



**Share the Pi(e): Vote Your Values, March 14,**  
**2021**  
***Suburban Breakout Group Notes***

**Evanston**

- A veteran group. On average, 34-35 years living in Evanston. An older group of an approx - average of 65 years. In total, 11-12 of us.
- Major weakness: ***Citizens are not listened to.***
- Major Strengths: ***The diversity of our community. Many voices.***
- A Question: ***Should the many grassroots organizations hold a Summit?***
- All active voters
- All support Reparations in Evanston.
- Most moved to or stayed in Evanston to live in a diverse community.

Everyone agreed to meet again if it was coordinated.

*Submitted by: Rick Marsh, [rick.marsh@comcast.net](mailto:rick.marsh@comcast.net)*

**Glenview**

What do we love and what attracted us to Glenview over a 3-30+ year period?

1. Strong schools
2. Simplicity of life
3. Mix of race/ethnicity
4. Spacious location with open space for leisure and recreation
5. Small school district communities
6. Trees
7. Right-sized neighborhoods with a hyper-local feeling
8. Proximities to other communities, activities, culture
9. Strong and inviting library
10. Safety, ability to be out and about, peaceful community
11. Easy commute to Chicago amenities and interstates
12. We have everything needed to live in place
13. State of the art community healthcare and access to Chicago specialized medicine

What has changed pre- and post-Naval Air Station closing and new development?

1. The overall view of Glenview as a community is positive, given that people can connect, several amenities have been added over time, and open space is valued and available
2. The transition of the Naval Air Station to the Glen has resulted in a mix of community changes and a substantive change in the community culture. Diversity of residents from socioeconomic and racial perspectives have decreased. The social dynamic has changed with fewer Naval service families, who were more diverse in every way. We have evolved to a more economically homogeneous community of higher income families, gentrification of more expensive properties, more large and more expensive rental housing. The housing economics have created a divide within the community.
3. The Glenview "brand" has become the Glen. The challenge/opportunity is to straddle the new and old sense of community.

What do we choose to focus on to create a more just and equitable Gv community?

1. Become a warm, inviting, and welcoming community
2. Create opportunities to celebrate, educate, and invite ethnic and socioeconomic diversity in Glenview
3. Engage the Village and surrounding area neighbors to join us in celebrating our cultures, life experiences, and aspirations, accomplishments, and dreams for a community that welcomes evolution and new perspectives
4. Support the processes, norms, and opportunities through individual, family, neighborhood, community, and regional initiatives - and enjoy every moment together

*Next steps:*

Reconnect on Zoom and explore proven methods of developing a welcoming community plan (e.g. Skokie) - Sue will send a Zoom invitation and background information to the group next week; meet before the end of March.

*Submitted by: Sue Gregory, [sgregnew@gmail.com](mailto:sgregnew@gmail.com)*

## **Morton Grove**

Discussed the dearth of progressive candidates in Morton Grove. The "Action" party is basically conservatives who like MG the way it is and aren't really interested in "action." This representation coming from conservative trustees and the mayor do not reflect the actual voting demographics of MG, which leans much more progressive and Democrat. There is also nepotism among Village officials and a lack of transparency.

We discussed the East/West divide in MG and how services do not seem to be equal between the two sides. We also talked about the Women Who Drink Tea group and Vision Morton Grove and how these two groups are organizing locally and good resources. We briefly talked about the upcoming referendum for Niles Township voters on the April 6 ballot and Lindsey and Irena introduced themselves as both running for different school board positions in the upcoming election.

The mayor was asked to attend two Vision Morton Grove community meetings. He declined both. He did say people could reach out to him, one-on-one. Most of MG candidates are running unopposed. Many have been in office for successive terms. A couple of people were new residents, and loved MG, but weren't aware of the dark underbelly. Were interested in getting more involved. We have a VMG meeting this Sunday.

