

CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.

MINUTES of Executive Council Meeting Held May 24, 2016.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vercauteren (President), Cooper, Skrentny, Mohs, Broughman, Ingebritson, Mayer, Stitt, O'Brien, Mary Kolar.

GUESTS PRESENT; Madison Police Officers Alex Berkowitz and Chad Crose.

- I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER by Vercauteren. There was no quorum.
- II. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.

Broughman asked about recent tagging of the new wall at the AT & T building on W. Wash. He believed it said "C-4" and asked if it was gang-related graffiti. Berkowitz answered that, if it was "C-14" it is probably gang-related. There have been other tagging complaints recently and it is hard to solve graffiti attacks. Broughman asked whether, if it is gang-related graffiti, does this mean that there is criminal activity in the neighborhood. Berkowitz believes that it does not, but cautioned that police expect some increase in criminal activity over the summer months in the downtown corridor that may include some gang activity. Broughman asked whether the recent multiple shootings in the city are gang related. Berkowitz did not know. He added that Madison gangs are less established than those in other cities, not well-defined, and more like "spaghetti" composed of small groups associating with larger groups. He believes relates to how housing is set up here; a block here and a block there with gang activity but not an entire neighborhood as in other cities. Crose concurred that the lines between gangs are "blurred" here.

Broughman asked about the presence of "Homeland Security" vans in the city. Berkowitz said Madison police work with them, but Madison is not a "hot spot." Mayer asked whether the "panhandling" ordinance has been suspended. Berkowitz said that it has been, on the advice of the City Attorney, because of a recent court decision that "negated" the ordinance by declaring panhandling protected speech. Mayer asked whether that would include "aggressive" panhandling. Berkowitz answered that there are other ways to address aggressive panhandling, including disorderly conduct or trespassing citations. Mere annoying behavior is not enough, however. In response to a question by Mohs, Berkowitz believes panhandling ordinances like Madison's would be illegal throughout the state because of the recent court decision. O'Brien and Kolar both agreed that a recent court decision interpreting a U.S. Supreme Court decision declared the ordinance unconstitutional as it applied to ordinary panhandling.

Berkowitz had no information about a reported bike theft at 380 W. Wash. Skrentny reports that strangers entered a home and stole a purse on Franklin and Main Sts. in First Settlement. On a second occasion, they were confronted and claimed it was a mistake. He asked whether this is an ongoing problem. Berkowitz answered that there are occasions downtown where people try to enter a house to steal and, if confronted, make up a false excuse for being there. It is not a constant problem and he does not know whether the incidents are increasing. If it happens, we should not confront the individual but should go to a safe place and call police. He added that most burglars will flee if someone is there because they want property, not a confrontation. They can be charged with trespassing merely by

entering through an unlocked door, and with burglary if you can prove their intent to steal or to commit some other felony. Mohs thanked the officers and commented that we feel well protected.

III. COUNTY SUPERVISOR'S REPORT.

Ald. Mary Kolar suggested that CNI host a program on the future of the county jail. At present, the 6th and 7th floors of the City-County Building are hazardous to inmates housed there and prison staff alike. She recommends another program similar to the one we hosted in the past with Sheriff Mahoney. Officer Berkowitz agreed that something needs to be done about the jail. Kolar added that the county has been warned and she does not want it to be responsible for a fatality due to inaction. Mohs commented that the building is not that old. Kolar agreed, but it is not safe now and suicides have occurred because the sightlines in the jail are inadequate for staff to monitor inmates. This poses a risk both to inmates and to staff whereas, in the new jail, staff can see what everyone is doing at all times. Retrofitting the current jail would be cost-prohibitive and the county would have to pay to have inmates transferred elsewhere.

The Alliant Energy Center master plan and market study is still in the works and has received more support from the County Executive. Kolar believes that something must be done; it cannot be allowed to continue to deteriorate. In response to a question by Mohs, Kolar did not know who is doing the study, but it is not the Hammes Co. In response to a question by Ingebritson, Kolar believes an RFP has been issued. Stitt said, if that is so, he would like to see a copy of the RFP. He pointed to problems with the RFP for the Edgewater Hotel. He believes there should be public input into what the RFP might include. Kolar later found the internet site for the RFP. She said to Google: "Dane County Open RFP AEC."

