

**CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.**

**MINUTES of Executive Council Meeting Held October 25, 2016.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vercauteren (President), Cooper, Stitt, Ostlind, Broughman, Ingebritson, Kamps, Fisher, O'Brien and Ald. Verveer.

- I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER by Vercauteren. There was no quorum.
- II. TREASURER'S REPORT. Warman not present. Vercauteren reports that we are in good financial shape at this time.
- III. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT. No one present from the police department
- IV. NEW BUSINESS.

**Feasibility Study for Fairchild Building.**

Vercauteren was recently asked by a reporter whether CNI will take a position on the various proposals for future uses of the city-owned building on Fairchild and Doty Sts. The city recently held a public meeting where several options were discussed, all of which would include a homeless shelter in the building. Vercauteren said there was neighborhood opposition at the recent public meeting to putting a homeless shelter there. Cooper was surprised at the level of opposition because there had been a Bassett District meeting to discuss this earlier in the year and, although neighbors expressed concerns going into the meeting, they seemed comfortable with it afterwards. Vercauteren recalled that Capitol Lakes residents seemed at that time to be generally supportive. Ostlind added that the homeless service providers made a "compelling" presentation at the Bassett meeting. The Bassett meeting was, he recalled, stimulated by a proposal from the Hovde Co. that is on hold for now. Ingebritson said concern was expressed at the recent Mansion Hill meeting about preserving the beautiful windows in the building. Vercauteren commented that this is probably not something we want to take a position on at this point. Cooper said he would like to have another discussion at the next Bassett meeting in a few weeks because he has no sense of how neighbors feel about it. Stitt said we need to get serious about the details of the proposals: management, discipline, aesthetics, etc. We need thoughtful, serious conversation about how to accommodate these social circumstances into a healthy residential living condition. Vercauteren does not want a repeat of what happened with the homeless shelter proposal for the Messner building on E. Wash. where both the county and Tenney-Lapham looked bad in the end because there was no dialogue. Stitt agreed, and noted that the new proposal for locating a homeless day resource center at the Chamber of Commerce building in the 600 block of E. Wash. has been handled better and the conversations are better. Vercauteren believes we should get out in front and spearhead a discussion even if we are not yet ready to take a position. We will find out what the next steps are from Ald. Verveer and go from there.

**CNI Holiday Party.**

Cliff Fisher reports that Rigby's on E. Main St. is willing to host the holiday party again this year. The party will be held on Thursday December 15 at Rigby's. If that date is not

available, it will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Ostlind suggested putting into the announcement a note that there is elevator access to the second floor of Rigby's. Vercauteren believes last year's event cost around \$500 or \$600. We will check with Warman to find out what the cost was. [NOTE: December 15, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., has since been confirmed as the date and time for the party.]

## V. OLD BUSINESS

### **State St. Retail Study.**

Vercauteren reports that the consultant is working on draft recommendations from the retail study. The BID is also working to modify some of the initial preliminary recommendations, looking for more flexibility. Stitt believes the study so far is not adequately interfacing with the future of retail. For instance, it is not emphasizing such things as developing websites with State St. businesses that could be accessed around the world by people such as former UW grads. Vercauteren was surprised at the prevalence of the perceived need for parking in the report. Fisher commented that people flock to the Old Fashioned without much parking close by. Stitt pointed to the need for a "circulator" - a trolley or something similar to move people around the Square and State St. Fisher believes a "circulator" should also include King St. Vercauteren pointed out that the State St. businesses have a trolley operating during the holiday season. Stitt also believes the city should reconfigure its bus system so that busses come all the way through the downtown area. A circulator could also pick up people at one end of the Square and connect them with buses at the other end of State St. Vercauteren noted that buses will travel along the outer loop of the Square next summer due to construction on the Square. This has spurred a proposal to close off the 100 block of State St. to traffic and use it as an event space. Stitt is pleased that the BID received \$75,000 in the city budget to construct a new visitor's information booth at the top of State St. to replace the ugly one currently there. Stitt has been pushing this for ten years.

Kamps reports there was a discussion at the last Miffland district meeting about the proposal to alter downtown parking rules. It would put an end to free meter parking on Sundays and extend meter parking hours on other days to 10:00 p.m. from the current 6:00 p.m. The objective is to turn over more parking spaces. Kamps said this received strong opposition at the district meeting. It seems, he added, that there are enough existing spaces for short-term parking. The Parking Utility wants to do this all at once, rather than piecemeal. Fisher referred to city parking ramps as "cash cows." Ingebritson noted, however, that Edgewater customers park in the city ramps and on the street instead of paying \$10 to park in the hotel's ramp. Kamps said the city is also proposing to increase the "special events" rates from \$5 to \$10. Kamps suggested that if we are interested in this, to keep up and attend meetings.

