

CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.
Minutes of Executive Council Meeting Held January 23, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ostlind (who chaired the meeting in Negrin's absence), Cooper, Mayer, Scott Kolar, Light, Broughman, Warman, Ingebritson, Stitt, Mohs, Vercauteren, O'Brien, and Verveer.

GUESTS; Madison Police Officer Chaney-Austin, John Morgan.

I. MEEETING CALLED TO ORDER by Ostlind. There is a quorum.

II. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT. Officer Chaney-Austin reports that police are concerned about a number of recent daylight armed robberies in the downtown and Monona Bay areas. Targets included Bassett Street Food Mart, Sedona Wine Shop and Harry's Market. The Violent Crimes Unit is assisting and extra patrols have been assigned to those areas. He encourages residents to be vigilant and report suspicious activity.

Additional officers were staffed for New Year's Eve and there were no major incidents. The Downtown Safety Initiative officers were on duty again last weekend in the 600 University Ave. corridor after the students returned from holiday break. Things were calm. Police are exploring the idea of getting the authority to write "short-form" tickets to taverns for over-serving and allowing intoxicated people into their establishments. Police currently only have the authority to write "short-form" tickets for over-capacity. Under the old system, police had to write up "long-form" reports and then go before the ALRC. Chaney-Austin believes this authority would help police address major problems caused by serving intoxicated people. Police are also concerned when restaurants in the area convert into dance clubs later in the evening. This, he said, is part of the bigger issue of alcohol density in the area. He referenced a meeting earlier today with two men opening a restaurant on Regent St. Much of the discussion concerned opening another bar with a beer garden in the Regent St. corridor which could affect the ability of police to provide services in the 600 block University Ave. area. In response to O'Brien's question, Chaney-Austin said that restaurants are licensed by the ALRC to convert into dance clubs.

Chaney-Austin announced that he will be attending a conference in Austin, Texas tomorrow as a representative of the Mayor's office for cities that host special events and festivals. He is concerned that Madison is becoming "saturated" with events and festivals that are stretching the department's resources. Those events have impacts beyond the event itself, including on Metro Bus service routes and its riders. There is a trend, he said, towards declaring moratoriums on new events to evaluate their effect on resources. He hopes to get ideas at the conference to be used here. Stitt suggested a future CNI program, perhaps hosted by a downtown alder, to discuss this.

II. Minutes of the November 28, 2017 EC meeting (there was no meeting in December), AS CORRECTED by Ingebritson to reflect in the Mansion Hill report, regarding the proposal to make the Clarenbach House a city landmark, that Gary Tipler presented the papers to nominate the house for landmark status to Amy Scanlon but she has not yet acted on the nomination, are APPROVED; on MOTION by Mohs, SECOND by Light.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT. Warman reports that we have a bank balance (as of 1/22/18) of \$19,612.92, of which \$16,682.27 is in the general account and not allocated to specific accounts. Warman also reports that he paid \$76 by check yesterday for our post office box. We have not yet received a bill for the holiday party. We have income since the November EC meeting of \$765.42 and expenses of \$596.53.

Warman asked whether he is authorized to pay the \$250 annual membership fee for DMI. Vercauteren notes that we had this same discussion last year. Our membership includes a position for the CNI President on the DMI Board, and CNI members may attend DMI events. Stitt believes it is healthy and worthwhile for us to work with DMI, and they have staff to assist. Warman would like to see better reporting of what happens at DMI meetings and he would like to know how we can better participate. Stitt wants the new DMI President to visit us. Mayer agreed that we should invite the new DMI President to an EC meeting. Vercauteren offered to download whatever information he gets from the DMI meetings and make it available. Light asked if DMI takes minutes of their meetings. Vercauteren said they do. Light suggested forwarding the minutes to our listserve. Ostlind directed us to add the "DMI Report" to our monthly agenda.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Future of CNI Newsletter.

Scott Kolar, who was present, is retiring as newsletter editor. The March issue will be his last. Warman is working with Kolar and Cooper in the transition. Stitt commented that the newsletter is important and suggested that we pay someone to produce it. Warman answered that this has been considered, as well as going from bi-monthly to quarterly. He added there is so much going on downtown that we should be reporting on. Warman said the group will put together recommendations on how to proceed for the next EC meeting. Kolar had no comments on how to proceed but said we will have to decide all of the following: whether to continue with a print copy, whether to keep the same format, whether to change software now that our Adobe software is no longer state-of-the-art, pursuing wider distribution if we continue with print to increase outreach, and improving our internet presence.

