

MNA Town Hall Meeting

October 3, 2018

Head count: 19 people in attendance, not counting the RPD speakers

Notetaker: Amie Alscheff

Bill Collins (MNA Vice President) started the meeting at 7 pm.

Announcements

Sam Spoto has resigned from the MNA Board due to health and personal reasons. According to the MNA By-laws, the Board will select one of the currently-elected Board members to complete Sam's term as President through the next scheduled elections, in the spring of 2020. This will take place at the next MNA Board meeting, October 10.

The Board will also need to appoint a new Board member, and this vacant position is open to all MNA members. Anyone interested in joining the Board should speak to Bill.

Report from the Rochester Police Department, Lake Section

(Officer Maldonado and Captain Dearcop were present representing RPD)

- Crime highlights for the month of September:
 - Homicide at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Finch Street, September 27. Capt. Dearcop says this corner has been noted for drug sales recently, and the homicide was not a random act. No suspect identified yet.
 - Two food delivery drivers were robbed: On September 18, a delivery person from Tony's (on Dewey Avenue) was robbed at 1600 Dewey Avenue. On September 24, a delivery person from Harry's Pizza was robbed of food and cash at an address on Pullman Avenue.
 - There were eight burglaries, eight car break-ins, and five car thefts reported. No serious concerns here, no patterns have been noticed.
- Capt. Dearcop spoke about the recent uptick in violent crime in Rochester. Patterns seem to be related to narcotics, and also retaliation for robberies (which may never be reported to police). RPD is working with parole and other organizations to try to identify individuals who may be likely to get into this kind of situation.
- The officers responded to the following questions from the group:

Q: Does Rochester have an especially high rate of domestic violence?

A: Not really, not as an explanation for the recent increase in violent crime.

Q: Heard a rumor that the Lake Section is "short" by 30 officers. Is this true?

A: No. At any time, they may have people away due to factors like injury, maternity leave, etc. They have perhaps three true vacancies (ie, positions that have opened up due

to retirement and have not been filled). Currently a new class of 28 RPD officers are about two weeks into their training, and another class is expected to start in 2019.

Q: There's been an extremely loud motorcycle on Albemarle St in the evenings.

A: They will check it out.

Q: Why does the RPD want to build a brand new Lake Section Office rather than refurbishing an existing vacant building in the neighborhood?

A: The most important factors are location and safety (ability to control access to the site).

Report from Molly Clifford, NW City Council Representative

Latasha Grayson-Shaw Memorial Park

Regarding the [dedication and naming](#) of the pocket park at Dewey/Driving Park, which took place on Saturday, September 29: A number of people questioned why the Maplewood and Edgerton neighborhoods were not informed in advance of plans to name the park in honor of Latasha Grayson-Shaw, and why neighborhood residents received no information about the ceremony before it happened.

City Council representative Adam McFadden was primarily responsible for promoting the naming and dedication. He's been working towards this for many years with the Grayson-Shaw families and the labor union that Ms. Shaw was involved in. In response to an email from MNA secretary Barb Ann Kupiec on Monday, he apologized for neglecting to communicate with the neighborhoods about his plans.

According to Molly, a larger issue is that the naming of a pocket park typically requires a formal planning process at the City.

Wayne Williams, who was formerly the City project manager for the Dewey/Driving Park Realignment, added here that the project is not technically finished. He said there were originally plans for design elements in the pocket park that would have referenced local history (such as the Driving Park race track), and these have not been installed. He does not know the current status of those designs, now that the park has been officially designated the "Latasha Grayson-Shaw Memorial Park." He is no longer involved with the project. The new project manager is Jim McIntyre.

Molly suggested that the MNA should submit a request to the City for more information about the naming process and future plans for the final design of the park and gardens. The MNA Board will discuss this at the meeting on October 10.

Further discussion of the Dewey/Driving Park Realignment Project

Q: Why does the new Dewey/Driving Park intersection have a stop sign rather than a yield sign for the right turn lane heading north onto Dewey Avenue from Driving Park?

A: Wayne says that was done for two reasons: 1. There's also a pedestrian crossing at that point, and 2) The line of sight for traffic traveling north on Dewey from across Driving Park is impeded by the building at the corner. A full stop is safer at this location than a yield.

Q: Will there be a zebra stripe crosswalk installed at that point to mark the pedestrian crossing?

A: Wayne believes it would be a good suggestion to make to the current project manager (Jim McIntyre). Molly and Bill Collins plan to email him. (Note: according to Wayne, the project calls for a final layer of asphalt to be laid down in early October, so the current asphalt and striping are not the finished version.)

Molly reminded everyone about her series of upcoming Saturday morning walks around the NW neighborhoods (replacing her regular coffee meetings). The Maplewood walk is November 3, starting at the Rose Garden at 10 am (approximately 45-60 minutes of walking).

