

Monday, May 5th 2025

Let's Taco 'Bout It: Quarterly Meeting

At this quarterly meeting we had approximately 50 adults in attendance (+20 or more kids).

The executive board was in full attendance, including Cassandra Jessee (Chair), Nate Kitzke (Vice Chair), Dot Walker (Treasurer), Juliet Armerding (Secretary) (one position is vacant - Membership Liaison, interested??). We are so grateful for such a robust turn out from the community!

Meeting Notes and Minutes:

6 pm: People arrive at Simpson-Hamline and begin taco dinner catered by [Xelaju Bakery](#). Kids had a room with crafts and games. Thanks to our neighborhood teens and tweens (Jonathan, Dylan, Matilda, Lexie, Rebeka, and Tristan) who stayed and played with all of them.

6:28: table icebreakers led by Juliet.

6:32: Cassandra introduced the agenda for the evening, introducing Gabrielle Amosi from [Uptown Main Street](#). Uptown Community Initiative manages Petworth and Uptown Main Streets.

- Goal is to help support commercial corridors. Looking to see what can be attracted and brought to the Main Streets - regenerating foot traffic with family friendly activities.
- free jazz concert on Wednesdays. Follow instagram for more information
- Competition for grants. Direct funds to businesses to help businesses for marketing/branding/infrastructure (in MAY!) must be a storefront, materials translated into 4 languages.
- Unending construction at Colorado Triangle.
- Cashmob! Register for business in the month of May to get some love from neighbors. Reach out to info@uptownmainstreet.org for more information.
- June: Annual meeting for Uptown Main and Petworth Streets. Will be on a Monday, details to come. [@uptownmainstreet](#) or [@petworthmainstreet](#) to follow IG.
- Community member question about the coming dispensary on 14th: it is legal? Answer is yes. No use of outdoor space allowed for smoking.

6:44: Camsie, our 4E05 ANC representative, was introduced. Here to help and serve and liaise with the city. Recent success getting new trash cans, resolving parking issues, etc. Reach out if you have questions on which agencies to help. Introduced a poll to vote for the next porch party - either 6/7 or 6/14. 6/14 won!

Reach out to Camsie (camsie.mcadams@gmail.com) if you are interested in being a porch host for about 45 minutes between 4-8pm on Sat June 14

6:48: More updates from Cassandra.

- Recent events: spring fling and garden clean up, partnership with Piney Spring Green, b/w 15 and 14th, Varnum and Webster. Please use the green space! It is open for the neighborhood.
- We've launched block captains and a senior committee (see updates following).
- SSNA contributed food to the Porch Fest on Buchanan (4/26).
- Joining with Camsie for Coffees on Monday, alternating between Zeke's and Casa Mia.
- Encourage joining David and John with Hot Mic'd Punk youth band first Saturday of the month hosted by Simpson-Hamline.
- Amplifying other community related efforts
- SSNA is working on getting online systems up and running more cohesively. We have a SSNA board position that was not filled in the December election - Membership liaison and it is a clear need. Interested? Please reach out!

Upcoming: Monday coffees from 9-10 am. Clean-ups every 3-4 weeks alternating Saturday or Sunday mornings. Next Senior Social May 21st from 4-6 at 19th St. Baptist Church. Porch party June 14 (seeking hosts).

Sept 13: SAVE THE DATE! Allison St Block Party! Sept 20 is the rain date. 4 pm start time.

We will be quieter over the summer so the Sept block party will launch the fall events. Keep initiating small get-togethers with your neighbors over the slower summer months!

6:54: Nate speaks to give an update for Block Captains. Great way to get people on your block, esp newcomers, to get plugged in. The decentralization of this concept helps to bring a lot to the neighborhood. Encouragement to volunteer for the missing block captains (Crittenden, Decatur, lower 16th and 14th, in particular). The more we know each other the more it creates a feeling of safety and helping the neighborhood to feel great. Big thanks to all block captains! Those present shared - please reach out to them if you are not yet connected on your block.

- Cecelia: 4500 15th St (gave history how MPD encouraged the start of this 15 years ago as a deterrent to crime!)
- Peggy: 1500 Block of Buchanan. Also connecting in efforts with Carter Barron East Neighborhood Association ([CBENA](#)) - seeking signatures for a dog park!
- Virginia: 4600 block of 16th St
- Dixy: been here since 1989. This meeting gives hope - importance of local things!
- Gina: 1400 Block of Varnum.
- Jason: 4700 Block of 15th St. Co-captain with Nafees Clay.
- Victorino: 1500 Block of Allison.

