

The Historic Jackson Ward Association

Historic Jackson Ward Association

Special Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2020

Meeting was held on Zoom at the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89813846484?pwd=NUM3YSt0cTh5NE1rYWkzOC9WRzJRdz09>.

Janis Allen called the meeting to order at 6:05. 46 individuals participated remotely. Board members in attendance:

- Janis Allen
- Zach Jesse
- Janet Armstead
- Angela Wilkes
- Donna Alleyne
- Vicki Mollenauer
- Mary Beth Blinn

[Secretary's note: Participating in discussion while fielding answers to the questions posed in chat made minute taking difficult. Moving forward, Zoom meetings will be recorded.]

HJWA Residential Parking Program

The meeting focused exclusively on Jackson Ward's new residential permit parking program which is slated to begin September 1, 2020. Meeting was held in response to requests expressed in the July Community meeting where this issue was also discussed.

Concerns from the neighborhood arose because some were unaware that this issue was one contemplated by HJWA and felt blindsided. This meeting was the first for some in attendance. A few attendees wanted to express lack of support for the program while others, who are signed up and supportive of the program, came to get specific questions answered to begin the application process for decals. Also, there were attendees who wanted to know if their blocks were eligible for the program and if and how they could be included in this initial phase.

Janis began the meeting with comments about the many calls, emails, and text messages she had fielded about the program and thanked everyone for working together in an effort to move forward. She expressed concern for those who felt left out of the process. In order to encourage and increase future participation, Janis addressed HJWA's outreach efforts, i.e. Facebook, Nextdoor, the HJWA website, the HJWA email notifications, community meetings and committee work. Notably, the Community Engagement Committee made efforts to drop off notices on doorsteps for this particular meeting. This proved effective and she thanked the committee and all those who provided input over the past weeks since the city's announcement about HJWA permit parking.

Janis asked Lynne Lancaster and Steve Bergin of DPW, who are responsible for administering the city's Residential Permit Parking Programs, to outline the additional blocks that were added since the city's initial announcement. Lynne announced the following additional blocks:

- 400 Adams, even side
- 100 E. Leigh, even side
- 400 Madison, odd side
- 300 W. Marshall, both sides
- 400 Brook, part of the even side

Note: it was possible to add these blocks so late in the process because they are contiguous to the existing Jackson Ward permit parking program area.

Janis, noting that the HJWA has been trying to institute a parking program since at least 2005, then opened the floor for public comment.

Steele Gamble gave a prepared statement. He commented that the parking program would divide our neighborhood, did not include a significant number of blocks, and would exacerbate parking issues already present in the neighborhood. He noted that he was able to get his block in after the announcement; yet he felt that no good faith outreach efforts were made to solicit community input and believes all JW residents should have the option to purchase parking permits. He stated that he is on a month to month lease that affords him the option of moving. Other renters with longer leases may not have this option.

Janis responded by reiterating that HJWA has been working on this for a while and that the current communications protocols were followed yet accepted responsibility for the expressed shortcomings in neighborhood communication. She reminded that the program can be revised every year and we can work to include additional blocks and amend details as we move forward.

Jovonni Armstead spoke next. She shared similar concerns and noted that she had never seen any notice of any parking program. She also mentioned how quickly the process seemed to have proceeded, along with the undue burden that the \$25 parking pass fee would have on the poorer neighborhood residents.

Zach in response posted the meeting minutes from HJWA's July 2018 Special meeting where voting on some, though not all of the specifics for the parking program, had occurred. Permit parking has been discussed at numerous community meetings over the last 2 years. He highlighted how this process was the culmination of years of work and that significant efforts were made to involve the community in the past on this particular issue and others. He stressed how slow this process has moved by noting that it's taken over two years since this vote to get to implementation.

Christine Fowler reiterated concerns, especially in the ability to pay. She also inquired about whether people can get passes after September 1.

Steve responded that those areas not in the program would have to wait until next year to become a part of it. Program eligible residents may apply for decals throughout the year.

In response to a question, Lynne advised that the application process takes about a week for Richmond to send out decals once requested.

(Note: The ability to pay issue was not specifically addressed and will be explored further.)

Christine asked about the addition of the odd side of Leigh at this junction. Lynne said that there were enough decals, but she would need to hurry to get the requisite signatures.

Marie Cousins asked for clarifications on dates, noting that the application says it is valid from 9/1/20 to 8/31/21, but that the decals say they expire on 7/31/20. Steve responded that it was an internal mistake. The expiration date will be the end of August, regardless of date on decal.

Jim Vigeant asked about additions to the program for next year, specifically whether the streets must be contiguous. Lynne replied that contiguous streets are best because they can be added administratively.

Angela Wilkes recounted how she has lived in Jackson Ward for 15 years and that every year since she's been here there's been an effort to get the parking program in place. She said that HJWA should begin the effort to get input for changes for next year. She specifically requested that people respond to the HJWA not only to comment, but also to volunteer. Lynne advised HJWA to start the conversation about changes people want to see in the permit program parking for September 2021 in February. The ordinance deadline is 90 days from the start of the program, but starting early provides more time for communication and feedback from the city on the issue. The Zoom comments suggested creating a Google Form or publicly accessible page through which people could comment.

Marilyn Campbell sought clarification on days and times of enforcement. She had specific concerns about the Black History Museum, particularly if it had events. Lynne provided the days and times (Mon-Thurs, 7am -10 pm; Fri & Sat, 7 am- midnight). She also noted the BHM is not in the parking district, but in general special events can be exempted if sought from the city.

Marilyn: In the renewal process, can we remove ourselves with signatures from the program?

Lynne: yes.

Alex Strauch recounted a personal story about having to sell his car. He noted that he intended to do so, and that he has a parking spot, but that he wouldn't have had an option if he didn't. He also voiced concern about customer parking for businesses.

Alyssa Holliday asked to consolidate the remaining time to best address concerns. She also opined that at a certain point HJWA can't be expected to hold residents' hands and discussed

personal responsibility for neighborhood involvement. Janis took this opportunity to discuss how HJWA needs more community participation and again encouraged people to join the association, attend meetings, visit the HJWA website, follow HJWA FB page, join Nextdoor and open and read email communications. The general consensus was that HJWA needs to develop a better strategy regarding its community engagement, especially for those in the neighborhood unaware that it exists. The Community Engagement Committee committed to work on this.

In non-parking related business:

- Zach mentioned board openings and the HJWA in general.
- He also noted the Gallery 5 neighborhood cleanup this Saturday.
- Janis highlighted the Art180 mural & parklet and promised to resend the email containing the link to the survey about it. She reminded everyone to respond to survey by 8/31.
- Ron Wesley commented that he liked the Zoom format for meetings.
- Jim reminded people to vote.
- Janis noted that the next meeting is planned for 9/15/20 at 6:00pm. [The current plan is to hold it at the Jackson Center (UNOS conference room), COVID-19 permitting. Otherwise we will use the Zoom format.]

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 7:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Zach Jesse, HJWA Secretary