

***CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.***  
**MINUTES of Executive Council Meeting - Tuesday, July 28, 2009**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Plotkin (President), Baynard, Zellers, Christiansen, Warman, Wurl-Koth, Steakley, Patterson, Verveer, Shean, Skrentny, Stitt, Cooper, Klema, McGrath, Kaufman,

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Mike Behrends, Edgewood College Student, Ilse Hecht, Lynn Phelps, Lupe Montes Tydnch, Lt. Mark Brown

**Downtown Crime and Safety Report – Lt. Brown**

Crime has declined in the downtown. There have been no major incidents downtown this summer, i.e. no armed robberies, no sexual assaults, burglaries way down (some significant burglary arrests that should help the problem), and drug sales on State Street (getting a handle on). Theft from autos is still an issue (mainly unlocked cars in city ramps). The remainder of the city has their problems, but in the downtown, we are doing well. UW is redistricting their areas and an upcoming joint meeting is scheduled to address safety for the remainder of the summer and as students return. Bar time is an emphasis as a deterrent to crime incidents. Joint efforts with UW are planned on State Street. It is very quiet downtown. This quietness is likely attributed to the increased foot patrol and additional emphasis and cooperation of working with UW. More collaboration has proved to be beneficial. Also, the quality of the officers is very good, and they are very aggressive in preempting incidents which have made a difference. Student neighborhoods are still an issue with safety, i.e. doors and windows. Additional attention will be paid to this in getting students to take responsibility for their safety.

Districts – The five shift model, used in 1985, will be reinstated from noon to 8 p.m. as a further enhancement beginning early next year. This scheduling is not likely to affect downtown but it provides for flexibility for officers and additional flexibility in scheduling. It will begin again in January 2010, and it should work well. In addition, it will likely help with flexibility for changing needs in the community. In addition, it should minimize lag time on shift turnover. This will be a change, but it should work out well.

**Finance Committee – Megan Christiansen**

As of today \$7,015.81 in our bank account with CDs of \$8,107.36 for a combined total of \$15,123.17.

**Hotel Development Discussions**

Edgewater – Mansion Hill

Ledell Zellers – There have been two informational meetings Planning and Landmarks. Several people spoke at these sessions. UDC will be the next presentation for the Hammes group. No discussions of impact on the community have been provided, and it is difficult to schedule a meeting with the developers. Meetings that have been held in the neighborhood have been focused on a rendering of the development.

The Business Section of the Wisconsin State Journal on Sunday, July 26, 2009 identified that a number of hotel proposals have been backed off of due to perception of overbuilding. There was a study, the Hunden Report, which discusses hotels in downtown and need to support Monona Terrace's need to attract conventions for the hotel to be within 1200 feet for attendees to walk. The proposed Apex development planned for West Wilson is within this distance. Marcus's Hilton is within the distance.

A study has been done that shows parking at the location of the Government East Parking Ramp could be developed as underground in the immediate vicinity at \$21,000/space and is reasonable since it is comparable for above grade parking costs. This represents some interesting options.

Mayor's blog on hotels – Bert Stitt. His comments appear less optimistic on the Edgewater than previous indications. Jonathan Cooper indicated that Brenda Konkel wrote on her blog on the recent meetings on the Edgewater.

Apex, the corner of West Wilson and South Henry – Bassett – A General Meeting is planned for August 5, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at Capital Lakes Retirement. It will be hosted by Alder Mike Verveer.

Jonathan Cooper – The proposal before Bassett is an ambitious proposal with no details, hotel space numbers, commercial, retail and residential space accommodations. All properties are on West Wilson and all but two are on South Henry. They will work around the properties they can not purchase.

Hilton – Bert Stitt indicated that the Hilton is largely filled most of the time by Epic. This is important for downtown. They are growing and will continue to grow. The federal government will be digitizing all medical records, and their employees and demographic want to be downtown. These are the creative class in a dynamic region which requires more attractive settings and living space that the downtown provides. In our considerations, we should consider this in the overall strategic view. This information is likely postdating the Hunden Report. Downtown will continue to thrive. “A good hotel has a fireplace in the lobby...” Paul Soglin.

