

Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition

Board Meeting

7:00 p.m., September 19, 2017

The Children's Institute

1405 Shady Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Attendees

SHUC Board: Michael Henderson, Lois Liberman, Gina Levine, Lisa Murphy, Lisa Steindel, Jim Burnham, Marshall Hershberg, Erika Strassberger, Mary Shaw, Erik Wagner, Lori Fitzgerald, Rich Feder, Mardi Isler, Chris Zurawsky, Rita Botts, Ray Baum, Cindy Morelock

SHUC Staff: Britt Reints, Marian Lien

Guests: Ernest Rajakone, City of Pittsburgh's [Office of Community Affairs](#); Jamie Glasser, Senator Jay Costa's Office; Aviva Fort, Arigl Shrgol, and William McDoodle, Yeshiva Schools; Nadav Gilboa, TedXYouth-BlueSlidePark; Eveline Young; [Helen Wilson Squirrel Hill Historical Society](#)

Minutes

- Meeting was called to order by Rich Feder at 7:00 p.m.
- Acceptance of July 18, 2017 Board meeting minutes: Mardi Isler moved to approve, Mary Shaw seconded; July 2017 minutes approved by unanimous vote.
- **Community Safety:** ~~Anti-Semitic~~ [White Supremist, Neo-Nazi](#) flyers distributed in Squirrel Hill. Letter to [Post-Gazette](#) editor denouncing the behavior and a [pro-](#) message was sent by Rich/Marian. The alleged responsible person has been arrested. [This incident has prompted an examination of our current procedures and by-laws, showing there is no policy in place](#) to address the making of public statements from SHUC regarding matters of community-wide importance that may arise.

Josh Sayles has volunteered to head up an ad hoc committee to draft policy. Marshall Hershberg and Lois Liberman volunteered to assist with drafting the policy.

- **Citizens' Patrol:** Ray Baum moved to dissolve the [committee as is](#) and Gina Levine seconded the motion. The Board voted and all were in favor except Rich Feder, who abstained. Citizens' Patrol has been inactive for 2-3 years. We do not have record of volunteers, anyone patrolling, no reports or documentation from this group and we pay insurance for the Patrol. Commander Hermann will work with us to develop a community safety committee. Marian Lien has been receiving calls at the SHUC office from residents who want to [revive](#) Block Watch. There is a Community Police meeting the 3rd Thursday of each month, and it was suggested that SHUC send a representative to the meeting.
- Nadav Gilboa, a Squirrel Hill resident is organizing a TEDx Youth event. He is requesting SHUC to be the fiscal agent for the fundraising associated with the event. He has already raised \$3K of the \$10K needed. The event is scheduled for November 19th, will last 6 hours, and include 12 TED talks. As of today, three talks have been recorded, and the remaining nine talks will be live. At least 3 presenters will be under the age of 21. The venue of event is not in Squirrel Hill, but it is being heavily marketed to the students at Allderdice HS, Colfax 7th and 8th grades. The owner of the venue "Repair The World"

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is also a Squirrel Hill resident. Nadav lives in Squirrel Hill, his family's business location is in Squirrel Hill, and the concept was developed in Squirrel Hill.

Nadav is seeking funding from several foundations. Budget—primarily for parking passes and food (hiring organizations that are rehabbing ex-cons). All funds raised will be used to run the event, and if there is money remaining, it will be donated to charity. Nadav and his mother will act as the Treasurers. Ray Baum stated that our legal restriction is for activity that benefits Squirrel Hill & the 14th Ward. Nadav claims the event will benefit Squirrel Hill as it is directly marketed to the residents and students of the schools in Squirrel Hill. Marshall Hershberg asked Nadav to submit the rationale for the benefits to Sq Hill to SHUC in writing.

THERE WAS A VOTE AND PASSED TO HAVE SHUC BE THE FISCAL AGENT, HOWEVER I DO NOT HAVE IN MY NOTES WHO MOTIONED AND SECONDED. RICH DO YOU HAVE?? I THINK IT WAS MARSHALL MOVED, BUT WHO SECONDED??

- **Update on SHUC Board member list:**

Steve Hawkins has resigned from the SHUC Board

- SHUC Board member requirements & expectations:

A draft has been started, but is not yet completed

- Election of new Board members:

Ray Baum moved and Mardi Isler seconded to elect the following two new SHUC Board members:

- Dalia Belinkoff
- Eveline Young

A vote was called for each, and both were elected unanimously.

