

# Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Board Meeting

Monday April 12, 2021, 6:30 pm on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84768261679?pwd=dURQczVTcFlzMt5Z3FSch6MkhpZz09>

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**+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)**

Meeting ID: 847 6826 1679

Passcode: 192712

## 2021-2024 Statements

**Mission:** To empower residents of the Belknap neighborhood to identify their interests, support their own well-being, and to facilitate community health and prosperity.

**Vision:** A neighbor driven organization, committed to making a deep impact on the major institutions around us and collectively improving our built environment and our neighbors' quality of life.

**Values:**      **Justice**      **Community**      **Quality of Life or Well-being**      **Accountable**

## Agenda

1. Call to order, introductions, and additions to agenda (5)
2. Financial Results (20)
  - a. Present and Accept 990
  - b. Present and Accept 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financials
3. Approve March Minutes (5)
4. Financial Planning (40)
  - a. Authorize Investment of Linear Park Dollars
  - b. Revise & Approve Capital Plan
  - c. Guide Temporary PILOT Workgroup
  - d. Decide on Accepting Funds from Nonprofitopoly
5. Project Planning (20)
  - a. CDBG Training/Preparation for Justice/Restructure – Decentering Whiteness
  - b. Summer activities
6. Announcements (10)
7. Miscellaneous & Public Comment
8. Adjournment

**2021 Board Meeting Schedule, 2nd MONDAY of each month, 6:30 pm, SAME LOG IN ABOVE**

May 10, 2021

Jun 14, 2021

Jul 12, 2021

Aug 9, 2021

Sep 13, 2021

Oct 11, 2021

Nov 8, 2021

Dec 13, 2021

## Meeting Details

### 1. Call to order, introductions, and additions to agenda (5)

### 2. Financial Results (20)

- a. **Present and Accept 990** – a 990 is a nonprofit organization’s annual informational return to the IRS, just as individuals prepare and submit their taxes. Scott Huebl, an accountant, volunteered to prepare our 990 again this year. We file the EZ form, which lays out our income, expenses, assets and liabilities as well as a number of other statements and supporting details. It is consistent with our year end financials (with the addition of depreciation, a term for charging for the deteriorating value of the building as improvements age; usually this is included in year end, but was not added in the correct sequence). The attached form does list Kara and Loren in their current roles, not last year’s, which Scott says is fine.  
**TO DO: Elianna and Kara will need to meet up for signature on this document.**
- b. **Present and Accept 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financials** – Elianna has streamlined our financial statements to be more in line with the budget presentation in February in terms of categories. She has also cleaned up accounts listed in the balance sheet and “written off” (or more specifically moved to retained earnings) the extra withholding that has accumulated from our various tax liability accounts over the years. Our minisplit loan is also paid off! Overall with the new PILOT funds having arrived, we are in an accumulating phase, and can expect to see significant spending on both PILOT and the Undoing Racism Workshop to reach a loss by the end of the second quarter.

### 3. Approve March Minutes (5) - see below.

### 4. Financial Planning (40)

- a. **Authorize Investment of Linear Park Dollars** – When the gateway at Hastings and Coit was constructed a few years ago, we were the recipient of a \$10,000 gift from Spectrum Health to maintain the Linear Park (primarily pay for irrigation). In order to protect the remaining principal, it is time to engage in proactive financial management. In the absence of a longer, formal Investment Policy, we should establish that our general guidelines for investment are to 1) protect the principal, and 2) make such investments as a reasonable person would consider prudent and useful. CD rates are fairly similar at our two credit unions.

For convenience, it seems reasonable to keep shorter term funds at Bloom, \$1,000 each in 18, 30, 36, and 48 month CDs, keeping \$452.23 in cash for this

summer's expenses.

Then for the longer term, we should set up a Vanguard investment account for the remaining \$5,000. They have an Inflation Protected Bond Fund that has performed well over both the recent past and the long term. It is a low risk choice.

- b. **Revise & Approve Capital Plan** – Rather than hire an inspector, I was advised to have a builder out to give a quote. I have therefore had the exterior stair's hand-rail replaced already within the budgeted amount. I was also approached by a roofing company who provided quotes for a new layer of roofing as well as for a tear off and reapplication (with added insulation as previously recommended by the energy savings program). They noted significant deterioration (it was only patched in one corner during renovation) and said we would need a new roof in 1-2 years. (Quotes available for review if desired.) Therefore I would propose:

**Immediate maintenance:** Replace tenant door and add exterior stair risers. \$1200 from rental proceeds. (Lower quote obtained from local handyman, happy to move to him particularly for risers.)

Investigate and use PACE program if possible; barring that proceed with:

**Mid-term (before winter):** Remove abandoned staircase between floors, re-insulate walls and ceiling with fiberglass batt insulation. The tenant's bathroom could be losing a lot of heat through this unfinished portion of the building. \$1205 from Charitable Gaming Proceeds (reduced utility costs which promotes affordable housing which is in line with our incorporated purpose). (Lower quote obtained from local handyman, can discuss choice if desired.)

