

2021 Annual Meeting Block Club Reports

Auburn-Lincoln Park

Under the leadership of 2020 Co-Chairs, Kate O'Neil and Jonathan Petrea, the Auburn-Lincoln Park Block Club held 6 meetings – 2 in-person (early in the year) and 4 via zoom (online & by phone) in 2020. The block club's major project was the 1415 Kenilworth proposed 46-unit apartment building (with no designated on-site parking). The membership met with the developers 2-3 times in 2020, participated in several Board of Zoning Appeal (BOZA) meetings regarding this proposed project, collected letters/e-mails in opposition to (and a couple in support of) the project which were shared with Tremont West and BOZA members, conducted a Traffic Study around Lincoln Park and produced the video – "There Will Be Cars" shared on social media and with BOZA. The membership also participated in the annual Holiday Food Drive 2020/2021 and took first place in the Most Food donated category. Our membership was also regularly updated about the resident-led and Tremont-based Clean Garbage Recycling program – with members donating clean aluminum and steel cans along with paper and cardboard recycling. We deeply appreciate the support of Councilman Kerry McCormack and Tremont West staff for our block club – including the Councilman's and Tremont West's opposition to the 1415 Kenilworth project as proposed with no parking (the project was opposed by the majority of our membership). Thanks, Councilman and TWDC!

Duck Island

Duck Island block club was able to meet 6 times through 2020 with Chairman Milton Lorrington leading the way from his computer at home. Building projects were not slowed down in the Duck Island Neighborhood and new projects were brought to the block club every meeting for resident feedback and approval. Continued attendance from local law enforcement helped solidify a strong working relationship with the neighborhood residents. Guest speakers also attended throughout the year including Debbie Smith with CLEANGarbage Recycling. The Duck Island Green Space committee continued to do great things to beautify and engage the neighborhood including getting a Clean & Green Trailer on multiple occasions for neighbors to borrow equipment for landscaping and cleanup. Most importantly, Abbey Park now has a Little Free Library (littlefreelibrary.org)! Elaine Borowski led the charge to get the Little Free Library in the nationwide network and the concept was designed and constructed by Chris Blue and masterfully painted by Karen Weaver to look like the iconic Duck Island Haabs Bakery. DIBC has also established Friends of Abby Park, led by Kim Pinter. They created a survey for the neighborhood seeking feedback on what improvements they'd like to see in the park and received input from nearly 60% of residents in the neighborhood. The committee has engaged Councilman Kerry McCormack and the city's landscape architect to begin a new vision for Abby Park. Wrapping up the year as always, the Duck Island Neighborhood "competed" in the Holiday Food Drive with great participation in donating food items as well as an increase in monetary donations thanks to setting up an online giving platform which made it easier to donate. (Submitted, Philip Major, Chair).

Irishtown Bend

Under the excellent guidance of our Chair, Jenny Rodriguez, the Irishtown Bend Block Club has met virtually four times during 2020. One of our major concerns this year was the details surrounding the construction of the Red Line Greenway and provisions for safety after it opens on May 12th, 2021.

Another was an ongoing traffic issue, - cars driving down Columbus Hill on the wrong side of the street to reach Franklin Road when the bridge is up. One of our members, Shawn Kenney, did a detailed analysis of traffic flow and made suggestions to solve this problem; we have been trying to get the attention of anyone who might help with this. The CPD meets with us on crime issues and the Public Works Department has been very responsive in removing graffiti. Marcy Vander Tuig led our Holiday Food Drive with great success. Muriel Lederman has been elected chair for 2021. She especially thanks Scott Rosenstein for helping with all manner of things, from the mundane to the philosophical and our Councilman Kerry McCormack for pushing buttons on our behalf. (Submitted by Muriel Lederman, Chair).

Metro North

The Metro North Block club was able to meet over Zoom with the assistance of Scott Rosenstein (TWDC). Several new members joined the mtgs. Some members preferred to access via phone call in to attend. In November, the long standing tradition of Good Neighbor Awards continued and were presented to Mary Ann Balog, coordinator of the St. Michael Food Pantry for her ability and commitment to keeping the pantry/hot meal functional throughout the year; to CPD Sgt. P. McLain for his continued presence at mtgs to hear about safety, crime, etc issues in MetroNorth neighborhood, and posthumously to Cornell O'Dell, longtime community activist in the Metro North. MetroNorth participated in the Food Drive and placed in the top 3 under Mary Ann Balog, MN coordinator. Housing issues and concerns throughout the neighborhood (esp. on Homlden Ave) were discussed and brought to the attention of the CPD. There were presentations on GreenRecycling (Debra Smith) and planned NEORSD work (Angela Jones).

