

Community Meeting Summary

Date: May 20, 2026

Location: Lindblom Park Fieldhouse

Start Time: 6:17 PM

Chairperson: Teresa Chandler

Due to quorum requirements, a community meeting was held with residents, District Council, and law enforcement representatives in attendance.

Attendance and Introductions

- Captain Darwin E. Butler-Representative of the Chicago Police Department
 - Teresa Chandler-District Council Chairperson
 - COC-Dannette Kennedy-Salaam
 - Two community residents in attendance
 - Community Engagement- Joesph Williams arrived later in the meeting
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Trends and Community Concerns

- Increasing incidents of “teen takeovers” and large gatherings escalating through social media communication and word-of-mouth invitations.
 - Ongoing concerns regarding large groups congregating late at night following violent incidents, contributing to noise, littering, and public disorder.
 - Reports of stolen vehicles being abandoned on residential blocks by individuals visiting from outside the neighborhood.
 - Increased loitering and disruptive activity near local businesses, particularly along 63rd Street and Racine Avenue and 65th Street and Racine Avenue.
 - Concerns regarding fights, disturbances, and disorderly conduct occurring at or near local restaurants and commercial establishments.
 - Illegal or unlicensed commercial activity taking place in public streets, including vehicle repair work creating traffic and pedestrian safety hazards.
 - Vacant properties continue to attract unlawful gatherings and illicit activity.
 - Community concerns regarding insufficient response to some calls for service and requests for more proactive intervention during escalating gatherings.
 - Recognition that warmer weather, holidays, and large public gatherings historically contribute to increased violence and public safety concerns within the district.
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Teen Takeovers and Large Gatherings

- Community members discussed the growing trend of “teen takeovers,” where small gatherings or house parties escalate rapidly through social media and word-of-mouth communication.
- A recent example involved a birthday gathering near 68th Street that expanded from approximately 50 attendees to more than 500–600 individuals, resulting in disorderly conduct and damage to vehicles, including police vehicles.
- Another incident following a fatal shooting near 58th Street and Damon involved groups remaining in the area overnight, contributing to trash accumulation and public disorder.
- Residents and police acknowledged that many attendees often come from outside the immediate neighborhood, including surrounding suburbs, and may become stranded without transportation.

Law Enforcement Response and Monitoring

- Police representatives explained that the district utilizes the Strategic Decision Support Center (SDSC) and available surveillance cameras in key locations to monitor large gatherings and respond to emerging incidents.
- Officers are encouraged to proactively engage in gatherings early, assess expected attendance, and monitor situations before they escalate.
- Residents expressed concerns that calls for service sometimes result only in patrol drive-bys without meaningful intervention.
- Captain Butler encouraged residents experiencing urgent concerns to contact the police station directly and request escalation through the desk sergeant or watch commander when necessary.

Community and Property Owner Responsibility

- Concerns were raised regarding stolen vehicles repeatedly being abandoned on residential blocks by youth visiting from other areas.
- Meeting participants emphasized that individuals hosting large gatherings may be held legally and financially responsible for safety violations, injuries, zoning issues, and dangerous conditions.
- Residents were encouraged to notify police in advance when planning large gatherings, especially during holidays, block parties, graduations, or neighborhood celebrations.

Public Nuisances and Commercial Area Concerns

Loitering and Storefront Activity

- Residents reported ongoing concerns regarding individuals congregating in front of businesses, creating discomfort for patrons and business owners.
- Police discussed the use of the affidavit enforcement program, which allows business owners to authorize officers to remove or arrest loiterers without requiring direct confrontation by the business.

- It was noted that businesses may face penalties or closure if illegal or unsafe activity continues on their property without corrective action.

Unlicensed Commercial Activity

- Concerns were raised regarding vehicle repair activity occurring in public streets near local businesses, including activity near AutoZone locations.
- Residents acknowledged the economic realities behind informal work while emphasizing the need for safe and lawful operations that do not obstruct traffic or endanger pedestrians.

Disturbances at Businesses

- Reports were shared regarding fights and disturbances involving staff and patrons at local restaurants and businesses, including concerns involving Brothers Restaurant near 63rd Street and Racine Avenue.
 - Increased gathering activity was also noted near 63rd and Racine and 65th and Racine, with concerns that warmer weather may contribute to additional disorder and criminal activity.
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Violence Prevention and Community Safety Initiatives

Violence Interrupter Coordination

- Participants discussed increasing collaboration with violence interrupter organizations to improve intervention efforts in areas experiencing renewed illicit activity and violence.
- Community members requested additional evaluation of violence interrupter deployment and effectiveness in current hotspot areas.

Holiday and Summer Safety Concerns

- Historical trends discussed during the meeting indicated increased violence following major holidays and public gatherings, particularly during overnight hours when intoxication and conflicts escalate.
 - Police representatives noted that multiple shooting incidents occurred in the district during the previous Fourth of July period following gatherings and celebrations.
 - Residents planning large events were encouraged to contact CAPS or district leadership in advance to allow for targeted monitoring or additional police presence if appropriate.
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Community Accountability and Engagement

- Speakers emphasized that public safety requires cooperation among residents, businesses, property owners, and law enforcement agencies.
- Participants noted that many ongoing problems persist due to underreporting and lack of timely communication with authorities.
- Comparisons were made to neighborhoods where block parties and gatherings are more effectively managed through stronger community coordination and self-monitoring.

Resident and Business Responsibilities

- Property owners hosting gatherings were reminded that they may be held civilly and legally liable for incidents occurring on their property.
 - Businesses were encouraged to maintain compliance with licensing, zoning, insurance, and public safety regulations.
 - Vacant properties were identified as recurring locations for loitering, unlawful gatherings, and illicit activity.
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CPD-Community Discussion

- Residents were encouraged to contact the police station directly regarding urgent public safety concerns when immediate response is needed.
 - Community members planning large gatherings were advised to notify law enforcement and CAPS offices in advance for proactive monitoring and support.
 - Business owners were encouraged to participate in affidavit enforcement programs and maintain active reporting of ongoing problems.
 - District leadership will consider additional coordination with violence interrupter organizations and evaluate current deployment strategies in hotspot areas.
 - Residents and businesses were reminded to remain compliant with zoning requirements, event regulations, insurance obligations, and public safety expectations.
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Follow-Up

- No formal follow-up meeting dates were established during the session.
 - District Council and Captain Butler stated they will continue outreach efforts and encourage direct communication from residents regarding ongoing or emerging concerns.
 - Future discussions may include additional focus on violence interruption and community safety assessments during the summer months.
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Adjournment

- The community meeting concluded at approximately 6:48 PM.