

Proposal for Collective Stewardship of 585 Space

No terms or content outlined in this document are final or legally binding

Date: June 30, 2025

To: Woodbine Co-Directorship

1. Statement of Intent

We, the 585 Collective, a collective body of dedicated participants in the Woodbine community, are writing to formally express our intent and commitment to assume collective stewardship of the space at 585 Woodward Avenue (the “585 Space”). This proposal builds upon ongoing conversations with the Woodbine Co-Directorship (Matt, Andy, Myf, Maria), Landlord, Leaseholders, and Working Groups, and sets out a clear path for transition, governance, and collective care. It also affirms our shared commitment to initiating a collaborative transition process during the Transition Period (June 2025 - December 2025) with the Woodbine Co-Directorship that honors the relationships and practices that have made Woodbine a vital node of autonomous organizing in Ridgewood.

2. Agreements with Landlord

Leaseholders:

- During the Transition Period the Landlord is not open to reassigning Leaseholders (current Leaseholders: Matt, Duncan, and Johnny); the Landlord has stated that no LLC or other entity can replace individual guarantors or Leaseholders.
- As such, Matt shall remain on the 585 Space lease (the “Lease”) but is indemnified from ongoing legal responsibility.
- Duncan shall remain on the Lease.
- Johnny shall become the designated point person on the Lease for Landlord communication.

- Vanessa shall be added to the Lease, upon the Landlord's schedule, likely post-Transition Period.

Lease Terms: Finances and Collective Structures:

- Fiscal sponsorship and internal collective structures do not concern the Landlord as Leaseholders are individual guarantors.

Lease Terms: Basement:

- Basement must be cleaned and brought into fire safety compliance within 6 weeks.
- Asbestos abatement will take place as soon as possible.
- Use for storage only per insurance policy, with handshake agreement with Landlord for limited use beyond storage if fire safety compliance demands are met.
- Landlord will repair and widen the basement stairs in September 2025.

Lease Terms: Kitchen:

- Kitchen will be formally added to Landlord's insurance policy after September 2025, when insurance policy is up for renewal; expenses for this are pending.

3. Transition Plan & Timeline

This section provides a preliminary plan for the Transition Period of the 585 Space from the current Woodbine Directorship to collective stewardship (the "585 Collective"). This plan will be expanded on and revised through **cooperative planning sessions** with the "585 Collective" (individuals who will be named in the governance section, who represent the newly formed administration of the 585 Space) between July and September as detailed below. We welcome feedback and intend for this process to remain adaptive and inclusive.

From July to September 30, 2025 (Q3):

We request that the current directorship engage in a series of **cooperative planning sessions** with the 585 Collective between July and September 2025. The goal of these meetings will be:

- Collection of existing contracts, keys, passwords, and inventories
- Walkthroughs and knowledge-sharing, that includes but is not limited to sharing of various internal documents, calendars, relationship contacts, etc.
- Establish clear expectations and points of mutual agreement
- Ensure continuity of ongoing projects and care for the physical 585 Space
- Reduce uncertainty and interpersonal friction during the transition

- Transfer of runway funds (3 months of rent, starting from July 2025 to September 2025)
- Communication of the new governance of the 585 Space and the move of Woodbine to a new building to the donors using Patreon and WithFriends
- Transfer of any other funds dedicated to the 585 Space as negotiated by the Woodbine Co-Directors and 585 Collective

By September 30, 2025 (end of Q3):

We will develop a written **Collective Stewardship Plan** in collaboration as needed with the current directorship. This plan will include:

- Lease responsibility and legal structures clearly outlined including liability/ risk mitigation plan
- Establish 585 Space governance models and accountability (Initial charters for all 585 Space working groups and admin committees will be drafted by August 2025 (detailed in Section 4)).
- Utilities, finances, and shared resources e.g. develop budget and system for shared dues/fundraising
- Communication with donors
- Funding and partnerships
- Programming, hosting, and scheduling systems
- Community safety and conflict support

In addition, we collectively aim to:

- Complete the addition of Vanessa to the Lease
- Establish a fiscal sponsorship to receive funds
- Transition funds and funding streams per details in Section 5
 - E.g. communication to patreon donors (e.g. coworkers) and other donor streams (e.g. reroute CSA funds, gym funds, basement donations)
 - E.g. set timeline for receiving seed runaway funding, and any other funds promised to the upkeep and improvement of the 585 Space (like the stove, asbestos, etc)
- Complete operational knowledge transfer
- Finalize calendars, booking systems, etc
- Publish new community agreements and onboarding process

By December 31, 2025 (end of Q4/year):

The 585 Collective will assume full logistical and fiscal responsibility for the 585 Space, per the plan outlined and agreed upon during the transition process. Governance structures will be fully operational, tested, and refined with open participation.