*Submitted by: Bev Copeland, [glassfocus@comcast.net](mailto:glassfocus@comcast.net)*

### **Northbrook, with Deerfield and Highland Park**

Thirteen of us gathered. Of the group, nine were Northbrook residents, and the discussion focused on Northbrook, particularly on the upcoming election. A pro-business slate has emerged (United4Northbrook), in part in response to the recent passage of an affordable housing ordinance, to challenge the Northbrook Caucus-backed slate. With funding from real estate developers, much of it outside Northbrook, the election was the main topic of discussion. We talked about the urgent need to address the disinformation and lies about affordable housing that the challengers are spreading and to get people to vote for the Caucus slate to prevent the overturn of gains made on affordable housing and sustainability. With so much at stake, including the future of the Green Acres property, we postponed a larger discussion about future JP work. The connections the Northbrook residents made among ourselves, and the support we received from the Highland Park residents (whose community is a model for affordable housing) will help lay the foundation for future work in Northbrook, and also for collaboration with Highland Park organizers.

*Submitted by: Debbie De Palma, [ddepalma92@gmail.com](mailto:ddepalma92@gmail.com)*

### **Park Ridge**

A member of Action Ridge attended who has been interested in the subject of Affordable Housing and in the effort to create a more welcoming and inclusive Park Ridge. She grew up in Oak Park where her mother was one of the residents who worked to keep Oak Park diverse. She said that she was interested to learn what could be done in Park Ridge to create more diversity.

We were glad to explain to her why we're advocating for more AH as a way to encourage diversity in the City and to recruit her for our Affordable Housing Advocacy Group, which is meeting for the first time on 3/25. We hope she will join us. Every convert is a plus.

The request to the Justice Project would be that next time we could hear from each suburb about actions they're taking to create a more Beloved Community. It would be good to share thoughts and actions. We know that Glenview, Northbrook and Arlington Heights are moving and shaking. We'd like to hear from them; and we could tell them about our efforts in Park Ridge.

*Submitted by: Nan Parson, [nanparson@hotmail.com](mailto:nanparson@hotmail.com)*

### **Skokie**

Five residents participated in this breakout group with diverse interests:

- Two are running for the District 219 Niles Township High School Board, including a founder of the Suburban Solidarity Network.
- One is a software engineer who is passionate about environmental justice and trying to start Go Green in Skokie.
- One is on the Board of People for a Safer Society.
- One is primarily involved in housing and civic participation issues.

Primary concerns raised were:

- Police department use of force and the need for crisis de-escalation training of officers.
- Environmental research in Skokie, especially a land use study that documents proximity of toxic sites to residential areas and the extent to which there is a racial correlation.
- Intolerance in local schools, by race and gender identity especially.
- Residents don't know of available services.
- One-party Caucus system stymies true democracy.
- Need to get out the vote.

Follow-up Justice Project actions could be:

- Candidates Forum, since Skokie does not have its own League of Women Voters
- Supporting the independent slate of candidates
- Helping to build Go Green in Skokie
- Reparations initiative

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## **Wilmette, with Winnetka**

In our Wilmette and Winnetka breakout room, we focused much of our time on the upcoming local elections on April 6.

We each gave a brief introduction and shared our community goals and concerns. In general, there is a desire to learn how we can become more civically engaged in our neighborhoods. We focused on the importance of voting in local elections. This included a comprehensive description of the upcoming elections in Wilmette. We also emphasized the importance of attending school board, village board, library board, park district board, etc. meetings. We agreed that these local institutions can at times appear dormant, but in fact they provide a venue for us to amplify our voices.

One concern discussed was how to increase affordable housing options in our areas. The question of open storefront properties was touched on, but not in any detail. Specifically in Wilmette, with many summer visitors coming to Gillson Park, there was concern about how the village could incentivize visitors from other neighborhoods to support local businesses after visiting the beach during the summer months.

Several questions came up about Cleland Place in Wilmette. There is interest in understanding more about issues related to affordable housing. The question of local diversity training for police departments also came up.

In sum, everyone agreed that the priority in the immediate term is to get out the vote in the April 6 elections and to attend more local government meetings, both to learn about the issues related to social justice, and to identify action items we can take to work to make our communities more welcoming.

*Submitted by: Jennifer Lind, ryan6lind@comcast.net*