

English Speakers' Focus Group Meeting: Summary

22 December 2020

In attendance (via Zoom): Carol Goldberg, Karen Stahl-Don, Lois Feinerman, Shoshana Shinar, Stuart Stanton, Marianne Hatchwell, Rachel Amar, Emilie Glayzer, Rachelle Saltzberg, Yisrael Smith, Richard Corman, Reuven Schwartz, Naomi Tsur
Staff: Batel Spivack & Aviva Loew

Save the date: The next meeting will be January 26th 2021, via Zoom

Summary:

- A. Carol Goldberg opened with introductions and an overview of the agenda
- B. Batel Spivack presented info regarding the Sustainable Jerusalem Lobby background, actions, and methods of engagement.
 - a. The lobby meets with the mayor (Moshe Leon) quarterly and had interviewed candidates during elections regarding their views and past environmentally-related decisions. All are invited. The meetings are in Hebrew.
 - b. The lobby is comprised of individuals and representatives from community centers, businesses, NGOs, educational institutions, and action groups
 - c. The lobby working group meets the 1st Sunday of each month at 20:30. When there are varying opinions on key issues, the group must reach consensus rather than a majority vote, in order to keep peace
- C. Naomi Tsur shared some background on building and development projects in Jerusalem, and JGFs role related to recent decisions. She went into the detailed history of threats to the Jerusalem Hills.
 - a. Jerusalem's building boom came after 1967, and the light rail was built in the 2000s. There has been a constant tension between constructing more housing units and more transit, or constructing more roads
 - b. The last city plan was written in 1969. JGF hopes to promote planning that is more inclusive of the surrounding area and incorporates the Sorek watershed. For example, the Olive Valley has drainage issues at present, but could perhaps mirror Gazelle Valley's success in water management and green infrastructure
 - c. The development projects such as Reches Lavan and the Olive Valley pose risk to the surrounding nature.
- D. Actions to be taken to both push the municipality & spread awareness: (see separate document with talking points & addresses)
 - a. Writing letters to officials: Mayor, holder of Building & Planning Portfolio, City Engineer
 - b. Demonstrating support online, ie interactions with 'Save the Jerusalem Hills' and JGF Facebook /Instagram pages, etc
 - c. Blogging on the topic, writing letters to the editor of local English media (Jpost, Haaretz, Times of Israel, Arutz7, Hamodia)

- d. Writing short posts for email/whatsapp groups of Anglo communities to be involved and learn more
- e. Visiting the nature museum's exhibit on Reches Lavan, and generally visiting the threatened locations on foot and taking photos/videos to share/post! (perhaps post Covid, we will organize a tour too)

Note: The new Hebrew-speaking Lobby intern, Dor, will join this group to keep us in the loop on the Hebrew Lobby activities, and both ongoing and current topics.