

MINUTES: OSW COMMUNITY Meeting, January 18, 2023 (6-8:00)

6-6:30 Social, Meeting 6:30-8

Facilitator/President: Simon Wolf

Secretary: Mary Anne Mather

Board attendees: Simon Mitchell-Wolf (president), Terry McGuire (V-P), Mary Anne Mather (secretary), Richard Normand, Annmarie Drake, Shirley Poss, Bill Dandridge, Cara Becker

Absent: David Jeavons (treasurer)

INTRODUCTION: 2024 OSW Board & Their Committee Work Assignments

President: Simon Mitchell-Wolf (2-year term) Green Committee

Vice President: Terry McGuire Green Committee

Treasurer: David Jeavons

Secretary: Mary Anne Mather Green Committee/Historic Preservation/Communications (social media)

Members at Large

Cara Becker: Parlor Tour/Social Events

Bill Dandridge: Historic Preservation/Gish House/Safety Liaison

Annemarie Drake: Historic Preservation/Communications (newsletter)

Richard Normand: Gish House (tenant relations)

Shirley Poss: Historic Preservation/Gish House

2 Open Positions – Are you interested? See Simon Wolf (simon@morticule.com) or MaryAnne Mather (maryanne.mahter@gmail.com)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

• **Thank You:** Mary Jo & Julie Gale, tonight’s refreshment hosts!

We welcome a February volunteer host. See Mary Anne Mather.

• **Next OSW Community Meeting 2/15:** Presenter is Better Building Works – Making Your Old Home Healthy & Economical, including Gish House building audit report.

• **OSW Needs YOU!** Support neighborhood issues important to you ... historic preservation, social events & activities, safety, environmental protection,

Alexander-Gish House preservation. Share thoughts/questions/interests.
Complete interest form anytime at: <http://oldsouthwest.org/contact-us>

- **ARTS Connect Roanoke:** Catalogs available. Public event: Buzz Watch Party, Grandin Theater 1/24, 6-7:30. More info about OSW participation is on the agenda.

PRESENTATION:

Overview: Arts Connect Roanoke

PRESENTER: Mary Anne Mather

–Explained the City’s initiative and how it works

–Neighbors we asked to review offerings in catalog. Make suggestions for aets activities to bring to OSW..

–In process:

 Pocket Park Fundraiser – Music/Roanoque Baroque

 Parlor Tour Music

 Seeking Other Ideas

–Announced Public Event

Buzz Watch Party, Grandin Theater 1/24, 6-7:30

Meet & celebrate the artists highlighted in the catalog. Pre-release viewing of show created to present the program.

Details were added by neighbors Lynn Hunt and Michael Shasberger. Michael encouraged OSW to apply as early as possible, before 2024 funding runs out. Lynn Hunt mentioned an application she is presenting to create an Old Southwest coloring book project that engages neighborhood artists. OSW will contact Doug Jackson for our requests.

OSW BUSINESS

Approval of minutes from 11/16/2023 APPROVED

Interested in what OSW has been doing on behalf of our neighborhood?

All Community Meeting minutes are available at: <https://oldsouthwest.org/osw-minutes>

1. Proud recap of 2023 Old Southwest Projects & Achievements

(photos were presented to illustrate each)

A. 2023 SUCCESS! 42nd Annual OSW Parlor Tour

- OSW's Biggest Annual Fundraiser: Always the first weekend in December!
 - THIS YEAR:
 - 6 fabulously decorated private homes
 - Rest stops & refreshments at two small neighborhood businesses
 - Alexander-Gish House: Cozy fire, refreshments, decor & art exhibit by LinDor Arts
 - 450 tickets sold! Net proceeds from tickets, donations & sponsorships ~\$9,000
 - Proceeds support: Historic Alexander-Gish House Preservation & Maintenance and OSW neighborhood events, projects and quality-of-life improvement initiatives
 - Heartfelt thanks are in order for this tasteful, warm, and rousing success...
 - YOU — who purchased tickets and joined the fun
 - Supporters who donated over the ticket price: EXTRA KUDOS!
 - OSW volunteers & the neighbors who shared their homes
 - LinDor Arts for a top-notch art exhibit
 - Southwest Virginia Ballet
 - On the Edge Salon, Queenpin Family Wellness, Sunnyside Market
- SPONSORS: [Big Lick Brewing Company](#), [Camp Victory Personal Training](#), [Crandall & Katt](#), and [Park Place Realty](#)

Neighbors were requested to please support our business partners.

Kat Kline—one of the Parlor Tour participants spoke and elaborated on the event. She offered kudos to the volunteers and organizers. Presented an open letter to Board about considering additional resources to execute this event in 2024. Suggested new rules “guidelines” for 2024. Acknowledged that tradition is important, but cautioned to suppress falling back on “we’ve always done it this way.” Communication & transparency very important. Kat suggested wanting to present additional ideas to the board. Cara Becker, Parlor Tour Co-Lead, invited others to approach her with ideas. Cara will follow-up and coordinate with Kat.

B. 2023 SUCCESS! OSW “Green” Projects: Creating sustainable & beautiful urban greenspaces

- Day Avenue Pocket Park Development – broke ground 12/2022. OSW received 2023 Neighborhood Improvement Award from city (\$4750).

