

Bassett Neighborhood District Monthly Meeting
7:00 p.m., 11 June 2007
Meriter Retirement Small Dining Room
333 W. Main St.

Attending: Officer Mark Allen, Jonathan Cooper, Vince Jenkins (minutes), Bob Keller, Griffin Klema, David Knuti, Rosemary Lee, Dave Mensch, Stefanie Moritz, Paula Oeler, Pete Ostlind (chair), Dan Petersen, Judy Twesme, Linda Vanden Berg, Alder Mike Verveer, Bill White, Rich Yaeger.

- 1. Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m.**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Approval of May minutes** – Minutes approved with corrections.
- 4. Announcements**
 - a. St. Raphael’s Cathedral on the 200 block of W. Main St., which burned two years ago, will be rebuilt, as announced by Bishop Robert Morlino.
 - b. Jeff Erlanger, president of State-Langdon Neighborhoods and an activist for the disabled, died on Sunday, 10 June. At R. Lee’s request, we observed a moment of silent remembrance for Jeff.
- 5. Report of Community Police Officer** (Officer Mark Allen): the residents renting the house at 539 W. Doty have been the cause of several noise complaints in recent months; they are now on “noise probation” until 1 Sept. and the property manager, Mike Schmidt of ??, has served eviction notice on the residents. A person was arrested on 8 June on suspicion of breaking into and burglarizing an auto; because this type of activity tends to increase in warm weather, Bassett residents are advised to remove tempting objects from cars and lock their cars.

Contact Officer Allen at mallen@cityofmadison.com, cell phone 209-7738, or 608-266-4275. Compliments/complaints: 608-266-4023.
- 6. Development proposals:** the proposal to build a hotel on the Block 51 development, Capitol West, introduces a second developer, Lodgeworks (see May 2007 minutes for description of this hotel proposal).
 - a. **Capitol West hotel:** the neighborhood steering committee has met with Bill White (representing LodgeWorks) and Alexander Co. representatives; chair J. Cooper will distribute a summary via the Bassett electronic list. The committee finds the design plan generally satisfactory, considering the implications of a limited service up-scale hotel downtown, with some reservations, including: the planned entrance protrudes into Capitol sight

lines from W. Washington; more green space is requested along W. Wash., with higher tree and greenery density; parking in the public right-of-way on the W. Washington terrace; capacity of the delivery corridor on the west side for fire and emergency vehicles; design of the façade to minimize light pollution; design height isn't yet defined; request to screen rooftop mechanicals; find ways to minimize the wind tunnel effect on W. Washington; incorporate as much green technology as possible. A general neighborhood meeting will be called later in June or July to present detailed plans of the revisions to the Cap West project. The city could grant approval by mid-August and construction could begin in early 2008.

Alexander Co. development: parking ratios for the entire development remain vague; as phases two and three are completed, on-site parking may not be adequate. The pedestrian bridge over the proposed Washington Place, currently postponed until phase three, could be incorporated in phase two to the benefit of the hotel. The return of some significant water feature to the Cap West plan would be welcomed.

Alexander must modify the Cap West general development plan (GDP) to accommodate the change of land use from condominiums to a hotel and the rephrasing of the project.

- b. Findorff proposal for 621 W. Doty St. (D. Peterson):** Findorff recently purchase this house east of the railroad tracks and bike path at 621 W. Doty St. Inspections of the house find it to be uninhabitable for health and safety reasons. Findorff proposes to demolish the structure and maintain the property as green space for the foreseeable future, with no plans to develop the lot. The condo board of 4th Ward Lofts, located directly across W. Doty, supports the demolition. The existing parking lot would remain and employees of WORT-FM will be allowed to park there.

Findorff installed the orange plastic snow fence now along the bike path to protect the path from parked car intrusion. Findorff hasn't decided what to do with the lot, so the snow fence may remain for the time being.

The new National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) office building at Bedford St. and W. Wilson should be completed by August or Sept.

Apparently homeless people have been camping in the tall grass and weeds south of the Tobacco Warehouses. Dave Muench (Urban Land Interests) will have the area mown.

- 7. Report on results of the neighborhood cleanup (S. Moritz):** Trash volume was down about 50% from last year. Eighteen volunteers spent two hours filling approx. 40 large garbage bags. Findorff, Tallard Apts., and Urban Land Interests provided funding support (a total of \$550, minus \$13 in expenses); John Koffel at

Delta Properties donated the use of Delta's large trash bin; Jo's Tazzina donated coffee and sandwiches; Capitol Centre Foods donated snack chips, ice, and bottled water. Last year's fund help supported the plantings at the Bassett sign at W. Main and Proudfit. The prairie area at John Nolan Parkway and Broom St. has been suggested as this year's project.

8. **E-mail lists for resident information sharing:** Volunteers are still needed at Bassett residential buildings to distribute information and maintain current addresses. Contact P. Ostlind <postlind@chartermi.net> .

9. **Alder's report** (M. Verveer)
 - a. **St. Rafael's Cathedral:** There is currently no timeline for reconstruction of the historic church building at Main and Fairchild Sts. Fundraising is the principal concern. The approval process will take several months, and neighborhood will be involved. The building had no landmark status, so no permission is required from the landmark commission to demolish it. The steeple will be reused in the new building
 - b. **Common Council** (Tuesday, 5th June): the lighting along 600 W. Main St. was approved. Reconstruction of S. Bedford/W. Main is scheduled for late June or early July. Some trees on Bedford will be removed. The "quiet zone" train gates installation has begun, from Monona Terrace to Charter St; planned completion by September, rather than in July as originally reported, because the equipment is said to be hard to acquire.
 - c. **Law Park:** The transient population has grown downtown, resulting in more panhandling, drunkenness, and disturbances. Law Park has received a lot of attention recently because transients have congregated there and used disturbing if not threatening behavior toward people using the area for recreation. Alder Verveer will propose a new ordinance against alcohol, which may well cause displacement of the problem to other areas such as Olin Park. Alcohol consumption has been banned in some parks for a long time and may need to be extended to Vilas Park.
 - d. **AT&T utility boxes:** these boxes (associated with the video relay towers atop the AT&T building, see May minutes) are large, unsightly, and regarded as graffiti targets. The city is pre-empted from preventing their placement on terraces. City ordinances require all such installments (e.g.. newspaper boxes) to be free of graffiti
 - e. **Bus traffic** (D. Knuti for 4th Ward Lofts): proposes re-routing "Badger Busses" from the Bedford and W. Washington bus station be re-routed from Bedford to Proudfit and W. Washington. The city has talked with the bus line before, but a community meeting might get better results. Four-way stops at Bedford and w. Main and at Bedford and W. Doty were suggested.

10. Other items brought forward by residents

- a. St. Paul's University Center (on the UW Library Mall): a new 8-10 story building is proposed to house the church, rectory, and dorms/apartments, requiring the demolition of the existing building.
- b. Candidates for Capitol Neighborhoods representatives: Melissa Hogg, Jonathan Cooper, Griffin Klema, Dave Knuti. The election will take place at the Capitol Neighborhoods annual meeting where Tom Carto, new president and CEO of the Overture Center for the Arts, will be the featured speaker.
- c. V. Jenkins will take the minutes for Bassett neighborhood meetings through August.

11. Adjourned at 8:25.

Next meeting: 9 July at Meriter Retirement, 333 W. Main St.

Respectfully submitted,
Vince Jenkins