

***Capitol Neighborhoods Association***  
**Minutes of Executive Council Meeting Held Tuesday March 28, 2017**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vercauteren (President), Negrin, Ostlind, Cooper, Brabender, Mayer, Warman, Ingebritson, Kamps, Stitt, Mohs, Montes-Tydrich, Broughman, O'Brien and Ald. Verveer.

GUESTS: Jill Karofsky (circuit judge candidate), Jill Ness, Jim Morgan, Madison Police Lt. Brian Chaney Austin, and "Leslie and Jackie" from the Madison Street Canopy Group.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER by Vercauteren. There is a quorum.

II. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.

Lt. Brian Chaney Austin introduced himself. He is new to the Central District, having worked in the gang unit and in other districts around the city. He will supervise the Community Policing Team and working on all downtown events. Police are investigating the recent homicide of a man in an apartment on N. Butler and Mifflin Sts., the second homicide in the city this year.

Police are exploring different policies for responding to the behavior issues at the top of State St. There is an outreach/educational component: police will educate new arrivals in the area about what is expected of them and what will not be tolerated. Police will follow up that component by addressing behavior that goes beyond mere nuisance, such as battery. Police are working with the Downtown Coordinating Committee and the Vending Oversight Committee to find ways to "activate" the space. They are also working with advocacy groups for the homeless. Austin is concerned because of a knife incident two days ago. This points to the need for police to do both outreach and address behavior issues early, and to hold people accountable. He said one officer has been dedicated to address graffiti. This is difficult because it is difficult to catch the offender in the act. The graffiti problem is increasing in the Marquette/Williamson area and is moving this way.

Cooper asked whether there have been reports of break-ins while the students were away on spring break. Nothing yet, Austin said. Mohs asked what would cause young people to engage in this sort of misbehavior. Austin pointed out that not all of the offenders are young. He faced similar issues in the gang unit. It's a case-by-case matter. People come from different backgrounds, but a common theme is alcohol and drug abuse. The offenders' families often are not part of their lives. Also, once they turn 18, police are not able to notify the parents. Stitt complained that the visitor's booth at the top of State St. looks like "an outhouse" and is "a disgrace." It should be redesigned to be made visible from all sides and to enhance that area.

### III. NEW BUSINESS.

#### **Presentation by Judicial Candidate Jill Karofsky.**

Karofsky is a candidate for the open seat on the Dane County Circuit Court in the April 4 election. She gave a brief presentation on her qualifications to be elected judge. She touted her 25 years of experience in the Criminal Justice System and described racial disparity and access to justice as major issues she will address if elected judge. Karofsky is currently employed in the Department of Justice as Director of its Office of Crime Victim Services and had previously been the first Violence Against Women Resource Prosecutor in Dane County. [NOTE; Karofsky won the April general election.]

#### **Presentation by Madison Street Canopy Group.**

Ostlind introduced Leslie Schroeder and Jackie Suska from the group which is a coalition of people from neighborhood associations across the city who are concerned about preserving our street trees – our street canopy. It started in Marquette. The group seeks not only to prevent the elimination of trees, but also to expand the number of street trees on the public terraces. Jackie and Leslie explained that they are especially concerned about the loss of many large trees, some over 100 years old that are being replaced with smaller ornamental trees. The larger trees prevent runoff and produce shade. They cool and absorb carbon dioxide, have an emotional appeal, help reduce crime, and enhance property values. The small trees provide none of these benefits. The planting of large trees is even prohibited now in certain areas, such as under power lines. They said that City Forestry has formed a street tree committee working on solutions for the past 6 months and is doing tree mapping. The tree canopy group is raising awareness of the issue and is working on an ordinance to treat ash trees under power lines rather than remove them. One solution is partial undergrounding of high voltage lines. An inter-departmental group is looking at these issues.

