



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

OANA Meeting June 12th

Richard welcomed everyone in attendance for being present. He thanked Astoria Craft and Costco for donating the food for this evening's meeting.

Ricard gave an update on the overhead wires problem in the neighborhood. These wires close off the neighborhood. We found out that contacting the cable companies and inquiring if they can remove the unused wire sometimes works. The changes to alternate side parking and street cleaning have been approved to once a week. We are currently awaiting the signage from the Department of Transportation. There was a discussion for the extension of the ferry from Hallett's Cove to the Upper East Side. There has been a petition that has been established to extend the ferry from Astoria to the Upper East Side. The petition is available on the OANA website. Richard asked that everyone share the petition with their friends and support the petition.

I. NYC Parks Department

Richard introduced Shirley Echevarria to present on the NYC Parks Department and provide updates on the construction that is occurring in Astoria. They currently have Astoria Park Playground Construction that is currently in procurement at 60% completion. They anticipate the construction will be completed in August 2019. The Diving Pool Reconstruction is at 80% completion under construction. They plan to be completed in November 2019. The playground reconstruction is in procurement at 85%. It is slated to be completed in July 2019. Construction will be occurring on the Field House, renovating the comfort stations to ensure they are ADA accessible and more modern. It is in two stages; the design is being approved internally by parks and is also in procurement. They are hoping to begin in July and end construction by the end of this year. Track and field is doing well. The goal is to be done in May 2020. Chapel square is in procurement at 85 percent. Dutch Kills green playground may be open in two weeks. The comfort station will not be open. It is at 65% completion. The comfort station construction should be done January 2020. Hallett's Cove is in design for the multipurpose play area and playground is in constructing and design in the review. Procurement of the Seawall is at 40% procurement. Playground is at 7% construction. Construction should be completed by February 2020. Playground 35 has had issues. There was a problem with new water piping needing to be done. There have been problems with tree roots. It is scheduled to be completed by August 2019. There are



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

allocated funds for Baby Kingsbridge handball courts. It is currently at design 5% complete. The field house at Kingsbridge is currently at 65% complete construction. It is scheduled to be done by July 2019. Ralph Demarco received funding to reconstruct their shore line. It is currently in design 35%. It should be done with design in May 2019. Ravenswood Houses playground is at 5% design. Procurement should be done by November. Funds were received to redo the synthetic turf field at St. Michaels. It is currently 5% into design. They plan to be done by May 2020. Lastly, the construction of Whitey Ford Ballfield is at 40% completed procurement. They hope to be done by November.

Clare Doyle inquired “Is there a website where we can check the progress of the parks construction?”

Shirley responded if anyone goes to the Parks website, they can type capital tracker and then select queens and you can view the status of the current project.

Vanessa Jones-Hall inquired “Where are the main players of the seawall?”

Shirley responded that the agency is working with FEMA to attain money to replace the seawall. Typically, the department receives capital funding from an elected official. We are informed by the official that the funds are to be utilized for a particular project.

Vanessa stated its hard for us to believe because we are not being told the same thing from all of the people. We are told different things by many people. There are two playgrounds around that seawall. There are make shift gates, make shift fences and even road cones that are blocking the path. There are curious children and the fences are not sturdy.

Vanessa states she wished that it could be addressed quickly. Her entire community is appalled that they have let it gotten it to this point.

Richard inquired “When will the pool open and when will it be closed?”

Shirley responded that it will be open June 27. The first session will be 11AM-3PM and second session from 4PM-7PM.

Dominque Perro commented that she has registered for the early bird swim and the night owls. She recommended others to register online.



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

David Matten inquired “What is being done to the tracks?”

Shirley responded the tracks have been redone. All the paths around, Bio swells have been installed. Benches and picnic tables and synthetic turf has been installed.

Dori Cocoros inquired, “Is there any update on the dog run that’s opening on June?”

Shirley replied that the site was visited a few weeks ago. There were certain issues with the dog run and asked the contractor to fix so that it may be opened to public.

Erica Heisler inquired, “Where is the dog park?”

Shirley responded that it is located on Hoyt Street & Astoria Park South 24th Street. Its on Triborough C.