The county's homeless subcommittee is working on a plan for Dane County, including for the homeless day resource center. Kolar believes the center will not be operable before 2017. Broughman suggested that developers be required to put money into funds for city homeless programs, just as they are now required to put money into funding for city parks. Mohs commented that monies should not be diverted from funding for the parks because the city made a compact with developers to use those funds for parks only. Stitt remarked that homelessness issues will never be resolved without money. Kolar noted that both the city and the county contribute to the Housing First Initiative and are working together on the day resource center. Mohs is concerned that, assuming these programs are successful, they might just attract more homeless to the city.

Kolar noted that the county zoning committee, of which she is chair, will be meeting earlier on Tuesdays, causing some conflict with her attendance at EC meetings. Broughman asked whether the county has something akin to the state's DNR for testing water. Kolar answered that there is the Lakes and Water Resources Department. She added that Lake Mendota is the "most tested lake in the world." Broughman is concerned about the DNR's relaxation of its rules for testing well water. Kolar agreed that private well owners have to ask to have their wells tested. She noted that the county works with the DNR. The Wisconsin Counties Association, of which Kolar is a member, also works with the DNR on issues related to shoreland zoning. When asked whether she expects to see an increase in algae blooms on the

lakes this summer, Kolar answered that she believes the county has the programs in place to deal with it. Kolar suggested that CNI also do a program on water issues.

IV TREASURER'S REPORT.

Plotkin (who was not present) submitted a written report showing that CNI's bank balance as of May 24, 2016, was \$14,674.35. He reports that CNI has received two confirmed donations for the Emerald Ash Borer treatment program that is being spearheaded by Ostlind.

V. APPROVAL OF APRIL EC MINUTES.

Due to the lack of a quorum, approval of the minutes for the April EC meeting will have to be deferred to the next EC meeting.

Vi. NEW BUSINESS

CNI Annual Meeting. The CNI Annual Membership Meeting will be held Monday, June 20, 2016, 7:00 p.m., at Monona Terrace. The guest speaker will be Tiffany Kenney, the new Executive Director of the Downtown BID. Elections for District Neighborhood Representatives on the EC will be held at the meeting. Vercauteren will distribute a draft ballot of Neighborhood Representatives up for election from each district. He noted that there are multiple vacancies that must be filled with new recruits making this a good time for us to find new EC members. Bassett and Mifflin West are full and Mohs believes that the vacancy in Mansion Hill will be filled. James Madison Park has vacancies. Mohs described it as a very important neighborhood for CNI. First Settlement is also down a member and needs a new chair to replace Skrentny. Vercauteren asked each district to identify potential new volunteers. Cooper noted that the bylaws require each district to designate a chair before the Annual Meeting.

Vercauteren has considered the creation of "at-large" representatives whereby each district would have two designated seats and one at-large seat. Mayer noted that the populations of the four districts vary. Stitt agrees that we might consider at-large representation because the current system is not working. He added that people in First Settlement became content while Jim Skrentny "held the fort" for a long time. Skrentny explained that he has tried to build relationships with people in the district, but it is difficult to interest them in serving. Stitt suggested getting outside consulting to address this matter. Mohs commented that the east Isthmus is very important to the downtown residential environment and we would regret losing that. Ingebritson noted that there are many more owner-occupants downtown. She cited Tenney-Lapham as having a very strong, active board of directors. We might be able to learn from them, she said. Mayer believes that shared positions and dividing up the work would help. Vercauteren noted that Tenney-Lapham and Marquette both have "at-large" seats on their boards. Broughman suggested a form of "Gerrymandering" to let some more active districts take over others. Cooper also suggested "tinkering" with boundaries. Ingebritson discussed the history of James Madison Park when it absorbed the "Old Market" district that in reality was more affiliated with Tenney-Lapham. Mayer noted, on the other hand, that Tenney-Lapham had three districts and the one closest to us decided to join CNI. Cooper cited the example of the "SASSY" neighborhood association's negotiating with Marquette over the boundary of Schoenck's Corners as a model of how to address overlapping boundaries. Vercauteren reported that he has talked to city