- **Executive Director Annual Performance Review:** Objective evaluations of Marian's performance over the past year were completed by members of the Executive Committee and Marian scored very high. Rich will meet with Marian to review her job performance, job description and expectations for coming year. Marian had not received a pay increase since hire due to fiscal constraints.

Ray Baum motioned to give Marian an 8% raise as recommended by the SHUC Executive Committee. In response to a request, Gina Levine indicated that the SHUC budget has room in the fiscal year to accommodate this increase. Marshall Hershberg seconded the motion. All SHUC Board members voted in favor of the salary increase.

- **Financial Report:** See financial reports for July and August.

We will need a recommendation from the Executive Committee or the Finance Committee re: what to do about the existing funds in the Bach, Beethoven & Brunch account. We prepaid this past summer's tent rental but have not been reimbursed yet for the \$2700 cost from Bagel Factory. Marian will work with Citiparks to resolve.

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- **Commercial Development and Residential Quality, Built Environment:**
Discussion of SHUC position on development proposal for 5800 Forward Ave: Developer Herky Pollock & his team have been given community feedback in a 7/24 public meeting sponsored by SHUC. The SHUC Built Environment Committee held two review meetings with the project team to review the proposal and provide input and suggestions to the design. Many of our concerns and ideas have been incorporated into the revised design, including revisions at the street level to provide more buffer between the sidewalk and the building, use of improved materials at the parking and commercial levels of the building, and use of variegated design of the building in order to provide the image of less bulk for the building. The committee supports the requested variances except for the variance that was requested for truck loading. Michael Henderson motioned that SHUC write a letter of support with conditions; Lisa Murphy seconded the motion. Board Members voted all in favor except Chris Zurawsky who was opposed.

Lori Fitzgerald will write a letter of support on behalf of SHUC for the development setback and FAR variances but recommend no support of on-street parking condition. Our support will also be contingent on the specific design presented to the SHUC committee. Zoning Board hearing is Sept 28th. The Zoning Board of Adjustments can make a determination with/without SHUC recommendations or support but it does typically incorporate input from SHUC.

- **Bus Rapid Transit:** Originally the buses were to be electric, but now the plan is for primarily diesel-fueled buses, which may be not as desirable as electric buses. SHUC will seek public input before sending another letter. There are also questions to be answered about the transfers/fares/costs.
- **O'Connor's Corner Project:** \$150K CITF Grant received, but not enough to fund rest of total \$225K. Mardi Isler is working with Dan Frankel's office to help with a \$70K state grant. Need support for extra accounting and administrative functions. Went to PNC to ask for a bridge loan, which is possible because of the grant letters stating that the funding is coming. The plan is to keep raising funds.

Additional progress reported by Mardi Isler

- 14 new street trees requests via Tree Vitalize
- Trees for Beacon and Forbes
- Caton, Lilac, Saline have no trees – now 8 requests
- Renovation at Beacon & Murray by John Katz: New trees are being planted by the bank and the shrubs & stumps near the public parking lot are being removed and will be replaced by trees. Also installing concrete chess tables and stools.
- 10 more Squirrel bike racks have been purchased by John Katz. The Pedestrian-Bicycle Committee will decide where to put the bike rack loops that are removed when squirrel racks are installed. I believe Mardi said these were already being

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installed in spaces on her list?? I think the discussion was that P-B committee would discuss further with Mardi and show her their list. Squirrels are going in on Forbes and Murray. There have been requests to put bike racks in at the Northumberland Plaza, so some loops will be installed in that location.

