

PPNA FUTURE OF SAFETY TOWN HALL RECAP

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ABOLISH AND DEFUND?

9/24/20

18

Participants

PURPOSE The PPNA Future of Safety Town Hall Series aims to increase awareness of what we mean as a community about topics that have a lot of influence on our city. This Town Hall explored the meaning of abolishing or defunding the Police.

SPEAKERS



RECLAIM THE BLOCK
CONTENT CONTRIBUTOR



CARMEN MEANS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL AREA
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT
ORGANIZATION & BRYANT NEIGHBORHOOD



JEANELLE AUSTIN
LEAD CARETAKER AT GEORGE FLOYD SQUARE,
FOUNDER OF THE RACIAL AGENCY INITIATIVE,
SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS (BRYANT) RESIDENT

HIGHLIGHTS

“Imagining a new world around abolishing, defunding, and reformation. It has to be intergenerational, diverse in identity, experience, and opinion. In those spaces, we can put out fires and fears, and we can push ourselves out of our current comfort zone that has been detrimental to our existence.”

- **CARMEN MEANS**

“If I feel safe and I feel like I can call the police, that’s not good enough. My neighbor also has to feel that. It’s like wearing a mask for COVID-19 to protect others. Some of us are struggling with this kind of engagement. What are we willing to give up to protect our neighbor? What are we willing to sacrifice for the health of our community?”

- **JEANELLE AUSTIN**

“In the meantime, there’s no such thing as fast healing. We love normalcy, but that’s a danger. The systems that have to be in place is accountability for people in power, and resources need to be put back in play, including dollars.”

- **CARMEN MEANS**

“How do we start educating ourselves on the resources that exist outside of 911? It’s easy to call 911, but we can assess the situation in the moment and determine if there’s another option like a hotline.”

- **JEANELLE AUSTIN**

KEY THEMES & NEXT STEPS

DEFUNDING IS A STEP TO WHAT ABOLISHING THE POLICE COULD LOOK LIKE. It frees up funding for other strategies to support community safety and health.

The **HISTORY OF POLICING IN AMERICA, SPECIFICALLY ITS TIES TO SLAVE CONTROL, IS PROBLEMATIC.** Defunding and abolishing starts to unravel the system so the community can take back responsibility we’ve given the police.

The **COMMUNITY NEEDS OPTIONS BEYOND THE POLICE** to support safety and livability. We also need to start training our minds to leverage those options.

TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE for the work that’s imperative to unraveling the standing system or creating a new system. It’s going to take long term and consistent engagement from the community.



WHAT ARE PPNA TOWN HALLS? PPNA produces town halls that connect community to experts on issues impacting everyday life in Powderhorn. PPNA is a non-partisan organization. Viewpoints expressed do not necessarily align with those of PPNA. We feel it’s important to have open dialogue and continuous education together, as a community.

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