4. Governance Model: Spokescouncil + Admin Collective

The new structure will be based on a two wheel model consisting of the Spokescouncil and the Admin Collective which deal with different areas of the 585 Space and different scopes and timelines of decision making. This is a preliminary governance model that will be reviewed for efficacy after 6 months.

Two-Wheel Model:

We propose a hybrid governance structure combining:

1. **Spokescouncil (front wheel)** consisting of representatives from autonomous working groups (the "Working Groups"). Spokescouncil holds decision-making power over broad programmatic direction, finances, and collective policy. It also defines the Charters for each Admin Committee, empowering them to make decisions on behalf of the 585 Space. Only the Spokescouncil has the authority to revise and revoke these Charters. Additionally, the Spokescouncil has the authority to recall an Admin Collective point person if (after mediation) the Spokescouncil continues to find them unsuitable.

Current Working Groups include, but are not limited to: gym, basement, pantry, Sunday dinner, kids programming, reading group, writing group, etc. Working Groups self-identify.

2. **Admin Collective (rear wheel)** is made up of several committees that are autonomously responsible for the execution of daily administration to reproduce the 585 Space: finance, rentals, facilities, and legal liability (full list of admin committees will be defined as needs arise). The Admin Collective will be accountable and responsive to the Spokescouncil.

Each Admin Committee has at least one "point-person" (a point person is someone who is the key member of the committee who has expertise and commitment to the role long term). The committees are also composed of members who are self-selected from the working group community and who will support the point-person with the day to day tasks of the committee. The point-person offers mentorship and training to the committee members. The committee members being part of the working group community will ensure oversight of the point-person and integration with the spokescouncil.

Admin Committees & Point-Persons*:

- **Finance** (Natalie, Calvin, Dora)
- **Rentals** (Johnny)
- **Fundraising/Grants** (Vanessa, Natalie)
- **Programming** (To be filled)
- **Facilities** (Iris)
- **Legal/Liability** (Johnny, Vanessa, legal advisor to be recruited)
- **Conflict Support** (Ash; floating committee supporting care, accountability, and conflict resolution)
- **Comms / Tech Admin** (Paul)

*Committees and names presented here will be reviewed after 6 months of implementation

Emergency decision-making authority of the Admin Collective:

The Admin Collective is empowered to take immediate action on any safety, legal, financial, or operational issue that poses imminent risk to:

- Leaseholders' legal or financial liability,
- The physical safety of participants,
- The continued operation of the 585 Space.

Leaseholders (as legal signatories) retain ultimate authority on immediate legal or insurance-related decisions where personal liability may be directly implicated.

A working list of emergency categories that are of paramount concern for liability holders (e.g. fire code violations, electrical hazards, illegal activity, building code violations, serious interpersonal threats) will be developed by the Admin Collective in consultation with leaseholders prior to full handover.

The Spokescouncil retains review authority for major financial or programmatic decisions.

Charter Development

- Each Admin Committee and Working Group shall draft a Charter defining roles, authority, and expectations.
 - Charters shall be reviewed and ratified by Spokescouncil.
 - Initial Charter drafts are due in August 2025; full charter system shall be operational by December Q4 2025.
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5. Financial, Fiscal Sponsorship & Fundraising

Financial transition:

The financial transition from Woodbine to the 585 Space will include the following to ensure stability, legality, and transparency:

- 3-month Seed Fund (amount is \$12,600 minus the rent already paid for July 2025) to help pay for rent at 585 Space from Woodbine) is secured through July-September 2025.
- Additional funds earmarked for specific purposes (e.g. asbestos abatement, capital improvement, gym funds, CSA (if CSA remains at 585 Space)) shall be transferred alongside the Seed Fund, with full transparency.
- Establish an independent bank account and financial identity for the 585 Space as a collective entity.

