

Prospect Park Association: Equitable Engagement Plan

Year(s) 2022

Neighborhood name: Prospect Park

Work summary

We will continue our effective outreach activities: **listen** to the priorities and concerns of renters, including Glendale public housing residents, **change direction** in response to those stated priorities, and **follow through** to deliver support and results (see examples in “PPA outcome – develop trust,” below). Outreach activities include **developing partnerships, reaching out to others (e.g., relationship-building)** and **developing trust** by following through. We will also continue to use flyers (translated into Somali, when appropriate), door-knocking, topic-centered meetings and events, general meetings, information sharing, and partnerships with other community organizations, as needed. Further, we will continue to build on connections and relationships created over the past two years with renters, including public housing residents and parents of our neighborhood elementary school children. Additionally, we will ask renters, including public housing residents, to evaluate proposed organizational changes to ensure they are consistent with this equitable engagement plan. PPA is restructuring to respond to the projected 72% funding decrease (i.e., if granted 2022 funds, PPA will receive \$15,000 in Neighborhood Network and \$3,100 in Equitable Engagement Funds).

Scope of work, outcomes and goals

PPA Outcome - listen to the priorities and concerns of renters, including public housing residents and parents, **change direction** in response to those stated priorities, and **follow through** to deliver support and results (see examples in “PPA outcome – develop trust,” below).

PPA Outcome - continue to build on connections and relationships created over the past two years with renters, including public housing residents and parents. In the “Jackson Project, described below for example, we are planning to form long-term working partnerships between Pratt PTO and PPA.

PPA Outcome - develop trust by demonstrating PPA is listening and actively supporting and helping renters and public housing residents and parents achieve **their** priorities. Examples: 1) PPA supported and facilitated the “fast-track” construction of the walkway children living in Glendale public housing need to travel from home to school and back. It had been in disrepair and construction plans stalled for well over a year. 2) PPA helped make possible a public listening session between Minneapolis parking systems officials and Glendale residents that resulted in resolving some long-standing resident parking problems. 3) PPA held a workshop with Glendale residents to identify resident priority safety and livability issues that resulted in a grant to redesign problematic areas. 4) PPA supported renters in their successful effort to encourage a local landlord to replace a non-responsive and verbally abusive property manager failing to safely maintain multiple building in our neighborhood. 5) During the pandemic, while school was virtual and at the request of local parents, PPA initiated a fund-raising campaign, working in partnership with another community-based non-profit organization, to raise \$5,000 to make an in-person outdoor after-school recreation and tutoring program available to neighborhood elementary school children, primarily children of color and public housing residents.

PPA Outcome - expand representation by renters, including public housing residents and parents in our informal connections and our formal groups and “committees.” PPA has increased representation by renters on our board from one in 2018 to six in 2021. It’s a start, but board membership is not necessarily an indicator of meaningful involvement, engagement, and partnership. More critical is developing a culture of listening within informal and formal community networks (e.g., relationship-building) throughout the organization: recognizing the need to ask and listen to the priorities and needs of renters, including public housing residents and parents, as they define them. We will better accomplish this outcome if priorities and activities emerge in community with renters.

PPA Outcome – evaluate progress to date. We have taken steps forward, but risk losing gains if we don’t evaluate progress to date. Is the organization attracting and retaining renters and public housing residents as participants, both informally and formally? What is working and what is not and why?

Plan detail

Demographic group	Renters	Parents – primarily families of color living in Glendale Public Housing		
Numbers or percentage	<p>According to MN Compass, 65% of Prospect Park residents are renters. Thirty-four percent of Prospect Park residents—renters and homeowners combined—are people of color (19% Asian or Pacific Islanders, 7% Black or African American, 3% Hispanic or Latino, and 4% two or more races). Sixty-six percent are White. About half of Prospect Park residents live in cost-burdened households.</p> <p>Prospect Park’s lowest-wealth residents are families who rent homes in Glendale Townhomes Public Housing. They represent about 5% of Prospect Park residents, about 7-8% of renters, and a majority of Prospect Park’s Black and African American residents. Most of the children living in Glendale attend our local Elementary School.</p>	<p>Pratt School enrolls about 320 students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Approximately 8% of students receive special education services, 10% are identified as Advanced Learners, 21% receive English-language learning services, and 63% qualify for free or reduced lunch (Pratt School website). The school’s minority student enrollment is about 70%. The school enrolls 58% students from low-wealth families (U.S. News).</p>		
Initiative, activity, project or program	Renters’ Rights Project	Learning Dreams Project and Jackson Memorial Playground Project		