North of Literary

North of Literary adapted to the pandemic by moving to online meetings on ZOOM...our last face-to-face was January 21, 2020. We averaged about twenty members a meeting plus we had guests who gave updates and briefings on community issues such as garbage recycling, voter registration, the importance of voting, and the celebration of women's suffrage. We met with representatives of the Water Department regarding ongoing water main replacements throughout Tremont. We appreciated Councilman Kerry McCormack's help with discussing and monitoring the repair and restoration (re-bricking) of West 6th Street. (The work was completed in spring 2021 and the street looks terrific.) Second District Police Community Services Officers gave regular updates and addressed neighborhood concerns, from serious crimes like armed robberies to noise and stop sign violations. Second District has been ever vigilant in increasing surveillance and patrols when necessary. We received updates as the work on the Towpath Trail and the Civil War Park progressed. We gave input regarding the new street configurations and the signage for new traffic patterns as necessitated by the progressing Towpath. We met with various proposed building project developers, primarily for information. We truly missed our summer BBQ, our winter holiday party and our in-person meetings at the Veteran's Post/Bar. We are heartened by the Tremont response to the holiday food drive and delighted and proud of North of Literary's award winning participation. (Submitted Marilyn Dubasak and Martha Lineberger, Co-Secretaries).

South of Jefferson

The South of Jefferson Block Club (SOJBC) met 8 times in 2020. Beginning in June of 2020, meetings were held in person at Lucky Park, incorporating masking and social distancing. A major achievement of 2020 was the installation of the 10 X 20 foot Lucky Park mural, thanks to a Tremont Trek grant received in 2019. The selection committee chose local artist Rachel Usmani to design the mural. Rachel met with the Block Club to get an idea of our vision. The beautiful mural, printed on a windscreen attached to the north fence of Lucky Park, was unveiled at our November meeting. It brightens the corner of Starkweather and Professor and adds to the beauty of the park. SOJBC continued to maintain Lucky Park in 2020. We planted bulbs and plant material, and added mulch in July, using donated funds from BC members and a special donation from the Starkweather Place HOA. SOJBC reviewed plans for several building projects: Tremont Avenue Residences, West 7th Residences, West 6th Residences, Professor Avenue development project, West 5th rehab project. SOJBC participated in the Holiday Food Drive. (Submitted by Debbie Smith, 2020 Co-Chair).

Lincoln Heights

The Lincoln Heights Block Club had major successes in the 2020/2021 year. The membership participated in many community meetings and outreach sessions to contribute to the new "Reaching Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Plan" which was formally approved in early 2020 by the Block Club. TWDC supported the plan followed by the City of Cleveland Planning Commission in August of 2020. The plan will be used as a template for new development projects including the Lincoln Heights Development Fund, which developers will contribute into a fund held at TWDC to assist homeowners in Lincoln Heights to help with funds to repair exterior violations or necessary repairs. We have seen the completion of the Tappan building project, and the start of the Lincoln, Scranton Carriage House, and the Treo projects. New businesses opened over the last year in the Block Club. Leavened Bakery, Earth Angels Holistic, and Taps & Tails. The Cleveland Animal Protective League is working on a major expansion, and we just heard the plans for the Tremont Taphouse to expand in three phases over the next two years. Membership worked in subcommittees to address concerns over the Block Club By-laws. The membership unanimously supported four amendments in October of 2020. We addressed inclusiveness, and created a path for members to vote on key property rights issues without the necessity to attend four meetings a year. We just started up meetings in person on April 19th 2021, but plan on meeting thru October on the Tremont Taphouse patio. Agendas are full of new developments, and expansions. Another accomplishment was just very recent, the Block Club was successful in requesting Riversweep take up both highway overpasses as clean-up sites. On Saturday May 8th Block Club members along with dozens of volunteers from several of the Sustainable Community Associates buildings removed over 150 bags of trash and leaves from under the overpasses. We are hopeful this will now continue annually.

Mentor Castle Clark and Holmden Buhrer Rowley

HBR/MCC saw extended downtime during the initial months of the Covid pandemic with the first return meeting held as a hybrid virtual and in-person meeting outside in September. Meetings then resumed on a normal schedule virtually with renewed interest from block club members primarily regarding safety concerns. Members of both block clubs and the community organized in 2020 for an initial phase of cleaning and painting the W 11th St and Buhrer Ave pedestrian bridges. Summer/Fall 2021 mural plans for the W 11th St Bridge are beginning to form with community and youth volunteers under the guidance from HBR block club chair, Angelica Pozo, and support from both block clubs.

Friends of Clark Field

Work has begun at Clark Field, due to continued support of Kerry McCormack, Tremont West, Jim McKnight and the City of Cleveland and Parks department.