Marcus – First Settlement – Jonathan Cooper indicated that no one has brought this project to our attention. It will be important to have a neighborhood meeting. There will be a discussion with the Mayor's office tomorrow.

Fiore – Mifflin West – Associated with the library in the space of the former library. There have been no details on this.

Meeting with the Mayor – July 30, 2009 - Mike Verveer – We should discuss in the meeting with the Mayor tomorrow our concerns on hotels in the downtown. He sent out 6,000 postcards on the Apex development planned for West Wilson. The Fiore proposal is on target; however, there will be no project unless the proposal is accepted for building the new Central Library. It rests on this approval and capital budget. City Council has had one retreat on August 6, 2009 to discuss this topic. The renovation proposal will be discussed at the Central Library and will include a presentation by the Milwaukee architects.

The Marcus proposal – the Mayor indicated we are open to discussing, and we are waiting on firm numbers. We are in a holding pattern of negotiations. There are some rumblings by residents in the Belleview regarding the covered walkway that would be located in front of their building. Marcus insists on the walkway. And the Bellevue is concerned over obtrusive nature and whether the architect has recommendations and other options.

The Edgewater concerns are apparent in the community, and we have a date for a neighborhood meeting sponsored from **7:30, August 25, Bethel or Concourse** hosted by Bridgett Maniaci and Mike Verveer. This is the same night as our CNI Executive Council meeting. It will require us to be prompt in closing our meeting to be able to attend the Edgewater meeting.

Bert Stitt indicated that we should have an Edgewater discussion meeting for CNI. We have serious long term issues on this project and want input from neighborhoods and not hampered by what the developers want to do.

Adam Plotkin suggested looking at two meetings and continue with the city process while still having the neighborhood meeting.

Mike Verveer – Additional outreach and coordination is needed from Hammes. He and Bridget Maniaci will stay involved.

A recommendation is to have a Program Committee Presentation – Hotel Development Overall

### **Homeless Committee**

Donna Asif – resigned from the ad hoc Homeless Committee; however, she has requested ongoing financial support from CNI for her activities.

Bert Stitt indicated he believed we should continue to support the homeless project, and indicated that he believes she has done a very good job. He suggested we look at this issue from a different angle than others and not view it in terms of a sense of incompleteness due to the lack of hard evidence of accomplishment. He does not believe this must have hard evidence and recommended \$500/yr up to 3 years.

Ledell Zellers indicated that without any kind of feedback whether it is hard evidence or softer descriptive discussion on these issues, it is not sure what we are getting from this investment.

Adam Plotkin asked if we should entertain a motion to fund \$500/yr for 3 years or do we authorize the Finance Committee up to a \$500 limit. Bill Patterson indicated that he was on the original committee, and it appeared that Donna was operating very independent from the committee. He indicated that it was somewhat embarrassing to accept money from the city without knowing what was produced. He is not confident that we have helped anyone or changed anyone's life.

Larry Warman has been attending since February and believes that the funds in the past have gone for refreshments?

Bert Stitt indicated that funding to date has been for paper, charts, rental of room, and refreshments.

Larry Warman suggested that if we continue support that we should have an active committee.

Ledell Zellers indicated that the purpose of an ad hoc committee was intended for an issue for a short duration, and if we no longer have CNI a committee, would funding be appropriate.

Stanley Kaufman indicated that he had involvement with the Homeless Committee in its forming and did not go to the first committee and did go to the second meeting. He found the committee to be unproductive and not orientated to accomplish any set goals. It appeared to be more of a feel good committee which was consistent with other comments from others. It was a diverse crowd. It was primarily revolved around community activities for the homeless by those who were already professionally working with the homeless and saw it as a natural home for their activities. Gradually these wonderful people dropped out because this committee a waste of time. It was too concentrated on process, dozen or so facilitators, and 6-7 facilitators with no control on the committee. There were more facilitators at the meeting than participants. Committee members appeared to just drop out.

Jonathan Cooper – Suggest Donna Asif come and provide a vision on how we can support, as well as provide a written proposal.

Bill Patterson – Other city programs did not appear to coordinate with Donna.

