



The Penn Brancher

Monthly Newsletter for Penn Branch Citizens Civic Association

"A Community on the Move"

Next Meeting: Topic: PBCCA General Body Zoom Meeting

Time: Sep 8, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5515035558>

Meeting ID: 551 503 5558

One tap mobile +13017158592,,5515035558# US (Germantown)



President's Message

2020 has been a year of challenges and has tested our resiliency as a nation and community. As we prepare for a pivotal nationwide election, while navigating through a global

pandemic and national civil unrest, we also continue to address critical issues that directly impact our community, including important local elections and elections for PBCCA officers.

My goal has been to strengthen our impact as an association and encourage residents to put aside differences to collectively work together for the good of Penn Branch and everyone living East of the River. I applaud the elected officers, and others who have added community tasks to their already busy lives to enhance our quality of life. I can't tell you how many hours we've dedicated to working together to make sure that the needs of long-time and new residents are addressed. While we might disagree on the path to take, divisions and differences of opinion have to be managed. We have to keep our eyes on our goal of an inclusive, livable, walkable, and strong community with access to essential services. No single opinion should eclipse what we can and should accomplish working together.

The PBCCA Board and select group of Penn Branch residents have been working diligently to update our bylaws to ensure that our collective voices are heard. We need an updated roadmap to follow that is in line with current DC regulations and the best practices and guidelines utilized by other like-minded and successful community associations. We appreciate the many Penn Branchers who have long been voices of the community. We also recognize that there are newer and emerging voices that deserve to be heard as we work together. We're saddened that many of our community pillars are passing away. Our goal is to build upon the many leaders who have helped build and strengthen this community and set the stage for future leaders to develop. We also must provide new leaders the opportunity to lead. Being a community leader isn't easy, and it can be downright frustrating, and rewarding.

However, we have to keep in mind that our purpose is to

collectively strengthen our community for current and future residents while recognizing the past. *I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.* – R. Tagore

Jacquelyn Cannon, President
PBCCA

Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street Program: A Major East of the River Victory

If you have not heard, the PBCCA and several community associations and leaders scored a significant victory in early August. After being told that it would be almost impossible to secure budget and support for a program during a COVID-era budget-cutting environment, the Pennsylvania Avenue East Community Coalition (PAECC) successfully obtained the funding and budget for a Pennsylvania Avenue East DC Main Streets program. Despite an attempt to change the boundaries of the designated Main Street, funding will remain focused on Pennsylvania Avenue East from the Sousa Bridge to Southern Avenue and will bring much needed targeted commercial revitalization to the Pennsylvania Avenue East corridor.

The \$200,000 grant allocates \$175,000 for programmatic and operation expenses and \$25,000 to be used by DSLBD to provide training and resources to the Main Street Program to develop a strong foundation. The PAECC will coordinate closely with DC leaders to ensure that a strong executive director focuses on the development of *our* corridor that benefits *our* community. We are appreciative to **Councilmember Vincent Gray** for his leadership and guidance to ensure this victory, **Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, John Falcicchio**, and members of the DC Council who approved the measures. We are very thankful to **Viveca Miller** and many other community residents for their dedication and contributions to this effort. They sacrificed their summers to make this happen.

The building blocks of this group started with a group of Penn Branch residents who expressed frustration with the lack of shops, restaurants, and

Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street (cont. from page 1) small and mid-sized businesses east of the river. They questioned why growth halted as soon as you crossed the Sousa Bridge and why we don't have the type of development enjoyed by residents in many other parts of the city.

Penn Branch Citizens Civic Association Bylaws



On Saturday, August 29, approximately 15 residents participated in a Zoom call with the PBCCA Bylaws Subcommittee to discuss the draft updated governance documents and provide input. The Bylaws were last revised in 2009.

Copies of the proposed updated documents are available at <https://pennbranchdc.org/pbcca-by-laws-update/>. You can request a copy for yourself or neighbors who might not have access to the Internet by sending an email to info@pennbranchdc.org or calling (202) 455-6035.

For those who were unable to join the live call, the video has been posted on the PBCCA website and can be watched by visiting: <https://pennbranchdc.org/pbcca-bylaws-1st-qa-session-video-link/>.

Thank you to all who participated and provided helpful suggestions to improve these drafts. The Subcommittee and Board aim to bring the updated documents to a membership vote for ratification in October before the election of new officers. Below is the schedule for the next several weeks of important work on the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and our 2020 - 2022 Officer Elections:

- **September 5:** 1st Round written inputs/questions on Articles and Bylaws due to kyle.murphy@kolabnow.com
- **September 7-8:** We will disseminate updated drafts via email (and paper to anyone who requests it).
- **September 8:** PBCCA will hold virtual September General Body Meeting and discuss this timeline. Zoom link will be published soon.
- **September 11:** Deadline to complete the PBCCA Name Update Survey located at: <https://forms.gle/EbecviymqjczwZm7>.
- **September 12:** 10 am: We will hold a 2nd Q&A session via Zoom.
- **September 19:** Final comments and questions due to kyle.murphy@kolabnow.com.
- **September 21-30:** Final legal review including all community inputs.
- **September 30:** midnight, **Deadline for PBCCA Membership Renewals to be eligible to VOTE.**

Visit: <https://pennbranchdc.org/membership/> to renew your membership online.