<p>Barriers to engagement</p>	<p>PPA has had committed volunteers working on the renter’s rights program since 2020. The volunteers organized a renter’s group and achieved solid outcomes. They are a sub-committee of and supported by PPA’s Community Building Committee. The renter’s group created flyers explaining their new program and engaged new participants. Flyers were printed in English and also translated into Somali. PPA created a database of neighborhood rental properties and distributed the flyers to residents. They established a renter’s right website with renter information and more. They held meetings for renters and door knocked and held community meetings to educate the broader neighborhood about renter issues.</p> <p>Given progress described above, what are the barriers?</p> <p>Human resources: the activities described above required hundreds of volunteer hours—a challenge considering most PPA volunteers, particularly renters, have full-time jobs and/or school. Renters’ rights activities remain on-going, and volunteers remain engaged, but the leadership has folded back into the Community Building Committee for the time being. Meanwhile, PPA needs to evaluate and regroup to find ways, perhaps increasing resources to better support renter-focused engagement.</p> <p>Accessing apartments: PPA developed a database of apartment-buildings, but some large buildings require “insiders” to access (distribute flyers door-to-door so they will not be tossed by staff). We recruited college students, for example, to help distribute our Census 2020 flyers, along with many other PPA volunteers, to all the large apartment buildings that target mostly students. Unfortunately, students frequently move or graduate and leave the neighborhood.</p> <p>Transient student population: we started our renters’ rights project by interviewing (listening to and learning) from student renters—on their own turf—to learn about their priorities and interests, but when the pandemic hit, students left the area, so renter’s right activities shifted to longer-term renters. Even in less</p>	<p>Language</p> <p>Starting in the early 1990’s, PPA used a least a third of its allocated NRP resources to meet the needs of Glendale residents—as identified by Glendale residents—and to help unite the neighborhood. PPA used NRP funds to install an elevator at Pratt, provide a jobs training program for Glendale residents, fund the NET program for Glendale residents (see below), and to improve our local parks, among other things. Barrier: But at times, PPA brings ideas, priorities, and programs to Glendale residents instead of seeking the priorities of Glendale residents and shifting gears to deliver on those priorities, thereby better building relationships and trust.</p>	
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	<p>turbulent times, renters' residency may be shorter, requiring more regular outreach.</p>		
<p>Outreach and engagement strategies</p>	<p>Conduct evaluation of renters' project to date: What renter outreach activities worked and what didn't? Why? What were the strengths and weaknesses of outreach and engagement activities during the past two years? What resources and support does PPA need to provide to the renter's project? What barriers—other than those described above—exist?</p> <p>Based on this evaluation, develop concrete next steps to address barriers, particularly the limited staff and volunteer resources. PPA might hire an outside community organizer, familiar with renter issues and neighborhood organizing, to help facilitate this evaluation and summarize next steps.</p> <p>Strategies to engage renters in evaluation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established renter relationships and communication channels: Renters' right leadership will invite renters already engaged through email, social media, and PPA's renter's website. ● Other relationships and outreach: PPA will invite renters using other PPA's communication strategies, including Committee, Board and Community meetings, neighborhood e-list, and PPA's newsletter, U of MN off-campus newsletter, Prospect Park Anti-Racism Org (i.e., we established a relationship with members of this group when we co-sponsored a series on public safety), Pratt PTO, etc. ● Neighborhood new renter engagement: hold neighborhood focus groups inviting renter participants via door-to-door leaflet drop to renters' households and apartments in the neighborhood. <p>Re-design a postcard and/or welcome packet to be mailed to Prospect Park residents and/or new Prospect Park residents, including renters who make up 65% of our residents. In 2020, volunteers representing all segments of the organization—environment, renters, board members, community members, and</p>	<p>Learning Dreams: PPA will work with the University of Minnesota to bring the Learning Dreams program to the Glendale Public Housing Community. Over 20 years ago, PPA started Learning Dreams in Glendale (originally called The NET Program). The program's purpose is to support learning for people and families that want such support.</p> <p>In the fall of 2019, Learning Dreams was asked by a group of mothers at a community meeting held at Luxton Park adjacent to Glendale Townhomes Public Housing to restart the program that had run in Glendale many years ago. The pandemic has forced a delay in this program, but we have started photography classes for young people living in Glendale and we hope to expand Learning Dreams in 2022, if safe to do so. The program will start small and grow at the request of residents. The program will identify a group of both youth and parents who are interested in working on educational goals and dreams; hold structured conversations with participants to discover what they identify as a goal or dream they want to pursue; identify resources in the wider community to support those goals and dreams; connect individuals with resources and concrete activities that respond to their dreams; track how they are doing on their progress; and stay connected over time to help participants deal with challenges and obstacles that always arise in such situations.</p> <p>Additional ways we will engage participants in Learning Dreams:</p>	

