

SOUTH PLAZA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2019

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

The next general membership meeting of the South Plaza Neighborhood Association will be held **Sunday, OCTOBER 20 at 6:00P.M.** We will meet at restaurant Osteria IL Centro, located at 51st and Main. The restaurant is closed on Sundays so please enter through Minsky's Pizza next door and pass through the interior door on the left. Pizza buffet is \$5 per person and sodas are \$3. Please arrive promptly for the pizza buffet, the meeting agenda will begin at 6:30p.m.

Our Good Neighbor Committee will present Community America Credit Union as the local business "spotlight". Branch Manager Megan Seithel will attend our meeting and tell us about the company and provide a door prize.

We will also have information on the upcoming November 5th election and the KC Streetcar Main Street extension alignment design.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I would like to begin by thanking Assistant City Attorney Dustin Johnson for helping our neighborhood association resolve an erroneous bill for having neighborhood pole banners. After several months of phone calls and more emails than Hillary's personal server, the city attorney's office brought to a close an attempt to erroneously charge SPNA nearly \$1,000 annual attachment fees as opposed to the \$58 annual permit fee. We still have some concerns about the confusion involved, but the fee issue "stands corrected".

SPNA has again submitted grant applications to the Public Improvements Advisory Committee (PIAC) to try to get curb and sidewalk repairs to both East 51st Terrace and West 51st Terrace. It is not known if or when the GoBonds program might implement these needed repairs. We expect GoBonds would fix 51 Street at some point. We also again requested a signaled pedestrian crosswalk on Brookside at 51 Terrace. We are in the process of clarifying the



plan and costs of replacing the concrete steps between Grand and Brookside at 50th Street. The PIAC funds for that are approved, but it appears the Parks Department email quoted a much larger cost than we expected compared to a bid we solicited ourselves and we were not given an opportunity for a followup meeting explaining the details and costs for the plan or the enhancements we requested (bench, railings, etc.). After many emails a miracle occurred and Parks Department Director Teresa Rynard contacted me at 5:45 p.m. on a Friday, giving me hope we will have another clear resolution to an important neighborhood issue.

The modus operandi for dealing with city departments and staff is persistence and clarity with friendly, information-based arguments. At times, it is dependent on pulling the chain high enough up the ladder if those involved are non responsive. It is rewarding and beneficial to the neighborhood when the magic works. The "magic" is an arcane mix of knowledge of the facts, laws or ordinances and tenacity. We need neighborhood leadership that is sharp and on the ball. We've always had great board members, but I especially want to welcome our newest SPNA board members, Sean Tucker and Kelly Hollowell. They give me hope that they will be just as tenacious as the occasion calls for. Please join us for the best pizza and the best neighbors in Kansas City at the meeting on October 20th.

SPNA WEBSITE

Our neighborhood association board is currently working on establishing a website. Our new board member Kelly Hollowell has the

expertise and has volunteered to put it together. It will contain the same basic information as our newsletter. We hope to add photos, a calendar of meetings and post notifications of special events. The URL address is southplazakc.org. It is just bare bones information at this point. Soon our paper newsletters will no longer be hand delivered, so look for South Plaza Neighborhood Association news on our website. If you join our association, be sure to provide your email address.

NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, which has an existing 500 seat film and theater auditorium, has announced they will provide a new home for the Tivoli Cinemas, formerly located in Westport. The Tivoli closed in April, putting an end to the almost 40 year run of an independent theater showing art films, foreign films and documentaries. The new venture will be known as Tivoli at the Nelson-Atkins and Tivoli owner Jerry Harrington will act as the film curator. The Nelson, like other arts organizations, recognize film as an art form. The Nelson is upgrading the existing digital projection system, installing a new film screen and the sound system will be upgraded to include a loop system for the hearing impaired. Showings will include classic films, silent films with live musical accompaniment, live opera and theatrical performances. There will be post-film community discussions after matinee showings as well with special guests when possible to facilitate conversation.

The films will start showings Wednesday, October 23. Films will be shown during daytime matinees on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays. Films will be shown Friday evenings at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each, \$7 for museum members and can be purchased online at nelson-atkins.org or at the box office near the info desk in the Bloch Lobby. The many sponsors who made this possible through the Nelson have the thanks of those of us who attended the Tivoli Cinemas for years and were in mourning for its demise.

The Rozelle Court restaurant in the museum will change Friday evening dinners beginning October 18 to a "Tapas and Tunes" concept, with sharable small plates accompanied by live music, from 5 to 9 p.m.

RECYCLING EVENT

The City of Kansas City, Missouri is holding a "Hard to Recycle" collection event on

Saturday, November 4 from 8 a.m. to noon. The location will be the parking lot of the Manual Career and Technical Center at 1215 E. Truman Road. The center is on the South side of Truman Road, between Troost and Paseo. It is for KCMO residents only. Materials accepted are tires, bulky items, leaf and brush, glass, hazardous waste like paint, appliances with freon, old electronics, computer and TVs. If anyone has cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors or TVs to get rid of, this is an opportunity. Items are free to dispose of EXCEPT cathode ray tubes and freon containing units. Freon units will cost \$10, CRT monitors \$5, CRT TVs \$30-\$50. LED/LCD/plasma TVs will cost \$20. Wood console and true big screen TVs will cost \$50. Call Robert Woods at 816-513-8442 for more information.