7:04: Cassandra speaks about the arson at 1401 Buchanan St NW. Update from the fire Marshall team, Sergeants Carrol and Gray Investigating the fires at 1350 Buchanan St Ethiopian Church too. Unfortunately no updates. Doing due diligence but there is not enough information to give an accurate representation of who the suspect is. The two fires are spread

out in time but there is not enough information to know whether or not they are connected. From what they can tell, the fire at 1401 Buchanan was a targeted attack.

The other fire at 1350 Buchanan: there is no video footage and not enough information to know if there is a connection. Reminder for all of us to be vigilant.

For those of you across the street with cameras, please check videos for footage.

Question from Jason: for a lot of us with cameras, they are pointed at the front door instead of the street so as not to be an invasion of privacy. Should we have videos to capture the street and our doors? Answer from Fire Marshalls: cameras pointing both directions most helpful. Fire happened at 2:41 am on Monday April 28.

7:15: 5 minute dessert break

7:22: Oscar Montiel spoke with an update from Janeese Lewis George's office.

- It is evident this community cares about each other. We had the lowest reach outs with 311 needs etc!
- Regarding the budget, a few key issues are: preserving DC's [PKEEP](#), early childhood educator equity fund - two vital programs to support our children.
- Ward 4 Small Biz summit on May 8 in Partnership with Ward 4 Main Street Association. Equipping Ward 4 Small Businesses.
- Recharge aimed at DPR (read more [here](#))
- Every week there are Ward 4 constituent hour services. [Sign up for the newsletter.](#)

7:22: Nelson from [Treehouse](#) on 14th St.

- (next to Atxondo) Group of artists to bring the community together. Every 1st Sunday of the month, "Uptown Kickin' It" with dance classes and art activities. Art shows, yoga classes, etc. Plans for a market this summer to sell goods that are made there.
- Go to the website to sign up for the newsletter.
- Check out [TreehouseDreamers.com](#), [@TreehouseDreamer](#), info@treehousedreamers.com or come and check out the community events.

7:29: Update from Dot, our fearless Treasurer!

- Paying dues is important! It covers all our newsletters, food for events, special rentals, etc. Please check to see if you have paid on the printout. You can pay by cash, check, PayPal, or Venmo (no Zelle - we tried but cannot use it with our business account).
- We currently have about \$2500 in the bank to help for the rest of the year.
- Just showing up – this is what community is all about!

7:33: Cassandra gives another push for membership.

- Before tonight we had 34 households paying dues for membership of the 525 or so households in our boundaries. If you are able to, and you appreciate these events, please join and pay. Membership costs \$30 per household per year <https://www.ssna-dc.org/membership>
- We are increasing collaboration with our neighborhood association to the north

- Peggy mentioned [CBENA](#) and introduced a petition for a dog park in Emory Heights. Peggy is collecting signatures in support.
- CBENA has asked for our collaboration for the [City Open tennis event](#). Looking for someone to volunteer to help during that event with permits, communications, etc. ***Let Cassandra know if you are around and able to help liaise for that event. (July 19-27 2025)***

7:35: Cecilia gave an update about the Senior Committee.

- DC has “senior villages,” but they are a bit geographically limited. Based on a lot of research, there is a pretty big pool of people ages 50+ who want to be able to age in place.
- Right now the committee is focused on having social events for seniors. Next one is at 19th St Baptist Church on May 21. Trying to get support from the city to help support this vision of a senior village.
- Input from neighbor Brian Fox: his mother started the Cleveland Park Senior Village, spoke about the benefits of aging citizens to help serve and then be recipients of service.

7:41: More updates from Cassandra:

- Upper CT Ave Association is concerned about Rock Creek proposed traffic changes and how it will be a major hardship for CT Ave, 16th St, etc. Cassandra states she has no opinion yet, lots to read, but will send out more information on the listserv. There is an opportunity to give feedback to the city.
- Northern Bus Garage Reconstruction Project AKA Bus Barn community meeting will be held on May 21 (virtually) from 6-7pm.
- MPD Sector 3 meeting is May 21 at 5-8pm.
- Rev Scott is moving to Baltimore. Last service is June 8th. Simpson-Hamline working on the transition to find a new Reverend, hoping for a focus on a community centered person. Cecelia gives a plug for joining the congregation.

7:48: Thunder begins outside and the meeting concludes. Thanks for coming everyone! And a big thank you to Ursula and Rev. Scott who helped with set up and to the many neighbors who helped clean up at the end.