MORNINGSIDER

The Official Newsletter of MorningSide



Participants of the Morningside Community Bike Ride enjoying a picture-perfect day. Image courtesy of Nicolas Hall

Morningside Makes Great Strides Despite Challenges of 2020

Jackie Grant | The Morningsider

Detroit — I want to talk to you about what your Morningside Board of Directors worked on in 2020 to move our community forward during a global pandemic. There were many challenges that we all faced last year, beginning in March with the outbreak of COVID-19. This was our last in person meeting, and for health reasons due to the pandemic we were no longer able to meet in person. Staying connected would now become the question that needed to be answered. Read below for the answer and learn of the other accomplishments MCO made during 2020.

ZOOM FOR YOU

We immediately purchased a Zoom account so that we could continue to meet with all of you and the board would be able to continue taking care of the business for our community. We had 12 robust community conversations, 2 in-person prior to COVID, and 10 via the Zoom platform. Valuable information was shared from various guest speakers throughout the year.

Story continued on page 4...

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Meet an NPO - Officer Willie Soles

Susan Newell | The Morningsider

Neighborhood Police Officer Willie Soles has deep roots in the 5th Precinct. He was born and raised in the Mack and Bewick area, the youngest of nine, and the only boy. "Being the only boy meant I learned how to cook and sew. I can pretty much take care of myself," he says with a laugh.

Officer Soles' first career was as a social worker doing substance abuse counseling at Harbor Light Mission. After a few years there, he decided that police work would be a more effective way to fight substance abuse. "I thought I could nip it in the bud this way," he says.

He joined the police force 25 years ago, working as a patrol officer in this precinct until he became an NPO two years ago. "I have a different outlook now, because I'm not just going on police runs. I'm meeting more people on a positive note, helping to bridge the gap between the police and the community.

One of the programs Officer Soles and other NPOs have committed to is bridging the gap between law enforcement and students at East English Village Preparatory Academy. Before the pandemic, he and other NPOs would meet on a weekly basis, in plain clothes, with male students to share their experiences. Many of the students, he says, think most police officers are just out to harass Black men and boys. Discussions were frank and sometimes intense, but helpful, he says. COVID-19 has put these meetings on hold, but he looks forward to continuing them as soon as possible.

Officer Soles' biggest challenge as an NPO before the pandemic was "being pulled in every direction" - taking care of the usual complaints from residents, attending community meetings, and being called to special details. Things have slowed down a bit due to Covid restrictions, but he says he misses the personal connection, especially when attending meetings via Zoom.

Sports and weight-lifting help him to de-stress, he says, but his real passion is fishing. Asked about ice fishing, Officer Soles just laughed, saying, "No, I try to catch enough during the summer to last me through the winter!"

Susan Newell, Associate Editor of The Morningsider, a retired nurse, and her photographer husband Jim West have lived in Morningside since 1984.

E. Warren Development Corp. Outlook for 2021 and Beyond

Joe Rashid | Contributing Writer

We are excited for what's to come in 2021 and beyond to our E. Warren Corridor! As our business ecosystem evolves, so must the ways we incubate business. In 2020, the E. Warren Development Corp. launched the E. Warren Farmers Market. Over the course of eight weeks. 70+ vendors participated and through your generous support of our community entrepreneurs, \$25,0000 in revenue was generated. We were also blessed with the invitation to host the market at the future site of "The Ribbon," formerly the Charter One Bank site. Once the site begins redevelopment in 2021, the market will need to identify a new location along East Warren. As new developments like the Ribbon begin to undergo construction, we knew we needed to secure a space where the E. Warren Development Corp can support budding local entrepreneurs.

I am excited to announce that the E. Warren Farmers Market will return to a familiar space! The same location as the E. Warren Farmers Market from years past. The E. Warren Development Corp. purchased 16835 E Warren (the former Pizza Hut) in late Fall 2020. The 2021 market season will kick off in May, and officially re-open use of the outdoor space at this location. The building is in need of repairs and modifications to accommodate future use and won't be open for use until a concrete plan is in place. I am hopeful we will have this building up & running to support local community business incubation in 2022 or 2023.

E. Warren Development Corp. envisions this space as a business incubation hub. We intend to install a community kitchen, pop up storefronts and storage space for local chefs to safely grow their businesses. We plan to transform the parking lot into a public commons where there can be year-round activity and act as a space where our community can come together in an open air environment, which has become all the more critical during this pandemic.