If you miss this opportunity, the Midwest Recycling Center at 2000 E. 19th Street takes electronics and appliances. They are certified for freon removal. They say they recycle anything that uses a power cord or batteries. However, they do not accept devices containing mercury, smoke detectors, light bulbs, glass lamps, and fluorescent tubes. They will recycle alkaline batteries and non-alkaline batteries. CRTs require a fee as noted above. Alkaline batteries cost \$1 per pound to recycle. They are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Call 816-479-2949 for more information or go to midwrc.net.

BRUSH AND LEAF

The city's fall brush and leaf curbside collection for our neighborhood will be Friday, December 6. Crews will pick up a total of no more than 20 paper bags of leaves and brush bundles at the curb of each residence. The items must be out by 7 a.m. They will take bundles of branches up to 4 feet long and 2 feet in diameter. Branches have to be no larger than 3 inches in diameter. Bundles should be tied with natural twine, not wire or plastic.

NOVEMBER ELECTION

We will have copies of the sample ballot for the November 5 special election at our October meeting. There are four questions on the ballot asking approval to remove some acres of land from the park system to give over to school districts or to simply remove the land as no longer necessary for park, parkway or boulevard uses. The fifth question is the result of an initiative petition to ask approval to change the name of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard back to The Paseo Boulevard. The change from

Paseo to Dr. MLK Boulevard was enacted by the city council after community meetings and the review of an appointed citizens commission. The citizens commission endorsed three potential sites for honoring Dr. King, either the airport terminal, 63rd Street or Paseo Boulevard. After several months, the city council enacted the change. However, the residents and property owners on the boulevard did not get to vote on the issue and the petitioners cite a city ordinance which requires approval of 75 percent of the property owners for a name change.

STREETCAR

The kcstreetcar.org website has a video simulation of the future streetcar path looking down from above as it proceeds from Union Station to 51st Street. The projected track alignment follows either side of Main Street as one would expect for either northbound or southbound travel. However, as the southbound track passes 45th Street, it swings over to the center of the street. At 47th, the southbound track swings over to the East side of Main to run right next to the northbound track. This puts both tracks on the East side of Brookside in the Trolley Track Trail easement as it terminates in South Plaza. The website notes this is a 30% design concept rendering and subject to change. The Federal Transit Administration found that the proposed streetcar operations would pose minimal disruption to the existing traffic patterns due to the design that allows for mixed traffic operation while maintaining two lanes in each direction. There are several informative documents about the project at the website and it still will depend on a future grant of about 49% federal funding to build.

JULY MEETING RECAP

Committee member Cliff Couty introduced the speaker from our local business/organization "spotlight" Michael Focke, the assistant director of the Veterans Center. Michael Focke is a veteran of the Marine Corps. He was discharged in 2009. The Veterans Centers program was created 40 years ago by a public law on 06/14/1978. It was created as a response to the many Vietnam War Veterans who needed counseling assistance handling the return to normal life after military service and fosters readjustment therapy. After World War II the residual emotional turmoil was referred to as "shell shock". After the Korean conflict it was referred to as "battle fatigue". Now we know it as post traumatic stress disorder

(PTSD). Michael related that the different branches of the military have different cultures and different ways of coping. Readjustment counseling is what the Veterans Centers provide. The Kansas City branch of the Veterans Center was founded on 02/15/1980. The very first Veterans Center was referred to as the Wesley House and was founded by a triple amputee who went on to become a US Senator.

He related that combat veterans, active duty members, reserve or National Guard members can have PTSD resulting from incidents in combat, active service, and training. The Veterans Center is staffed with LCW, LCPC, counselors and family therapists. A military veteran can come to the Vet Center for the rest of their life if they want to. The primary staff at the Vet Center are military veterans. The Vet Center in South Plaza in the 4800 Main Street building is the only one in Kansas City, Missouri. It has eight staff members and it serves a 27 county area. They want to build the sense of community for veterans and do outreach to veterans. Also, they serve the family members of veterans. They are under the Veterans Health Administration. Michael says they want to promote their services but they are not permitted to post a sign on the exterior of the building as yet, so he wants to encourage us to let people know where they are. Their phone number is 816-753-1866.

CENSUS

By April 1, 2020 we will begin getting contacted to respond to the 2020 Census. Federal funding and many other things like local decisions on serving the medical and educational needs of the population are informed by the Federal Census. People can respond to the census by completing it online, by phone or by mail. If you don't respond, a field census worker may pay a visit. If someone visits your home to collect a response for the census, you can verify their identity by checking their badge which has their photograph, a US Department of Commerce watermark and an expiration date. If you still question their identity you can call 800-923-8282 to speak with a local Census Representative. Go to www.census.gov for more information.