- **October 1-5:** PBCCA will disseminate Articles and Bylaws in final form with instructions for voting (including option for electronic or paper ballots).
- **October 5-12:** Members in good standing will vote on accepting updated Articles and Bylaws.
- **October 13:** Virtual October General Body Meeting, announce results of vote, and introduce nominees for 2020 - 2022 officers.
- **November 2-9:** Members in good standing will VOTE for 2020 - 2022 officer slate.
- **November 10:** Virtual November General Body Meeting and announcement of results of officer vote.

Thanks for the hard work of our Bylaws Subcommittee, which includes Joan McKenzie, Rosemary Crockett, Dr. Cicily Hampton, Tad Duree, and Kyle Murphy. The subcommittee worked closely in conjunction with Latham & Watkins law firm (pro bono) to ensure the PBCCA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are updated to comply with DC law and to reflect best practices and guidelines.

We're Looking for Candidates

The Penn Branch Citizens Civic Association (PBCCA) is currently recruiting for a slate of candidates best qualified to serve as officers of PBCCA. The following positions are up for election: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Correspondence Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. Please click on the link at: <https://pennbranchdc.org/pbcca-2020-officer-elections-nomination-form/> to view the position descriptions and to complete a Nomination Form. The deadline for submission of the Nomination Form is midnight, September 26, 2020.

For more information or to obtain a hardcopy of the Nomination Form, please contact Elson Nash, Chair of the Nominations Committee at 240-350-5970 or elsonb13@gmail.com.

Opening Soon on Pennsylvania Avenue - House of Ruth: Kidspace

Many Penn Branch residents have asked about the new construction on the 2900 block of Pennsylvania Avenue,



SE. The location will soon welcome the return of the *House of Ruth Kids Space* that had operated in the area since 1996 when it first opened. The new building will soon open directly across the street from the South East White House,

House of Ruth (cont. from page2)

which recently opened the Dream Center about two years ago.

Kids Space and Family Development Center is a nationally accredited child development center for children ages six months through five. The center will provide help and assistance to children from families that are homeless and living at the House of Ruth or participating in other DC programs. The new building is a stark contrast to the older white building with overgrowth and a chain-link fence that functioned for years on the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor. With its colorful exterior and lighted ABC's and playground, the new construction is expected to serve about 88 children.

The facility will include a community room that neighborhood residents can use. The playground will also be open for community residents. Kids Place adds function and vitality to what we hope will soon be a developing and vital Pennsylvania Avenue East of the River corridor. To learn more: <https://vimeo.com/450810331>

If you are interested in volunteering at House of Ruth, please contact Elizabeth Kiker at ekiker@houseofruth.org or 202-597-5803.

Neighborhood Safety

Despite all of the challenges with COVID and many other issues, crime has not taken a break. Over the summer, several neighbors woke up to find their cars ransacked by opportunistic youth roaming through the community looking for open car doors. The thefts were caught on camera around 1:00 am, with several youths pulling on car doors and quickly going through the automobiles.

There have been two home invasions around the 3200 block of O Street, SE (behind Penn Branch Shopping Center). Burglars entered homes they presumed to be empty; however, one was indeed occupied. They broke into the home at 3:00 am and left when the occupant confronted them. The MPD Police responded promptly in all cases. We strongly encourage community vigilance and installing outdoor security cameras in the front and rear of your homes. The more neighbors participate, the more coverage and protection for our community. Remember, nothing will take the place of precautions such as locking your car doors, using good locks, alarm systems, alerting police of suspicious activities, and of course, security cameras. The District government offers up to a \$500.00 reimbursement. For more information, visit: <https://ovsjg.dc.gov/service/private-security-camera-system-incentive-program>.

Homelessness and Mental Health

Several neighbors have asked about the homeless lady, "Ms. Angela", who has lived under the bridge since 2016. Neighbors have expressed concern for her safety since she lives year-round in the open space under the expressway. We have also received inquiries from pedestrians and bicyclists concerned about sanitary conditions, trash, debris, waste, and other passageway issues.



We recognize the delicate balance of protecting the less fortunate or those in need of mental health services and the need to ensure access, safety, and cleanings for our community.