### **Homeless Day Resource Center.**

[County Supervisor Mary Kolar, who was not present, provided a written update before the meeting addressing concerns about the choice of Catholic Charities as the service provider.] Kolar noted in her e-mail that Dane County has contracted with religiously-affiliated organizations to provide homeless services in the past, the county may not

discriminate against religious organizations, and religious organizations are prohibited in their contracts with the county from proselytizing. Also, staff from Public Health Madison Dane County will be available to assist with referrals regarding individual health care needs, including reproductive health. Noting the controversy about Catholic Charities, Verveer asked whether there is any interest in CNI hosting discussions about the operator and potential action. No interest was expressed at this time. Fisher is concerned there will be problems with locating the shelter there, and he will have to put up "No Trespassing" signs around his property next door. He believes it should have been located near the Coliseum. Fisher said he tried to buy the Chamber of Commerce building but it was sold to the county instead.

#### **Proposed Reincorporation of State/Langdon District into CNI.**

According to Vercauteren, there is nothing new since the last EC meeting. Ald. Wood said at the last meeting that he would check with ASM to see if they are interested. He has not reported back. Kamps reports that at the last Miffland district meeting, they decided to seek out new members and promote interest in working on this with the goal of grooming new young people to work in CNI. He said district residents are happy to work on this.

#### **VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**

**James Madison Park.** Fisher reports that his proposed apartment project will go before UDC and the Plan Commission soon. He has received positive feedback. The building will have a "1920s look." Fisher believes there is a demand for the smaller units in the project because they are more affordable. Fisher also reports that a new Korean barbecue restaurant has opened in his space on E. Wash. and Blair St. where another barbecue restaurant had previously been.

**Mansion Hill.** Ingebritson reports that the district continues to have issues with the Edgewater. They are violating the 15-minute idling ordinance at their loading dock. Buses and beer trucks idle for hours at a time, she said. She hopes signs will soon be posted and the ordinance enforced. Research in other cities has shown that a three minute limit is best. She urged the city to also pass a three minute idling ordinance. Kamps reports that the city is in the process of preliminary steps toward "clean idle" for city streets. Fisher noted that buses idle behind the Overture Center where parking should be. Cooper agreed that Henry St. behind the Overture has excess idling. Broughman reports the same problem with idling at Hyatt Place. Ingebritson believes this is an issue that CNI should address and said that Ald. Zellers is aware of it. Vercauteren agreed this might be something we will want to support as a group. We should keep in touch with Ald. Zellers.

In response to Vercauteren's question, Ingebritson said the demolition of the Chabad House on Gilman St. has been approved. She added that other houses in the area have had mold complaints because landlords let them fall into disrepair. They "get away with it" because the city allows them too much time to make repairs. This pattern, she said, has to stop.

**Miffland.** Kamps reported on the district's recent two hour meeting. Police Department data was presented showing that crowds around Frances St. subside when students are back in town. Plans are underway for "place-making" at the top of State St. to mitigate behavior issues there. He said police are frustrated that there is little self-policing

and cameras don't seem to help. Kamps believes it helps if we are present, but he acknowledges that the problems have become more concentrated, especially over the summer. There is no good solution yet. He believes cooler weather will move activities more toward the Central Library and indoors.

Halloween Freakfest takes place next Saturday (10/29) beginning just after the 6:00 p.m., the same time as the UW football game against Nebraska. A delicatessen is slated to open early next year where "Bluphies" was located at 222 W. Wash. They plan to sell food and retail wine.

Kamps reports that the district membership drive is underway. The November district meeting will be at the "Uncommon." Food and refreshments will be provided in the community room. The focus of the meeting will be on the downtown park deficit and on outreach to new members. Kamps said they feared the \$8 million in fees paid by developers and set aside for a park would be re-appropriated elsewhere in the 2017 city budget. But the budget amendment was defeated and it did not come up for a vote. He believes the developers who are paying this fee prefer the benefit of having a park near their buildings in exchange. Ostlind reports there are efforts in the works to change the park fee structure. Vercauteren believes the "impact fee" will not affect the future of a downtown park. It will raise fees on developments effective in 2017 and rates will be capped. Developers will pay less in 2017 and more in 2018. It used to be, he said, that fees were based on each unit, but they are now based on each bedroom, but only when there are four or more bedrooms per unit. This proposal will be taken up at the November 1 city council meeting. Vercauteren noted that there are now 10-12 impact fee districts, but the proposal is to combine them into four districts beginning in 2017. Priority would be given to park investments within a two mile radius of a development. Verveer noted that the four districts would be: East, West, Central and North. Law Park would be in two districts with the dividing line at MLK Blvd. and Wis. Ave. Verveer added that there will be a meeting with the Mayor's staff tomorrow (10/26) to discuss the downtown park. We will know more after that.