- **Planning for Nov. 16 Public Meeting/Open House:** This would be the “annual meeting” called for in SHUC by-laws. A possible breakdown of the schedule might be: Public meeting – 60 minutes; at the JCC we would like to invite some interesting speakers; 20-30 minutes for speakers, 20-30 minutes for Q&A, then 30-40 minutes of Open House format including committee tables showcasing SHUC projects and initiatives.
 - Speakers: Suggestion: Rebecca Flora is hired her firm to establish this process. New process in city that any request for development projects – gives a quantitative view.
 - Chris: suggests pedestrian safety, crosswalks, etc a city official to provide some information & explanations.
 - Erika: Invite Amanda Broadwater as presenter so that she can talk more specifically in addition to the City's director of the new Department of Mobility and Infrastructure, Karina Ricks.
 - [Mary Shaw, Chris Zurwasky, Marshall Hershberg and Lisa Steindel volunteered with Rich and Marian to develop and organize the 11/16 meeting.](#)
- **Need for blinking lights at intersection for Yeshiva Schools** – This need was presented by a community member, William McDoodle. Mr. McDoodle was directed to attend the next Pedestrian-Bicycle Committee meeting for discussion of this issue.
- **Pedestrian-Bicycle Committee:**
Attempts to connect SHUC w/ Hazelwood initiative – met with Pedestrian –Bicycle and Greenfield Community representative; this was a successful connection.
[Next meeting on October 19 at 6:30pm](#)
- **Development Committee/Events (Treasure Dinner, Night Market):**
Treasure Dinner: November 2. Doing very well in sponsorships \$34K so far – better than last year. Maria Caruso dancers will perform and sell raffle tickets prior to dinner that evening. We will not have Mr McFeely this year. We will reevaluate the menu and possibly make changes if the budget allows. All Board members are asked to sell tickets on their own as well as sell at the Manor Theatre and the Farmer's Market. Board members are also asked to contribute wine for the wine basket(s). It would be great to have enough wine for 2-3 baskets (24-36 bottles needed).
- **Natural Environment**
 - Traffic study around Prospect Drive – good effort, lengthy.

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- Parks Conservancy is proposing expansion of Schenley Park with retention ponds (make it nice like 9 mile run).
- Bob O'Connor Golf Course building meeting – no designs have been completed as yet (under way) – fundraising is being planned.
- **Magazine Report:** See Editor report attachment to the minutes below.
- **Executive Director's Report:** See ED report attachment to the minutes below. Helped Minedeo write a \$7,500 mini-grant to Vibrant Pittsburgh for funding a Enrichment for Student Success program, of which \$1K is asked for admin assistance and coordination of volunteer efforts by SHUC.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm

SHUC Committee Chairs' and Executive Director Updates for September 19, 2017:

*Gateway Committee September Report
Submitted by Chair Martha Isler*

O'Connor's Corner

As reported a CITF grant of \$150,000 was awarded to SHUC in July which accounts for about 2/3 of the projected cost of completing O'Connor's Corner. This was accomplished with the help of Senator Costa and DTI Development, Inc.

A meeting was held with representative Frankel and his Chief of Staff Ryan Morden to discuss securing the balance of funding necessary. After consultation with Harrisburg, it was recommended that SHUC apply for a Greenways grant, applications are open in February. (SHUC Board has already approved submission of an application to this source.)

Even with both funding sources above there will be a gap for covering SHUC administrative and accounting costs associated with the fiduciary responsibility. Therefore, a letter of inquiry was submitted to Colcom Foundation to determine if an application for funding could be submitted.

Since CITF is reimbursement based, a meeting was held with the manager of PNC Bank to determine if a line of credit could be secured based on the grant award. The response was positive, a formal application will be submitted when all funding is secured and the project is ready to break ground.

Gateway Trees

With the help of Tree Pittsburgh, an intern actually walked some key streets adjacent to the business corridor to secure signed Tree Request Forms. On September 15th an application

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was submitted to TreeVitalize for trees on Forbes and Beacon. In addition, SHUC identified residential streets that are in need of greening. Therefore, trees on Saline, Lilac and Caton are also included in the request for a spring 2018 planting.

Extension of Beacon and Murray Katz Parklet Project

In conjunction with the corner parklet construction, SHUC is working with the Pittsburgh Parking Authority and to remove the rather tired shrubs on the two islands at the Beacon entrance of the Parking lot (used for Farmer's Market.) A large shade tree will be planted on the island closest to the Katz Parklet, and three smaller decorative trees, possibly dogwoods, will be planted on the island on the other side.

Parks and Open Space Committee

Submitted by Chris Zurawsky

August 7 – Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Four Mile Run green infrastructure plan conference call. SHUC was represented on the call by Chris, Marian Lien and Rich Feder.

August 12 – Prospect Drive, Schenley Park, clean-up. Chris was involved in organizing the effort and Rich briefly attended. About a dozen people participated. A second Prospect Drive clean-up is being considered for October. (NOTE: The Greenfield Bridge, near Prospect Drive, is scheduled to reopen on Saturday, October 14.)