Richard inquired, “What is the status of erosion control in Astoria Park?” It is still a huge issue, there are dirt patches. There are runoff issue. Is that still part of the anchor budget.

Shirley responded it is still part of the anchor budget.

George Hall inquired, “Will the broken water pipe be taken care of?”

Shirley responded that their shop division are looking to at thematic plans to determine if the drain is clogged or if it is a broken pipe.

George inquired, “Will it happen soon?”

Shirley responded that we hope it will be addressed soon.

II. Astoria Parks Alliance

Richard introduced Dori Cocoros to present the summer program for the Astoria Parks Alliance. Dori is on the board for the Astoria Park Alliance. The Astoria Park Alliance is a non-profit organization that has been growing over the last 12 years. They support the Parks department. They run events that include clean ups in the park, raking events and leaf fest events in the fall. They sponsored a showing of Bohemian Rhapsody last Friday evening. Their mission is building community through the parks. They will host yoga on Friday and Saturday will be a historic walking tour and Sunday will be their 2nd annual classic car show cosponsored by OANA. There will be yoga on the terrace starting June 29th throughout the summer. The next cleanup event will be July 13th.



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

III. Socrates Sculpture Park

Richard introduced Audrey Dimola. She is the director of public programs at Socrates Sculpture park. They have a license agreement with the NYC parks to program, maintain and operate Socrates NYC park. Mark Disubero had a vision to create a space for the community. They have two exhibitions yearly. The current program is Cronus Cosmos, the theme being space and time, which will be up until Labor Day. The park is open 365 days a year from 9AM until sunset. They have a Galageso festival with Foklorico Mexicano. They hold a summer program called sculpture camp. It's a free art making opportunity. Their outdoor cinema will begin July 3rd showcasing March of the Penguins. On Saturdays from 12PM-3PM they will have artist that help children make art. Jazz at Socrates will begin the second Thursday of every month with the Jazz Foundation. They have a partnership with Hip-hop legend Ralph McDaniels to continue Hip-hop in the Park. The Met Opera will have a free recital Monday June 17th. Yoga and Taiichi occur Saturdays and Sunday. Sunset Meditation occurs Tuesday evenings. Back to our roots is a new initiative every single Saturday. Workshops will be provided Thursday evenings.

IV. The Noguchi Museum

Richard introduced Jennifer Lorch. Jennifer Lorch. The museum is located right across from Costco. Noguchi has permanent collection in the museum. There are temporary exhibits. The first exhibit is Changing and Unchanging things Noguchi and Hasagawa is an international traveling exhibition that explores Noguchi trip to Japan in 1950. The next installation "Rotating Objects" is by Gabriel Orozco and located in two of the smaller galleries on the first floor. The collection show "Noguchi bodyspace devices" was just opened. One is a sit sculpture another is a Martha Grand Dance set. The events will be Bang on a can music series will happen in the garden. The series began this past weekend. The following dates will be July 14th, August 11th & September 6th. Big Alice Brewery provides refreshment. They are free on first Fridays. They Free Tours at 2PM. Center of Attention public program at 6:30PM. The community days are First Sunday through September, programs will be held all day.

V. Whitey Ford Field

Richard introduced the co-chairs of Whitey Ford Field Neil Herden and Blair Clancy. Blair is the granddaughter of Whitey Ford. They had their family day recently. Blair will be organizing their first fundraising event later in the summer.



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

They will be having one more clean up before the season is over. They coined their park as the beloved waterfront park. All of their events can be found on their Facebook page.

VI. Long Island City Boathouse

- a. Richard introduced Dave Madden. Dave Madden is a member of the Long Island City Boathouse is an all-volunteer organization. Paxil gives them their space. They take small donations. They have their walk ups at Hallett's Cove. There are small difficulties with currents. They begin Memorial Day and end Labor Day. There are seven dates set for Hallett's Cove and six dates for Animal basin. We are only limited by our volunteer bandwidth. They run trips that the public can take part in. These are small trips from Hallett's Cove to Animal basin. It will take 30-45 minutes to take these small trips. They have volunteer exclusive events. A circumnavigation of Manhattan. This will run approximately 10 hours that is done in the night. There is a good sunrise. They have assistance for open water swims. They have basics of kayak, seamanship and recently CPR classes. There is an environmental program called the restoration station which is a project looking for the best locations to restore oyster beds.

