

CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.
MINUTES of Executive Council Meeting Held Tuesday August 26, 2009.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Plotkin (President), Mayer (Vice-President), Patterson, Megan Christiansen, Yarborough, John Sheean, Ostlind, Cooper, Zellers, Phelps, Fisher, Stan Kaufman, Julie Wurl-Koth, O'Brien and Verveer.

GUEST PRESENT: Lupe Montes-Tydrich, Madison Police Lt. Kristin Roman.

I. MINUTES of July EC Meeting (prepared in O'Brien's absence by Patsy Baynard) are APPROVED: on MOTION by Patterson; SECOND by Cooper.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Megan Christiansen reports a bank balance of \$12,862.01, consisting of \$4,754.65 in checking and \$8,107.36 in CDs. There are no liabilities.

III. REPORT ON SAFETY/CRIME DOWNTOWN.

Madison Police Lt. Kristin Roman reports burglaries in the city are up only slightly, and armed robberies are down in the central district compared to other districts. The focus is now on the return of students and the start of football season. There is a night game and the "Taste of Madison" runs until 9:00 p.m. on Sat. Sept. 5th. Police are working with other agencies in preparation for "Freak Night" Oct. 31st, which will also feature a football game.

IV. ACTION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS.

EC Changes.

Donna Asif has indicated that she no longer wishes to serve on the EC. She has not yet resigned. Therefore, in accord with § 6.4(3) of the bylaws, because she has not attended at least three consecutive EC meetings, it is recommended that she be removed from the EC. [CORRECTION: Asif in fact submitted her resignation as James Madison Park District Representative on the EC and as CNI Homelessness Issues Committee Chair by e-mail to O'Brien July 29, 2009.]

Rick Broughman has agreed to serve as the additional Mifflin West representative and seeks that appointment.

Patsy Baynard has resigned as the Program Committee Chair to take a new job in Austin, Texas.

Lynn Phelps has announced he will no longer serve on the EC but wishes to remain as the newsletter editor.

A MOTION by Zellers, with a SECOND by Patterson, that: (1) Donna Asif be removed from the EC; (2) Rick Broughman be appointed to the open Mifflin West Neighborhood Representative seat; (3) Patsy Baynard be allowed to step down as Membership Committee Chair; and (4) Phelps be allowed to step down from the EC, but to remain as Newsletter Editor, is APPROVED.

[Plotkin notes there are now 22 EC members. A quorum is 12, and a 2/3 vote requires 15.]

Conflict of Interest Disclosure.

Several EC members gave O'Brien their signed EC conflict of interest disclosure forms in accord with the "Conflict of Interest Policy" included in the new bylaws. This came about in response to a round at the July EC meeting, at Stitt's suggestion, during the discussion of the APEX hotel development proposal. Stitt noted that he works as a consultant and is also a member of the EC Development Review Oversight Committee. He saw the potential for a conflict of interest on his part. Others may have similar potential conflicts. He noted that potential conflicts must be addressed as part of the new bylaws prepared in conjunction with our 501(c)3 application to the IRS. Ostlind pointed out the bylaws require meeting "minutes" to reflect a discussion of potential conflicts of interest. He asked what would happen if the committee in question does not normally prepare minutes? Plotkin said this is a good point but encourages the preparation of minutes by CNI committees. Phelps said he would gladly post any minutes on the website. Cooper pointed to the language (the minutes "shall contain" a discussion of conflicts of interest) and asked whether this makes a difference when it involves CNI districts as opposed to other CNI committees. Zellers suggested we review the bylaws. In response to a question by Mayer, Plotkin said this requirement was added to the bylaws in February. Plotkin agreed to talk about this with others in the next few weeks.

CNI Membership on the Joint Southeast Campus Area Committee and the Business Improvement District (BID) Board.

Plotkin announced there are openings for a CNI representative on both of these boards. The Mayor's office is looking for recommendations. It need not be an EC member. Let Plotkin know if interested.

Creation of Demolition Protocol.

