



Charlotte Community Association, Inc.

"A Community That Cares"

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES September 9, 2024 Roger Robach Community Center

Attendance: Board of Directors: Jose Peo, President; Sue Roethel, Secretary; RoseMary Shaw, Treasurer; Tony Micciche, Director; Lindy Litwak, Director; John Kabrovski, Director; Jon Cahill, Director (Excused: Tom Bruce, Vice President). Additionally, there were approximately 35 people in the audience.

CITY OF ROCHESTER UPDATES

Rochester Police Department (RPD) – Crime Prevention Officer Vinny Agnone reported that there was an assault over a stolen bike in the 4000 block of Lake Avenue; perpetrator was arrested. Traffic detail at 4752 Lake Avenue on 8/31 resulted in 38 tickets issued by RPD; 20 tickets issued by Monroe County Sheriffs; and 15 tickets issued by NYS Troopers. The summer detail from 7-11 pm at Ontario Beach Park has ended and officers have resumed their normal assignments. Car thefts are still happening across the city, including NW quad. In the Charlotte neighborhood, they are reported in the Cherry Road area.

For general complaints, the public is advised to email or call Officer Agnone prior to the next CCA meeting. He left his contact info on the resource table for anyone wishing to contact him. Regarding 911 calls, RPD only receives them if a referral is made by the 911 center. RPD does see a report afterward of calls received. Officer Agnone was asked to provide an update next month on the Monroe County Juvenile Initiative program that supports youth who are repeat offenders.

City Council NW Representative – Bridget Monroe's legislative aide Mitch Rowe reported that there were four public hearings on NYS "Good Cause Eviction" legislation. City Council is considering legislation to limit rent increases; handouts were made available. Bridget has not taken a position on the issue yet. The public is urged to call in any nuisances so that a record is on file; then property owners can be served with nuisance points and shut down for code violations that exceed tolerance. Also, the public is urged to read carefully the language in legislation.

Regarding the RFP to lease the restaurant space (formerly occupied by The Jetty) on 2nd floor of the Port Terminal Building, Council has still not seen a recommendation; negotiations continue between the city and a potential tenant. Same status for the RFP to develop the Marina Overlook Site at the Port; negotiations are still in process with a chosen developer. Same status for the RFP for the River Street Realignment Project; negotiations still in process with owner of 503 River Street property (Terry Testa), with a possible start date of early 2025. The contractor who completed sidewalk repairs in Charlotte last year left 25 sections of shoddy work that is deemed unacceptable. Work will be re-done at contractor's expense. Today NY Governor Kathy Hochul visited Rochester and pledged \$25M to the city to provide RPD with needed equipment.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Irish American History Memorial Proposed at Ontario Beach Park – Tom O'Connell, Col. Patrick O'Rorke Irish American Historical Society (IAHS), presented a revised design proposed for installation on the west side of the Robach Community Center, just outside of the pickleball courts. The purpose is to celebrate the "American Dream" by honoring Irish immigrants who arrived at the Port of Rochester to



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start of new life. The memorial is intended to be a quiet, meditative space that is also educational. The IAHS is seeking community input in order to proceed with their plans. They have presented their proposal at area festivals and have received positive feedback so far. During a Q&A session with the Charlotte community, there were many concerns expressed but no show of support of this proposed installation at Ontario Beach Park. The following facts were established and community concerns expressed:

- The IAHS took their original proposal to the city and county and asked for land that they could purchase for the memorial. They were given only two options: Canal Park or Ontario Beach Park (OBP). Canal Park does not have appropriate access, so OBP is their only viable option.
- The project budget is \$1M, which will come from fundraising efforts and held in the form of a trust fund.
- The project involves 3 phases: Phase 1: Approval and purchase of land; Phase 2: fundraising; Phase 3: Installation. The Monroe County Legislature must approve land use.
- Contract will include plans for maintenance.
- Granting space for one ethnic group at the park could set a precedent for other groups to want their own space as well.
- The west end of Ontario Beach Park is the only space left for shore birds and wild life. The IAHS has done a site study but have not consulted with environmentalists, biologists, or educators about the environmental impact their installation would have on wild life in the area. They could do an impact study once they have secured the land purchase.
- The design is low-profile, so it should not block any views of Lake Ontario.
- There are approximately 12 people in the IAHS and are the people behind this proposal; none are residents of Charlotte.
- The CCA hosted a design charrette in 2017 to plan for future development of the Port of Rochester and surrounding areas, including OBP. About 100 people from Charlotte and the Greater Rochester area participated in the full charrette, and about 15-20 of the participants focused specifically on OBP. In the five years following the charrette, a community-developed Vision Plan was created from the many ideas brought forth in the charrette. Many needs and desires are identified for OBP in the Vision Plan, and none of them involve separating out a designated space for a static memorial installation.
- The Port of Rochester and Charlotte Vision Plan, completed in March 2023, can be viewed on the CCA website at: <https://charlottecca.org/community-development/port-development/>.
- The CCA Board consensus on the proposal is not in favor of supporting of its installation at OBP.
- The Monroe County Parks Department wants to ensure that due process is given through public forums such as tonight's meeting provides. Ongoing debate and discussion will continue.

NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATES / COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Monroe County Legislature - Yversha Roman, President (and representative of Charlotte Community) reported that the county received ARPA funds that were allocated as follows: \$6M going to suburban municipalities for support of youth and seniors; \$6M going to nonprofit organizations within zip codes in distressed areas. \$3M going to the library system to provide digital equity through free and available wifi access. The funds will purchase tables and benches; she asked if the community had any suggestions of where in Charlotte these should be placed.

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During Q&A, it was discussed that Charlotte does not current receive any benefits from the ARPA funds that support youth, but (Yversha said) any organization can apply for those funds. Currently, when the city declares a "Cool Sweep" during very hot days, the spray park at OBP is not included.

New York State Senator Jeremy Cooney thanked the community for continued support. He reported that municipal broadband service is possible in the future and that Verizon has purchased Frontier Communications. He continues to support grants and programming for the Robach Community Center and OBP through the Monroe County Parks Department. He said that Rochester has a higher percentage of car thefts than anywhere else in NYS. Corn Hill is a neighborhood very high in car thefts. Some changes to NYS laws have happened which would allow law enforcement to arrest a suspect, rather than issue a ticket to appear in court. Judges have discretion under NYS law to hold a suspect when they are deemed to pose a danger to the community. Senator Cooney suggested that other neighborhoods share the same issues as Charlotte does with crime, nuisances, noise, and garbage. There is current legislation to provide \$300K in state funding to support groups doing gang intervention, to address the root cause.

During Q&A, it was discussed that meaningful consequences must happen to deter youth from stealing cars. Legislation to amend the NYS Bail Reform Law ("catch and release" program) was brought forth a year ago that gives judges the ability to hold an offender in jail without bail, but it is not mandated that they do so. It is purely at the discretion of the judge in each case. There was an interest in having more discussion on this topic, but we ran out of time to do so.

BOARD REPORTS

President's Report - **Jose Peo** nominated himself to be a candidate for President on the ballot for fall elections of CCA Board of Directors. He also nominated Jonathan Hardin and Valerie Delvecchio as candidates for Director.

Treasurer's Report – RoseMary Shaw reported that income for the month of August was received from memberships, sponsorships, donations and t-shirt sales. After expenses, the month-end balance was \$12,712.

COMMITTEE REPORTS / VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Beautification – UR students helped with cleaning up flower beds.

Communications

Community Development

Finance

Nominating & Governance – Final Call for Nominations for 2025-26 Board of Directors; Elections will take place on 11/5 at the CCA General Meeting. The final slate of candidates plus proposed revisions to CCA Bylaws will be presented at the CCA General Meeting on 10/7.

Programming – Fall Community Bonfire event is scheduled on 9/21 at Ontario Beach Park.

Youth Engagement

9:10 pm

Adjournment

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9/16/24 BOD Meeting, 6:30 pm, location TBD
- 9/21/24 Fall Community Bonfire Event, 5:30 pm, Ontario Beach Park
- 10/7/24 General Meeting, 7 pm, Robach Community Center – Slate of 2025-26 Board Candidates announced

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