PPA staff, worked together to design a postcard that was mailed to all our residents.

- Engaging renters in postcard design is a key priority. See bulleted points above for strategies to engage renters in this activity.

Continue the internship program with Venture Academy charter school. In this program high school students work with the Environment Committee on neighborhood projects that help students develop job skills and fulfill committee work. The Environment Committee has also partnered with PPA’s Vice President, a Black and Indigenous consultant who works with historically underrepresented and under-engaged community members. This relationship has helped guide their programming.

Publish the renter’s rights curriculum website, with resource links, currently in development. **Strategies to engage renters on website:**

- **Established renter communication channels:** renters’ right leadership will notify renters already engaged using email, social media, PPA’s renter’s website, and word of mouth
- **Other relationships and outreach:** PPA will use newsletters, social media and flyers to notify renters using PPA Committee, Board and Community meetings, neighborhood e-list, PPA’s newsletter, U of MN off-campus newsletter, Prospect Park Anti-racism group, Luxton Park and Pratt PTO.
- **Neighborhood engagement:** Door to door leaflet drop to renters’ households and apartments in the neighborhood.

- The group of 15 Glendale moms who requested that we re-start Learning Dreams in Glendale will act as outreach volunteers, communicating with other adults in the neighborhood to seek their participation.
- Interpreters and translation, depending on needs of participants.
- Ten youth who participate in our start-up classes at Luxton Park in Glendale and are neighborhood residents will act as outreach connectors to their families
- East Side Neighborhood Services has already surveyed Glendale parent about their learning needs and will share those results with PPA.
- Luxton Park staff, located immediately adjacent to Glendale, will provide connections to interested families in Glendale
- We will piggy-back on other door-to-door work in Glendale to take around news of the Learning Dreams opportunity.

Jackson Project: “In 1908, Madison and Amy Woods Jackson moved into the Prospect Park neighborhood with their three young daughters, Marvel, Helen, and Zelma. The Jacksons were the first African American Family to move into the all-White neighborhood. At this time, only 2,700 Black people lived in Minneapolis. Their daughters were the first African American children to attend Pratt Community School. Soon after they moved in, the Jackson family was subject to discrimination, harassment, and daily threats trying to get them to leave the neighborhood. One such threat came during a demonstration in which Madison Jackson was told “Your children will not have anybody to play with.”. As a concerned

father, he considered this and decided o build a playground in their backyard that was open to all of the children in the neighborhood. And the children did come and play, with smiles on their faces and joy in their hearts. The Jackson Family lived in Prospect Park for 20 years, until the time of the father’s death.” Excerpt from Ashley Zapata’s, President PTO, presentation to PPA’s Community Building Committee, 7/14/21

Members of PPA’s Community Building committee have been working closely with the Pratt PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) and the Pratt School administration for over a year. The project has the full support of Pratt PTO and Pratt School Principal.