**Spring 2022 or 2023** (booking by March 2022 allows use of existing quote): Tear off, Added insulation, and Two ply chip with 20 year warranty: \$10,655. Begin "Raise the Roof" or similar campaign, goal \$2146.75 (minimum; prefer \$7474.25) to combine with remainder of charitable gaming proceeds for 50% down payment, option to finance the remainder if needed. (Reduced amounts are available for shorter warranty [negligible] or building over top [no insulation added but \$4k savings]).

**2023 or 2024+** - Put \$1,000 a year into the Vanguard account for long term use.

- c. **Guide Temporary PILOT Workgroup** – The City has informed us that we actually missed a round of PILOT dollars – we have \$18,074 to request as a catch up. We do have the option of trying to use these dollars as **start up funds for a social enterprise** that will actually make the organization money. We should talk at least briefly about what that might look like; based on the strategic plan to date, it seems that we've ruled out housing (either owning or maintenance) and landscaping. Is there a food justice-oriented revenue generator we want to pursue?

Other items more in line with previous selections would be:

- i. \$2,000? New benches for outside the office (supplement pending LGROW grant for environmentally friendly landscaping for which we were a potential beneficiary, not the actual applicant).
- ii. \$10,000 Finish building out the Lights on Stairs Fund (change to help with design RFP DGRI is working on?)
- iii. ??? Water at the garden
- iv. ??? More wifi units
- v. \$5,000 Test out ten \$500 neighbor-selected projects for expansion in re-structure

Loretta has some points she'd like to make about the garden and cats as well.

We should at least put some "guard rails" on what we're looking for (perhaps identify any questions to be answered), then appoint a workgroup to get more detailed quotes (if needed) and bring a recommendation to the next meeting.

- d. **Decide on Accepting Funds from Nonprofitopoly** – Would we like to accept proceeds from a board game based on Monopoly that features local businesses? Background: <https://grbj.com/news/small-business-startups/animation-creative-producing-nonprofitopoly-board-game>. We would recommend three businesses to go on our area's squares and accept donations that then give people their code to get the game. This item can be delegated to a work group as well.
- e. **Execute CDBG Documents:** We are in the CDBG Pre-Agreement phase (assumed to be allocated the recommended amount) so we have paperwork to complete in preparation for the contract. The Signature Authorization Form includes a resolution which Elianna will read and Dan will sign certifying that Elianna and Kara are the signatories for the organization. There is a second form for Kara to sign.

TO DO: Elianna will need to meet up with Dan and Kara for signatures.

## 5. Project Planning (20)

- a. **CDBG Training/Preparation for Justice/Restructure – Decentering Whiteness** – Since we're not deliberately reviewing the draft strategic plan this month, I wanted to note that I've added a step in the restructuring process based on Robin's recommendation. After Ayanfe teaches us more about Sociocracy in June, we should then book a workshop on Decentering Whiteness from the Center for the Study of White American Culture for our July meeting. This will come out of our next CDBG allocation. For super quick background/reference, I'm going to rely on a Medium article - <https://medium.com/@eec/your-office-has-white-supremacy-culture-d6226ad47a80> - some of what we see in organizations

includes: perfectionism, sense of urgency, defensiveness, worship of the written word, and power hoarding. Sound familiar? This workshop will help get whiteness out of the center and get us ready to build a multiracial community. **I'm looking for support to commit these training funds and book the workshop.**

**b. Summer activities**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Where/When</b>
Spring park clean ups	Elianna & volunteers	April 16/17 – multiple
Dumpster Day	Elianna & neighbors	June 12 – East Leonard
National Night Out: activity baskets for porch picnics?	Elianna & neighbors	August 3 - remote
Summer park clean ups	Elianna & volunteers	July?
Garden @ 762 North	Amy & neighbors	2 <sup>nd</sup> weekend monthly
Highland Park - \$500 gift card?	Terry	As desired
Alley clean ups	Elianna, Kara, volunteers	Weekly except for major events? <b>Set pattern!</b>
Cats	Loretta & volunteers	As desired
Sphere gardens	<b>Identify!</b>	TBD

Elianna should also follow up with the State Land Bank to complete purchase of 762 North; public wifi purchase is in progress.

**6. Announcements (10)**

- Kara and Elianna are planning to launch the development scorecard preparation meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 3 pm this April. We have 3 sessions scheduled and can add as needed.
- Please review/comment/add more measurables and deadlines to the strategic plan – Elianna and Karolyn have drafted options for most items and the Executive Committee will review on Sunday April 25. The current expectation is that we will bring the document to the May board meeting for adoption and creation of the 2021 Work Plan.
- NMF – Restorative Justice –Elianna is talking with Coit Church and the Dispute Resolution Center of West Michigan about a possible Neighborhood Match Fund application that will be due in June. Want to help plan? Let her know!
- Our CDBG funding will be the subject of a public hearing at tomorrow's City Commission meeting at 7pm – see the April mass email for log in information.
- Poll – Elianna will launch a poll for our CDBG reporting about whether you learned something about leadership today.



f.