Other work related to Prospect Drive included a traffic report, compiled by Jeremy Weber and his partner, Sara de Melo Weber. Jeremy is an associate professor at Pitt's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, focusing on energy and the environment.

Sara has been spearheading an effort to make Prospect Drive a safer and more welcoming area for families. She and Jeremy met with Pittsburgh City Councilmember Corey O'Connor on August 8 and shared with him the traffic report and a revised proposal for upgrading Prospect Drive. Both documents are available here (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B43zyN1x7a5Pc3hSeJ1SDA0bEE/view>). The long-term vision for the space includes a community garden and a special needs playground.

Sara provided these takeaways from the meeting:

- Public Works: Councilmember O'Connor will meet with Public Works to share the study and look at options and costs. What we are asking for is simple: place a gate to consolidate parking and create a traffic-free space. But he also suggested asking for a larger sum to revamp the shelter etc. We think this is worth exploring but would not want larger projects to hinder the advancement of creating a traffic-free space,
- Joint meeting: he will organize a meeting with SHUC, Bike Pittsburgh, and DPW for us to discuss improvements to the Prospect Drive area and ways to increase use of the space.

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- Community meeting: *possibly* hosted by SHUC for the community to provide comments on specific proposals.

September 6 - Junction Hollow Walk, hosted by Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, to highlight the latest thinking on installing green infrastructure in the area. Plans include stormwater retaining ponds and a "daylighted" stream. Chris, SHUC board member Mary Shaw and her partner and active SHUC supporter, Roy Weil, also participated in the event.

Litter Patrol Committee

Submitted by Chair Barb Grover

The August 26th Night Market was the third event in our Beautify Our 'Burgh City Grant. Litter Patrol Volunteers and Board members removed litter from Murray between Bartlett and Forbes prior to and following the event. They also roamed the area throughout the evening, replacing full trash and recycling bags. Several volunteers also staffed the SHUC Table to promote our Adopt-A-Block program and sell our remaining T-shirts at the discounted price of \$5. We will do similar work at the September 23rd Night Market. Volunteers are definitely needed for that effort. Note that the city has put up 2 signs ---1 at the corner of Forbes and Murray by the Rite Aid and 1 at the corner of Forward and Murray -- identifying the area as a Beautify Our 'Burgh site.

As part of our Love Your Block Grant, we have ordered 12 cigarette butt receptacles to be placed around the business district. These will be installed sometime this fall.

Because we received only 1 entry to our "Every Litter Bit Matters" video competition, we are revising our plans. We plan to promote the competition this fall and winter with due dates for entries moved to spring of 2018.

Adopt-A-Block has a request from the Jewish Federation to conduct a cleanup on Christmas Day. Dave Grover will handle that request by providing instructions for where to clean and deliver supplies.

The Litter Patrol Steering Committee will have a meeting in October with Miriam Parsons from In Our BackYards, Inc (IOBY) to discuss potential fundraising opportunities.

Magazine Committee Report

Submitted by Editor Britt Reints

Fall Issue

- Total billed: \$14,610
- Published first week of September

Holiday Issue

- \$7,200 sold thus far

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- Plan to hit homes week of Thanksgiving (early, before the weekend)
- All content has to be in by October 15th
- Please send committee updates to breints@shuc.org ASAP. This can be as simple as one or two paragraphs or even photos from an event (we've used pics from Bike-Ped and Litter Patrol recently!)
- If you want space reserved for a specific topic, please let me know by October 1 for planning.

Outstanding Invoices:

- Summer 2017 - \$2,320
- Spring 2017 - \$625
- Holiday 2016 - \$1,495
- >year - \$11,088 – do these need to stay on the books or can they be written off as loss?

Additional info:

- We are looking into sending electronic invoices through PayPal
- I installed WooCommerce on the website for processing Treasure tickets and Treasure ad sales. This is a free shopping cart that just makes everything look a little nicer.
- Promoting Treasure Dinner: if anyone has photos from past treasure dinners, please send to breints@shuc.org and we can share them on the website and social media to help promote this year's event.
- Planning to partner with Print for content & advertising

No other written committee report submissions this month.

Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition Executive Director's Highlights and Report

Submission on 8/31/2017 of mini-grant to Vibrant Pittsburgh-Jewish Federation on behalf of Minadeo Pre-K to 5 for \$7500 funding of Enrichment for Student Success program, of which \$1000 is to cover administrative assistance and coordination of volunteer efforts by SHUC. Co-principle, Jennifer Petrie (volunteer with Ed Committee).

SHUC Annual Meeting set for Thursday November 16th, 7pm to 8:30pm @JCC Levinson Hall.
Possible guest speakers:

Rebecca Flora of P4 initiative (12-measure P4 scoring system. The measures focus on community engagement, affordable housing, transportation connections, energy efficiency, economic equity, land reuse, rainwater management, innovation, public space, air quality, design excellence and stimulation of weak markets. The scoring process is outlined in a 64-page document available via <http://p4pittsburgh.org/pages/p4-performance-measures>.)

Alexander Phillips, our neighborhood city planner.

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Prepared public statement in response to white supremacy and neo-nazi literature found in Squirrel Hill. Letter printed in Post Gazette on 9-13-2017:

<http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/letters/2017/09/13/Diversity-makes-us-stronger-to-fight-bigotry-which-has-no-place-in-communities/stories/201709130073>

“Diversity makes us stronger to fight bigotry, which has no place in communities”

We are deeply saddened by news that neo-Nazi and white supremacist literature has appeared in the public spaces of Squirrel Hill (“Neo-Nazi Stickers, Cards in Squirrel Hill Get FBI Attention,” Sept. 6). The Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition unequivocally denounces hate and the ideology that drives it.

For nearly 45 years, the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition has worked with our partners to ensure all residents, neighbors and visitors have opportunities to thrive in and contribute to our community. We celebrate and embrace the very essence of our differences. We know it is the diversity of thought, background and ability that is the backbone of Squirrel Hill's strength and endurance.

The invaluable contributions of our Jewish neighbors have built a foundation rooted in pluralism and equality, enabling all neighbors to continue to build upon and stand up against any threats. Everyone in our community deserves dignity and respect, and freedom from discrimination, bigotry and bullying. We celebrate our diversity. Moreover, we acknowledge our common humanity and the most basic desires we all share — to be able to provide for ourselves and our loved ones, to have opportunities that match our abilities, to live free of fear.

We appreciate local and national organizations stepping up security during this time. We encourage the general public to say something to the police or the FBI if they see anything of concern.

RICHARD FEDER

President of the Board

MARIAN LIEN

Executive Director

Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition

Squirrel Hill

Email response from: maureenyoung@me.com

Date: September 14, 2017 4:57PM

I read the letter published in the 9/13 Post Gazette — “Bigotry has no place.” Thank you so much for taking the time to write this thoughtful and important letter. I love Squirrel Hill and one of the reasons is its beautiful people — our diverse and generally peaceful population makes me feel both comfortable and proud. My grandchildren all go to St. Edmund's Academy and I often take them to the Library, Little's Shoe store, Coldstone Creamery, and other shops on Forbes or Murray. They love these outings and have fun; and at the same time see how “normal” it is to see so many different types of people sharing these same pleasures. The terrible white supremacist

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notes found in Squirrel Hill lately should not be accepted or ignored. I am proud of the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition for addressing this issue to the public.

Sincerely,
Maureen Young
5023 Frew Street

Over 12 responses on P-G, including:

David Reese

Thank you for your continued efforts. They are both valid and valued in an era where bigotry and discrimination are used for political gain, and for personal satisfaction. Don't stop, you're needed now more than ever.

Oren Spiegler

It is a shame that honorable individuals must issue statements condemning hatred and bigotry, but we all know why it is necessary in this era, one in which our president, of all people, seeks to establish an equivalency between protesters of hate and the haters. This letter makes me proud to be a Squirrel Hill native.

F-M Corner Traffic-Pedestrian cross:

Working with Zone 4, Mosites Construction, ACTION Housing, and Allderdice HS to resolve dangerous crossing for students at Forward Murray corner.

CMU Urban Planning masters graduate in Traffic design Abhishikta Pal currently interning in office: working on massing maximum density in commercial corridor and renderings of trails and the F-M intersection. Looking for grants with Rich to fund a trails engineering study.

Need to convene:

Ad Hoc Committee to write policy on future issuance of public statements from the organization
Ad Hoc Committee to update By-laws