

# Jackson Park Advisory Council- November 14, 2011 council mtg. minutes

Louise McCurry convened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the fieldhouse. 16 including all officers were present. New attendee Dick Klarich, Manager of Capital Construction at the **Museum of Science and Industry** told of recent façade repairs made possible by the Save America's Treasures fund of the National Park Service and said that the Museum does its part for green (including with solar panels that produce 50 KW power) and pursues community engagement. MSI will update plans for the southwest lot area at the December meeting.

**Park and Program.** William Tillis, Jackson Park Supervisor, reminded us of the upcoming Turkey Trot race. JPAC exhausted its efforts to have turkeys donated by stores. So, moved by Fran Vandervoort, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jerry Levy and **approved to buy 25 turkeys for about \$250**. The next event will be the Christmas Party December 16.--donation for that by JPAC was placed on the December agenda. In answer to questions, Tillis reported that various changes with schools and neighborhoods have reduced the number of kids, especially from the immediate area who enroll in Jackson Park programs, especially after the free and low-cost track, football, and soccer programs end. Soccer nets are taken down each year, but the tennis nets are not because they are old and fragile. There are new chairs in the South Room-- which JPAC very much appreciated.

On November 12, The South Room was filled with over 40 participants in JPAC and Chicago Conservation Corp's (3C) **Weatherization Workshop**. WECAN (Woodlawn East Community and Neighbors, Mattie Butler, Director) many brought supplies, kits and informational brochures and gave hands-on demonstrations. Energy Results and others also supplied many prizes. The Secretary was asked to feature in announcements a \$40 discount at Home Depot on weatherization kits that will be furnished through aldermen.

On October 15, our first **clinic-- on bikes** and bike safety, was held at the 'Iowa building' south of Montgomery Place. Our huge sail-banner flew high. Many bike groups and experts participated, including Blackstone Bicycle Works, which teaches youth skills through which they earn repaired bikes. The pre-event cleanup crew and our pruner Jerry Levy were thanked. More work is needed there--painting, the patio, and a gate.

**The minutes** of the October meeting were moved by Esther Schechter, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dwight Powell, and approved.

**Treasurer Dwight Powell** reported a October 31 balance of \$5,130.24. Contributions for 2011, less expenses have left us with a balance about \$1,500 higher than at this time last year. Appropriated but not yet spent current expenses include \$150 and \$283.98. Members requested an accounting at the next meeting of expenses paid out this year. Our reports to our fiscal agent Friends of the Parks are up to date. Barry Rapoport reported an old honorarium cost that fell through the cracks related to the Frederick Douglass Monument dedication (not our project) —referral to sponsors was suggested.

**The Fundraising and Development Committee** submitted a **new contributions schedule for 2012** and are completing a solicitation letter that will include a listing of JPAC's many activities and accomplishments for the year. The committee will be recommending JPAC help with park needs and start new programs for the public and park users. (Those reviewed at this meeting will be referred to the committee). The committee proposed a higher basic level of giving and several opportunity levels. It was repeated that neither making a financial contribution nor the level of giving have any relationship to one's being a member, participation or voting. The levels are **Friend \$35, Guardian \$100, Conservator \$250, Patron \$500, and Founder \$1,000**.

Suggested: joining and actively working with community organizations, asking certain businesses and organizations to give for particular projects, and asking their leaders to come and say a few words. Our brochure and bookmarks are nearly ready. We continue to review our survey returns.

Rapoport gave an update on materials about the Frederick Douglass monument and its dedication, including that the chronicle of the project will be distributed at the upcoming convention of Teachers of English. For materials contact Barry at [barryrapoport7@gmail.com](mailto:barryrapoport7@gmail.com). Find the descriptive monument on the bike path west of and leading to the 59<sup>th</sup> St. Lake Shore Drive underpass (south of the Bowling Green). (2)

**Nature/Natural Areas and park-at-large.** Ten trees were planted west of Darrow bridge and the lagoons with Friends of the Parks. These are in memory of Charles Marks, Jr., a Hyde Park resident killed in Jackson Park in 2006.

Trees, shrubs and ground cover were planted at Osaka Garden.

In the LaRabida section, most of the overcrowding and invasive trees (including some growing sideways from shore rocks) have been removed and a huge garbage pit cleared. Criminal activity has been replaced with people strolling and visiting the shores and their beautiful views. One can see many fossils in the rocks. There were two workdays including with Loyola University at LaRabida. More needs to be cleaned north of the inner harbor along Richards Drive, and along Marquette and under the Animal bridge.

In response to a concern, it was reported that trees in Bobolink and Wooded Island are monitored regularly to make sure beaver protection does not girdle or choke the trees.

Paths were reported to be very bad on the west side of the golf course and at 67<sup>th</sup>/Marquette—in the latter sector, golf course chain link fence continues to be stolen, presumably to be sold for scrap—non-metal material was suggested. The path east of the new track and field was also reportedly bad. Several paths have been rebuilt in the last couple of years.

