

# Minutes from 7/20/11 123<sup>rd</sup> Street Block Association and Community Garden Meeting

## Agenda

- 1) Block Association and Garden Finances
- 2) Special thanks
- 3) Upcoming Events
  - a. Youth Day
  - b. 123<sup>rd</sup> Street Youth Program Scholarship Ceremony
  - c. Theater- Renaissance in the Belly of a Killer Whale
- 4) Garden Projects
- 5) Filling the Block Association VP Position
- 6) Block Association/Garden Steering Committee

## Attendance

Jackie Albano	Omar Davis
Aaron Albano	Dolores Leon
Kendra Sykes	Tracey Stahling
Diane Mellon	Mayer Grashin
Chyann Sapp (Harlem KW Project)	Africa Heiderhoff
Rajesh Jayaraman	Jason Price
Robin Worley	Shirley Reid
Tom Barnard	Lamont Alston
Sebastian Morell	Paul Ferrara
Glenn Richards	
Chef Clarence Van de Mark	
Shari Fine	
Clyde Nisbett	
Madeleine Arthurs	
Michael Lackwood	
Scott Ahlhorn	
Vincent Beeker	
Syderia Chresfield	

- 1) Block Association/Garden Finances
  - a. Current balance: \$1,244.55. We still have outstanding bills for the gate; if there are other invoices, please forward them to Aaron.
    - i. Most of the balance came from membership dues and is a sum total of membership dues from the Garden and Block Association.

- ii. Funds are also accumulated through grant writing and asking for reimbursements for inconveniences from film crews such as Boardwalk Empire. Additionally, donations are crucial.
- b. 34 garden members and 18 Block Association members. We have been seeing an increase in garden activity and everything looks great!

## 2) Special Thanks

- a. We would like to start a new tradition where we acknowledge residents of the Block who go the extra mile in helping in the garden; especially during the most recent heat wave!
- b. Those who were recognized include: Clyde, Hammer, Sebastian, Aaron and Greg.
- c. It was suggested that we continue work on the pathway so walkers and strollers are able to enter and exit more easily.

## 3) Upcoming Events

### a. Youth Day

- i. Will take place on Saturday, August 27, 2011 and has been a tradition for 18 years.
- ii. The street will be closed to cars and residents will be able to cook out (Lamont got a permit from the City that allows for barbequing . He was also able to get a sound permit; music must stop at 9pm).
- iii. Some of the activities include face painting, balloons, horse/pony rides, martial arts, raffles, handing out school supplies and a fashion show; the models will be provided by Mikesha Perry, a student at FIT.
- iv. Volunteers are needed! Please contact Lamont if you are interested in doing so.

### b. Youth Program Scholarship and Award Ceremony

- i. Ceremony will take place in the second week of August and is geared towards kids in the Youth Program who are going to college in the Fall.
- ii. There have been numerous fundraisers throughout the year towards this cause (raffles and bus rides) and the \$500 prize is split between the first year: \$250 during the first semester and \$250 for the second semester. Acts as an incentive for kids to return to school the next semester.

### c. Theater: Renaissance in the Belly of a Killer Whale

- i. Chyann Sapp gave us a brief presentation about the off-broadway show entitled Renaissance in the Belly of a Killer Whale; a show about the past, present and future changes in Harlem told through the narratives of Harlem natives. For more information, please visit <http://www.harlemkwproject.com/>

## 4) Garden Projects

- a. Finishing the Walkway
- b. Keeping track of the produce grown, weighing it and writing down the results. Stems from the program "Farming Concrete" which is a citywide effort to measure and quantity what gardens grow. It is important to share what you grow and to allow others to use that crop if you are out of town. Should we post a sign on the board showing what each box is growing and when the owners of the box will be out of town?

- c. Block/Garden Clean Up coming up in August- Kendra will organize.
- d. Getting compost in the late fall. We are able to get a shipment of mulch directly from an arborist.
- e. Movie Night is looking more and more like a possibility; Greg has a projector that would work well and the Greenthumb does make certain allowances for events taking place after dark.

5) VP elections

- a. Will take place next meeting.
- b. Candidates should be a member in good standing and above all, must have an interest to participate fully!
- c. Let Jackie know about your nominations, which are due one week before the next meeting on August 10<sup>th</sup>.
- d. Duties include assisting the President, helping to write grants, conduct research on various topics, attend city meetings and must have flexible availability.
- e. Because there are so many city meeting, it was suggested that there be alternative people to attend the meetings.

6) Steering Committee

- a. Jackie handed out a draft of the description of the steering committee; who will act as one voting member within the board. We would like to get the committee during the next meeting.
- b. The main purpose of this steering committee is to offer greater roles and responsibility to members of good standing of BOTH the Block Association and the Garden who are not part of the BA Board of Directors or the Garden head contacts. Committee members should be people who are already super active but who would like a bigger role.
- c. The Committee will make decisions that would affect the block.
- d. Steering committee must be made up of an odd number of members, so as to gain a majority vote. There cannot be any abstentions; to make any progress you must be willing to offer your opinion, especially if you feel strongly about an issue. It is your responsibility to the steering committee to make a decision.
- e. Questions raised about the Steering Committee:
  - i. Who decides unruly behaviors that could be grounds for dismissal? The Block Association and Garden by Laws.
  - ii. What if someone just doesn't want to vote? What if the issue is too controversial? Aaron noted that so far, things haven't been that controversial and that members should come into the steering committee knowing you have to make the right decision. The goal of the committee is to be the right answer for the community.
- f. Prospects must be nominated by another member of the Block Association OR Garden but should be members of both to be considered.
- g. An email will be sent out listing eligible members.

- h. Frequency of meetings will be decided by Steering Committee members
  - i. Two year term starts in August, unless they step down. In the event this does happen, the successor's two years will begin as soon as they are voted onto the Steering Committee.
- 7) Announcements
- a. Garden Tour on July 30<sup>th</sup>
  - b. The city is looking for workers to build a bus depot- this opportunity may have already passed.