

Candler Park Conservancy, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting
March 17, 2021 –Video Conference 7:00 pm

Present: Kim Awbrey, Ken Edelstein, Stacy Funderburke, Dan Hanlon, Elliot Jones, Ben Klehr, Scott Lenhart, Perry Smith, John Skach, Amy Stout, Doug Wetzel, Lauren Welsh, Jack White, John Wolf, and Omar Zaki. Members of the public also attended.

Not Present:

Annual Meeting Notes:

Doug Wetzel presented the Candler Park Conservancy’s Annual Membership Meeting via zoom. The annual meeting is open to the public. Invitations were made via membership outreach, social media, and posted on our website. A record of this meeting differs slightly from meeting minutes generated during regular monthly board meetings, in that a presentation was given and that ongoing regular business of decision-making and board business considerations is not generally part of this session. The slide presentation “Candler Park: Atlanta’s Natural Place to Play” is available online here (provide link?).

The meeting presentation Included:

What is the Candler Park Conservancy?

- Discussed the origin of the park and current use of the park.
- Presented how the Candler Park Conservancy was created, stemming from a master-planning process of the CPNO, then established as a volunteer-run nonprofit, with partner organizations including the City of Atlanta and CPNO. Three guiding principles are: open, democratic decision-making; commitment to enhancing the park’s wildlife, natural areas, and environmental sustainability; open access for all Atlantans in all our diversity.
- Discussed the 20-year vision plan.

2020 in Review

- A Dramatic increase in use is occurring due to the pandemic. More people have been using the park for a wider variety of activities.
- Project completion for The Amy Erwin Memorial Garden, a beautifully designed area to gather within the nature of the coves, which reactivated an underutilized portion of the park.
- Board and volunteers rallied despite Covid to advance outcomes this year – monthly meetings, continued initiatives, fundraising 80% increase from 2020. Leveraged new technologies for efficient and fluid communication. Updated finance practices and reporting capabilities. Held first virtual members meeting. Revamped and repaired CP front entrance gardens with volunteers and professional landscaping services.

2021 Progress and Process

- Vision Plan – The Active Lawn will be the flagship project for the park’s renewal.
- Plans to make the field resilient will incorporate stormwater management to protect the riparian corridor and innovations to drain the soil and turf.
- Sustainable design for the will permit expanded recreational activities and improved access.
- Additional upcoming projects include \$30k of small projects, maintenance, invasive species removal, plantings and educational programming. A collaboration with neighborhood volunteers is pursuing a solution to restroom availability in the park.
- Socially distance Activities are planned including scavenger hunt, chalk-o-rama, cleanups and plantings. A list of planned but yet unscheduled activities exists for when gatherings are safe following Covid including movie nights, disc-golf, Fall-Fest, and Beavers, Bluegrass & BBQ celebration.

Going Forward Together

- Description of current board composition
- Candler Park Decides Initiative by City Councilman Amir Farokhi offers opportunities for collaboration and neighborhood improvements that receive popular support, CPC is in a great position to host projects important to the community.
- Active Lawn Fundraising will call on all supporters for help.
- Candler Park will be celebrating its Centennial Anniversary! It is a unique moment for CP.

Open Discussion followed with members of the public:

- Edith Kelman of Candler Park asked about collaboration with the Freedom Park Conservancy and has suggestions to review the north end of the park. She also mentioned that the 100 year anniversary is an opportunity to further dialogue with the Bi-racial History Project, a suggestion that was welcomed by CPC.
- Susan Rose commented that CPNO will be a good partner in the 100 year celebration of CP and critical to help spread the message. It is a great PR opportunity to share the identity and plans of the Conservancy and for Candler Park as it is currently an open and diverse community, while also offering honest clear picture of the history of the park. Discussion followed around how to honor history. A series of discussions about next steps needs a meeting.
- Edward Andrews asked about erosion control on the playground, it was acknowledged that the projects committee is aware of this and currently exploring solutions.

- Scott Lenhart of the Governance Committee invited involvement by the public and described ways that community members can get involved with the board including participation on specific committees.

Annual Meeting Board Business: A vote to confirm board members' renewal traditionally occurs at the annual members meeting. The vote to renew the following CPC Board General and At-large Directors was conducted and unanimous in confirming: Ben Klehr, Scott Lenhart, John Wolf, Omar Zaki, Kim Awbrey and Jack White.

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