Adam Plotkin indicated that he would contact Donna and indicated that we are requesting a written report and details of how the money would be spent.

### **New By – Laws for CNI**

We must certify the list of voting members of the Executive Council. At tonight's meeting we have 10/18 members, and a quorum is present.

Phil Hees former Chair of James Madison Park District – now it is James Steakley - Chair and Ilse Hecht have submitted resignations; Julie Wurl-Koth will serve as a James Madison Park District Representative.

John Sheean and Brendan McGrath were confirmed as Bassett and Mansion Hill District Representatives.

### **Approve Committee Chairs and New Vice President**

Jonathan Cooper nominated Davy Mayer as Vice President – approved unanimously.

The following Committee Chairs were appointed by the EC:

- (1) Program – Patsy Baynard
- (2) Membership/Media – Stanley Kaufman
- (3) Garden – Ruth Yarborough
- (4) Finance – Megan Christiansen
- (5) Physical Linkages – Davy Mayer
- (6) Development Proposal Review Oversight – Pete Ostlind
- (7) Education and City Issues Monitoring – Bill Patterson
- (8) Downtown Plan Ad Hoc – Melissa Berger

### **Other Business**

#### **Alcohol Issues Committee**

There was a draft letter sent out with the agenda involving the disbanding of the Alcohol Issues Committee. There was a motion, seconded and a discussion of the letter. The intended audience is the Mayor, Alcohol Licensing and Review Commission and CNI membership.

Verveer requested how this would be addressed in the meeting with the Mayor tomorrow.

Ledell Zellers indicated that the Executive Council (EC) voted last meeting on 6/26/09 to disband the committee.

A minor edit was suggested to the letter and a final vote on sending the letter disbanding the committee.

### **Old Business**

Approved June EC meetings minutes.

Parking there was a plan to do a downtown parking plan, and Gene Devitt was representing CNI; however, the committee not meeting regularly and no final work product.

Sheridan Glenn had been updating the EC on real estate issues in the downtown. He was evaluating housing inventory and identifying houses in downtown perceived as potential owner occupancy and on web site and not tied to small cap tiff but a component.

### **District Reports**

Mansion Hill District – Ledell Zellers – The Edgewater is the priority, Bethel is looking at building on their parking lot, potentially a school. Verveer concerned at how the downtown plan depicted their property.

Bassett District – Jonathan Cooper – It is all about development – 115-117 Bassett, Brandon Cook, was identified as a redevelopment of this property. He identified it as a zoning variance; however, he raised the house 18 inches and it was not part of the variance. He attempted to rectify and request redevelopment approval. Additional details are needed. Has been to Bassett Neighborhood meetings, and GDP/PUB has been handled differently and difficult to see where he is going, plan appears to be good; however, details are required.

There are new detailed drawings for two houses and carriage house and scale and on Urban Design Commission on August 5, 2009, and it was pushed back perhaps will be early September.

The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) has purchased the Council of Bar Examiners and is doing some renovation/clean up of the building. Initially it will be occupied with about 20 staff members and no commercial business. It is a trade association and not a dentist office. The building has been vacant for some time, and this represents a shot in the arm to have people back in the building. The AACD is really excited about being downtown. The previous plan to demolish a house and expand parking will no longer be needed. There are no current plans to expand parking.

The Bassett Cleanup will be sometime after August 15 when the students are back. It will be chaired by Brendan McGrath. It is not expected to conflict with a Badger home game. It is expected to take place before the first home game. The date will be finalized by the next meeting. It represents a good opportunity to meet residents in the downtown.

#### First Settlement District - Jim Skrentny

There is a proposed development for 502 504 East Main which continues in some stage of development, and the purchase has not been complete. The neighborhood has a steering committee and expects it to happen,

On 14 South Franklin there has been a meeting to discuss this rental property. In attendance were Mary Schauf and Marsha Rummel. It was a productive meeting since there have been multiple arrests, unsatisfactory city building inspections, and public health, bed bugs, reported.

#### Mifflin West District – Larry Warman

There are two vacancies on Executive Board which will be dealt with quickly; people are not anxiously taking up positions. Mike Verveer has indicated he will come to meetings in the future.