Vercauteren suggested that we explore hiring a media consultant to help find solutions. Cooper commented that we also need people within CNI to contribute more, such as regular district reports and news articles. Ostlind asked Kolar what

the biggest challenges and joys are for the editor. Kolar said the biggest joy is sending the completed newsletter to the publisher. The biggest challenge, he said, is increasing neighborhood content, which is difficult because it comes out bi-monthly. We need a large group of contributors. Stitt commented that if we were more sophisticated we could pay someone to get this information and interview people. Ostlind asked what the time commitment is. Kolar responded that Lynn Phelps was editor for over 15 years and he did “everything;” soliciting ads, billing, articles, content, editing, composition. Kolar said that most of his work is composing within the software, which is time-consuming, and membership. The latter consists of mailing notices and listing members in the newsletter. Kolar said that he will continue to work on membership and the listing of advertisers, but he will not solicit ads. He noted that MG & E is our biggest advertiser. Kolar believes it would be easier to solicit ads if our advertisers were made business members of CNI; if you become a business member, you get an ad in the newsletter.

The bigger issues we face, according to Kolar, are: Should we have a newsletter? If so, what do we want to accomplish with it? He described the four functions as: (1) composition; (2) editing; (3) news collection; (4) advertising solicitation. He pointed to the Tenney-Lapham newsletter that gets great contributions from its members, has several people working on the newsletter, and is mailed to everyone in the district. Mayer suggested that the functions could be broken up among different people, and membership would be independent of the newsletter work. Noting that these functions could be performed by anyone, Ostlind suggested that we include an article in the next newsletter offering that opportunity to the readers. Warman said his group will come back with a proposal at the next EC meeting. Ostlind expressed our thanks to Scott Kolar for his hard work as newsletter editor.

CNI Holiday Party Report.

Everyone agreed that the party at Rigby’s in early December was fun and a success.

West Washington Corridor Plan.

Cooper has nothing new to report. According to Ostlind and Cooper, a development proposal is coming forward soon for the old credit union building at Bedford and W. Wash. A representative wants to attend the March Bassett meeting to discuss the plans. Cooper said we need to develop a plan for the corridor and City Planning Dept. staff should now be available to assist in the planning process.

MATC Downtown Campus Update.

Mohs reports that residents in the Mansion Hill Historic District are monitoring this project to ensure that it does not deteriorate the historic look of Wisconsin Avenue.

State Historical Museum Update.

According to Mohs, both the State and Gary Gorman have proposed a development to house the new State Historical Museum that would take out everything on Carroll Street except for Grace Episcopal Church and the Hovde Building. It would include multi-use offices—both public and State—and an underground parking ramp. The Veteran’s Museum would not be included in the project. The project is taking a long time, Mohs added. Mohs also commented that it will have to be a “great project” worthy of the Capitol and the historic site to get his support. Stitt urged a design that retains the integrity of the historic buildings and of the museum. They should “think creatively;” the engineers can figure it out, he remarked. Mohs agreed, but it will not be economical. Ostlind added that the State is also interested in relocating state offices to that site and it is confident the project will happen.

V. DISTRICT REPORTS

Mansion Hill.

Mohs reports that he and Ingebritson attended an all-day hearing at the State Legislature before an important upcoming vote on a fast-moving bill regarding historic preservation issues. According to Mohs, there have been some improvements to the original unfavorable proposal. These provisions were included in a landlord-tenant bill.

Bassett.

Cooper again referenced the new proposal for the credit union building at 555 W. Wash., discussed above. There are new proposals for the APEX properties at W. Wash. and S. Henry St. with an eye toward building a hotel there. This corner includes a potential landmarked building. The building at 222 S. Hamilton across from the courthouse is for sale. There is some discussion about putting a condominium development on that site. If so, it would be the first condominium project downtown in some time.

Miffland.

According to Warman, residents are waiting to see what will happen to Dorn Hardware. In response, Verveer announced that Dorn is moving out on February 19, 2018, much sooner than the previously-announced July moving date. Unfortunately, Dorn is moving to Verona after giving up on trying to purchase a building downtown. The current store is owned by Capitol Foods. They plan to expand into it with a deli and bakery. According to Verveer, the owners of Capitol Center Foods will appear at the February Miffland District meeting to discuss the project. The next Miffland District meeting is on Wednesday February 7, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. Verveer also announced that Professor Wills is moving ahead with plans to expand his house on N. Broom St. from a single-family to a four-unit home by adding to the rear.

First Settlement.

Stitt reports that things are relatively quiet but interesting. The recently-opened Hail Mary Sports Bar has gone out of business. The Blue Agave Mexican restaurant opened recently on S. Butler St. where the Bayou used to be. Stitt described the space is very nicely re-done and it seems like a pleasant place. Mayer asked about trash disposal issues that spurred recent complaints by neighbors. Verveer responded that the owners were cited by city Building Inspection and they cleaned it up. There have also been new complaints and City Sanitation and Building Inspectors went out again yesterday. The owners said they were having problems with Waste Management Inc. and hope to have those problems resolved now. Some early noise complaints have also been rectified by the owners. Stitt said he saw the owners removing trash the day after the complaint was lodged by a neighbor.

Stitt attended the recent memorial for Todd McGrath at the Goodman Center. It was filled with people, many of whom we know and were there to honor Todd's contributions. Stitt noted that early on, McGrath helped find money for the Bassett District planning process.

