

**BYLAWS
OF
PEACE CORPS HOUSE,
INCORPORATED**

INTRODUCTION

America's 400 settlement houses — often called a community or neighborhood center — date back to the progressive era of the late 1800s. In that tradition, Peace Corps House will be located in a neglected, stressed, careworn urban neighborhood with local staff and volunteers working to identify and provide social services and a range of activities designed to reinforce the strengths of individuals and families and their children living in the area.

Eventually, working with the community and operating from an existing house or other building, these traditional institutions provide such social services as daycare, health care clinics, youth guidance and learning, workforce development, crime intervention, good food, recreation, entertainment, and cultural programs, family and senior programs and other services to the community which help improve the lives of the people.

But Peace Corps House shall start small, perhaps in a church basement or in a single room in a collaborating organization and initially shall likely develop a single program that empowers young people.

The District of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan states, "Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, crime and other social issues must be addressed because for revitalization to truly succeed, all residents must be given opportunities to advance."

ARTICLE 1: Name

The name of the corporation is and shall be "Peace Corps House, Inc."

ARTICLE 2:

Mission and Guiding Principles

1. To help make a DC neighborhood a more livable and better place to grow up.
2. To serve the people in the neighborhood with effective social services.
3. To advocate for social justice.

Peace Corps House, operating as a 501(c)(3) and independent from Peace Corps, while working with the community shall address the needs and aspirations of the community with a variety of services and programs aimed to improve the lives of community members.

Peace Corps House needs to be welcoming of change. Indeed, as Jane Addams, a pioneer of the world's settlement house movement with her 1889 opening of Chicago's Hull House said, "The only thing to be dreaded in the Settlement is that it lose its flexibility, its power of quick adaptation, its readiness to change its methods as its environment may demand. It thus must be hospitable and ready for experiment."

Participants will come to see Peace Corps House as a community hub embedded in their neighborhood and which acts as a gateway to multiple services, addresses basic needs, brings local residents together around mutual concerns, builds solid relationships, and empowers residents.

ARTICLE 3: Members

Peace Corps House shall have no *members* as such. Instead, the community members themselves will be front and center at Peace Corps House and serve as the organization's heart.

ARTICLE 4: Board of Directors & Executive Director

(a) Among the first tasks of the Executive Director is the creation of a Board of Directors with a large, diverse, flexible mix of local leaders, social workers, and good souls. But, especially, the Board members are sponsors. While donating money and/or in-kind donation of their skills, they also raise money and are able to mobilize volunteers. Board members are ambassadors who interpret the mission of Peace Corps House; they defend it, they represent it in their constituencies and the community. Some are also consultants with professional skills who can give answers to important questions. Board members are governors not managers who, while they generally stay out of day-to-day operations, they shall ensure that the Mission is carried out.

(b) There shall be not less than ten (10) or more than twenty (20) members of the Board of Directors, the number at any time to be determined by the Board. The term of office is three years. The Board shall meet at least four times per year.

(c) Unless a greater number is required by law, the presence of seven (7) Directors shall be required for a quorum.

(d) Except as otherwise provided by law or these by-laws, the vote of a majority of the Directors present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is present at such time, shall be the act of the Board.

(e) The specific duties of the Board include, but are not be limited to, the oversight of Peace Corps House funds, strategic planning, benchmark goal setting, helping to establish linkages and collaborations with other organizations, the governance and disposition of Peace Corps House property, the formulation of policies of Peace Corps House, the election of Officers of the Board, selection of the Executive Director, and all other duties as may be necessary or desirable for the management of Peace Corps House.

(f) The Board shall consider an annual Board Self-Assessment and Board training process and evaluation of the performance of Peace Corps House itself and shall do any all things necessary, suitable, convenient or desirable to accomplish the mission of Peace Corps House.

(g) The Executive Director shall be the chief operating officer of the Corporation, subject to the policies and procedures established by the Board and shall be a voting member of the Board. The essential duties of the Executive Director are as follows:

Once the Board is established, the Executive Director shall report to its Chair and shall also work side-by-side with the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, the National Peace Corps Association, municipal government officials, Federal agencies, and especially, the community Peace Corps House shall serve.

The Executive Director shall be responsible for bringing Peace Corps House “out of the ground,” raising money while opening its doors as quickly as possible. Once a working model for Peace Corps House has been developed, the Executive Director shall lead a team to find and develop a building suitable for conversion into a proper settlement house.