VII. Welling Court Mural Project

Richard introduced Garrison Buxton. The Welling Court Mural project is currently in its 10th year. Jonathan Ellis who lived on Welling Court wanted to improve the neighborhood. It started with 44 murals. They are currently up to 150 murals. The murals represent local artist but also artist from Russia, China and other locations. The project has been featured in local news and international media. R&R Hardware donates to the project.

VIII. Two Coves Community Garden

Richard introduced Vanessa Jones-Hall. Vanessa Jones-Hall. Two Coves Community garden is located across from the Astoria houses. The Garden became a dumpsite from local businesses. Residents of Astoria houses and neighborhoods rallied to eliminate the dumping into the garden. They started with 12 members and currently have over 200 members. They also have 107 plots and are growing. They have been threatened after Peter Vallone Sr. allocated a \$100,000 grant. An organization claimed they had rights to the land. Two Coves sat down with the organizations. They were able to complete their irrigation system and have electricity established. They were able to expand and have a diversity with their membership. They've had people from Spain,



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

Germany & Brazil that wanted to write articles on them. They had their potluck this past Saturday. They will have a tour on July 20th giving the history of the garden. They are open Saturday and Sunday from 8AM-6PM. There is a summer camp that happens.

IX. Central Astoria LDC

Richard introduced Marie Torniali. Central Astoria Local Development Corporation began 35 years ago with one small Independence Day celebration with a few hundred people. They currently provide 24 local events. The majority are held in Astoria park. 12 events are held during the summer. They have summer movies, concerts. They introduced their drive-in movies last year. Their signature event will be June 27th is their Independence celebration. Marie thanked Councilman Constantanides for helping fund the event.

X. Councilman Costas Constantanides

Richard introduced Councilman Costas Constantanides. Councilman Constantanides thanked everyone for being here to represent their organizations. The budget must pass it by the end of this month. The council response is completed after the mayor presents his budget. They have asked for more money for parks and parks recreation and maintenance. They are fighting for additional urban forest rangers. They want additional maintenance workers for the parks. Community gardens are in their budget response. Richard and OANA have spoken to the council in regards to having an arts district. Arts Together with Van Bramer they need to establish the proper borders for the district. Councilman Constantanides thanked Richard and OANA for this excellent project. We need to continue to beautify our waterfront. They finally completed a water clean-up at the Radio Tower removing the shopping carts. The Hallett's Cove playground construction has begun should be completed by the end of the year. The East River Little League is looking for children between the ages of 7-10 to play for free. Our investments in Infrastructure, arts district and our youth we can help make a great community better.

David Matten inquired, "What does it mean to designate an arts district?"

Costas responded it involves a declaration from the city. The work would be done by the groups to establish the infrastructure for the arts district. We will need a partnership with Van Bramer. There will be a partnership for the district to be established and maintained.



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

Richard stated that the arts district would not tax anyone. It can be a very effective marketing tool to help the community grow.

Clare Doyle inquired, “Did the bill for the environmental sustainability get voted on?”

Costas responded they created a bill to create a department of sustainability. He proposed that there be a Department of sustainability established. The bill was not passed today. EDC is doing resiliency in lower Manhattan. There should be a department that handles this. There was a bill on methane leaks to create a map on the methane leaks for quality control.

Vanessa Jones-Hall inquired, “Is the 5G going to be on the bill?”

Costas responded I have not heard that there is a science that it is something we should be worried about it. Uber is planning to have helicopters. If the three bills pass they will have a better aspect on improving. These are the first steps that the council is utilizing.

Phyliss Parra posted on March 26th regarding 19th street to clean it up the garbage.

Costas proposed the creation of an office of derelict boats and marine disposal. They have towed 75 boats this year.

Richard thanked everyone for coming and Astoria Craft and Costco for providing the food for tonight’s meeting. The next meeting will take place in September.