As the vision for this space evolves, the E. Warren Development Corp. pledges to engage the community in the design process using the weekly market, community clean-ups, community meetings, and door-to-door engagement as a means to influence the design and development process of this building. Community engagement for the design process will begin in Spring 2021 with the intention to present design ideas in Fall 2021.

I welcome any questions or comments you may have as the design process approaches, and after it's kicked off. Please send me an email at Joe@ewarren.org. We want this to be an inclusive space that will help incubate local businesses and entrepreneurs. We look forward to discussing future details with you.

Joe Rashid, Executive Director of E. Warren Development Corp.



Plans for the former Pizza Hut at 16835 E. Warren Ave., will consist of reactivating the space to serve as a hub for community development and entrepreneurial efforts

Continued... Morningside Makes Great Strides Despite Challenges of 2020

EVENTS

We were able to carefully have a few events while socially distancing. The Morningside Garage Sale was lots of fun and a success for all who participated selling goods, buying products, or just plain visiting with a neighbor. We assure you that it will occur again this year. Additionally we had 2 Morningside bike rides that were well attended and even brought residents from our neighboring communities along for the ride.



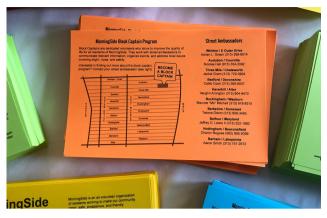
The Zoom platform allowed MCO to continuously share viable information and stay connected with community members throughout the pandemic. Image courtesy of Nicolas Hall

GRANTS

We received a couple of canvassing grants and twice acted as a fiduciary for another organization. Before the close of 2019, we conducted similar canvassing activities that increased the balance in our bank account. This has been the most important element of bringing funds into the organization as we do not have a stream of income.

CANVASSING & OUTREACH

We put Detroiters to work as they canvassed for the 2020 Census funded by the City of Detroit and the East Warren/Cadieux effort funded by Invest Detroit. We created a colorful flyer that provided essential resources, as well as contact information for each MCO Board Director. We knocked the doors and passed out over 3000 flyers in Morningside.



Flyer distribution throughout Morningside was one of several outreach initiatives made by MCO in 2020. Image courtesy of Nicolas Hall

NEWSLETTER

We continue to have the best newsletter on the east side thanks to Jeff Lewis II and Susan Newell, and don't let me forget our amazing resident photographer Jim West. We put out 8 quality issues, having 64 articles written by our friends and neighbors.

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The Morningsider covered national stories such as the murder of George Floyd that sparked the Black Lives Matter movement. Image courtesy of The Morningsider

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Brilliant Detroit Starts New Health Program in Morningside

Rakisha Odom | Contributing Writer

The Morningside HealthLink Action Council is currently seeking additional members to help develop a childhood obesity health campaign in our community. This project will only be successful with more engagement from community members like you!

Here's what you'll be asked to do:

- Learn about childhood obesity & current guidelines to treat it. It's okay if you don't know much right now!
- Determine what the Morningside community needs to know and what we want people to do.
- · Create a health campaign and action plan to get messages out to your neighbors

You will also be asked to attend up to five Zoom meetings that are 2 hours each, between February and June.

Did you know?

- Nearly 35% of preschoolers in the United States are overweight or obese
- This is the highest rate of overweight/obesity in nearly a decade
- Children from lower-income and minority backgrounds are at greater risk for becoming obese and are less likely to participate in prevention and treatment efforts

Communities can help close this gap and help set children on healthy paths by partnering with researchers to match information, resources identify community priorities.

Join us on Zoom for an information session on January 20th, 2021 at 10:00am

https://wayne-edu.zoom.us/j/6177324647?pwd=VHY0WIB6dndjZWZHeE9CWDRWZGhHdz09

For more information, you can also contact me at: Rodom@BrilliantDetroit.org, (313) 914-9638.

Rakisha Odom, Community Outreach Manager for Brilliant Detroit, advocate for the youth in the City of Detroit.

Give Input on Morningside's New Logo

Have you provided your feedback for what the new MCO logo could possibly look like? If not please visit the link below as our new look will be chosen by our community members. Don't miss out!

https://www.morningsidedetroit.org/feedback



Preliminary designs of Morningside's New Logo. Image courtesy of Cosmo Jones

Continued... Morningside Makes Great Strides Despite Challenges of 2020

KEEPING YOU INFORMED DIGITALLY

We built out a new and vibrant website that went live in June. Since then we have had 3200 visits. MailChimp helped us reach all of you. In January 2020 we were reaching 189 Detroiters and by the end of the year our reach is up to 311, up 60% and growing. We added Simple Texting, that gives us the ability to send a quick text, meeting announcement, or reminder of an important event. We have over 1000 followers between Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We are growing communication with you every day thanks to Nic Hall and Jeff Lewis II.