The Development Review Oversight Committee, chaired by Ostlind, has suggested creation of a protocol for demolition of buildings before development starts to avoid the specter of demolition without any new development taking place. This is in response to the APEX proposal on S. Hamilton St. and Cliff Fisher's desire to move, rather than demolish, a home on Butler St. Zellers noted the Landmarks Commission requires that the intended use and a timeline be provided before any demolition can take place. Verveer added that Landmarks approval could be conditioned on proof of financing or acquisition of a building permit. Zellers urged CNI to endorse that approach and communicate to the city that we will not support demolitions and they should not be approved without such plans for use. Ostlind suggested adopting a policy to review each demolition request as it comes along. Zellers answered it is different because this is part of city policy. Patterson pointed to the precedent of the old YMCA building on Fairchild St. being demolished with nothing new to replace it and leaving a hole in the ground for years, due to lack of financing. Ostlind suggested making proof of financing a condition of any approval. He will make a proposal at the Sept. EC meeting and asked that it be put on the Sept. EC agenda.

Anti-SLAPP State Legislation.

Plotkin distributed a draft of proposed state legislation to prevent “Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation” (SLAPP). These are frivolous suits brought by powerful interests against civic-minded individuals and organizations to silence them. Other states have passed similar laws. Zellers encouraged CNI support for the legislation, noting that CNI members have been threatened with lawsuits in the past. Cooper asked who the sponsors of the bill are. Zellers said State Senator Risser was a sponsor the last time this was introduced and she believes he would introduce it again. Fisher asked how one defines “frivolous” suits.

A MOTION by Zellers, with a SECOND by Plotkin, that CNI support the introduction of legislation outlawing SLAPP lawsuits, is APPROVED. Fisher OPPOSES.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

Housing Inventory.

Glen not present.

Parking.

Devitt not present.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS.

Mansion Hill.

Zellers announced there is a “community meeting” tonight (8/26), 7:30 at Bethel, to discuss the Edgewater Hotel proposal. The Edgewater project went before Landmarks last night, with many registered and speaking in opposition to it, citing concerns that its bulk and mass is out of scale with the historic district and it will increase traffic in the district. The developers have requested 16.8 million in city TIF funds. This issue has absorbed most of the energy in the district recently, she added.

Bassett.

The steering committee for the APEX project has met for the first time and new residents have joined it. The formal application by APEX has been delayed until mid-October, Ostlind added

CVS Pharmacy is the sole retail tenant for the new apartment building to be built at the Badger Bus depot site, at 2 S. Bedford. They want a drive-through window that would require separate approval. Most on the committee reviewing the project were comfortable with it. There is opposition to their request to turn the planned community room into another apartment. Verveer reports the attorney for the family that owns Badger Bus depot said CVS is refusing to sign unless they get approval to sell beer. Verveer noted they are not eligible for a license because of the alcohol density ordinance. Walgreen’s has already been told they can’t sell liquor because of the ordinance. He said CVS wants an amendment to the ordinance. Verveer will meet with them and suggest they come to a Bassett district meeting. Ostlind said this came up at the monthly meeting. Cooper commented that allowing CVS to sell liquor would be a “slippery slope” because the city would then have to allow Walgreen’s to sell it. Ostlind sees no reason to allow it. Verveer thanked everyone for the feedback.

Bassett representatives will meet with city planning staff to discuss recommendations for the next phase of the downtown plan.

First Settlement.

Megan Christiansen reports that residents met last week with Ricardo Gonzales to discuss his plans for re-opening the Cardinal Bar. He is now doing remodeling and hopes to reopen in early October. Ricardo plans to provide food service. She said he has a good track record with the neighborhood in the past and they are encouraged by his plans. According to Plotkin, Jim Skrentny will draft a letter of support by the neighborhood.

Mifflin West.

Yarborough reports the district has concerns about the proposal in the downtown plan for higher density in the district. City planning staff will speak at the next district meeting and residents will be allowed to weigh in.

Yarborough reports district residents unanimously voted in support of the Fiore proposal for the new Central Library. She believes the alternative proposed rehabilitation of the existing library is not practical. They liked the idea of its fronting on W. Washington. She said the district asked Plotkin to bring this up before the EC for support. [The EC sent out a letter of support for the Fiore proposal to the Mayor before this meeting]

James Madison Park.