Jerry Levy and Fran Vandervoort passed around a draft template for a brochure that would include a list and locator map of tree species on Wooded Island and an introduction to the Island. They would be made available in a simple box at the north end of the island, and to school groups etc. Discrete small identifier tags for certain trees is being considered. Nature tours are already being given to groups.

Bookmarks with a collage of park pictures are in preparation, for use in outreach and fundraising.

**Birds.** Migration is done and ducks are settling in. The bird walks now go year round, with the Wednesday walks starting a bit later, at 7:15 a.m., during winter.

**Sports and recreation.** Discussion was held with Aaron Stephens of Apostolic Church, Ziff Sistrunk, Kenny Newman, and others concerning which baseball/softball field(s) should be refurbished and improved, what would be needed, and possible costs. Conclusion was that a committee will meet and come up with a plan. JPAC should then put in a request during the next budget season and major funders be contacted.

**Old and new business.** 59<sup>th</sup> tennis and dog-designated area: drug dealers are back in the afternoon- 3<sup>rd</sup> District is being notified. This area is a target for JPAC fundraising.

Suggested and agreed: that the December meeting will be at least as much a party as a meeting—a food etc. list will be drawn up and attendees encouraged to bring goodies. (PS. council meetings have refreshments.)

**Election of Officers.** Jerry Levy assumed the chair. He read the slate nominated at the last meeting: President- Louise McCurry, Vice President (new)- Judith Hill, Treasurer- Dwight Powell, Secretary- Gary Ossewaarde. There being no other nominations, Esther Schechter moved and Levy seconded that the slate be elected by acclamation. So done.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m. Next meeting and party December 12, Monday, at the field house. Principal agenda item: Presentation by Museum of Science and Industry.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary M. Ossewaarde  
Secretary

**We are beginning our contributions and membership drive for 2012.** Suggested basic level (Friend) is \$35. A letter will be sent to our regular and past contributors, or send with your contact information (especially email address for the monthly newsletter) and check made out to JPAC to Jackson Park Advisory Council, c/o Dwight Powell, 7206 S. Luella, Chicago, IL 60649.

**Congratulations to newly elected officers, President Louise McCurry, Vice President Judith Hill, Treasurer Dwight Powell, Secretary Gary Ossewaarde. Judith succeeds Toshia Booker-Blakely, an innovator and leader who will continue in her committee chair and project development roles.**

**Learn about a \$40 voucher for Office Depot weatherization kits soon to be available from aldermen:** <http://www.chicagolandrealestateforum.com/2010/12/07/we-can-vouch-for-the-importance-of-weatherizing-your-chicago-home/>. More info? <http://www.wecanwoodlawn.org>, <http://www.energyresults.com>.

## **2011 accomplishments... the train gathers momentum, thanks to those getting on board!**

- JPAC members, volunteer groups and organizations and Chicago Park District worked together to clean up and enhance Wooded Island, Bobolink Meadow, lagoon edges, LaRabida Hospital/Promontory Drive/outer harbor sector, 59<sup>th</sup> tennis area, north edge including the 'Iowa bldg'), areas east of the Museum of Science and Industry, and the 57<sup>th</sup>-63<sup>rd</sup> beaches.
- JPAC stewards and volunteers planted dozens of trees, many shrubs and ground cover, flowers, and grasses. Invasive plants were replaced with bird- and habitat-friendly species. Further work will enhance and draw visitors to the beauty and importance of this historic park.
- JPAC members identified, reviewed, and fixed up possible sites for new sports and other park use facilities, including a dog area and found or suggested partners to get these done,
- JPAC proposed and launched ongoing environment and nature workshops, tours, and is preparing informational materials- brochures, bookmarks, and guide sheets.
- JPAC has sponsored bicycle and weatherization clinics and is planning more on tool-sharpening, composting, and landscape planning.
- JPAC supported park kids and fieldhouse programs including recognition ceremonies.
- JPAC worked with park security and Chicago Police to monitor and correct issues.
- JPAC expanded its community outreach, connecting neighbors to each other and their park.

**The final hearing for the 2012 park and Park District budget will be held at 4 p.m. Wednesday, December 7 at headquarters, 541 E. Fairbanks Ct. 8<sup>th</sup> floor.** You must show photo ID and arrive over a half hour early to sign up to speak. Comment time is limited. **The board gives its final approval December 14.** Friends of the Parks held a highly informative budget primer November 28 with PD budget chief Steve Hughes. Their next events include Feb. 2 awards luncheon and Feb. 25 Advocacy Conference.

**Our next council meeting (with party) is December 12, 7:30 at the field house. Main items will be a presentation by the Museum of Science and Industry and an in-gathering of our accomplishments of 2011 and ambitions for 2012.**

**Save the date our next Community Workshop: Small Tool Sharpening-** bring yours to be sharpened and learn how. **January 21, Saturday, 1-3 pm.**

**Bird walks go year round now. Wednesdays at (in winter) 7:15 a.m., Saturdays at 8 am. Meet at Darrow Bridge south of the MSI Columbia Basin.** Parking east of Darrow Bridge, access from Lake Shore Drive at 5800. Thanks to Chicago Audubon and its members for this program and raising the bar for natural areas. **(4)**