

**CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS INC.**

**MINUTES of Executive Council Meeting Held September 27, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Vercauteren (President), Broughman, Brabender, Negrin, Ostlind, Cooper, Ingebritson, Herring, Mayer, Warman, Plotkin, Mohs, Stitt, Fisher, O'Brien and Ald. Verveer.

**GUEST PRESENT:** State/Langdon Ald. Zach Wood; Gary Bennett (UW System Office of Educational Opportunity).

I. MINUTES of August EC meeting (with a change to the Bassett District report deleting the inaccurate phrase that there have been problems with the Eric Minton site in the 400 block of W. Wash. going back twelve years) are APPROVED; on MOTION by Mohs, SECOND by Brabender.

II. TREASURERE'S REPORT. Warman said his name will be added to the CNI bank account as the new Treasurer tomorrow (9/28). Our bank balance in both accounts is \$23,413.00. We received a nice letter from the Capital Lakes Foundation thanking us for the contribution in memory of Lynn Phelps. Warman also made the \$500 donation to the Creative Learning Child Day Care Center's fundraising effort that was approved at the August EC meeting. In response to Vercauteren's question, Warman believes that Creative Learning reached its fundraising goal, enabling the center to purchase the building they are now renting.

III. NEW BUSINESS

**GUEST PRESENTATION - State Charter School Program.**

Gary Bennett, from the UW System Office of Educational Opportunity, discussed the new state charter school program. Bennett helped form the new charter school office on campus created last year by Wisconsin Legislative Act 5. He is doing outreach work regarding the charter school program. Described as the "charter czar" by the *Wisconsin State Journal*, Bennett said he advised democrats before Act 10 and Republicans after. His objective is to bring leaders to the middle. His goal is for charter schools to become what they used to be. He does not support for-profit charter schools and supports a return to the "Wisconsin Idea," breaking down barriers between pre-K12 and higher education. He said success will be defined by student achievement, along with parental engagement and satisfaction. He cited the positive examples of two charter schools in Milwaukee that were started in 1998 at UW-Milwaukee and were spun into the Milwaukee Public School System this year. He hopes charters can partner with the public schools as much as possible and eventually successful schools will be spun into the system.

Vercauteren asked whether the focus is on specific locations for charter schools. Bennett answered that the focus is on school "deserts." CNI, he noted, has no schools downtown and his office is looking into this area. It is up to the community to decide whether it wants to do something about this, he added. In response to Mohs' question, Bennett said parents would not be prevented from sending their children outside of the district where they live. He noted that last year the Madison School District lost 1,200 children whose parents still live in Madison to outside school districts. He asked how many of them might have stayed in

the district if they had an option. Ostlind asked whether the school “desert” concept related only to elementary schools. Bennett answered that it refers to all grades, but primarily to high schools. He said they are looking at potential neighborhoods for sites but do not want to overlap with the changes made by MPS Superintendent Cheatham. Cooper asked about the demographics of the children leaving the MPS district and whether the homeless are included. Bennett answered that there is some data but it is difficult to identify the demographics of those who leave. With regard to the homeless, Bennett referred to the Milwaukee model of transitional housing partners. Ingebritson noted the difficulties of the transitional housing model where children come in taxis and arrive as late as 10:30. They have many special needs but there is a lack of funding. For example, Ingebritson’s hours as an educational assistant have been reduced from five hours to two hours a week. There is no help now and people are leaving the district. She added that parents of special needs children have difficulty advocating for them. Bennett replied that, as a former second grade teacher, he understands the strain. The formula for special education funding has been broken for a long time. Bennett prefers inclusion as the model and does not want to see an “autism campus.” Bennett wants to see a “slow growth” model that will take into account how the population shift is going.