With this approach, a fledgling Peace Corps House could end up working out of a series of smaller but gradually larger facilities as it finds footing and traction.

This position shall offer the successful candidate the opportunity to then continue developing Peace Corps House and cultivating new areas of capability so as to meet the changing needs of its chosen neighborhood.

(h) Finally, in case removal of any leader is necessary because it has been proven that significant harm to the organization has occurred, a full consensus of the entire Board is required. But a letter of resignation to any member of the Board shall suffice.

ARTICLE 5: Officers of the Board

The officers of the Board shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. All of the Officers of the Board shall be elected by the Board from the membership of the Board at the Annual Meeting on each second successive year, with each such Officer to be elected for a period of three years.

Duties:

(a) The Board Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board, shall appoint all committees and perform such other duties and functions that custom and parliamentary usage require.

(b) The Board Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair at the latter’s request or in his or her absence.

(c) The Secretary shall write and distribute both accurate and readable minutes of all Board and Executive Committee meetings. In order that the meetings are interactive and collaborative the Secretary can also help facilitate these meetings.

Note: *A key to all such meetings is an easel with a pad and Magic Markers. Working with the Board Chair, the Secretary will capture the ideas of Board members and visitors in everybody's full view while the Chair keeps the meeting's agenda moving forward. The comments on the paper sheets become the basis for the minutes.*

The Secretary shall also conduct general correspondence and along with the Board Chair sign necessary documents.

(d) The Treasurer shall work closely with the Executive Director to ensure that all appropriate procedures are being followed in the financial affairs of Peace Corps House. Working with an independent certified accountant, the Treasurer shall prepare for the Board, in a timely manner, an Annual Report of the organization's financial transactional and financial condition.

(e) The Treasurer shall also keep correct books of account of the activities and transactions of Peace Corps House including a minute book, which shall contain a copy of the certificate of incorporation, a copy of these by-laws, and all minutes of meetings and written consents of the Board.

ARTICLE 6: COMMITTEES

The Board may designate an Executive Committee and other standing committees, of three or more directors, which shall have the authority of the Board and which shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. Two essential committees:

1. The Facilities and Environment Committee

Upon recommendations from the Executive Director and approval by the full Board, the Facilities and Environment Committee oversees all planning, construction, maintenance, expansion, and renovation projects that affect Peace Corps House's physical facilities and capital equipment. The Committee works to ensure that the natural environment of Peace Corps House remains viable. The Committee conducts its work in the context of traditional settlement house practices but with local historical roots and contemporary environmental issues.

2. The Community Outreach Committee

The Community Outreach Committee seeks to ensure that Peace Corps House programs are of the highest quality and that Peace Corps House serves as a center for community life and leadership development for the local community. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the programs

reflect the best thinking about community centers and ensures that adequate resources are made available and that the community outreach program is developed in partnership with local leaders. It thus must be hospitable and ready for experiment.

ARTICLE 7: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of Peace Corps House is and shall be from July 1 to June 30.

ARTICLE 8: INDEMNIFICATION

Each Board member and officer of the Board shall be indemnified against all expenses actually and necessarily incurred by such Board member or officer in connection with the defense of any action, suit, or proceeding to which he or she has been made party by reason of being or having been an officer or tee. Peace Corps House shall cover such expenses except in relation to matters in which the Board member or officer shall be adjudicated in such actions, suits, or proceedings to be liable for gross negligence or willful misconduct in the performance of his or her duty. Peace Corps House shall also maintain appropriate Board and officer insurance.

ARTICLE 9: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The standard of behavior at Peace Corps House is that all staff, volunteers and Board members shall scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest between the interests of Peace Corps House and personal, professional and other interests that impair, or appear to impair, their independent, unbiased judgment in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Article 10: Relationship with the Peace Corps

As mentioned in a March 11, 2016 letter of support from the director of the Peace Corps, it is understood that "Peace Corps House is outside the authorities of the Peace Corps." But, it was also understood from the beginning that if the management of Peace Corps House was to go awry at some point, become a liability, Peace Corps would be within its rights to say, "Shape up or shut down."

However, the achievable goal is a collegial, mutually supportive relationship.

ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENTS

While a majority of the Board's membership shall constitute a quorum, any amendment to these bylaws requires a full consensus of the entire Board. Moreover, such amendment must be proposed at a prior meeting of the Board or on three (3) weeks' prior written notice to the Directors.

On [date] the Board of Directors of Peace Corps House approved these bylaws.
