

KNA Proposed Plan Modification Q & A
Updated 10/21/2020

In looking at the communication and FAQs regarding this plan modification, it looks like the 2019 survey was a key driver in allocation of the new plan. As a new Kenny homeowner, I appreciate that the voices of those who responded to the survey were taken into account.

What is the likelihood that the predicted budget cuts will be enacted?

Thanks for your comments. We anticipate that we will know more about the budget cuts in November. It is almost certain that our funding will be cut; it remains to be seen how severely until the Mayor's budget is revised.

Just providing feedback on the new KNA Plan modification - I love the rain garden program and hope that continues along with other things like this! But overall sounds like a good plan going forward.

If our funding increases, we will definitely look at doing it again in the future. For right now, however, we are focusing on things that can impact the most number of people, such as communications, events, engagement and city representation.

\$50,000 for administrative functions; do the admins of the KNA receive a salary? Our impression is that it's voluntary. What does this large sum entail?

It is our hope that this reallocation will keep the neighborhood association up and running for several years in the face of decreased city investment in neighborhoods, so these funds will be spread out over time.

Yes, KNA has a paid part-time staff person. Administrative functions cover the part-time staff person, required insurance, supplies, postage, social media communication and other items- staffing is the biggest piece of these functions. There are 70+ neighborhood associations in the city and all but one or two have paid staff- some with multiple employees and rented/owned office space. At 8 or so hours per week for a paid staff person with no office space, Kenny is nearly the lowest in the city in terms of administrative costs. More volunteers are always welcome and can help reduce the need for administrative work.

\$15,000 for the paper newsletter; this could be discontinued and look to have a more robust email newsletter, e.g. Council Member Linea Palmisano's email-only newsletter to save costs and be good stewards of funding.

According to our 2019 survey, over 90% of respondents read the KNA newsletter and they overwhelmingly would prefer a paper copy rather than electronic. We also know that the newsletter is our only way of making sure that we reach every household in the neighborhood. For many reasons, not everyone uses electronic platforms and we want to make sure to equally engage everyone in the neighborhood.

\$10,000 for neighborhood events; considering KNA events have been cancelled since January due to the pandemic; and no particular end in sight.

You are correct that we have not been able to have events in 2020, but it is certainly our hope that we'll be able to bring back our popular events such as the Summer Festival, Ice Cream Social, Fire on Ice, etc. in 2021 and beyond. We work hard to keep the cost of these events low and to offer them free or at very low cost to the neighborhood.

We are strong advocates for housing programs and want to be sure we understand the fund reallocation proposal.

We, too, support housing programs. We had a very popular low-interest home loan program that we operated for several years. This was well utilized by neighborhood residents until we could no longer find a partner to administer the program in an affordable way; the program was discontinued in 2017.

I like it. It's a well thought out plan.

Thanks!

Voicemail Message asking about the housing program and taking funds away from it.

Over the years, KNA invested \$250K in housing programs that supported low-interest home improvement loans for Kenny residents. These loan funds allowed residents to do upgrades to their homes such as new roofs, windows, basements, garages, remodels, etc. As loan funds were re-paid, we invested back into the program. However, in 2017 our administrative partner stopped doing this line of business and we were unable to find another partner to administer the program in an affordable way and the program was discontinued. The proposed plan modification is not taking funds from an existing program, but rather using the proceeds of the program (loan repayments that have built up over the past 3 years) to fund other areas of KNA.

I am relatively new to the area and have not paid attention to the KNA. A recent postcard about plan modification led me to the KNA website which in turn raised more questions. To give me an idea of the starting point, can you send me a copy of the most recent year balance sheet and statement of receipts and disbursements? In addition, please send the budget for the current year as planned before the reduction in funding from the city/county.

Hi and welcome to the neighborhood! I have attached a couple of very simple spreadsheets showing 2019 income and expenses broken down into basic categories as well as the 2020 proposed operating budget. It gets really complicated to talk about city funding because it comes from a couple of sources: an old program (NRP) that is no longer active, but we are slowly using up the remaining funds, and the current program (CPP) that provides us \$25K per year for operating and engagement purposes; this funding ends in 2020. The proposed new program that is *slated* to begin in 2021 would provide us with decreasing funds that will bottom out in 2023 at \$10K per year. That is why we are proposing moving funds into these categories so that we can continue to operate and provide basic services like the newsletter, a couple of events and small programs. These funds are not renewable and we're trying to be good stewards of them and use them slowly to support the work of the association for as long as we can.

Since the housing program is complete and we are not able to continue it, I agree with the reallocation of the funds. I would love to see the environmental funds be used for larger projects that impact multiple neighbors - such as a rain garden in the alley by City Church which is prone to flooding or a native planting in Kenny Park.

Thanks for the comments! We'll definitely keep that in mind for a more wide-spread use of environmental funds.

How many years does \$50K cover? Are we to assume these line items equal one year each?

Thanks for the question and sorry we weren't clearer with defining the timeline. It is our hope that this reallocation will keep the neighborhood association up and running for several years in the face of decreased city investment in neighborhoods, so these funds will be spread out over time. Exactly how many years this will cover depends on the final program approved by the city, but we're thinking this will keep us going for 3-5 years.