Kamps reports that work is underway for developing a special neighborhood plan for the W. Wash. area. They have identified a core group of interested people and hope to have a kick-off party soon. This will be followed by 2-3 meetings. They hope to wrap up the plan in early 2017. Verveer reports that the good news out of the last Board of Estimate meeting two weeks ago was that this planning process is a priority for next year. The bad news is that even higher priorities make it unrealistic to provide city staff resources or a planner until the second half of the year. Kamps answered that this is good to know and he believes it is still important to have the initial meeting before the end of this year to let people know about it. He would like to get guidance from the Planning Dept. to find out what residents can do in the meantime. Ostlind agrees that this shouldn't change the time frame. Verveer offered to arrange for a city planner to meet with residents to discuss what to expect and what resources will be available.

Broughman reports that the 123 ft. high artwork on the side of the Hovde Building in the 300 block of W. Wash will be unveiled November 10. It will have a great impact on the neighborhood. It is in the form of a waterfall and will be illuminated. Verveer noted that it will be illuminated during the DMI "New Face. New Places" event to be held there on Nov. 10. Broughman said the architect is from Houston. A real waterfall designed by the same architect

will also be installed on the plaza next year. Verveer added that the building is 100% LEED except for a small space off the lobby and city staff is happy with the building. Vercauteren reports that he was contacted by jazz musician Hannah John Taylor who is interested in opening a jazz venue in the space formerly occupied by a coffee shop on the first floor of the Metropolitan Building on Mifflin St.

**Bassett.** According to Verveer around 100 people attended the recent public meeting to discuss the future of the city building at Fairchild and Doty Sts. The architect presented three options for a homeless center there. These included keeping all existing city uses but to "shoehorn" a homeless shelter into the building as well, at a cost of \$4 million; or, adding another floor to house a homeless shelter, at a cost of \$12 million. Many adjacent neighbors from the Baskerville, Capitol Lakes and Capitol West attended, voicing concerns and opposition. Verveer assured them this will not happen any time soon. When a final report is issued, it will be put on the city website and, if approved by the city council, it will then go through the city approval process. This proposal came about in response to Hovde Co.'s interest in purchasing the Grace Episcopal drop-in shelter for parking as part of a larger project. The Hovde project is, however, on hold for now and the Grace shelter will remain operational for the time being. There is, accordingly, no impetus to convert the Fairchild building for the foreseeable future, according to Verveer.

Verveer reports that construction has begun at the dog park. The North Shore sidewalk has been completed but it cannot be connected up over the railroad right-of-way.

**First Settlement.** Stitt reported on the development proposal for the Essen Haus property owned by Bob Worm that would include a hotel. A steering committee is reviewing the proposal. Stitt believes that Worm does not understand the limitations of his property. Even so, Worm's approach is more reasonable this time than in the past. One major issue is the proposal to open the driveway off of Franklin St. to traffic. Residents had insisted years ago that it remain closed to traffic and Worm agreed to that. Worm also wants to demolish the historic buildings that house his businesses on Wilson St. Stitt has suggested that parking access to the hotel be off of Blair St. Stitt believes the developers need to get more creative.

O'Brien reports that Lance McGrath is apparently reviving his proposal to construct a high-rise apartment building on e. Wilson St. next to the Marina Condos despite legal opposition from Marina residents. Construction work continues on the Progressive Building at 409 E. Main St. This includes adding a third floor to the building. When work is completed next spring, the building will be occupied by the Hawks Quindell Law Firm.

## VII. ALDERPERONS' REPORTS.

Verveer reports that a final report will be out by the end of the year on the State St. retail study. There may be another meeting with the consultant in Nov. or Dec. The next step after the final report will be recommendations regarding implementation and prioritization.

Verveer reports that there is some consternation about the selection of Catholic Charities to run the homeless day resource center because of their refusal to allow Planned Parenthood and other public health providers on site. Verveer said he introduced a budget amendment to encourage the county and Catholic Charities to provide overnight storage facilities.

Vercauteren noted the concern expressed by EC members about the idling ordinance. He said nothing has been introduced yet. Ingebritson believes the city's committee on the environment is currently looking into it.

Verveer reminded everyone of Freakfest and the UW football game both occurring this coming Saturday night (10/29). Over 300 police will be working that night, double the normal number.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

**NEXT EC MEETING:** Tuesday November 22, 2016, 5:15 p.m., Central Library, third floor.

AGENDA for Nov. 22 EC Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (Vercauteren).
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 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.