Donor transition & communications:

The Finance Committee of the 585 Admin Collective, in coordination with the Woodbine Co-Directorship, will oversee the full donor transition process. The following steps will be taken:

- Donors (i.e. funders through Patreon, WithFriends, etc.) will be notified through multiple channels (email, social media, public meetings, and signage in the 585 Space) and on multiple occasions well before any funding platform changes occur.
- Communications will outline the governance changes, clarify the continuation of programming, and invite donors to continue supporting the collective.
- Donors will be presented with clear options for how to redirect or maintain their contributions under the new collective structure.
- Transparency regarding legal, tax, and fiscal sponsorship status will be prioritized throughout the process.

Fiscal sponsorship:

The 585 Collective will seek to establish a fiscal sponsorship as soon as possible. This sponsorship would allow:

- The 585 Collective to maintain 501(c)3 tax-exempt status for donors.
- Legally compliant fundraising, grant applications, and receipt of philanthropic donations.
- Professional financial oversight while the collective develops its own independent organizational identity.

Identification of a sponsor and negotiations are ongoing, and an agreement is anticipated in July 2025. A fiscal sponsorship contingency plan will be developed in tandem.

Financial stability targets:

Minimum monthly operating overhead:	\$5,000–\$6,000
Target buffer for renovations & compliance:	\$7,000–\$8,000
Emergency Reserve Goal (by Q1 2026):	3 months of fully funded operations (\$15,000- \$24,000)

Working Groups' fundraising efforts shall remain autonomous, are strongly encouraged and will occasionally be necessitated in their charter documents (after negotiation of working group members with the admin collective). These funds would contribute to funding basic overhead expenses and providing surplus funds toward collective operating expenses whenever feasible, as determined by Working Group Charters.

6. Conflict resolution and points of unity

Conflict Support Structure:

We recognize that power dynamics, cultural shifts, and changing community composition require intentional conflict support structures. To address this, the Conflict Support Committee will hold ongoing care work to ensure accountability, transparency, and trust-building across differences. The Conflict Support Committee operates independently of Admin Collective or individual Working Groups, but may collaborate with the Admin Collective and Spokescouncil for resolution pathways. Its membership will include trained individuals drawn from multiple Working Groups with terms reviewed every 6 months. The Conflict Support Committee is empowered to:

- Receive feedback and any conflict concerns from any participant confidentially
- Facilitate conflict support/ mediation where appropriate.
- Escalate unresolved conflicts to the Spokescouncil when collective attention or formal action is required.
- Maintain an evolving set of protocols for harm reduction, accountability, and trust-building that balance care and operational stability.

Points of Unity Development:

We recognize that the Woodbine community has evolved significantly over the past decade, with multiple waves of participants bringing different political, cultural, and personal

commitments into the space. While this diversity is a strength, we also acknowledge that the absence of clearly articulated shared principles has contributed to misalignments and tensions in recent years. To reduce future conflict, and to foster alignment across the community, we propose to develop a Points of Unity document for the 585 Collective.

Purpose of Points of Unity:

- To clearly articulate the shared political, social, and community commitments that guide the 585 Collective. These commitments will honor the legacy and political intentions of the space while adapting to current community composition.
- To serve as a reference for onboarding new participants, so that opportunities and expectations are transparent from the outset.
- To reduce future misalignments that can lead to conflict, exclusion, or unspoken power dynamics.
- To be articulated in a way that also allows the 585 Collective to remain adaptable to shifting community and political needs.
- The Points of Unity document may be reviewed and revised periodically to confirm the continued fulfillment of the above stated intentions.

A dedicated ad-hoc Working Group will draft an updated Points of Unity document during the Transition Period, drawing from both historical materials (e.g. existing Working Group documents, Woodbine mission statement, etc.) and current community input, including participants with long-standing histories at Woodbine. The draft Points of Unity will be presented to the Spokescouncil for review, amendment, and approval prior to full governance handoff.

While remaining open to ongoing dialogue and evolution as the 585 Collective assembles, the following general commitments are proposed as a starting framework:

- Commitment to anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist, anti-fascist politics.
- Commitment to autonomy and decentralized self-organization.
- Commitment to mutual-aid and collective resource sharing.
- Commitment to “invitability”: ensuring the 585 Space and culture is accessible to a broad range of participants without sacrificing collective safety or political efficacy.
- Commitment to developing internal accountability practices that balance care and responsibility.
- Recognition of historical exclusion and harm dynamics within radical spaces, with a commitment to learning from and addressing those histories.

This process does not seek to produce a static doctrine, but to create an evolving framework that can guide the 585 Collective community while allowing flexibility as the 585 Space grows.

