

# **Discussion Item**

## **Building Community in Parkfairfax**

## Dana Cross

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**From:** Linda Klinger  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 18, 2019 11:25 AM  
**To:** Mark Miller; Dana Cross  
**Cc:** Michele Louie e-mail; Elsbury Karen; buchananward4@gmail.com; Guy Andrew; susancox91@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Building community in Parkfairfax

*Mark and Dana, I'm sending this letter on behalf of Michele Melita — please reply directly to her*

Dear Mark and Dana:

I sent the following letter to Karen Elsbury on July 11. She thinks it's a great idea and suggested contacting you. If it meets with your approval, I think the next step would be to write a short piece for the newsletter and other Parkfairfax outlets, such as your weekly e-mail update and Facebook site, that promotes the party room as a "third place" and invites residents to drop in whenever it's available. I can write that if you want. Please let me know what you think. Thanks —

Michele Melita

July 11, 2019

Dear Karen:

To help build community in Parkfairfax, I'd like your feedback as to the following idea.

First, some background: You may have heard of the "third place." It's a location where neighbors and friends gather to socialize, exchange ideas, and build relationships when they're not at their "first place" — which is home — or "second place" — work or a volunteer site.

I'd like to see the party room become the third place in Parkfairfax, where residents are welcome to drop in whenever it's open and stay for awhile. Individuals can use it as a quiet space to knit or read, or a group can congregate to make tea, play a game, or chat. The purpose is to provide a central location where we can get to know the interesting individuals who live here, but as more people get acquainted and develop connections to our community, it may have greater benefits over time. When people know and respect their neighbors and are proud of their neighborhood, they're more likely to dispose of trash properly, clean up after their dogs, and tidy up their gardens and decks. In addition, we'd get more use out of a large, comfortable room that's usually left vacant, used only by the Lending Library and for occasional events and private parties.

To make residents aware of the room's availability and help them become comfortable using it, I'd like to promote it as a regular destination and encourage people to drop in during the week and second Saturdays. Many retirees and people

who work at home would love an opportunity to socialize for an hour during the workday, and those who are at their “second place” during the week can use the room to socialize each month. The only rules would be that visitors must be Parkfairfax residents and must treat the place — and each other — respectfully. We could promote it in the newsletter, on Nextdoor, and on the Parkfairfax Facebook site.

What specific rules are involved in the use of the room and what steps are involved in getting this under way?

I’m looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Michele Melita

## The Party Room is Not Just for Parties

The Parkfairfax party room is a bright, comfortable space that's usually left vacant — used only for private parties, occasional events, and the Parkfairfax Library. But it's also an amenity that few residents use.

In fact, the room is an ideal location where neighbors can gather to visit, unwind, or meet more of the interesting people who live here. Use it as a quiet space to knit or read or come with a group to play a game. For telecommuters, it can be an opportunity to get out of the house during the workday. If you commute during the week, use it to socialize on second Saturdays. The rules are simple: visitors must be Parkfairfax residents and must treat the place — and each other — respectfully.

The party room is open during office hours. Drop in when you have a chance and stay awhile!