Stitt asked whether Bennett believes there is a need for a charter school downtown. Bennett explained that he is starting the discussion. Stitt then asked what he has found out about the downtown. Bennett answered that some families could stay in the district especially with content-based programs such as the arts, math, etc., along with general education; a charter “magnet” school. Bennett explained further that his job is to ask the questions and then to wait and see whether there are any viable applicants. He will not say yes to an applicant just to say yes. The specific location would be up to whoever would operate the school. As with current charter schools, each would have its own board that would make decisions in consultation with the community. Fisher asked Bennett to comment on the schools that have failed in Milwaukee. Bennett said those are voucher schools, which are not to be confused with charter schools; adding that charters are just a different version of public schools. Fisher asked who would pay for the schools. Bennett answered they would receive money from the same source of revenue as for the public schools but at a reduced rate; \$8,000 per student as opposed to \$14,000 for a public school student. Brabender asked how many charter schools there are now in Madison. Bennett answered there are three: Nuestro Mundo, Badger Rock and O’Keefe middle school. Broughman expressed concern about charters siphoning funds from public schools. Bennett acknowledged this, but noted that it is \$6,000 less per student and he would be an advocate for increasing the school budget. Stitt is concerned that this may compromise the integrity of the public schools. Bennett believes that slow growth can be done collaboratively but acknowledges that harm can occur if growth is done too fast. He has had “great conversations” with Supt. Cheatham about closing the student achievement gap. He added that charter schools must be licensed, have background checks, have annual reviews, and will receive the same annual report card from DPI as any other campus. In response to Cooper’s question, Bennett said that he is regulated by DPI and he thanked School Supt. Evers for doing a great job in providing staffing support.

Herring asked what the motivation was for Act 5. Bennett answered that it was in part the achievement gap between white children and children of color that is wider than most parts of the country; and in part due to the perceived difficulty in creating change in a large

bureaucracy. The belief is that it may be easier to work outside the system and then spin schools into the public school system. In response to Broughman's question, Bennett said schools in "deserts" will utilize incubation and innovation. In response to Ingebritson's question, Bennett said there would be some similarity with Waldorf as well as with the Montessori school. Bennett believes the first campus could open as soon as 2017-18 but more likely 2018-19. Vercauteren asked whether community members would be included on the school's board. Bennett said the directors can authorize a mixed panel that would include current educators, UW faculty and parents. The discussion concluded with Vercauteren expressing appreciation to Bennett for the early "heads up."

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

**State St. Retail Study.** Mayer said he could not attend last Thursday's meeting but said a preliminary report came out recently. According to Vercauteren, BID Director Tiffany Kenney said there were some good, concrete recommendations including "carrots" the city might offer to encourage retail.

**Homeless Day Resource Center.** According to Vercauteren, the Marquette Neighborhood Assoc. board gave a positive response to the proposed E. Wash. site at the meeting about the center last Thursday (9/22). Stitt added that few people from the neighborhood attended, and those who attended from Marquette and Tenney-Lapham were outnumbered by the "officialdom" in attendance. There was, nonetheless, good engagement and conversation. Stitt personally believes the proposal is good and the best location for services during the day, although he acknowledged that Cliff Fisher is opposed. Fisher commented that the city and county do not want the center in the City-County Building or near the Coliseum. Vercauteren noted that a problem with the Messner site was that they did not have a curator, whereas Catholic Charities will be the curator at this site. Fisher added that Tenney-Lapham also opposed the Messner site. Stitt commented that the county did not do a good job of engaging the community about the Messner site and the same thing happened with this site. He is not pleased with that approach, but agrees that it is a good site and is located directly across from the Salvation Army. Its success will depend, he said, on how it is designed and managed. He believes that Catholic Charities will be a strong manager. He added that Fisher could do a development next door that would interface with the resource center. Fisher said he wanted to purchase the building from the Chamber of Commerce for the same price but lost out and the building is now off the tax rolls. Stitt noted that the next meeting will be held tomorrow morning (9/28), 9:30 a.m., at United Methodist Church