BYLAWS

It took us some time, but we did establish a Bylaws Committee before the end of 2020, and they are currently convening to review the current bylaws and bring suggested changes to the community in early 2021 for a vote. Please bear with us as we are now moving forward and in good hands with Adrian Green.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

For our 2nd year in partnership with the Gleaners organization we have distributed a food value of \$338,827.06, up from 2019's distribution of \$123,019.40 worth of food. We knew the need was much greater this year and we answered the call. Thank you to Twiana Odom for leading this effort going into our 3rd year of feeding our neighbors. Lastly, we need more volunteers at the distributions each week. Please sign up on our website to donate a couple hours of your time each month.



The Gleaners and MCO Food Distribution provided fresh goods and produce regularly throughout 2020. Image courtesy of Gleaners Food Bank

BLOCK CAPTAIN PROGRAM

Nic Hall took this task on in May 2020 when you elected him to the board and he greatly expanded resident interest and participation, not an easy task by any measure. The board agreed to purchase 50 trash picker uppers and they were distributed to the block captains. Nic and the block captains will be having their 1st monthly meeting on Zoom very soon to set some goals for 2021.

VACANT RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TASK FORCE

In October, nine Morningside residents volunteered to go out and take inventory on vacant residential properties. We identified 464 vacant residences. Aaron Smith is heading up this effort and we are continuing on to phase two. We will be addressing the DLBA properties and our less than stellar investors that need to step up or step out of Morningside. To the investors, get these properties renovated, inspected and occupied! We will not tolerate less than quality renovation of these properties. If you are not up to the task, SELL! We are done with your lack of respect for OUR community.

THREE MILE MUNICH PARK & GATEWAY PARK

We will be seeing a new mural this spring at our neighborhood city park. We democratically voted to have Jake Dwyer, a local artist, create a mural with an uplifting theme. Also, SAY Detroit added seating and other improvements to the park as they have for the last 3 years. We appreciate Marc "Rosey" Rosenthal from SAY Detroit and the volunteers from Cooper Standard. We did a major clean up at the Gateway Park at Alter Rd. and Mack Ave. in collaboration with Motor City Grounds Crew, and friend to Morningside, Carol Wilson, formerly with Habitat for Humanity. New and exciting plans for the Gateway coming in 2021.

Continues on page 7...

Our Best Christmas Present of 2020

'Twas some days before Christmas—how many I'm not sure (The days ran together; everything was a blur). All the houses were locked down from COVID-19, With everyone wishing for the promised vaccine.

The children were nestled and sleeping just fine. They were all tuckered out from their classes online. And mamma in her kerchief and I in my cap Had just sanitized our hands and hung up our masks. The year had been hard. We were due a vacation. But the thing wanted most? Emergency use authorization.

Then out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I assumed it was another 2020 disaster. I ran to the window and put on my mask, But what would I see? I was too scared to ask. The neighbors were quiet and socially distant, Awaiting the time they'd be COVID resistant.

But despite travel bans, there then did appear A miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer. But this wasn't Santa. His gut wasn't paunchy. It was the trusted presence of Anthony Fauci. More rapid than eagles, at warp speed they came, And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name: "Now Pfizer! Now Sanofi! Now Johnson & Johnson! "On Moderna! On BioNTech! On Adaptive and Amgen! To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall! Now vaccinate, vaccinate, vaccinate all!"

As a virus expelled by a cough or a sneeze When it meets plexiglass rises up on the breeze; So up to the house-top the pharma all flew, With the sleigh full of hope, and Dr. Fauci, too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof The prancing and pawing of each little hoof. As I drew in my head, and was turning around, Down the chimney Fauci came with a bound. He was dressed in a suit, as was always his way, And his neatly cut hair was a smart silver-grey. A chart in one hand, a syringe in the other,

And a medical bag—a gift from his mother. The wisdom in his eyes and the knowledge in his head Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

With his reassuring smile covered up with a mask, His no-nonsense style led him straight to the task. He sprang to my side as I rolled up my sleeve, And he stuck in the vaccine as quick as you please. He flew to the bedroom, gave mamma a shot, Then vaxxed both our kids without waking them up.

Inoculations complete, he returned to the chimney, And gave me a pamphlet about what he put in me. Then raising his finger but not touching his nose, And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose. "C'mon, team!" he said. "We've a great opportunity. If we vaccinate more we can reach herd immunity!" Then he yelled back to me, as the sleigh quickly rose, "I'll be back in a fortnight for the follow-up dose."