Julie Wurl-Koth reports there is a district meeting this Thursday (8/28). Porchlight is remodeling the old halfway house on Hancock and Mifflin.

As of now, the district will have three homes on the Downtown Living Tour. Zellers suggested that Cliff Fisher's house also be on the tour. Wurl-Koth notes that Fisher obtained approval to move the house that is in the path of his development project. She hopes residents can develop good communications with the new alder (Ald. Maniaci) who also plans to attend the meeting.

Fisher announced that Lupe Montes-Tydrich seeks approval to take Donna Asif's place as a James Madison Park neighborhood representative on the EC. Montes-Tydrich then briefly discussed her background and explained why she wishes to be a member of the EC.

A MOTION by Zellers, with a SECOND by Cooper, to appoint Lupe Montes-Tydrich to the EC as a James Madison Park neighborhood representative, is APPROVED BY ACCLAMATION.

VII. REPORT OF THE ALDERPERSONS.

Verveer reports new Mifflin West District Chair Larry Warman has agreed to be the CNI representative on the BID Board and the Southeast Campus Committee, His application has been submitted to the Mayor. He notes there are three candidates for the BID board downtown resident position.

City staff meetings with district residents are now taking place to discuss the downtown plan. Mansion Hill has already met with city staff, but most of the discussion focused on the Edgewater proposal. Verveer hopes another meeting in Mansion Hill to discuss the plan will occur. City staff will meet with Bassett August 27th and with Mifflin West September 10th at the Senior Center. Verveer called the plan a "critically important" document. This is the time to get input (or "lobby") because city staff will

make their recommendations in October and, Verveer believes, those recommendations will carry much weight. Verveer urged anyone in other neighborhoods where such meetings with city staff are not scheduled to contact their alder and request one. Another public meeting will be held in the near future at the Overture Center.

The “Ride the Drive” will take place this Sunday, August 30, from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Major thoroughfares will be closed downtown for bicyclists and pedestrians: John Nolen Drive, East Washington Ave., and others. Verveer said the Mayor hopes to make this an annual event to encourage alternative modes of transportation. Wurl-Koth said she has seen no publicity about this.

Verveer wishes to have a neighborhood meeting to discuss the proposed renovation of Lisa Link Peace Park at the Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel September 9th, 7:00 p.m. If approved, ground could be broken later this year. Patterson urged Verveer to make sure Tom Link is there. Verveer responded that the design provides a greater tribute to Lisa Link and to the peace movement. There will be a “peace pole,” an amphitheater, a visitor’s center staffed by BID Ambassadors with public restrooms, and a spray park for children. It goes before the Plan Commission in September and the City Council later in the fall. In response to a question by Mayer about keeping the bathrooms clean and safe, Verveer said they would only be accessible from inside the visitor’s center.

Verveer believes the Mayor is about to announce support for the Fiore Company’s new Central Library proposal and will include it in his capital budget next week. He believes CNI’s letter of support helped. Patterson suggested the current property could be sold to help defray the costs of the new one. Verveer answered that this is precisely what is being discussed.

Fisher expressed concern about the increase in the number of homeless people sleeping on the Square. Verveer said city ordinance outlaws sleeping in bus shelters but it is not enforced once the busses stop running. He noted that Ald. Sanborn stated at last night’s budget meeting the city is spending more on homelessness prevention than ever before due to increased federal aid. According to Patterson, many homeless have nowhere to go during the day; he encouraged creating “drop-in centers” during the day for them. He added that many have mental health issues and don’t take their medication. Wurl-Koth suggested a creative approach such as that employed by Baltimore, where people donate support for homeless shelters and services through parking meters. Verveer said the meter donation idea has been suggested for Madison before and he does not know why we haven’t done it. Perhaps donation boxes could be located in the new Lisa Link Peace Park, he added.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

ASM Liaison.

Hannah Karns not present. Plotkin will meet with her on other issues before the Sept. EC meeting.

Education and City Issues Monitoring.

