

**CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.**

**MINUTES of Annual Membership Meeting Held June 27, 2013 at Monona Terrace**

**I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER by Davy Mayer.**

**II. OPENING REMARKS.**

Mayer discussed community involvement in the city approval process. He noted that since 2010, 1,200 new living units have been constructed within CNI's boundaries. This is not to mention new office and hotel space that has also been constructed. More is either under construction or being proposed. This shows that CNI is not hostile to development. CNI is pro-development, but in Mayer's view, it does not function as a "pass through" or "rubber stamp" for development proposals. Our role is to help fine tune and guide proposals.

There is room for growth. Mayer noted that we are currently at a 2% housing vacancy level. Much of the growth is in response to demand for downtown housing by EPIC employees, but also from other burgeoning tech companies. Mayer expressed concern that the stock of older homes downtown may deteriorate and he encourages the city to promote the conversion of older homes back to owner-occupancy. He suggested that the city, state and the university encourage their employees to live downtown near work. A critical issue for us is how to get people to live downtown and buy homes downtown. Mayer concluded by stating that CNI serves to protect, promote and make downtown Madison a better place for current residents and new residents to live.

**III. ANNUAL ELECTION OF NEIGHBORHOOD REPRESENTATIVES TO THE EC.**

Mayer then oversaw the annual election of district representatives to two-year terms on the EC. There were no contested seats in any of the four districts. There were two candidates for the two seats open for election in Mifflin West: Larry Warman and Trish Codde. There were three candidates for the three seats open for election in Bassett: Davy Mayer, Peter Ostlind and Jeff Vercauteren. There was one candidate for the two seats open for election in Mansion Hill: Fred Mohs. There was one open seat in First Settlement and one open seat in James Madison Park districts. There were no candidates for those two open seats.

Mayer opened the floor for nominations of candidates for any of the open seats. There were none. Nominations were then closed.

A MOTION by Scott Kolar, with a SECOND by Tim Kamps, to move the slate of candidates for election by acclamation, is APPROVED. Mayer thanked all those who will serve on the EC.

**IV. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION.**

Scott Kolar introduced Madison Eighth District City Alderperson Scott Resnick who gave the keynote address. Resnick discussed the growth of Madison's high-tech sector and its impact on the downtown in coming years. Scott was elected to the city council in 2011 and was re-elected this year.

He serves as the council's President Pro Tem and is a member of the Plan Commission. Scott is also Executive Vice-President of Hardin Design and Development in Madison; a company he described as a leader in mobile applications and software development. It has a number of major clients. The former President of the State-Langdon Neighborhood Association, Resnick said his first company was operated out of the Chadbourne Hall dormitory on the UW campus. His second company was Hardin Design and Development. Its offices are in the Verex Building and it has 17 employees.

According to Resnick, Hardin shares Madison's values and is a vital part of its "tech environment." He noted that Hardin covers 100% of its employees' health insurance benefits and has set up an IRA plan for them. Its employees live downtown and many bike or walk to work.

Resnick helped establish "Capitol Enterprises" in 2007 – an organization designed to be a support mechanism for "start-up" entrepreneurs. When it started as more or less a social group, there were 7 members. Last year, there were 150 "start-ups," most located in downtown Madison. Three months ago, Resnick reports, that figure surpassed 200. The organization has helped set up a "co-working" arrangement whereby a starting entrepreneur can rent a desk in an office for \$100 a week.

A recent survey of 200 members drew 39 responses. When asked where they would prefer to locate, 37 of the respondents answered they preferred downtown or the near east side because they like the atmosphere in those places. Resnick wants to find ways to capture this potential and keep these new companies here. He believes Madison has many parallels with Austin, Texas and sees no reason why Madison cannot attract the same sort of businesses. According to Resnick, Madison has three things to work on:

- (1) Embracing entrepreneurship;
- (2) Mentoring;
- (3) Financing.

Madison has a mix of skilled workers. This attribute, Resnick said, is unlike other cities. There are also many entertainment choices. To encourage these businesses and their employees to stay downtown, we need to provide both long-term and short-term housing, affordable condominiums, and mixed-use opportunities. Transportation options are important. This includes bicycles. Resnick lamented the lost opportunity for train service to and from Madison. He notes that the city's Economic Development Commission is working on ways to keep these young people and their businesses here. Resnick does not believe that the city's review process has to be tweaked to accomplish these objectives, noting that Austin is also a "liberal" city but it, too, has a process. Resnick believes we can incorporate our values into this new growth.

A demographic problem of note is that those employees ages 22-30 want to live downtown, but those ages 30-40 are moving away to places like Fitchburg, Waunakee, Verona, etc. He described

it as an “exodus of young families.” Our goal should be to bring companies here and then keep those young families here, moving them into our neighborhoods.

Scott opened the floor for questions. In response to one question, he said the development of more “Class A” office space is still a challenge and should be encouraged. In response to a question about ways to improve regional transit, Resnick remarked that the No. 1 barrier to it is the inescapable fact that we live on an isthmus. He emphasized the need for a centrally-located bus depot, more “park-and-ride” locations, and more efficient roads and buses. In response to a question about historic preservation, Resnick answered there needs to be a balance. It is important to preserve the historic character of our neighborhoods. One questioner noted that young families don’t stay because there are no schools and the cost of housing is so high; so much of downtown is geared toward singles. Resnick answered that he tries to work that concern into every discussion he has with city staff. He cited the example of new single purpose student high-rise housing coming onto the market that will not attract those families. We need to set the bar higher, he commented. We need to provide housing with multiple uses.

When asked what a neighborhood association can do, Resnick quickly answered: “events” and “invite your neighbors.” People do come out when that is done. He added that we should protect our true community resources, such as James Madison Park. Another questioner lamented the continued allowance of the blight of backyard parking downtown, deteriorating the value of neighborhoods, despite a city ordinance banning it. The questioner believes the city council should no longer continue to allow downtown parking as a “non-conforming use.” Resnick suggested making more affordable parking available, but also trying to attract those workers who do not need or want to bring their cars to work.

In response to another question, Resnick described as “cool” his recent visit to the White House along with a group of select business leaders. They covered all sorts of topics, he reports. In response to another inquiry about the need for green space, natural environment and playground space downtown, Resnick suggested that the park enhancement fees imposed by the city on development projects could be used for such purposes. This can be a strong investment that will benefit the greater good. Another asked whether the city will ever erect a shelter/ice skating facility in James Madison Park to help make the park friendlier. Resnick suggested that interested residents have ongoing discussions about it with the local alderperson and make it a major issue. Resnick added that his company, Hardin, is a neighbor of the park and is investing in its improvement even though the park is not in his district. He would support a shelter in the park if the community wants it. The better James Madison Park is, Resnick added, the better he will be able to recruit new employees.

The meeting concluded. All present were encouraged to stay, socialize and consume the fine food and beverage provided.