#### NEW BUSINESS (cont'd)

##### **Continued Discussion of State/Langdon Reincorporation Into CNI.**

Ald. Zach Wood discussed the idea of reincorporating State/Langdon, the district he represents, into CNI. Vercauteren said the impetus for this was the lack of activity in S/L. Also, changes on State St. and developments such as the "Hub" have had a large impact on CNI but they occurred outside our borders. He believes that re-connecting will allow us to become more active on issues that affect the State St. area. He asked whether it makes sense to do this and whether there are individuals in S/L who would be interested in working on

this. Ald. Wood said the S/L organization has been “effectively dead” for over a year causing concerns when alcohol licensee applicants get no response when trying to set up neighborhood meetings. Wood has been talking to the Associated Students of Madison (ASM) to recruit people. He suggested that ASM informally absorb S/L into its structure and get people serving in specific roles. Many of the more engaged people in ASM do not live in S/L but could help. He believes ASM could serve as a “feeder” to find interested people. Vercauteren called the ASM idea “interesting.” With so much turnover in S/L, and if those who get involved do not have to run the organization, there might be more interest. Wood said we would have to find a mechanism to funnel them into CNI. Mayer noted that we worked with ASM in the past and they gave us three people, but then they graduated. He added that people who become engaged are more likely to find others who are engaged. Broughman asked whether there are non-students in S/L who might get involved. Wood said there are, citing residents in the Towers and some of the newer developments. The important issues for most residents, Wood added, revolve around social matters, security deposits and alcohol policy.

Stitt pointed out that we had this conversation some 25 years ago. A person becomes involved, took charge but used the position for his own political purposes and took S/L out of CNI. Stitt agrees we should pursue this, but to be aware of that possibility. Wood said he is aware of that history and realizes that the priorities of CNI and S/L differ because of their different populations. Wood and Stitt agreed it is worth another try. Mohs concurred, but said it will be difficult. There are continuing issues but also so much flux in the district. He believes it is such an important part of the downtown, the students can benefit and they may provide clever approaches to district problems. Stitt added it is important to take a scientific approach; find out what really works and make it sustainable. Cooper notes there are many students in Bassett and Miffland as well. We should look for ways to activate student involvement throughout the downtown. Wood agrees. Although he is the alder of District 6, Wood sees his job as representing all of those people even if they don’t live in his district. The objective is to make CNI sustainable and not to have to do this every 2-3 years. The ASM idea will help find talent. Wood will also seek recruits in the School of Urban Planning. Brabender suggested also recruiting in the political science and social work schools. Wood agreed that we should talk to them all. Warman, noting that student involvement in CNI is a “challenge,” suggested creating a “student district” rather than incorporating S/L. He pointed to the active role ASM took in past years in the ongoing discussion regarding what to do about the Mifflin Street Block Party that connected students from S/L and Mifflin. Mayer pointed out that students in S/L will become motivated by big events, such as the issues with the “Waterfront” apartments. Cooper, noting that ASM represents students in a broader area, agreed that we should not limit student involvement to S/L. Warman agrees that student involvement should not be limited to S/L. Herring cited the current State St. retail study as a possible area for student involvement.

Herring suggested that we also allow for an “ex officio” attendee from the business community. Mayer pointed out that we already welcome businesses as non-voting members. According to Vercauteren, once we identify S/L people who are interested in re-incorporating into CNI, the process becomes relatively simple. He asked for suggestions on how best to identify people. Wood believes ASM is the best and quickest way to identify people. Wood asked that we give him a brief description of CNI and its role that he can include with a description of S/L district. He can use that to promote membership in S/L and then call an S/L

meeting. This will get life back into the district and we can go from there, he remarked. Ostlind said Ald. Zellers, who also represents part of S/L, and she could not come up with any names of potential recruits from her constituents. Broughman suggested using Basset and Miffland as “incubators.” ASM could also funnel students into those groups and they could stay if they want. This will give them a place to go to learn what CNI is all about, he noted. Because student participation is usually “issue driven,” Cooper said it would be nice to establish a communication pipeline when an issue comes up. Wood said this also fits with his ongoing project to encourage student engagement with the city. It will be a great way to provide experience by getting them involved with neighborhood associations. Wood concluded the discussion with the comment that, lacking institutional knowledge, ASM would serve as a good “pipeline” to funnel people to us for this purpose. Vercauteren will work on the description of CNI for Wood who said he will utilize the full student e-mail system to recruit S/L members.