- Spring & Fall Curb-Strip Tree Planting in partnership with Urban Forestry and Tree Stewards.
- Clearing Woods Ave. lots for safety, access, litter removal
- Plawking – Thank you Sunni Purviance in SE for cheerleading the activity across neighborhoods
- Old Southwest Won City-wide Recognition in Dec. 2023: Neighborhood Improvement Award (trophy)
- Heartfelt thanks to OSW Neighbors & Partners who made this success possible
 YOU — our OSW volunteer neighbors
 Star City & Town and Country Garden Clubs
 Roanoke Storm Water Division
 Sarah Baumgardner – Western VA Water Authority
 Samantha Matson, Roanoke Urban Forestry, Roanoke Tree Stewards
 Mark Cary & City of Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates (grants)
 Other Grantors: VA Federation of Garden Clubs, National Garden Clubs Inc.,
 Looking Out Foundation

Total of \$12,300 grants secured for Pocket Park development.

We look forward to continuing efforts in 2024!

C. 2023 SUCCESS! Community Outreach

- June: Neighborhood Appreciation Event attend by ~100
 Lead–Beth Dimun/On the Edge Salon
- Two Block Parties: Led by neighbors on the party blocks
 --July: Argonne Circle – Lead: Terry McGuire & King George Ave neighbors
 --October: Day Ave. – Lead: by Erica & Dan Danko (Held same day as Pocket Park native species plantings/ All volunteers were invited to celebrate.)
- Focus on Awareness-building & outreach
 Lead: Stephanie Bilbry. Developed:
 - Welcome table for events
 - Neighborhood Meet ‘n Greet & Info Gathering systems for gathering emails for OSW eNews. NOTE: 80 new email addresses added in 2023.
 - Distributed welcome letter/packet to new home owners to raise awareness of Architectural Review Board (ARB) guidelines and requirement to get a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) before starting work in any historic City neighborhood.

D. 2023 SUCCESS! Alexander-Gish House

House is owned by the City, but OSW is completely responsible for its maintenance & preservation. Paid rentals supported the Old Southwest budget.

- Volunteers kept the grounds looking good (spring & fall clean-ups)
- Volunteers successfully secured and managed eleven paid event rentals and supported one donated rental to Chris's Coffee and Custard.
- OSW welcomed a new tenant to the upstairs studio apartment

E. 2023 Work in Progress: Historic Preservation

- Committee reactivated
- Created welcome letter for new homeowners calling attention to ARB Guidelines in historic neighborhoods.
- Efforts made to influence ARB Guideline updates. Mentioned that home owners must get permission from ARB. OSW also tracks historic preservation in the neighborhood.
- PRIORITY area for 2024
- Considering a series of workshops and classes for homeowners.

2. OSW 2024 Priority Goals (President): Shared & Solicited Input

2024 GOAL 1: Maintain & expand OSW's reputation as a welcoming, positive, energized neighborhood

A. Develop Sustainable/Manageable Organizational Infrastructure

Pressing Issue: Renegotiation of the Gish House contract

Strategies: Electronic documentation of systems & protocols in google drive, strategic committee development, develop procedure for donations & voting members. Create a sustainable infrastructure. Strengthen documentation of history and protocols.

B. Community Outreach

Pressing Issue: Managing meeting organization, socials, speakers. What interests you?

In Process: Identify & budget for manageable # of Social Events:

--Proposed: Neighborhood Appreciation Event, Parlor Tour

--Your interests? Block parties (OSW would financially sponsor two. Volunteer leads needed.)

Athletic/outdoor events? Other?

--Potential Mountainview collaboration to expand resources (social at Fishburn Mansion)

Solicited neighbor input:

2024 GOAL 2: Support ongoing neighborhood improvement & quality-of-life in OSW

A. Historic Preservation

Pressing Issues: ACTIVE participation in ARB Guidelines update. Non-Producing Properties Turnaround

Strategies: Abandoned house database, work with city to turnaround 2-4 OSW properties annually. [Need volunteers/committee members](#)

B. Environmental Protection & Improvement

In Process: Pocket Park next-phase development/signage, plantings/mulching, develop maintenance plan ([Need grant-seeking & fundraiser](#))

–Continue spring/fall tree planting

Considerations:

--Continue Plawking Socials: ascertain Interest & consider collaboration with Mountainview Neighborhood

–Highland Park Improvements: Ideas – mulching under trees by Gish, mulching around disc golf, solar lights on gazebo, mural at public bathrooms) [Thoughts?](#)

2024 GOAL 3: Remain financially solvent & in compliance with non-profit responsibilities

A. Create & maintain a balanced budget

[\(Budget presentation at February Community Meeting\)](#)

B. Plan & execute another successful Parlor Tour

[\(Seeking private homes\)](#)

C. Explore other fundraising strategies

[\(Considering “Friends of OSW” donations, grant seeking, fundraising event for OSW “green” projects\)](#)

3. Wrap-up

A. FINAL REMINDER: OSW Standing Committees

Share your skills. Have a hand in making OSW the best place to live, work, play!

CONTACT: maryanne.mather@gmail.com OR Complete form at:

oldsouthwest.org/contact-us

Ideas for involvement:

--Communications (social media, OSW list maintenance, OSW email updates, website)

--Events (help select & coordinate activities/social events)

--Community Outreach/Membership

--Alexander-Gish House Maintenance & Rentals

--Fundraising

--Neighborhood Safety

--Historical Preservation Committee

--Environmental Preservation, Parks & Greenspace

Stephanie Bilbry volunteered to create a volunteer database as an OSW resource.

B. Other Business??

A neighbor noted that we used to enjoy a police officer coming to neighborhood meetings. Officer Underwood is our relatively new resource officer. He is invited to come to each OSW meeting. Board member Bill Dandridge will reach out before each meeting with continued invitations. If neighbors have safety issues, they can bring them to meetings or alert Bill ([wmrdandridge@gmail.com](mailto:wmrDandridge@gmail.com)), who will relay them to Jacob Underwood.

Adjourn 7:44 PM