staff about recapturing the State/Langdon district that was once part of CNI. He said city staff is “fine” with it and our bylaws provide a process for doing it. He believes that we need to “shake up the model.” Ingebritson asked why State-Langdon pulled out. Stitt answered that opposition to its affiliation with CNI became a political issue in an aldermanic campaign. Mohs added that State-Langdon is very important to Mansion Hill. Stitt concluded the discussion by stating that this is a very important conversation and it points up the need for an annual EC retreat to address these sorts of issues. Vercauteren said we will continue this discussion in the future.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

State Street Retail Study and Potential Action. Vercauteren recalled that at the April meeting we decided not to take action at this point on the mayor’s proposed food and drink license moratorium and retail business use study for the State St. area. Mayer noted that the Downtown Coordinating Committee, of which he is a member, did not meet this month to address this, but will likely take it up when they meet several times during the summer. Vercauteren noted that a meeting is scheduled for tomorrow morning (5/25) targeting retail operators. Stitt pointed to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he recently visited, as an example of a downtown that has successfully combined vibrant retail and entertainment. It should be studied as a model for Madison. Stitt also believes that the State St. BID is not doing what it needs to do. Just complaining about “too many bars” is in his view not sufficient and it drains energy. Mayer fears that they have already reached a conclusion and are just looking for ways to get there. Vercauteren believes there would be “no value” in CNI’s issuing a statement at this point. We will keep tabs on this as things develop.

MATC Relocation of Downtown Campus. The MATC board recently decided to close and sell its downtown campus, and construct a new south side campus. Mohs called the process “disappointing” and “grinding along.” It is difficult to discuss the issues when race becomes part of the discussion, he remarked. Mohs believes it is much better for all students to use the existing campuses and this decision will dilute MATC’s impact. Vercauteren commented that, despite the decision, there is still a long process ahead. Cooper agrees. We should continue to pay attention because they are a long way from abandoning DTEC. We should continue to try to influence the process. And, Mohs added, we should not make things worse. Stitt believes it is erroneous to argue that it is not a good idea to have a south side campus. It makes sense to put a campus there, but it also makes sense to keep the downtown campus. It is not an “either/or” proposition, he maintained, but a “both/and” proposition. Vercauteren said we will continue to stay abreast of developments.

VIII. DISTRICT REPORTS

Bassett. Cooper reports that the 12th annual neighborhood clean-up took place last Saturday (5/21). They collected 70 trash bags of debris, down from previous years. This has made a big difference in the neighborhood. Cooper applauded those who came out to help on Saturday (including Davy Mayer).

The obsolete microwave towers on the roof of the AT & T building on Fairchild St. are being removed thanks in large part to the insistence of residents at Capitol Lakes with the help of Ald. Verveer over the past year. Cooper believes the roof will be clear by late June.

He called this a “testament to citizen power.” Vercauteren added that it will create a completely different view from John Nolen Dr.

The “Shake the Lake” fireworks show is scheduled for Saturday June 25th. It was successful last year and the same is expected this year. Cooper noted that the promoters are working with the parking ramps to have people pay as they enter, rather than as they leave, to avoid congestion after the show.

First Settlement. Stitt reports that the district is looking for a chairperson to replace Skrentny. The house at 138 S. Franklin has been sold and will be reconstructed as a home. The work is being done either by Gary Gorman or his son. Stitt has seen the plans and the proposal will go before Landmarks soon. Skrentny added that the plan is for two units with three bedrooms. Stitt reports that construction work has begun on the conversion of the Progressive Building, 409 E. Main St., into a law office. Skrentny reports that the district is otherwise healthy and in good shape.