## V. DISTRICT REPORTS

### **Miffland.**

Warman attended the “Uncommon” open house last Friday. It was “impressive” and has more of a public presence than other new apartment buildings. It has a coffee shop on the first floor. He hopes CNI will schedule a meeting there “where the people are.” Broughman asked whether the smaller lobby was a change from the approved plans. Ostlind explained that the coffee shop, which was a neighborhood idea and seems to be doing well so far, took up some of the space. Ostlind also reports that the architect asked to do a “de-briefing” with the steering committee after the project was completed.

Warman reports that discussions continue with Bassett to set up a joint committee to come up with a plan for the W. Wash. corridor between Broom and Bedford Sts., including the location of a city park. City committees have been lax in coming up with plans for the corridor, he added. Verveer reports that the AT & T building at 316 W. Wash. is now leased in full and the new Red Sushi restaurant there is good. This is a great addition to the neighborhood, he remarked.

### **Mansion Hill.**

Ingebritson attended the August 24 neighborhood meeting about noise emanating from the Edgewater. She reports that over 30 attended. She is encouraged that neighbors are meeting each other and have a common belief that the noise is way overboard. She said most are happy that the weather is getting cooler and bands will not be playing very often.

**James Madison Park.** No one present (Fisher left early).

### **First Settlement.**

O’Brien reports that a steering committee has formed to consider the Essen Haus development proposal. The developer wants to construct a high-rise hotel, apartments, perhaps condominiums, and a parking garage. The project would entail demolition of the Essen Haus and Come Back Inn buildings that are in a national historic district, and homes on Blair St. that are in the First Settlement Historic District. There are many issues, including a

desired height variance from the First Settlement Historic District limits, a proposal for traffic flow onto Franklin St., and city traffic issues regarding the Blair/Wilson/John Nolen intersection.

Construction continues on the Progressive Building at 409 E. Main St. A large hole has been dug at the rear, work has begun on the inside, and preparations are underway for adding the new third floor. Work will likely continue well into next spring.

There is no news regarding who will take over the Bayou bar and restaurant that recently closed on Butler St. A Ramen noodle restaurant will open soon in the space on King St. recently vacated by Red Sushi.

### **Bassett.**

Cooper reports the southwest corner of the Square is well along in its transformation. The Park Hotel is almost done. The Anchor Bank looks much better and the hole behind it is filling in slowly but surely. The Urban Land apartment complex on Bedford and Doty is also coming along. The September district meeting was devoted mostly to W. Wash. Several Miffland residents attended. A steering committee will be formed to put together a plan for W. Wash., as is called for in the Downtown Plan. Herring met with the owner of the new Espresso Bar on Bassett and Main Sts. It is now up and running as a coffee shop with food. The new coffee shop in the "Uncommon" building is also open and quite nice. When the new building opens on Doty and Bedford, it and the "Uncommon" will account for 650 new residents in the district, only one percent of whom are undergraduates, five percent are graduate students, and the rest are "yuppies" and "empty nesters."

### **VI. ALDERPERSONS' REPORTS.**

Verveer reports that the "Hub" has already been sold ("flipped") after only one year. In contrast with the "Uncommon," the "Hub" is 100% undergraduate students. Verveer reports that more aesthetically pleasing bike lane signage will be installed on the Square to replace the signs recently installed that caused some complaints. Verveer sponsored a budget amendment to use TIF funds to construct a new Visitor's Information booth at the top of State St. It was approved.