Warman asked whether the group receives alerts when canopy trees are threatened. No, other than what they learn from neighborhood associations and individuals who are aware of the impacts. Mohs commented that he is “100% supportive” of the group’s efforts. He said the city is being talked into “chinsing out” on the number of new trees planted to save money. He cited the example of trees planted to replace those lost to EAB in front of the National Guardian Life Building in Mansion Hill. The new trees were planted so far apart from each other. After residents complained, the city agreed to add more trees. He was told that they have been ordered to plant fewer trees. Mohs believes citizens would not object to the city’s spending what it used to on trees because they add value to our properties. Mohs suggested that the cost of undergrounding utilities could be built into the utility rate with PSC approval. Mohs personally paid for the planting of new trees

in and around Mansion Hill after Dutch elm disease struck. Mayer said when the city planted new trees in front of his house, he was told that residents could have no input into what type of tree should be planted. The canopy group said that Prof. Harrington at UW has called for a “mix” of trees. The smaller ones now being planted are often non-native to the area, are not attractive to our insects and are not a food source for birds. Ostlind said the group is working to raise the priority of trees in city decision-making. It is an important initiative that allows people from across the city to stay connected on these issues. The group can be reached at: [Madisoncanopystreettrees.org](http://Madisoncanopystreettrees.org).

### **Proposed CNI Contribution to “Off the Square Club.”**

At last month’s meeting representatives of this club, which provides services and a day shelter at St. John’s Lutheran Church for homeless people with mental health issues, asked that CNI consider contributing to their efforts, perhaps with an annual budget allotment or sponsorship of their upcoming program. Vercauteren noted that we made a \$500 contribution recently to the owners of the Creative Learning Day Care Center to help fund their purchase of the building so they could stay downtown.

Warman said, in his role as Treasurer, **that an ongoing contribution would more likely be approved than a \$500 contribution. Creative Learning was a one-time donation without an ongoing contribution.** A contribution only for this year was then discussed. In response to a MOTION by Mohs, with a SECOND by Brabender, that we contribute \$50-\$100 this year, Vercauteren said he believes that \$250 would be more appropriate. The MOTION was accordingly AMENDED by Mohs to read that the CNI EC approve a \$250 donation to the “Off the Square Club,” with a SECOND by Stitt. As amended and seconded, the MOTION was APPROVED. Warman will contact Ilse Hecht to issue the check for \$250.

### **Planning for CNI Annual Membership Meeting.**

The date is fast approaching for the CNI annual membership meeting in June. Vercauteren seeks suggestions for speakers at the event. One suggested topic was issues related to urban forestry. Mohs agrees that this would be a good topic because of the importance of trees to the value and livability of our neighborhoods. Verveer agrees and suggested including both activists and city forestry staff in the presentation. Stitt agrees this is a good suggestion, but believes we should put some money into bringing in a presenter who draws people into the room; a name that people will recognize and will want to hear. Ostlind likes the proposal because we must start talking about preserving the urban canopy. He will ask the Street Canopy group for suggestions. It could be done with or without city staff.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY EC MINUTES.

These minutes all must be approved now because there was no meeting in December and no quorum in January or February. O'Brien noted there were several corrections that were brought to his attention and made before the meeting. Ostlind added one more correction to the February minutes in the section regarding the proposed State Historical Museum that will be made.

The minutes are all APPROVED as amended; on MOTION by Mohs, with a SECOND by Stitt.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Warman reports a bank balance of \$19,447.25, of which \$15,417.89 is available to spend. The rest is set aside for specific expenditures and we have an outstanding bill of \$600 for the CNI Holiday Party. Warman ~~paid a \$990 bill~~ filed a Form 990 last week to preserve our non-profit status for another year. Warman reports that we received an invoice from DMI for \$240 in annual membership dues. He intends to pay it if that is our wish. Verveer noted that the CNI President is also a member of the DMI Board. Negrin asked whether DMI is a member of CNI. Stitt answered they are not. He suggested that we ask DMI about the idea of having reciprocal memberships. Vercauteren noted that the CNI listserv used to forward notices of DMI events to our members. Stitt believes we should participate in their programs and stay engaged. Vercauteren will speak to Susan Schmitz about these matters.

