

Sunnyside Neighborhood Association (SNA) Safety and Livability Committee Meeting Minutes
3/5/19

Sunnyside Community House (SCH) 6:30-7:30 pm

Minutes taken by D. Boush (SNA Secretary Lorraine Henriques was ill).

Matt Lembo presiding (Other SNA board members attending: David Boush, KC Hoffert, Pat Schweibert).

Approximately 8 others in attendance.

Matt called the meeting to order and asked if there was any business beside consideration of the Good Neighbor Agreement between SNA and the Community House.

A neighbor asked that the group consider 24-hour security for the community house. He read a statement from the online forum Nextdoor posted by a woman who lived in the house adjacent to the SCH also owned by the Methodist Church from 1997-2016. There was discussion regarding whether the post was public and it was agreed that it could be summarized in the notes without attribution or included later with author permission. The gist was that the woman said she and her husband had performed monitoring outside the building, especially after Wednesday meals, until funding was ended in 2016. She "was saddened that conditions are so disgusting and unsafe" now and recommended 24-hour security be conducted by an outside party, especially because services by SCH have been expanded since 2016. Pat verified that the woman had lived in the house and noted that there also had been a security guard 20 years ago who was terminated for breaking into cars.

Neighbors and SNA Board members made the following points during the ensuing discussion:

Guests are camping outside the SCH, on the porch of the adjacent house, and in cars on the street next to SCH.

A parent of a Sunnyside Elementary School (SES) student reported hearing loud sex in a car camped by the SCH while walking children to school, observing people smoking something unrecognized, finding a needle, and having someone lying on the street try to strike her when she offered help. She asked whether people who do not want to come inside are asked to leave the premises. The answer from SCH volunteers was "no."

A teacher offered support for the above statement adding that children have rights along with houseless people.

A neighbor disagreed completely with the perspective taken in the last several Safety and Livability meetings that SCH is enabling a bad situation. Houseless people have desperate needs. These meetings are not useful.

Other responses:

These meetings really are useful to resolve differences of opinion.. It can be tough to listen to different people's opinions objectively.

We should consider how to make people feel safer. Houseless people (peacemakers) have left because of their security concerns.

This is not a suitable place to have a campground.

We should consider Community Patrols. (The April meeting of this Committee 4/2/19 is scheduled to be a Park Watch Training class).

What we are dealing with in the neighborhood is part of a much larger problem with homelessness.

Matt ended the meeting by expressing the hope that we can work on the little problems

Submitted by Dave Boush