
- Communications: Paul reported the committee has been working with The Hartford to create the new video about Asylum Hill.
- Green: Lynn reported the next meeting, focused on the Park Watershed, is Dec 13. At the Harvest Fair on Nov 23, the Mayor recognized Barbara Robbins for her work on composting in Asylum Hill.
- Development and Fundraising: the committee will meet soon and select a new chair.

Presentation on 2022 Open Streets initiative: Nat Gale, Director of Operations in Hartford, announced that on six different Sundays next year, one or two streets will be closed to vehicular traffic from 9-3 to encourage connecting the community outside. The event will highlight small business, public safety and public health. Cultural and recreational programs, music, food and other activities will be planned. The first Open Street will be Farmington Ave from Whitney to Main on May 22. More information is available on [safestreets@hartford.gov](mailto:safestreets@hartford.gov). Some funding may be available.

Election of Officers: Nominees include Jackie McKinney – Chair, Marian Leist and Janine McMahon – Co-Vice Chairs, Louisa Barton Duguay – Treasurer, and Nancy Rion – Secretary. These individuals were unanimously approved to be AHNA's officers for 2022.

Request for Letter of Support: Ken Johnson from NINA described two blighted properties at 279 and 285 Farmington Ave. NINA proposes to renovate these to become desirable owner occupied homes. He requested a letter of support from AHNA. It was unanimously approved.

#### Voices of the Neighborhood:

- A Sigourney resident expressed concern about many trespassers on a neighbor's property. The Police recommended posting a No Trespassing Sign. Putting up a fence would be another option.
- Peter Lewis is the new Director of the Asylum Hill Family Center.
- Wishes for Happy Holidays

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07.