A MOTION by ~~Warman~~ Vercauteren, with a SECOND by Stitt, that we pay the DMI membership bill, with a FRIENDLY AMENDMENT by Negrin that Vercauteren explore with DMI the idea of reciprocal memberships, is APPROVED.

[Because Vercauteren had to leave early the meeting was chaired by Negrin from this point on.]

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS

**Bassett.** Cooper reports that residents and Ald. Verveer met earlier this afternoon with representatives from Beitler Co., the contractor for the Judge Doyle Square project, and city staff. Beitler will go before the UDC next week for approval, but it is not likely to get approval because of some remaining issues related to traffic and the size of the parking ramp entrances. Ostlind noted that the ramp entrances as proposed conflict with the Downtown Plan and with the Zoning Code which limit the width to ~~26~~ 22 ft., whereas the

current proposal is a width of 45 ft. He believes the increased width is a hazard to pedestrians. Cooper suggested a design that would allow for two lanes entering off the street with a third lane inside. Mohs said the entrances must be designed in a way that will work. Cooper hopes they will be able to compose a neighborhood position statement before the UDC meeting. The developers plan to file their final submittal for next week's UDC meeting either late today or tomorrow. Warman asked whether CNI should issue a statement as an organization. Coper answered that he intends to speak in his capacity as the Bassett District Chair. Stitt is confident that those EC members who attend and speak will be able to speak on behalf of CNI. He commented that cavernous entryways "deaden" the street. If designed properly, it can work. Stitt cited as an example of good design the entrance to the Block 89 ramp. Warman asked whether we have a Judge Doyle Square subcommittee. Mayer answered that Adam Plotkin was a member of the city's committee and Mayer was chair of the CNI committee. There is none now.

Cooper reports there was a public meeting with city staff in February to discuss plans for the reconstruction of the 10 and 100 blocks of W. Wilson St. A second meeting was held last Thursday (3/23) where three options were discussed. These included widening the sidewalk and creating a counter-flow bike lane. All options require some loss of parking spaces. Removal of street trees is also possible. Ostlind, who said he is trying to preserve trees, commented that there was not much clarity at the meeting regarding these options. Verveer agreed. Verveer announced that city staff has recommended testing the contra-flow bike lane option this summer for six weeks or so with all parking temporarily removed. He believes this option would preserve more trees. Testing this idea is a good compromise, he believes. It is on tonight's agenda at the city's Pedestrian/Bicycle Committee meeting (of which Ald. Zellers is a member).

**First Settlement.** Stitt reports that the renovation of 409 E. Main St. is just about done and the Hawks-Quindell Law Firm plans to move in April 1<sup>st</sup>. The building went from two-stories to four stories.

Daniel Gorman, the owner of the small house at 138 S. Franklin, wants to renovate that house and construct a new one behind it. Stitt supports him but the city wants him just to renovate the existing house. According to Ostlind, Gorman could not get a zoning variance for the second house.

The Essen Haus hotel proposal is going nowhere for the time being, according to Stitt. It appears that Bob Worm has dropped his plans, at least for now. Plans for the day resource center for the homeless at 615 E. Wash. continue.

The “Nomad World Pub” has now opened at the site of the former Cardinal Bar. It opens at 7:00 a.m. on weekends for soccer, offering waffles and bacon.

Verveer reports that demolition has begun to make way for the Lance McGrath high-rise apartment development next to the Marina condos on E. Wilson. He reports that McGrath has agreed to move the entrance off of Wilson to the rear of the building, and he has granted the city an easement for future pedestrian/bike access to Law Park. McGrath expects occupancy by July, 2018.

**James Madison Park.** Warman reports there will be a public hearing regarding Cliff Fisher’s proposed development of small, affordable apartment units. Verveer noted that UDC voted to deny approval, but Fisher is still going ahead before the Plan Commission. Stitt said that he spoke in favor of the project because it will provide useful and interesting small, affordable apartments. Morgan believes that the city should be encouraging projects like this that provide affordable housing. Mohs pointed out that other houses on that block have setbacks. Rather than high density projects like this, Mohs prefers fixing up the old houses in the neighborhood.

