

**Iles Park Neighborhood Association  
Neighborhood Minutes July 1, 2024  
Iles Park Pavilion**



14 attendees

**Jennifer Notariano, Alderwoman Ward 6**

- City of Springfield has new **Cited Property Dashboard**:
  - <https://www.springfield.il.us/> scroll down and click on “Cited Properties”. Displays all properties in the City of Springfield with *current* citations for Environmental Trash, Other Environmental, Housing, and Zoning Complaints, with the % abated.
  - Request for online video training in using the dashboard.
- City Council has a **working group on solutions to Problem Properties**. Ald Gregory is a member. Most pressing issues:
  - Transparency (what is in city code, how problems can be remedied, what we already have.)
  - Identifying what could be helpful but that we don’t currently utilize.
  - Working with landlords, especially those that are out of state/unreachable when there are issues.
- **Problem Properties**
  - Process: citizens report problems, inspector confirms problem, violations are sent to property owner, owner has opportunity to abate with time limit. If time runs out, then property goes to administrative court, then circuit court for fines.
  - Large apartment complexes with absent/remote owners are a problem. Considering adding to city code that out of town owners need to identify a local agent for the city to contact.
  - Olde Towne Apartments: half of buildings are slated for demolition. Need tenants/others to report issues. Michael Horn, Zone Manager indicated squatters and homeless are trashing buildings and fly dumping. Property Manager was terminated before they could talk with them. Scrap companies are accepting scrap that is ripped out of dilapidated buildings; need to work with them. Hard to catch homeless people in the act/working at night.
- City-owned houses near rail underpasses on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets – have received good bids that are expected to be opened soon; city will have a lot of paperwork to complete sales.

**Shawn Gregory, Alderman Ward 2**

- Possible great news for property on S Grand that could lift up the community. Stay tuned for more information.
- **Problem Properties**
  - Working group on Problem Properties is considering how to manage properties with owners who aren’t around, can’t pay, won’t pay. If it’s a good landlord, then nuisance abatement has a chance of succeeding; if a bad landlord, then it’s nearly impossible to put people out of their house these days.
  - Likes the Cited Properties Dashboard: see metrics, gets to things faster. Things are “coming together”.
  - He is working to understand how the city could get to problem properties faster. The city has to have enough people to do their jobs. Homeowners need to do their part and contact him or Jennifer for problems.
- **Closed/restricted roadways**
  - Capitol Ave should be open on 7/3. Alderpeople don’t have input to when roads will be closed.

- Stanford Ave between 11<sup>th</sup> and Fox Bridge – put pressure on them to finish, but not till next year. Homeowners can't get to their properties.
- **Rail project** question – will it be finished by 2025?
  - Missed funding last year. Will be able to apply again in August, with December decision. Madison/Jefferson will be done. Unsure about segments further north. He is confident we will eventually get the money and get it finished.
- **Family Dollar stores** recently closed on 4<sup>th</sup> and on 16th have had pressure to clean up properties. He is paying attention to what happens to those buildings & will stand against liquor stores and other uses contrary to neighborhoods.

#### **Michael Horn, Zone Manager, Public Works**

- Use Report a Problem in the website or call city 217-789-2255 and ask for him. Email [Michael.Horn@Springfield.il.us](mailto:Michael.Horn@Springfield.il.us). If you see a problem, report it. Call on non-emergency number 217-788-8311.
- Cars parked in yards are a violation. He has cited several next to the park.
- Houses with businesses are not allowed (car repair business.)
- Multiple specific properties with problems were discussed.
- Car Wash property purchased to park dump truck on, but zoning issues. Non-paved parking lots are not allowed.

#### **Chief Patrick Murphy, Park District Police**

- **Pop-up parties** – they are working with other city departments to prevent pop-up parties. There have been a few huge ones. One in Iles Park Thursday night 2:15am. Have driven them out of Comer Cox, Southwind; started using Wyndham parking lot & renting rooms at the Wyndham. **Homework:** be aware of what's going on in the park; trust your instincts; report suspicious noise and activities.
- Iles Park – large diseased tree south of pavilion will be cut down.
- Vacant owners should consider posting “**NO TRESSPASSING**” signs and signing a **letter of intent**. This allows police to take action immediately if someone is on property. “... agree to sign charges of trespassing...”
- **Ambulances** are busy because calls are up due to age-related, mental illness, and drug overdose calls.
- **Homework:** check your homes for **working smoke detectors and fire extinguishers** (to allow you to escape.) Residential fires in older neighborhoods can start homes nearby.
- **Homework:** check that your **house number is visible from the street** so helpers can find you in case of emergency. Also consider adding house numbers in the alley – helps when looking for problems/people.
- **Kia and Hundai car thefts** – any car where you have to stick something into the dash is susceptible. Even teenagers will break a window and can start car in minutes. Recommend going to harbor Freight and getting a cheap version of “The Club”; won't stop professional thief, but could stop joyriding teens.

#### **NPO Officers Joe Vose and Joe Bridges – not in attendance**

- Joe Vose 217-558-1291. Joe Bridges 217-843-6694.

#### **Michelle Coffin, President**

- **National Night Out – August 6 in Iles Park 6-8pm**
  - Partnership with Harvard Park/Polly Poskin President
  - Michelle will make door hangers; volunteers to take door-to-door.
  - NPO hasn't confirmed police dogs.
  - Food: 100 hot dogs, chips, water (put dogs in buns for self-service)
  - Michelle will get insurance.
  - Michelle will ask Park District for picnic tables
  - Connie will ask Mosquito Joe for 1 box of frisbees.

- Polly has hired face painter and balloon artist.
- Ask Polly about large banner.
- Carol will get sign stickers and get signs to volunteers.
- Steve will provide and manage the sound system.
- Prizes: cash cards, Malibou Jacks, Level Up, Grab-a-Java.
- **Clean up** possible in September
- No meeting in August; September meeting will be the 9<sup>th</sup> (first Monday is Labor Day).
- 2024 meeting dates are generally 1<sup>st</sup> Mondays at the park pavilion.

**Bob Immel, Historic Sites Commission**

- The commission is presenting classes at Lincoln Library:
- How to research the historic significance of your home
- Bob will present a class on the benefits of “landmark” status.
- Bob will get more information to us.

**City’s Unsafe and Dangerous Buildings map:** <https://arcg.is/1Gz5va> (click on Demo)

Respectfully, Carol Kneeder, IPNA Secretary