## 7. Miscellaneous & Public Comment

- a. Neighbor Ana on the 700 block of Lafayette recommends a campaign against littering in the strategic plan.

## Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes Monday, March 8, 2021, Zoom Meeting

**Members Present:** Kara Harrison Gates (President) Robin Benton Loren Sturuss  
Dan Miller (Secretary) Ellie Walborn-Henry (Vice President)  
Ayanfe Jamison Amy Gautraud

**Staff Present:** Elianna Bootzin (Executive Director)

**Guests Present:** Karolyn Grove Bill Hebert (Dev Chair) Chris Swank (GVSU)  
Jean Jilote Joe Modderman (RJM) Chad Fisk (architect)  
David Layman (architect)

1. Kara called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.
2. The Board discussed the Mission and Vision statements that have been proposed by the Strategic Planning meeting. (See Ellie's notes.)
  - a. Ellie summarized the Strategic Planning Committee's work thus far regarding Mission, Vision, Values, and Mandate. She encouraged Board members to respond to the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats).
  - b. Kara summarized the Community Standards that should characterize discussions at strategic planning meetings.
  - c. Elianna summarized the responses to the surveys that were sent to the Belknap neighborhood. Key concerns were housing and crime, secondary varied by audience.

- d. Ellie explained how NOBL programs should be evaluated according to whether they fit with the Mission and whether they raise Revenue that helps sustain the work of NOBL.
- e. Kara asked about using PILOT funds for trash pickup.
- f. Elianna: GVSU has offered to give some money to NOBL because it owns five blocks in the Belknap neighborhood. That has the potential to sustain NOBL programs that do not fit under the CDBG funds. It's a good time to ask if that money can be used for Social Enterprise (revenue generating activity that is designed to benefit the neighborhood in some way). Such a use would help sustain NOBL, especially if NOBL loses its CDBG funds. As long as it is in line with our mission, it suits our non-profit status.
- i. Board members spent ten minutes filling out the Critical Issues survey to identify priorities for the future.
- j. The Board discussed getting "neighborhood partners" such as Spectrum and GVSU more involved in projects that might interest them such as a pedestrian connector from the top of Belknap Lookout to the Grand River area.

3. The Board approved the Minutes of the February 8 meeting.

4. The Board discussed how to fill two vacancies owing to Missy Brown missing two successive meetings without notice and Jon Swets' resignation.

- a. Dan nominated Lois Williams to fill out one of the terms of former Board members.
- b. Elianna: The Executive Board (officers) should vet her and all other nominees to make sure they are eligible to serve.
- c. Robin volunteered to solicit candidates from Creston Plaza as a way of getting more representatives of color on the Board.
- d. Elianna will make sure other outreach is bi-lingual and put up a sign in the window of the NOBL office. We can ask L&L Market to set out a sign as well.

5. Administrative Items.

- Elianna noted that the City or its contractors are supposed to pick up trash in the barrels beside the bus stops that have shelters but we have not been able to verify who does College & Leonard.
- b. Elianna passed out postcards to residents on the 600 block of Coit to introduce Lena Agnew, our contracted Social Worker, who can connect them with community resources. We can follow up in small groups at Creston Plaza if slots remain available.

6. The Board listened to a presentation by Chad Fisk with Hooker DeJong about the project by RJM Properties (Joe Modderman) at the NE corner of Fairbanks and Lafayette.

- a. The project will include approximately 156 units (75% one BR, 12% two BR, and 13% 3 BR) including four "affordable units" which will be guaranteed for fifteen years by a deed restriction. The project will also have between 100 and 130 underground parking spaces and 15 to 30 above ground spaces. It will reserve between 2000 and 5000 square feet of space for retail. Modderman hopes to attract a grocery store along with other businesses that will add value to the neighborhood.
- b. Karolyn: Will the project accept housing choice vouchers? Modderman was not sure.
- c. Kara: Who will manage the development? Modderman: This is a sufficiently large project that RJM will provide the managers, likely two staff people at all times.

e. The Board discussed the concerns of Jean Jilote who sent a letter to the Board and was present. She said that by vacating the alley and dividing the space between her property and the new development, the RJM project would leave her with insufficient access to her garage. Modderman proposed granting the Jilotes a majority of the alley—8 feet total which should give them enough room to drive to their garage without having to drive across their lawn. He also offered to visit the Jilotes at their home to discuss the issue and make sure there would be sufficient space for them to reach their garage.

g. The Board also voted to support the project at Planning Commission with the understanding that the site plan will reflect deeding 8 feet of the alley to the owner of 714 Lafayette to maintain access to their garage. Robin and Ayanfe had already left the meeting. This motion passed 3:2 with the dissent preferring to hear back from the Jilotes regarding their satisfaction with the arrangement prior to issuing a decision.

Respectfully submitted, Daniel Miller, Board Secretary

**Public Safety - [www.crimemapping.com](http://www.crimemapping.com) last 4 weeks (image):**

Of the 43 total sexual assaults in the neighborhood the breakdown by location is as follows:

- [illegible]

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