James Madison Park. No one present.

Mansion Hill. Mohs reports that things are fairly clam at present. Activity at the Edgewater has calmed down but they are still working on issues with the large light poles. Mohs hopes that former district resident and EC member Steve Fabick will move back into the district if he can get TIF funding to rehab his property there. Work continues on preserving the old Governor’s Mansion on Gilman St.

Ingebritson reports that issues persist with regard to the Chabad House, a “contributing structure” to the historic district. Mohs added that the concern here is setting bad precedent; how can we say “no” to others in the future if we don’t say “no” now. He said the City Planning Department is considering not allowing expansion behind the house. They also need to find a way to get the dumpsters out from behind the “Hop Cat” bar. Mohs hopes that we can find a solution because the district is supportive of the services provided for students at Chabad House, but not enough to abandon precedent.

Miffland. Broughman reports that the proposed demolition of homes and apartment building construction at 400 W. Wash. has become a “bone of contention.” Residents wrote a position statement for the UDC raising issues regarding height, massing and setbacks. Also, the design does not warrant two “bonus” stories for “exceptional design.” Other issues include lack of parking and the need for affordable housing. Vercauteren reports that the proposal was scheduled to go before the Plan Commission last night (5/23) but the developer voluntarily withdrew it from the agenda and it was not rescheduled. Mohs commented that the lack of parking will have implications for other developments downtown. The developers will rent to anyone; not just those who ride the bus, he said. This will create parking pressure in the neighborhood. Mayer responded that this development is for “transit oriented” people, it is on Epic Corp.’s main transportation line and there may be less of a demand for parking in ten years. Ingebritson added that other residents could rent out garages. Mohs believes that the inadequate setback is a big issue. The broad terraces and lawns currently there are worth saving. We should be careful and not “wreck” what’s there, he remarked.

Broughman reports that the cast of “The Lion King” is spending a lot of time in the neighborhood. The “Red Sushi” restaurant will open at its new location in the AT & T Building

on W. Wash. around July 1. Vercauteren added that Hovde Co. has offered to host a neighborhood event at their renovated building and will have an open house once the restaurants are up and running. Cooper reports that a new espresso bar, the “Highland Espresso Bar,” has opened on W. Main and Bassett Sts. where the “Eight Seasons” restaurant was located. He said they allowed the neighborhood to stage last weekend’s cleanup there.

MEETING ADJOURNED (on MOTION by Mohs; SECOND by Cooper).

NEXT EC MEETING: Tuesday, July 26, 2016, 5:15 p.m., Central Library, Third Floor.*

***NOTE: There is no EC meeting in June. The Annual Membership meeting is Monday, June 20, 7:00 p.m., at Monona Terrace.**

AGENDA FOR JULY 26 EC MEETING

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (Vercauteren).
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MAY EC AND JUNE ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES.
- III. TREASURER’S REPORT (Plotkin).
- IV. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.
- V. COUNTY SUPERVISOR’S REPORT (Mary Kolar).
- VI. ACTION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS:
 - Annual Meeting Report;**
 - Newly-Elected EC Members;**
 - Election of EC Officers (including new President and new Treasurer);**
 - New First Settlement Chair;**
 - State Street Business Study and Potential Action;**
 - Other.**
- VII. OLD BUSINESS:
 - CNI Membership Outreach/Growth Strategy Next Steps;**
 - Update on Website/Membership/Communications System Upgrade;**
 - Other.**
- VIII. DISTRICT REPORTS:
 - Mansion Hill, Bassett, Mifflin West, First Settlement, James Madison Park.**
- IX. ALDERPERSONS’ REPORTS.

X. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Vercauteren).

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Program (open), Membership/Media/Development (open), Policy (Vercauteren), DROC (Ostlind), Finance (Plotkin), Physical Linkages (Mayer), Garden (open), Education and City Issues Monitoring (open), Judge Doyle Square (Plotkin).

XII. ADJOURNMENT.

***Agenda subject to change by Vercauteren.**