

## Edgemere Park Neighborhood Annual Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2024

The meeting was held at Shakespeare in the Park Theatre in the Paseo, with thanks to Henri Bailey for making the arrangements. Lindsey Pever called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm.

Members present: Coleman Nash, Joanne Holden, Ann Parrish, Margaret Donnelly, Monica, Jack and Andrew Sexton, Jessica Johnson, Christa Ball, Susie White, Kevin Wilson, John and Jacqueline Rogers, Brian Mitchell, Katie Watts, Katie Hawk, Rebecca Snyder, Marilyn Edens, Petra Cox, Andrea Monachella, John and Shelly Knight, Marcus Long (guest speaker), Doug Eason, Liz Bullen, Stacy and Duane Blass, Nancy Cain, Henri Bailey, Caroline and Robert Dennis, Marnie Taylor, Doug Stratton, Wendy Shreffler, Jann Hook, JJ and Nicky Kuen, Kelly Barnes

A motion to renew the terms of existing expiring block trustees was made and approved (motion by Robert Dennis; second by Petra Cox; voice vote).

Lindsey introduced our guest speaker, Marcus Long with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, who has been invited to speak about the issue of spraying chemical herbicides in the park. The board of trustees has not been able to reach a consensus on this issue at recent meetings. This issue predates other pressing issues such as the ongoing ONG project. Questions and concerns about the ongoing issues are encouraged to be presented to the project manager (for ONG) and the appropriate block trustees or other board members (other issues).

Marcus Long introduced himself and explained his background as a horticulturist and present employee of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. He explained that Bermuda lawns or other large monocultures do not exist in nature and therefore must have artificial inputs. Over time, the soil and microbes degrade and are unable to sustain the vegetation, thus requiring nitrogen fertilizer. There are environmental costs associated therewith. The biggest source of water pollution is sediment, and fertilizer use may be a contributing factor to this. Another impact to monoculture is the spreading of weeds, which is a natural plant process. There are two main types of weed and pest prevention pesticides: preemergent (to kill seeds; lower environmental impact) and postemergent (higher environmental impact; systemic impact on food chain). Pesticide use can be reduced through more consistent lawn maintenance (elimination of seedheads), and pesticides have a place in appropriate lawn maintenance.

Questions related to:

- using buffalo grass rather than Bermuda. Marcus said that Bermuda grass will take over and is expensive to start;
- sand burrs and stickers in the park;
- water conservation/xeriscaping;
- alternatives to a monoculture landscape and benefits of “weeds” such as dandelions and henbit;
- the presence of large weeds on the creekbed;
- the benefits of large weeds for erosion control and alternatives.

Marcus also discussed the yard-by-yard program, which encourages homeowners to incorporate responsible conservation measures on their own property. There is also a park-by-park program

targeted to schools, businesses and churches, for which the neighborhood could apply. He offered to serve as a resource if we want to develop a plan to reduce pesticide use in the park.

Representatives from Okies for Monarchs, including neighbors Rebecca Snyder and Katie Hawk, were at the meeting and added that they would love to see native plants planted in the park and that people can find more info about that organization at <https://www.okiesformonarchs.org/>.

Lindsey invited interested neighbors to sign up for the Parks and Landscaping Committee, and it was suggested that neighborhood representatives meet with the city to encourage more frequent mowing and pesticide mitigation.

Lindsey gave an update on the proposed development at 30<sup>th</sup> and Hudson. The proposal is before the Planning Commission at this time. We have worked with Jefferson Park and the developer to negotiate for preferable development, despite the action of the Historic Preservation Commission to ignore its own guidelines and approve the project. The developer has made several concessions but the project still exceeds all applicable standards. The current plan is 20 units, down from 27, but parking remains a problem. Our reps on the City Council, Planning Commission and Traffic Commission have been helpful. The Planning Commission will meet on February 8 and the City Council is anticipated to hear the application on February 27. There is then an option to take the issue to district court after a final decision is rendered, and there will be another opportunity to go before the Historic Preservation Commission before construction begins. Negotiations with the developer are ongoing. The goal is to have the project comply with the existing HP guidelines with respect to number of units, setbacks, parking, sight lines, etc. Existing guidelines would be 12-16 units, with 1.5-2 parking spaces per unit.

Ann Parrish and Margaret Donnelly discussed the status of the security corporation, starting with a plea for payment of annual dues. We have been successful in having patrols four times per day, but we have noticed more vagrancy and unclaimed possessions in the park area. We have had some reports of crime but it is unknown if this is an increase or decrease. Our security patrolman has gone above and beyond in helping with keeping transients out of the park. We currently have 91 subscribers, and have confiscated the security signs from neighbors who are not dues-paying members. We have funds on hand to pay for five weeks at this point, and that is with a single donor paying over \$3,000. The idea of allowing a discount for multiple property owners is being discussed. Lindsey will look into whether security dues could be paid to the nonprofit neighborhood association (for tax purposes) and then transferred to the security corporation. Dues can be paid on the new website. Thanks and appreciation were expressed to Ann and Margaret for their hard work.

The website continues to be a work in progress and the board would welcome any neighbors who would be interested in assisting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 pm.

APPENDIX: EPPi 2024 Officers and Trustees  
OFFICERS, 2023-2024

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VACANT 2022-2023

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