Additional strategies to engage participants

- **Neighborhood engagement:** hold at least two neighborhood meetings; invite participants via neighborhood newsletter and e-list; leaflets going to families in student backpacks, and door to door leaflet drop in neighborhood.
- **Use established communication channels:** monthly meetings with joint subcommittee of parents and neighborhood residents; monthly reports to Pratt PTO and monthly reports to Pratt Site Council; monthly reports to PPA Community Building committee
- **City wide engagement:** Contact TPT producer re: update to “Jim Crow of the North”; programming Work with Council member on historic designation of Jackson home; begin design work with 4M+ULA for Jackson memorial; meet with representatives of AKA, Alpha Kappa Alpha, national sorority for Black women; meet with YWCA leaders; meet with Univ of MN.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School wide communication for engagement: Within Pratt School survey all parents, staff and students using online survey tools and info sent home in student backpacks. Create additional scheduled parent/teacher meetings. With MPS facilitate meeting with MPS Facilities reps and Joint Committee, including representatives from school administration, PTO, 4M+ULA 	
<p>Resources needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2022 Equitable Engagement funds to print and mail a postcard to all residents and/or to create a Welcome Packet for new residents(described above). ● Technical skill/services and an application to include a “QR code” on the postcard so renters can access the curriculum without needing to copy and type a website link. (QR code = Quick Response code can be read by a smart phone and point the user to a website or application). ● Renter’s rights outreach staff (or an agreement with another neighborhood organization who already has a renter community organizer to deliver these services in our neighborhood). ● Volunteers with human resource skills to organize and conduct search for renters’ right staff or arrange an agreement to collaborate with another neighborhood group to provide these services in Prospect Park. Even if we hire staff, we’ll need volunteers with administrative skills to write the job description, perform the search, hire, and supervise staff. ● Mission Guardian legal service to review consultant and outreach contracts, if any. ● Interpretation and translation services for flyers and the postcard. ● Funding: PPA initiated our renters’ rights project in 2020 after giving community input. PPA created a new renter’s rights NRP strategy and allocated funds into the strategy. PPA has been 	<p>Learning Dreams: In 2021, PPA’s Board of Directors approved allocating \$5,000 of funds into the existing NRP Learning Dreams strategy.</p> <p>Additional Learning Dreams resources needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Part time staff ● The resource support of a network of 20-30 local partners as they help us respond to the dreams of participants ● A small fund to use for costs associated with dream support (e.g. class fees, supplies and materials, etc.) ● Minimal access to printing services ● Spaces to meet at within the neighborhood ● A group of volunteers (described above on the engagement section) to coordinate contacts with participants. <p>Jackson Project Resources Needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PPA to allocate \$10,000 in one-time board-designated funds for preliminary design work and volunteer resources to formally create a partnership between PTO and PPA. ● Minneapolis Public Schools legal support ● Damon and Farber landscape architects (playground design) ● 4m+ULA architects (overall design leadership) 	

	<p>and will continue to use, when appropriate and funds are eligible, NRP “housing” funds for the renter’s right program.</p> <p>The Evaluation and Plan that identifies next steps—these steps might include resources to recruit volunteers and/or to hire renters’ rights project staff to carry out proposed outreach and engagement strategies during 2022 and beyond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Memorial artist funds ● Neighborhood Joint subcommittee buy-in: Pratt PTO, Pratt staff, Pratt administration, PPA, ● Resources to support Jackson family participation (plane flights, hotels) ● Signage <p>One next is to request the PPA Board partner with the Pratt PTO board in urging the Minneapolis Public Schools to rename the playground at Pratt School after the Jackson family and create a memorial of the Jackson family at the playground, and request PPA match the Pratt PTO contribution by allocating \$10,000 for preliminary project design work.</p> <p>The preliminary design work will cost \$20,000. Pratt PTO has already committed \$10,000 toward preliminary design work.</p>		
Partners in the work	To varying degrees, we have sought resources from or developed partnerships with U of MN Off-Campus Living and Student Legal Service (SLS), Defend Glendale and Public Housing Coalition, MPHA’s Property Manager at Glendale Townhomes Public Housing, HOME Line, Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, Minneapolis Housing Inspections, Minnesota BIPOC Environmental Justice Table, Rethos, Housing Link, Minnesota Fair Housing, and Inquilinx.	The Jackson Family, Luxton Park Recreation Center, Pratt PTO, Minneapolis Public Schools, Pratt School Administration, families and students of Pratt, and the community-at-large.		
Person(s) responsible	Relevant PPA committee volunteers and PPA Board of Directors	Community Building Committee and PPA Board of Directors		
Timeline	Jan – May: identify independent leadership, evaluate renters’ rights project to date, and identify next steps and resources needed.	Learning Dreams: The program will begin small and step-up gradually. Exact dates will depend on the pandemic.		