Verveer is pleased to announce that a proposed budget amendment to delete reauthorization of \$7.5 million for a city park in the Miffland area was defeated. Planning for the downtown park will proceed and, he added, we are serious about developing a park. An amendment passed to add \$1 million for improvements to the Central Library after ten years, including new flooring, carpeting and other upgrades. Utilities will be put underground on Wilson St. from Blair St. all the way to Henry St. The work will be done in two segments. Next year, as part of the five-year Capitol Square improvement plan, construction work will extend around the Square from MLK to N. Hamilton St. There will also be reconstruction on Henry St. next summer that will include burying utilities. After Judge Doyle Square is done, reconstruction work will extend from MLK all the way down to Blount St.

There will be a public information meeting in early November at Monona Terrace where the consultant (Strand) will discuss proposals for the intersection at John Nolen, Blair, Wilson and Williamson Sts. A budget amendment passed to use TIF funds for streetscapes,

benches, bike racks, tree guards, etc. An amendment sponsored by Ald. Zellers passed to add \$250,000 for street surveillance cameras in the Langdon, W. Wash. and Bassett districts.

A meeting is scheduled for October 17, 7:00 p.m., at Capitol Lakes to discuss proposed reuses for the city garage at Fairchild and Doty Sts. where the team will present their findings. Of the several options to be discussed, one would be to make it a drop-in shelter for the homeless. There is great interest among neighbors. There was a public meeting last Thursday (9/22) to present the preliminary report of the State St./Capitol Square retail study. One more public meeting will be held Thursday, October 20, 2016, 6:00 p.m., at the Municipal Building, Rm. 260. The post office is moving out of the Municipal Building at the end of this week to its new permanent location in the Manchester Place building on E. Mifflin St. on the Square. The Municipal Building will be completely vacated around Thanksgiving and city staff will relocate to 30 on the Square and to the former Anchor Bank annex on S. Hamilton St. Public meetings will be moved to Monona Terrace, Central Library and the City-County Building.

The city is considering changing the hours of parking meter enforcement. Currently, enforcement goes to 6:00 p.m. The proposal is to enforce until 10:00 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and to 6:00 p.m. Sundays. Stay tuned. Verveer said CNI might want to weigh in on this. In response to Mayer's question, Verveer said this is motivated by the desire for more revenue. The Parking Utility has noticed that meter spaces are full after 6:00 p.m. He reports that Sandy Torkelson of the BID wants to decrease special event parking because it costs retail customers extra to park in city garages, but some merchants disagree. The full city council must approve any changes because city ordinance controls parking rates and hours. Verveer said he has not yet decided and CNI's comments would be helpful. Ostlind noted that parking in new apartment developments is not being used in favor of on-street parking, This, he said, might change that. Finally, Verveer reports that Madison Police Chief Koval will host a community forum tomorrow night (9/28), 6:00 p.m., at Festival Foods on E. Wash.

MEETING ADJOURNED (on MOTION by Warman; SECOND by Ingebritson).

**NEXT EC MEETING: Tuesday October 25, 2016, 5:15 p.m., Central Library, third floor.**

#### AGENDA for Oct 25 Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (Vercauteren).
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES.
- III. TREASURER'S REPORT (Warman).
- IV. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.
- V. ACTION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS:
  - Action on EC Projects for the Coming Year;**
  - Proposal to re-incorporate State/Langdon into CNI;**
  - Other.**

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

**CNI Membership Outreach/Growth Strategy Next Steps;**

**Update on Website/Membership/Communications System Upgrade;**

**State Street Retail Business Study and Potential Action;**

**Update on Homeless Day Resource Center;**

**Other.**

VII. DISTRICT REPORTS:

**Mansion Hill, Bassett, Mifflin West, First Settlement, James Madison Park.**

VIII. ALDERPERSONS' REPORTS.

IX. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Vercauteren).

X. 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).**

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

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