### **Mansion Hill.**

Ingebritson reported on the recent meeting to discuss the proposal to demolish 118 and 122 State St. for a hotel. She is concerned about the loss of what she called a “beautiful old building” with “nice details” **at 118 State St. where the “Fountain” is located.** They propose a 100-room hotel with no parking. She believes that most residents at the meeting were concerned that it is too big and will increase parking problems, especially for events downtown. Verveer specified that the developers want 110 rooms, and that Vercauteren’s law firm represents the development team. They appeared before UDC last week, and expect to have a timeline late next week. Verveer was pleased that there were many volunteers for the steering committee to meet with the development team. Stitt commented that it may be a good project, but they did not present it well. He believes it would be great to have a hotel on State St. and noted that fewer people bring cars to hotels. The developers should also design a façade that looks good. Ostlind noted that they want more stories than current zoning allows.

Verveer reports that there is a proposal by the Evans Scholars to demolish a house on Henry and Langdon Sts. that was built in the 1970s and replace it with a new one. There is a meeting April 10, 5:30 p.m., at MATC Rm. D-240 to discuss this.

### **Miffland.**

Broughman reports that the planning efforts in the district have been deferred until the stakeholders return from vacations.

Broughman has obtained the permit for the CNI booth at the Farmer's Market again this year. He asked whether we have new brochures. Mayer said he hopes to have new ones out in the next few weeks. In response to Warman's question, Verveer said the MDC building on Mifflin St. is slated for occupancy in July. The Urban Land Interest building on Bedford and Doty is slated for occupancy on July 1<sup>st</sup>. As of now, 10% of the apartments have been leased for that building.

The new owners of the train depot on W. Wash. may attend the next Miffland meeting to discuss their plans to enclose the platform for an all-season market. In response to Broughman's question about the recent meeting to discuss a downtown park, Verveer said there was not a great turnout, but Cooper ably represented CNI when he spoke in support of a downtown park.

#### VII. ALDERPERSONS' REPORTS.

Verveer announced that the second of three public meetings to discuss proposals for the John Nolen Dr. corridor and the Blair/Wilson/Williamson intersection will be held April 17, 7:00 p.m. at Monona Terrace.

A representative of the Madison Mallards offered to give a presentation to the EC about this summer's "Shake the Lake" fireworks show to take place on June 24. He has also already agreed to attend the April Bassett meeting.

Brabender noted that hackers are getting into Facebook accounts. We should be aware of this and discuss what we can do to protect our own Facebook site. This topic will be placed on the agenda for future meetings.

MEETING ADJOURNED, on MOTION by Warman; SECOND by Ostlind.

**NEXT EC MEETING: Tuesday April 25, 2017, 5:15 p.m., Central Library, Third Floor.**

#### AGENDA for April 25 EC meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (Vercauteren).
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MARCH EC MEETING MINUTES.
- III. TREASURER'S REPORT (Warman).

- IV. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.
- V. ACTION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS:  
**Planning/Presenter for the June Annual Meeting;**  
**Mifflin Street Block Party Update;**  
**2017 Programs and Initiatives;**  
**Securing CNI's Facebook Account from Hackers (Brabender);**  
**Other.**
- VI. OLD BUSINESS:  
**Madison College RFP Update;**  
**W. Washington Corridor Plan;**  
**State Historical Museum Project Update;**  
**State Street Retail Business Study and Potential Action;**  
**Judge Doyle Square Update;**  
**Proposal to re-incorporate State/Langdon District into CNI;**  
**Update on Homeless Day Resource Center;**  
**CNI Membership Outreach/Growth Strategy Next Steps;**  
**Update on Website/Membership/Communications System Upgrade;**  
**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 (Warman), Physical Linkages (Mayer), Garden (open), Education and City Issues Monitoring (open).**
- XI. ADJOURNMENT.  
**\*Agenda subject to change by Vercauteren.**