I know we job share our coordinator with two (?) other parks so this should really "spread the wealth/cost" over a few years?

Yes, the part-time staff for Kenny independently also works for Fulton and Lynnhurst neighborhoods. This has actually been giving us a benefit for several years as there are tasks that can be pro-rated among the three neighborhoods. Kenny contracts this staff position for 8-10 hours/week; as a comparison, our neighbors in Armatage utilize a staff person for 15 hours/week.

I don't think I've missed this in the newsletter but what is KNA doing with any monies/budget surplus due to inability to host events due to the Corona virus? Many organizations are tightening belts as this situation will continue deep into winter and possibly into summer, so it's a good idea to cut back where possible now. Is this something being discussed?

You are correct that we have not been able to have events in 2020, but it is certainly our hope that we'll be able to bring back our popular events such as the Summer Festival, Ice Cream Social, Fire on Ice, etc. in 2021 and beyond. When we determined that we would not be able to hold our Summer Festival, most likely along with our other summer events, we made the decision to designate the funding we would have spent on 2021 events (about \$2,500) and donate that to a city-wide neighborhoods COVID support fund. These funds were used to support the city's most vulnerable residents and were used toward the purchase of 2,500 face masks and 4,800 bottles of hand sanitizer (more than 3 million doses of hand sanitizer.) The KNA Board felt strongly that using the 2020 events funds to support our broader community in a time of unprecedented need was the right thing to do.

This neighborhood is being hit financially like others. I just lost my job to COVID19 and my house is 70 years old. Please rethink the size and distribution of these cuts.

We reached out on this comment to better try to understand the specifics of the feedback, but the poster did not return our message.

What is meant by "environmental-related programming?" Will it include Grass Lake?

The proposed Plan Modification calls for \$15,000 of environmental spending. That has not, yet, been defined beyond the concept of work done to support the environment. The goal is to provide programming that is broad-based and will benefit the entire neighborhood, not just individuals.

The objection to the NRP plan is that more money needs to be allocated to safety. There have been constant break-ins and theft. This is damaging the sense of community and feeling safe. Would rather have a robust neighborhood safety plan than these other items that do not benefit the neighborhood as a whole. I'd like to see \$15K into neighborhood safety.

Thanks for your comments! We, too, value safety in the neighborhood and the need to impact as many people as possible with our funding. For the past 18 months, we have been running a very popular security rebate program. Although we have very much enjoyed being able to support individual residents with these rebates, we have decided to focus our efforts and spending on activities that will benefit the neighborhood as a whole, as you suggest. We will engage the neighborhood through education, safety related seminars, block leader recruitment and training, etc. If our funding situation improves, we will put safety-related programming at the top of our list to consider for further investment, including reinitiating the security rebate program and/or additional programming.

I agree with the resident who asked about reducing/cutting out the funding for the print newsletter. While it's hard to argue with the results of the survey from 2019:

- * Did the survey receive a decent sample size on which to base recommendations?**
- * Could the results be quite a bit different now that we are living in a COVID world?**
- * In addition, what is the return/the value that the Kenny neighborhood receives with 90% of the residents reading the print version?**

As the results indicated, over 90% of the people who answered read the print version. I read it simply because it shows up at my door as non-junk mail; however, were it to be delivered in a different format,

I would read that, too. By the time we read the information in the newsletter it is, quite frankly, dated; and I wonder how much it engages the Kenny community like other priorities on the plan do. Reducing or cutting out the print version seems like a place in which we could save money that would be better spent in connecting the community at events and communications/outreach, etc. An online version would probably be more cost-effective and nimble.

Sacrifices need to be made and the print newsletter, on the list of priorities, looks like the most viable candidate to take a reduction/elimination in funding.

Thanks for your thoughtful comments. We had about 10% of households respond to our survey. We put a notice in the newsletter and several postings in our e-news and social media accounts to promote neighbors to respond. I have no idea if the results would be different now during the COVID pandemic.

We reported that 91% of respondents read the newsletter. Beyond that, 71% indicated that they preferred a paper copy over an electronic version.

The KNA Board has discussed the newsletter several times in determining its value and keeps coming back to the fact that residents have reported, in our survey and anecdotally, that they really enjoy reading it and that some even keep it on their coffee tables until the next issue arrives so they can refer back to it. But even more importantly, it is the ONLY way we have to ensure that every household is receiving information equally. We still have a good number of seniors in the neighborhood and not all of them use computers regularly. We just aren't able to reach every household through our website, e-news and social media. Also, by sending a newsletter we are taking the action of presenting the information to you, rather than you having to seek it out.

But your points are well taken and we'll continue to evaluate the value of a printed newsletter. One option we've thought about is an opt-out, but managing that would be quite difficult. For example, if you opt out your address, what happens in five years when you decide to move? We would have no way of knowing that a new owner is now living at that address and not receiving anything or know to go online to read a newsletter. There may be companies that somehow manage that scenario? If you have knowledge about that we'd really love to hear it and learn from you. Keeping our options open may be really important as our funding continues to decline.