	<p>June: take next steps proposal for next steps to PPA Board of Directors</p> <p>July: Implement next steps</p> <p>June: Proof and publish renter’s rights website</p> <p>July-September: Promote renter’s rights website using PPA’s database of “Communication Avenues.”</p> <p>Date to be determined: Re-design postcard and mail to Prospect Park residents</p>	<p>Jackson Project: now – March: PPA to allocate \$10,000 in reserved board-designated funds for preliminary design work</p> <p>April – December: Create formal partnership between PTO and PPA to manage Jackson project activities.</p> <p>June – December: Oversee preliminary design work</p>	
<p>Quantitative goals</p>	<p>Obtain a written evaluation and recommend a concrete plan to address resource barriers and build on progress to date. Obtain evaluations from all PPA volunteers involved in the current renters’ rights project plus renters not currently involved.</p> <p>500 renters will access renter’s curriculum and website</p> <p>Mail postcard to 14,300 residents. Identify and measure outcomes of postcard mailing.</p>	<p>Learning Dreams: Identify a group of 5-20 youth and parents who are interested in working on educational goals and dreams; Hold 5-15 structured conversations with participants to discover what they identify as a goal or dream they want to pursue; Identify resources in the wider community to support those goals and dreams.</p> <p>Jackson Project: see above</p>	
<p>Qualitative goals</p>	<p>Listen to the priorities and concerns of renters, including public housing residents and parents, change direction in response to those stated priorities, and follow through to deliver support and results. Continue to build on connections and relationships. Develop trust. Expand representation by renters, including public housing residents and parents in our informal connections and our formal groups and “committees.”</p>	<p>Learning Dreams: The program works to find out what really motivates the participants, and connects them to mentors, programs and learning networks in the community that creatively respond to those goals and dreams, helping to build a foundation for learning and educational success. Learning Dreams is not intended to “fix” people; rather, it finds their strengths and helps people to build on them. The program presents strong connectors for participants to help them build paths for successful learning, and successful lives. All people need such support, but many never get enough of it.</p>	

		Jackson Project Long-Term Goals: Provide an exciting, dynamic, community space/playground for young people to learn our history, combined with a coordinated Pratt School curriculum.		
Outcome of engagement	<p>To date successful engagement outcomes have flowed directly from these activities: Listening to the priorities and concerns of renters, including public housing residents and parents, changing direction in response to those stated priorities, and following through to deliver support and results. Building connections and relationships. Developing trust by following through when identify priorities. Expanding representation by renters, including public housing residents and parents in our informal connections and our formal groups and committees.</p> <p>New 2022 outcomes Include: 1) evaluating progress to date and 2) ensuring organizational structure changes to make it possible for volunteers with limited time and resources to be involved in decision-making through informal communications and formal/information groups, such as PPA committees and board and community meetings.</p>	<p>Learning Dreams: Connect individuals with resources and concrete activities that respond to their dreams; track how they are doing on their progress; and stay connected over time to help participants deal with challenges and obstacles that always arise in such situations.</p> <p>Jackson Project: During 2022, PPA to allocate \$10,000 in reserved board-designated funds for preliminary design work and develop a formal working partnership between PTO parents and PPA members.</p>		
Next steps	See above	See above		