According to Stitt, the hotel proposal for N. Franklin and E. Wash., a Lance McGrath project, appears to be going forward. Stitt personally does not like the proposal. Ostlind reported that the proposal will go before UDC tomorrow (1/24).

Stitt reports that Gary Gorman's son is building a rear addition to the house he owns at 130 S. Franklin. A young couple from Fitchburg purchased the small, cement block house next door to it and are doing a lot of work to improve that house.

Vercauteren asked whether Traffic Engineering will add lane stripes to eliminate confusion on E. Wilson St. along the Judge Doyle Square construction zone. Cooper agreed there is confusion. Verveer will mention this to Traffic Engineering, but said it is the contractor's responsibility.

According to Stitt, the Beacon homeless day resource center seems to be operating well so far, but he understands that there are differences of opinion. He believes it is good for the community, it is in the right place, and it seems to be well-managed. Verveer noted that the Police Dept. Central District Command reports increased calls around the Beacon, and Capitol Police are also concerned. He suggested that we ask the police for a report on the Beacon at our next EC meeting.

John Morgan asked about the recent meeting to discuss plans for a park on John Nolen Dr. Verveer said there have been four meetings so far to discuss plans for the proposed park. Ingebritson suggested that they post the results of the meetings on line. She would like to know what people value about the park.

VI. ALDERPERSONS' REPORTS

Verveer has nothing new to report regarding the hotel proposal for 118-122 State Street. The project team is now focusing on parking and access issues. Vercauteren added there is nothing definite yet. They may go before UDC in March.

Verveer has not heard from Drury or from City Planning staff regarding plans for the MATC downtown campus. Mohs suggested that we contact them first. The steering committee has not yet met. Verveer agreed to reach out to them.

There is a meeting January 31, 2018, 7:00 p.m., at Capitol Lakes to discuss improvements to the Brittingham Dog Park. The city is putting in \$250,000. Stitt remarked that the city should do more to make the park something to be proud of. Verveer said the park can be expanded, storm water runoff issues should be addressed, and Parks Division staff would like to install artificial turf. Stitt would like to see the aesthetics improved in the park.

There is a meeting Monday February 19, 2018, 7:00 p.m., at a place TBD, to discuss the reconstruction of W. Wash. between Bedford, Regent and Prouditt. This will include improvements to the railroad crossing on W. Wash. near the bike path.

“Ride the Drive” will take place on the first Sunday in June every year from now on. This year it will be on June 3 from 10-2. It will be the same abbreviated route as last year. There is no longer private sponsorship and police will staff the intersections rather than volunteers, increasing the cost of the event.

Verveer announced, to Stitt’s pleasure, that a new and improved Ambassador’s Booth will be installed at the top of State St. in a few months.

Verveer also announced that Judge Doyle Square now has a hotel operator—Embassy Suites. This goes before the city council for approval at its next meeting. It appears to be non-controversial.

Verveer discussed the controversy over the Mayor’s recent proposed moratorium on alcohol licenses downtown. He hopes for a compromise. Verveer believes that new restaurants should not be precluded from obtaining a liquor license. Mayer commented that the moratorium seems to be a simplistic solution for public safety concerns and has little or no impact on retail, much of which is not coming back due to changes in consumer buying habits. Light added that those changes in retail sales are occurring across the country, not just on State St. Ostlind asked how the moratorium will help address the problems in the 600 block of University Ave. Vercauteren asked whether CNI might consider issuing a position statement on the Mayor’s proposal. Stitt suggested that legalization of marijuana might help reduce alcohol consumption. Verveer noted that we already have a moratorium in place prohibiting new liquor stores, new taverns and the expansion of existing taverns in the problem areas. It sunsets in July, 2019

MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT EC MEETING: Tuesday February 27, 2018, 5:15 p.m., Central Library, Third Floor.

AGENDA for the February 27 EC Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (Negrin).
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2018 EC MEETING MINUTES.
- III. TREASURER'S REPORT (Warman).
- IV. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.
- V. ACTION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS:
DMI Report (Vercauteren/Mohs);
Other.
- VI. OLD BUSINESS:
CNI Presidency;
CNI Newsletter Recommendations;
Madison College Downtown Campus Update;
W. Washington Corridor Plan Update;
State Historical Museum Project Update;
John Nolen Dr./Blair/Willy/Wilson St. Improvement Proposal Update;
State Street Retail Business Study and Potential Action;
Judge Doyle Square Update;
Proposal to re-incorporate State/Langdon District into CNI;
CNI Membership Outreach/Growth Strategy Next Steps;
Update on Website/Membership/Communications System Upgrade;
Securing CNI's Facebook Account from Hackers (Brabender);
Other.
- VII. DISTRICT REPORTS:
Mansion Hill, Bassett, Mifflin West, First Settlement, James Madison Park.
- VIII. ALDERPERSONS' REPORTS.
- IX. PRESIDENT'S REPORT.
- 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 Negrin.**