Patterson has nothing to report.

Garden.

Yarborough reports the committee plans to meet four times a year.

Program.

A new chair is needed to replace Patsy Baynard. Zellers said she is willing to help but will not chair the committee.

Upcoming programs:

- Sept. 24, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at Capitol Lakes, 333 W. Main. Glen Mitroff of community radio station WORT-FM will talk about the station and there will be an optional tour of its studios following the program at 8:30.

- October. Sheridan Glen will discuss positive images of downtown.

- December. The Annual CNI Holiday Party will take place December 3rd, 7:00 p.m., at Kennedy Manor.

Downtown Living Tour.

Cooper announced the tour will take place Sunday, October 4, 2009. Volunteers are needed! Zellers pointed out that the "Alternative Parade of Homes" is taking place the same day in Marquette, making it more difficult to get volunteers. Cooper said they've discussed cooperating with the "Parade." Cooper announced that Trek will allow the use of the Mansion Hill Inn for tours and as a base camp. There are seven confirmed locations and seven others that are pending. The goal is to have 10-12 locations in all. Eighty or more volunteers are needed to cover two shifts. Plotkin asked how DMI feels about our shared responsibilities so far. Cooper believes they are "comfortable" with our response to this point. Stitt urged CNI to develop an "institutionalized approach" to the tour; perhaps forming a standing committee.

Membership/Media.

Kaufman reports the next meeting is September 1st, 5:00 p.m., at the Central Library, Rm. 201. Issues to be taken up: (1) updating the website (Patterson is willing to help); (2) updating the membership renewal letter (a draft is being discussed); (3) processing renewal checks; and (4) finding a new place to hold meetings. On the third point, Stanley reports that four supposedly "lapsed" members who were contacted recently said they had sent in their renewal checks. Two said their checks were cashed, a third said the check was never processed, and the fourth said the check was not cashed. Megan Christiansen said any checks mailed to CNI go into the CNI P.O. Box, they get deposited and she gives renewal slips to Lynn Phelps. As for meeting space, the committee now meets at Burrique's. It is often noisy and cramped, and they feel the need to purchase something while there. In response to a question by Plotkin, Kaufman said Monica Harkey will start work on the website soon after she's finished with her Ph.D. He hopes she'll start by October 1st.

Development Review Oversight.

Ostlind has nothing to report.

Finance.

Megan Christiansen reports the committee approved expenditures for James Madison Park of \$100 for gardens (\$50 for plants; \$50 for labor).

President's Report.

Plotkin reports he and Zellers met with the President of Marquette Neighborhood and with Tenney-Lapham representatives to discuss collaboration among the three downtown districts regarding development and historic preservation issues. They intend to meet with the Mayor to discuss historic preservation and the need for a Preservation Planner. Patterson suggested they also discuss creation of a Downtown Planning Council.

Physical Linkages.

Mayer will send out an e-mail about the upcoming "Ride the Drive" event. Plotkin also suggested sending an e-mail regarding the upcoming Madison Mini-Marathon.

Downtown Pan.

Zellers has nothing else to report.

Zoning.

Zellers has nothing to report.

MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT EC MEETING: *Tuesday September 22, 2009, 5:15 p.m., State Capitol Rm. 415NW.*

AGENDA for Sept. 22 EC Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM.
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AUGUST EC MINUTES.
- III. TREASURER'S REPORT.
- IV. REPORT ON SAFETY/CRIME DOWNTOWN.
- V. ACTION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS.
- VI. OLD BUSINESS.
Housing Inventory for Owner/Occupancy (Glen).
Parking (Devitt).
Demolition Protocol (Ostlind).
- VII. DISTRICT REPORTS
Bassett, Mifflin West, Mansion Hill, James Madison Park, First Settlement.
- VIII. REPORT OF THE ALDERPERSONS.
- IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS
ASM Student Liaison, Program, Membership/Media, Development, Finance, Development Review Oversight, Downtown Living Tour, Downtown Plan, Garden, Education and City Issues Monitoring, Physical Linkages, President's Report.
- X. ADJOURNMENT.