The feel they need more input to the Central Library Proposals. Mifflin West is 99% metropolitan place and most of the volunteers are burned out due to Garden Walk and the Geranium Sale. Considering a Mifflin West clean up is under consideration.

#### James Madison Park District - Jim Steakley

We met for the first time on July 22, 2009. Major topics included a visit by Alderperson Bridget Maniaci, and we had communication on how work at the park and for the shoreline would take place. Discussions were on the Edgewater and the Apex 200 Block development and the move of the Lamp house. It is currently on the National registry and in rough shape.

Bert Stitt indicated that he works with Apex. There is an Erik Paulson who has expressed an interest in chairing the Development Steering Committee on James Madison Park. He indicated that he did not believe there was any intention to move the house. The owner has a great respect for the house and wants to see house whole.

### **Alder Report – Mike Verveer**

He provided a plug for the importance for the Downtown Plan and how it is approaching finalization. The downtown recommendations are likely to come out in September. In discussions with the planners, they are willing to meet early and often and discuss plans for our districts, Widelich, Brad Murphy in Mansion Hill – not much information that was satisfying. Really want to have maximum amount of our vision for our neighborhood to be incorporated and the Planning Commission will deal with it in October at their next public meeting. We need to continue to stay engaged to get vision incorporated. Some view that we need a “Town Gown” to serve the campus since Mifflin district and do not want conservation or preservation and DMI is behind this, clear it out and upscale it, very tall buildings, U haul, Doyle Education, Mifflin West is the most potentially impacted – vision is conservation and city feels it is the opposite and higher better and taller better and taller buildings around John Nolan and Apex development and staff is conflicted. Staff is willing to come and we must be proactive – we must make these overtures, Brad Murphy or Bill Frueling and go through Bridget for James Madison Park

Ledell Zellers – Zoning Code Rewrite – now sounding like they will go ahead based on direction from staff, Mansion Hill is R6H and this leaves this neighborhood vulnerable. Zoning will implement the plan.

Jim Skrentny – asked Mike how best to engage.

Mike Verveer indicated we need to stay engaged and discuss with the staff. Ask Marsha for meeting and willing to meet at night or come to their office.

Jonathan Cooper – office will be in their office for a couple of weeks. Go to their office and more contact, encourage all to communicate

ASM – Students night out – notice out.

### **Education & City Issues – Will Patterson**

Dane Dances upcoming Friday evenings during the month of August at Monona Terrace Rooftop.

**Garden Walk and Geranium Sales - Ruth Yarborough report out by Larry Warman**

Revenue to CNI of \$4,623.57 from the Geranium Sales and Garden Walk. It was two great events.

### **Downtown Living Tour (DMI)**

Jonathan Cooper and Bert Stitt are on the committee. DMI discussion has been productive. Patrick Marsden from State Farm is on the committee. There has been approximately \$4,000 income. This is a big need, and we do not want to give this up. The Garden Tour is considering not doing a tour every year. Under consideration is gardening awards in interim year. The committee is meeting Fridays at 11:30 at Sunprint Café. The Downtown Living Tour is relatively smaller and will focus this year in the James Madison Park District and up into Mansion Hill Inn.

### **Membership/Media - Griffin Klema passed the baton to Stanley Kaufman**

Stan was part of membership/media for the last year and motivated and dedicated. Goals are to revise membership/media materials, identify our accomplishments and combine with the results of the membership survey and concerns of membership.

### **Website – Monica Harkey**

She is working on the website and completing her PhD. We should discuss professional service if Monica can not come through and provide ongoing updating. Lynn Phelps is not available to continue this effort. Bill Patterson is interested in helping design the website.

### **Development Review Oversight – Bert Stitt**

The conversation about hotels and all that went on. A conversation with his development of CNI and sensitive about any potential threat of conflict of interest.

### **Downtown Planning or Zoning Code Rewrite – Ledell Zellers**

This is still underway.

### **Annual CNI executive Council Retreat**

We need to secure retreat location (potentially Fred Mohs' brother's barn) and obtain potential dates.

Meeting adjourned.

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