

## Updates for the Historic Jackson Ward Community

Submitted by Marilyn Milio, HJWA President  
September 2017

- 1. The Playground at Abner Clay Park** - We have experienced some delays with the playground and now that all the signers have signed the contract, we are ready to plan and build. We will have a totally new playground in the same location by **November 17th**. That is the new build day and planning days will be either September 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>. You will receive a special email with the dates. We need children, residents, playground users, all to come out and help KaBOOM design your playground. Below in red is the history of the playground build. Richmond Public Schools is on board as the playground and Abner Clay Park is their responsibility.

How? We were gifted an anonymous donation of \$200,000 by a resident of Jackson Ward who walks past the park and wanted to ensure that children had a safe, beautiful place to play. The City of Richmond and Communities in Schools brought on KaBoom, a national organization that builds playgrounds with the help of volunteers. There is a process, and I will let the community know what that process is as soon as we have finalized. We will need the help of the entire community from Design Day to the Build Day. KaBoom has established a successful process. Community players include City of Richmond Parks and Recreation – Deborah Morton and Heywood Harrison, Paul Manning – Neighbor to Neighbor, Kim Gray 2nd District Councilwoman, Dr. Harold Fitrer - CEO Communities in Schools, Melissa Terranova and Tara Fitzpatrick - community members, and me, representing the Historic Jackson Ward Association. As a community we are required to donate \$8500 to the project. HJWA voted to use part of the money from Altria to cover this expense. There will be many opportunities to volunteer and become committee members. Please follow the link to express your interests. KaBoom staff will contact you

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQZzl4LB3cg7VGC4ubMZY7Ron1CPdtpMLIbH6bepzEpGkaOg/viewform>

- 2. Abner Clay Park Renovation** is ready to move forward. In 2016, the Timmons group submitted to Richmond City an opinion of probable construction costs for the original Abner Clay Proposed Renovations. The estimated cost came to \$2,978,397.00. That estimate is 2 million more than what was originally proposed. As good financial stewards, the HJWA Board, Beautification Committee members and the community decided to revisit for a smaller scale project, where the cost would be closer to the original \$1,000,000 estimate. **Please mark your calendars, The Timmons Group will be presenting the new plan on September 19<sup>th</sup> at the HJWA Membership Meeting. Last year at a membership meeting, the membership decided the key areas to rework. You will have an opportunity for input in those areas... field, community area, gazebo and basketball court. They will return for a special October meeting on 10/17/17 with the final plans.**
- 3. HJWA Board Elections** - It is time again to vote your new board members. We have 5 slots, each with a three year commitment, open. If you would like to run, please email a brief bio to me;

one that can be circulated. At the October and November meetings you will have the opportunity to present. Please check the by-laws on the website for expectations and requirements for board members.

\*I want you to know that I have chosen not to run for reelection. Personal and professional commitments will be limiting my time. I will remain active in the community and remain on the committees.

4. **Dog Waste Stations** - HJWA members Jay, Zach and Gary will be placing two dog waste stations this weekend. We have 6 and then will continue to place others as necessary.
5. **Plant 40 trees in wells that are open.** I have been in contact with Norm Brown with the Urban Forestry Program. We can adopt 40 trees, if the residents are willing to water in times of needs. Also, there is an interactive map on the <http://www.richmondgov.com/PublicWorks/UrbanForestry.aspx> site. Go to the site and click on interactive map and navigate to Jackson Ward to see all the empty tree wells. This needs to be submitted now to have a fall planting by the City. The cost per tree is \$50, far less that doing it ourselves. The extra money could be moved to enhance other green spaces in Jackson Ward. Trees are ready to be ordered. Please comment to me as soon as possible. We will take care of submitting locations.
6. Our **new HJWA website** will be ready to launch momentarily. Vicki, Zach and Jourdan are updating some information and then we will launch. We will make an announcement when it is live. You may now pay membership via paypal on the website.
7. Hope you have visited the Maggie Walker Statue and had the time to read about her and sit and rest for a bit.
8. The CPDC project planned on the block of 1<sup>st</sup>, Duval, Jackson and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets is ready to kick off. There will be a picnic on either October 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> on that location from 11am -2pm. I will send an email with details.
9. The community engagement committee created a letter to send to homeowners who are leaving their properties in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. Please send an email to [hjwassociation@gmail.com](mailto:hjwassociation@gmail.com) to report a property and include the address, reason for letter and the owner's name and address if rental property. We will send the letter and follow up with the results.
10. Hope you are reading the VCU and Pulse updates we are sending out. They will help you navigate some traffic and parking situations regarding events and construction.

#### **Upcoming Dates:**

#### **Membership Meetings**

**September 19<sup>th</sup>**

**October 17<sup>th</sup>**

**November 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Clean Up Day – October 21<sup>st</sup>**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Street Festival – October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Richmond Folk Festival 13<sup>th</sup> -15th**