

Iles Park Neighborhood Association
Neighborhood Minutes September 21, 2020, 6pm
Iles Park
25 attendees



IPNA Elections

- Former President Curt Drew has moved from the neighborhood. Acting President Michelle Coffin called for volunteers, and the membership voted on the following for Board of Directors:
- President Michelle Coffin; Vice President Connie Preston; Treasurer Martin Fruchtl; Secretary Carol Kneidler
- Michelle thanked Curt for his work with the IPNA and presented him with a \$50 gift card.

Derek Harms, Executive Director, Springfield Park District

- Talked about Iles Park restoration project – finalizing contract was delayed to June due to COVID. They have 24 months to complete. Bids will be let in January with construction beginning spring 2021 and 90% done by end of summer, with the project closing out in 2022.
- Property near 9th St has been acquired for conversion to a parking lot and current parking will be milled from 6th St to 9th St.
- City of Springfield will repave Oak from 5th St to the corner at 8th Street and bury some overhead utility lines.
- **Skate Park** - there will be a workshop on Saturday 9/26 at 10am at Erin's Pavilion.
- **Playground** – Park district sought separate \$60-70k grant to extend playground for 2-5 year olds in addition to playground planned for 5-12 year olds. They have 30 days to purchase & take delivery. IPNA voted overwhelmingly to support the expansion plan. Conceptual drawings were provided for both playgrounds.
- **Walking path** – nearly ¾ mile loop. Considering connection to Ash St to direct bike traffic east of pickleball courts and away from playgrounds.
- **Trees** - few existing trees will be impacted. They are trimming trees in the park.
- **Pavilion** – no changes for the pavilion, but security lighting was installed recently.

Patrick Murphy, Captain, Park Police

- Iles park has had more than its fair share of issues. The Park Police work with Springfield Police. They have increased their presence and have been aggressive at banning unacceptable behavior such as fornication, defecation and drug use. They are seeing a lot fewer needles.
- Homeless people living in park can be and have been banned from the park. Others take their place. Problem activity is more difficult to recognize, especially under the fir trees east of the park. Call in when you notice people sleeping in the park or doing other unacceptable behavior. During the day they have the same rights as anyone, but after parks close at 10:30, they can be banned for illegal activity.

Mike Badger, Neighborhood Police Officer

- **Fireworks** were a huge problem this year – all through June and after 4th. They did respond to calls as they were able and issued citations.
- **Shotspotter technology** – mixed reviews. It's not in the Iles Park neighborhood.
- North Grand 30-40 shots fired; all police units responded and will respond to shots fired and be tied up for at least a short period of time.
- **Police numbers are down** and it's going to stay down. No plans to fill police until September of 2021. Was 292 when he started; now 221 and will be down to 201 in the 1st quarter of 2021. Need for federal funds to help with COVID budget issues on police force.

- **Strong neighborhoods** are going to be essential to help – keep eyes open and report suspicious behavior. CALL if unsure. For example, an afternoon burglary 1900 S 5th was foiled by neighbor on 4th across the alley reporting suspicious behavior. Caught and arrested 4 people in the act.
- **1900 block S 4th – chronic loud music** from same house. Citations are issued each time \$225. Call when it happens, and if they turn it back up, CALL AGAIN and AGAIN. You can remain anonymous – ask dispatcher to have the officer contact you by phone. If fines not paid, liens go on house. Photo of the perp has been featured in the officer newsletter.
- Fines for **vehicle noise** can escalate rapidly. If the vehicle is 75' away, it starts at \$275, to \$500 to towing car. Call it in.
- **NPO program** continues, but NPO officers are on the street more and in neighborhoods less and will be less available. Enormous workloads.
- **Midway Liquors** – will be demolished soon. [Kristin says when asbestos is abated.] Having it gone will be a great benefit to IPNA and community. Request owners of nearby properties to cut overgrown trees / bushes nearby to discourage homelessness.
- Curt & Janeen have done a marvelous job with neighborhood watch.

Kristin DiCenso, Alderwoman Ward 6 was not there, but from her notes:

- **Railroad construction impact on property owners:** some residents have retained attorneys, so she can't discuss. [Carol comment: based on the talk at city council recently, sounds like something may happen.]
- **Midway liquors** asbestos was found & currently being abated. Then City will demolish.
- **Hazardous Waste collection** Sat Nov 7, 8am-3pm for all IL residents. Voucher needed.
- **Branch pickup** - no date yet; budget constraints may impact that.
- City services likely to be cut or reduced due to budget shortfall due to COVID affect on revenue.
- Shots-fired incident in Grand Central yesterday 2pm. No one was injured and no evidence was found. [Carol: Neighborhood leaders report large gathering 500 people.] If you are aware of large block parties in advance, inform Kristin or the police.
- The **eviction moratorium has been extended**. If you have a nuisance property in your neighborhood, please call the police every time you have a problem.
- New **LED lights** are going in around the City. I've had several complaints about lights being too bright. If you are having this issue, please contact me.
- This week is pick up for **yard waste**. Please be sure to put your bags out to the curb.
- **COMPLETE YOUR CENSUS!** This is so important for our city and our representation.

Bob Immel

- Rail bridges over 5th & 6th underpassed will both be replaced at the same time late Oct/early Nov. Detours for 1.5 weeks.
- 5th & 6th will be resurfaced in 2021 from Stanford to Myrtle.

Carol Kneedler, Secretary, acting Treasurer

- Current IPNA bank balance is \$2,470.76.
- City council will consider ordinances to change economic development structure within city government. I've asked for clarification from W5 Ald Proctor, but no response.
- Infrastructure funds, TIF funds, RR funds are in separate buckets and doing OK; infrastructure work will continue.

Michelle Coffin, President

- Meetings 2nd Monday of the month; November next meeting?

Respectfully submitted, Carol Kneedler, Secretary