The DC Government has scheduled a general clean-up for early September. Unfortunately, previous attempts to find permanent assistance for Ms. Angela and address the unsanitary conditions and keep the area under the bridge and immediate area have failed. We hope the City can find a solution.

PBCCA Resident Appears of Rachel Maddow Show

PBCCA Recording Secretary and Acting Vice President, Kyle Murphy, was recently interviewed on The Rachel Maddow Show on MSNBC in an extended interview with



the host. Murphy, a former Senior Analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency, spoke with Rachel Maddow about his views of the Trump administration and what led him to resign his government position.

He also shared his thoughts on how Americans should respond. You can view his interview at: <https://tinyurl.com/yxdkdfjw>.

We should note the PBCCA is a non-partisan 501(c)(3) and remains politically neutral.

In Memory

We ask that you continue to support the families of our Penn Branchers who have passed this year. Please keep in your prayers the families of long-time residents, **Blaun-Eva Brewton (Hiram)** and **Elouise Prince (Roy)**, who passed this summer. They were leaders and active participants with PBCCA.

PBCCA Membership News

Your membership in the PBCCA Association helps to make a difference in our community. Your membership allows us to support many of our community activities and efforts such as the Annual Penn Branch Community Day, Holiday Celebration, community advocacy, and also ensuring that our collective voices are heard.

Please renew your membership or join the PBCCA Association by October 1, 2020 in order to VOTE on the Bylaws and in the upcoming elections.

Join online Today and make your voice heard! Visit <https://pennbranchdc.org/membership/>.

*** PBCCA Membership Cards ***

If you joined PBCCA in 2019 or 2020 and never received your Membership card, please send an email to info@pennbranchdc.org to request your card. We have a few that have not been distributed.

The Membership Committee is busy working on consolidating multiple distribution lists to ensure everyone receives the PBCCA publications and correspondences. If you receive multiple emails from info@pennbranchdc.org in the coming days, please just respond and say, "I received this already" or something similar. We will promptly rectify the situation.

Want FREE Fresh Vegetables? Visit one of the locations listed below to grab your bag of fresh corn, cucumbers, broccoli, squash, zucchini, potatoes or other fresh vegetables and GO! Many bags are going unclaimed by residents. Save money on expanding grocery bills and pick up a bag today!

| Martha's Table 40 years strong EDUCATION • FOOD • OPPORTUNITY | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| GRAB-AND-GO GROCERY DISTRIBUTION | | | |
| TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
| 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM KELLY MILLER MIDDLE SCHOOL 301 49TH STREET NE 20019 (WARD 7) | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM H.D. WOODSON HIGH SCHOOL 540 55TH STREET NE (WARD 7) | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM KIMBALL ELEMENTARY 3375 MINNESOTA AVE SE (WARD 7) | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM BALLOU HIGH SCHOOL 3401 4TH STREET SE (WARD 8) |
| 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM STANTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2701 NAYLOR ROAD SE 20020 (WARD 8) | 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM THEARC WEST CAMPUS 1901 MISSISSIPPI AVE SE (WARD 8) | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM ANACOSTIA HIGH SCHOOL 1601 16TH STREET SE (WARD 8) | 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM E.W. STOKES PCS - EAST END CAMPUS 5600 EAST CAPITOL STREET NE (WARD 7) |

Pope Branch Park is Open



The tree that fell in Pope Branch Park has been removed and kids once again will have a nearby place to play and parents have a nice sitting areas.

PENN BRANCH HAPPENINGS

Welcome Back Ms. Carolyn Ray: After an extended covalence and absence from the community, welcome back Carolyn Ray. Ms. Ray has long worked with the PBCCA Hospitality Committee serving food at our community meetings. She has also been an active participant ensuring the removal of trash and debris from our community.

Get Well Soon: To all of our neighbors who may be recovering from recent illnesses, surgeries, colds/flu/COVID-19, stress or strain. Our sincere wishes for a speedy recovery! Remembering you all in our thoughts & prayers.

Check Up on Seniors!

Please continue to check on our seniors as we all address the COVID-19 pandemic. If you know of seniors in need of assistance, please contact us at info@pennbranchdc.org or contact your neighborhood Block Captain.



Shout Out: To the PBCCA Board and Executive Board Members who have been busy handling PBCCA's business during the pandemic. Outstanding TEAM

EFFORT! We appreciate you all!

The US Census is ending on September 30th!

Residents have three ways to respond to the census: [online](#), by [phone](#), or by mail. Visit: <https://dccensus2020.dc.gov/> to learn more and respond while you still have time!

This publication is being delivered to you electronically to adhere to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The PBCCA Block Captains will resume delivering the Newsletter once the Public Health Emergency has been lifted.

Thank you to the PBCCA members and Ward 7 Community Leaders for your support, concern, ideas, and efforts to keep the community moving forward.