By Kevin A. Wilson (with apologies to Clement Clarke Moore)

Continued... Morningside Makes Great Strides Despite Challenges of 2020

SHOW ME THE MONEY

Our organization grew its finances considerably in 2020, and this speaks to a larger trend that I would like to showcase. In 2019, we had a beginning balance of \$4,977.19, and an ending balance of \$8,269.75, a 66% increase in our finances. In 2020, our growth was even better, with a 121% increase, wrapping up the year with an impressive \$18,329.52 in the bank. We also introduced measures to provide oversight and transparency. Quickbooks was put in place as our accounting system. A requirement was adopted of 2 signatures on every check. And every month, we have provided a financial report to the community. That's a long way to go in just two years! It's a financial record our board is proud of. A big thank you goes to our Treasurer, Adrian Green, who has been instrumental here.

CONCLUSION

The past 2 years have been a complete rebuilding of the Morningside Community Organization and I am very proud of what we've accomplished, especially this past year, despite its challenges. We continue to build community partnerships and build the balance in our Huntington Bank account. The board and I will work with great vigor until the end of our terms in May 2021, and work to increase the number of residents attending our meetings. Oh, by the way, Morningside received the 2020 MOE Better award at the Eastside Community Extravaganza for best east side community organization!

Jackie Grant, President of the Morningside Community Organization, works tirelessly to reduce tax foreclosures throughout the city of Detroit

Give A Smile, Get A Smile

As introduced in our previous issue of The Morningsider, the purpose of *Give A Smile*, *Get A Smile*, is to brighten your day some through the trying times we all are living through currently.

Whether it's a motivational quote, a hilarious video clip, of even a few words of encouragement, Give A Smile, Get A Smile will do just that!

This months Give A Smile, Get A Smile comes from Morningside resident, Donyelle Pressley.

Quote of the Day

"I am now Dionne the Singer"

– Legendary singer Dionne Warwick, teasing Chance the Rapper on his stage name.

After all, That's What Friends Are For.

Thanks Donyelle!

Continue with your submissions everyone. Who knows, yours could very well be featured in next month's issue of The Morningsider!



Dionne Warwick. Image courtesy of David Nathan

TALK TO US!

Letter to the Editor

This is a very informative community newsletter, good job! Thanks for sharing.

- Michelle West

I'd like to recognize the hard work of those who've been putting together the MEC newsletter, specifically Jeffrey Lewis and Susan Newell. The format and the content has been interesting, relevant, and really useful to our community. It's not easy finding topics to write about on a monthly basis, and you've done a great job of keeping it fresh and informative. I hope we can encourage more residents to contribute to the newsletter content in the future. Thank you for all you do!

- Elena Fracassa

Send your comments to <u>morningsidecommunity2@gmail.com</u>. Letters, edited as necessary for space and clarity, will be published each month.

Upcoming Events

Morningside General Community Meeting

Second Tuesday of every month via Zoom. Our next meeting will be held **February 9th at 6:30 p.m.** To dial in with your phone, use the following info: Dial number: (301) 715-8592 / Meeting ID: 876 5627 5944 / Password: 824390. To access the meeting via computer, please visit either <u>morningsidedetroit.org</u> or the Morningside Facebook page the day of the meeting.

East Warren/Cadieux Neighborhood Framework Plan Virtual Office Hours

Date: TBA, 12:30pm to 1:30pm

Join via computer: https://us04web.zoom.us/j/248643408 Join via phone: (312) 626-6799, Meeting ID: 248 643 408

5th Precinct Command/Community Update

The Zoom link for the 5th Precinct meeting is scheduled twice a month. For anyone who is interested in attending, please email MCO at <u>morningsidecommunity2@gmail.com</u> as we will provide you with the access link once we receive it.

Detroit Board of Police Commissioners Each Thursday at 3 p.m.

By computer: Use the following link and follow prompts: https://cityofdetroit.zoom.us/j/397380647?
pwd=S1kzVzU4RURFb2NBRGJIb1kwWVNjdz09

By phone: Call one of the these numbers: 1 (929) 436-2866, 1 (312) 626-6799

1 (346) 248-7799, 1 (301) 715-8592

Meeting ID: 397380647 and press ##

The virtual meeting will use a form for public comments:

https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/d26fa38cc5e94a018836d065000714ce

MECCA Development Corporation is partnering with Dolly Parton's

Imagination Library to deliver books every month to children under the age of 5. To sign up your child, go to: https://www.meccadc.org/imagination-library

Gleaner's Food Distribution

This is held on the **2nd** and **4th** Monday of the month at Noon until the food is gone. This month's distributions are on **January 26th** at **The Craft Cafe**, **15641 E. Warren Ave**.