Upcoming City Council Meeting

On the agenda will be the vote for the money needed for acquisition of the two parcels of land at Lake Avenue and Ridge Road to build the new Lake Section RPD Office (the former Piehler dealership). The cost is \$2.3 million. The sites require some clean-up, with the current owner responsible for the first \$650K and the rest shared between the current owner and the City.

Discussion

Q: Any possibility that the City might reconsider this purchase and choose to locate the new RPD Office at the Tops location on Lake Avenue that is closing?

A: No, that's not an option that the City is considering.

Q: Are there any other proposals yet for the Tops location?

A: Not yet. The City's Economic Development Corp. is hoping to get another grocery store to move into the location, or possibly a warehouse/distribution center.

Report from Monroe County Legislator Tony Micciche (26th District)

- Monroe County Airport renovation project continues to wrap up. A new restaurant opened recently.
- The County was awarded a large [grant](#) from the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse. \$564K will be provided to fund a new inpatient withdrawal program.
- Seneca Park Zoo has installed a [new tram](#) to shuttle visitors from the entrance to the Animals of the Savanna exhibit.
- Monroe County recently received \$1.17 million in state funding for its proposed [pedestrian safety action plan](#) to enhance safety measures at 400 crosswalks. Most of these improvements will be in suburban locations, not in the city.
- Legalization of marijuana in NY: both he and Cindy Kaleh attended a NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) event that looked at this issue. Tony mentioned concerns

about marijuana and DUI. Difficulty with determining intoxication level. Colorado is using a roving van program to test drivers.

- He supports the new RPD Lake Section Office.

Report from Monroe County Legislator Cindy Kaleh (28th District)

- Legalization of marijuana in NY/NYSAC event: Cindy noted the economic implications for farmers. Constellation Brands is investing in a pot-enhanced wine. But at the same time, farmers who want to grow hemp (a strain that contains no THC) are still not eligible for any kind of federal agricultural funding.
- Monroe County Airport renovation project: Taste of Rochester restaurant unveiling is tomorrow.
- Monroe County Child Protective Services: still no real progress on solving CPS issues. Referred to new radio ads placed by John Geer, grandfather of Brook Stagles.
- Downtown DMV office is now open

Open Mic

Roc the Riverway (formerly River Romance) is this weekend. Gorge Tours will take place Saturday, October 6 from 10-2. Salmon fishing in the river is in full swing. Also, check out the [statue of Frederick Douglass](#), installed at the Rose Garden earlier this week. It's next to the historic marker for Kelsey's Landing, near the steps leading down into the gorge.

Dewey/Ridgeway Fire House is holding an Open House, also on Saturday October 6 from 10-2. From their Facebook page: "Come visit with your neighborhood firefighters, tour the apparatus, see demonstrations, learn about fire safety and go through the RFD "Fire Safety House." RPD will also be on hand with "Operation Safe Child." There will be hotdogs and soft drinks, rain or shine and all free."

Devon Reynolds, Sr., the owner of Brothers & Sisters Unisex Salon (Dewey Avenue, between Electric and Magee), spoke about his efforts to promote socially-responsible business ownership in the neighborhood and support black-owned business.

- Examples of programs his business sponsors: a food pantry, annual "back to school" backpack give-away, annual Thanksgiving Dinner at St. Luke's Tabernacle, free yoga classes, an apprenticeship program for youth.
- Other local businesses that supported his "back to school" event with donations include: Salvatores, American Deli, and On The Rocks Liquor.
- He's organizing a boycott on October 15 of businesses that don't give back to the community.
- He holds a community forum at Brothers & Sisters on the second Sunday of the month, which is open to the public. Next planned meeting is Sunday, October 14 at 5 pm.

Bruce Wilder, from the Northwest Service Center, reported on various issues.

- Maplewood is getting a new code enforcement officer. Albert Algarin is being transferred to a different part of the City. Not sure who will fill the position yet, it will probably be a new hire.

- The 1481-1497 block of Dewey Avenue (at the corner of Ridgeway, building housing the Ramsey Bakery and the laundromat, and buildings across the street) had a problem recently with trash not being collected by the private service the owner contracted with. Apparently there's some kind of property ownership dispute involved. The City Department of Environmental Services (DES) installed a city dumpster to provide a temporary solution.
- Dewey Avenue Merchants Association: this organization disbanded recently because no one was showing up except City employees. They are going to try to revive it: first meeting is October 23.
- DES has begun installing "no littering" signs in the neighborhood. RPD enforcement of littering fines will be key to making this effective. Bruce plans to talk to them about this.
- Welker's Grill: Phat Boy plans to move into this building, expand the existing pawn shop into the former Phat Boy location.