Meet the Developer: The Red Carpet Lounge (Recap)

Hosted by E. Warren Development Corp. Meet with the development team that is working to bring new life back to the iconic *Red Carpet Lounge* (located next to the Alger Theater), **Wednesday**, **January 13th**, 12:30-1:30 PM. For more information:

https://www.facebook.com/events/2825027707740337

Community Budget Priorities Virtual Forum

Let Your Voice Be Heard! Here's your chance to provide your input as the City Detroit develops its budget for fiscal year 2021-2022. You can review the budget presentation here or call (313) 224-1927 for more information. District 4 - January 14th | 6:30-8:30pm.

Join the meeting via Zoom: https://cityofdetroit.zoom.us/j/88054739237 Meeting ID 880 5473 9237 Join by phone: (312) 626-6799 Meeting ID 880 5473 9237

Advertise in The Morningsider!

The Morningsider is officially open for advertisement! For those who want to place ads in our newsletter, please contact Jackie Grant at (313) 720-3904. Below are the rates for advertisements:

6 - Month Run

\$825 Full Page \$400 Half Page \$275 Ouarter Page





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featherstone garden

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

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MORNINGSIDE COMMUNITY
ORGANIZATION
for all you do!

We are proud to be in your neighborhood!

Featherstone Farm Stand is open to neighbors: Thursdays from 4-7pm 4178 Lakepointe Street www.featherstonegarden.com



Moning Side's Finest Kelley Marks

Kelley Marks remembers the exact date she moved into their new home on Maryland Street – December 23, 2006. It was the end of a long journey for her with Habitat for Humanity, which built the house she still lives in with her husband and three daughters. Kelley had already been volunteering with Habitat, and had even helped build a home for her sister on the west side. It was one of Habitat's international builds, drawing volunteers from all over the world. "There's an energy during a Habitat build that I've never experienced anywhere else," she says.

Her own turn to get help from Habitat for Humanity came a little later, when Kelley and her husband embarked on the process of qualifying for one of a cluster of homes being built at the western end of Morningside. It took them 1½ years, participation in Habitat's financial literacy program, and plenty of "sweat equity," but they were eventually the first ones to move into the new development. "The whole experience changed my life," Kelley says.

It didn't take long for Kelley to throw herself into serving her new community. She was elected president of MorningSide Community Organization in 2008, serving a two-year term as president. By that time she had just given birth to her second daughter and felt the need to devote herself to her family.

Now, with her daughters older – 9, 10, and 17 – Kelley has decided to get re-involved. "When Covid hit," she says, "life changed for us. I was at home more, had a lot of time to walk around the community, shop locally, and get acquainted with new neighbors. I was looking for new things to do with my kids, and I knew that Morningside organization was a good place to find out what was going on." When she attended a Zoom meeting a few months ago, she said "it felt like MorningSide again to me, with people who really cared about the community. I was really happy to be welcomed back." She's also been very impressed by the website, newsletter, and other social media, she says.

Kelley has volunteered for the Bylaws Committee, which is "going really well." She's also a block captain now for Maryland. "I have some really great neighbors," she says, "but due to Covid, we haven't been able to meet." Once the weather improves and the pandemic is under better control, she's looking forward to working with her neighbors "to figure out the vision for Maryland St." She thinks some of the vacant lots there can be activated for the whole community.

Kelley becomes animated when she talks about community work. "I want to be the inspiration; it's something doable, it's reachable...I'm glad for my spark to be re-ignited."



Kelley Marks. Image courtesy of Kelley Marks

Let's Talk Trash!

Please note that yard waste pickup has been suspended until spring, and unfortunately that includes Christmas trees as well. If you haven't already gotten rid of yours, you can always put it in your backyard and enjoy the greenery awhile longer. Even a cut tree will last quite awhile in the cold weather.

Our next three bulk trash pickup days are **January** 21st, February 4th, and February 18th.



Illegal Dumping is one of the many items you can report via the Improve Detroit app. Image courtesy of Jeffrey D. Lewis II



For the latest news taking place in MorningSide, please follow us on:



@morningsidedet

MorningSide is a corporation organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes outlined in section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Contact The Morningside Community Organization at: (313) 355-2468 or via email

morningsidecommunity2@gmail.com
Also checkout our new website!
www.morningsidedetroit.org

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