

CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.
MINUTES of Executive Council Meeting Held February 27, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cooper (chaired the meeting in Negrin's absence), Broughman, Warman, Stitt, Fisher, O'Brien and Ald. Verveer.

GUESTS PRESENT: Jason Ilstrup (DMI President), Madison Police Capt. Jason Freedman, John Morgan.

I. Meeting called to order by Cooper. There is no quorum.

II. DOWNTOWN POLICE REPORT.

Captain Freedman reports that things have been relatively quiet the last couple of months, largely due to the winter weather. He reports that there have been many calls to the Beacon homeless day resource center since it opened last October, including to break up a recent large brawl causing it to temporarily cease operations. Freedman announced that, as of today, those in charge of the Beacon have initiated significant policy changes for the better. He believes there will be ongoing issues for the Beacon and the surrounding area, and noted that police now have three primary focus areas downtown: (1) the 600 block of University Ave.; (2) the top of State St.; and (3) the Beacon. In response to Fisher's question, Freedman said the new policies are in line with other entities serving at-risk populations, such as the Central Library and Porchlight. The policies include not allowing intoxicated people to be there; immediately removing/arresting anyone who threatens staff; no urination/defecation outside bathrooms on the premises; posting a written code of conduct on the premises; and calling police when help is needed. Police are doing enforcement action and working with staff to reduce impacts on the surrounding area. This, he added, will take time. A full-time officer, Tim Brown, is assigned to the area.

In Freedman's opinion, this is not a good location for the Beacon. He would choose a less dense location perhaps in another part of the city but, he acknowledged, it is not going anywhere. Cooper observed that many of the problems are not being caused by those who use the Beacon's services, but by those hangers-on who are preying on the users of services. Fisher remarked that this represents half of the people there. Freedman believes it may be even more than half. Freedman believes that by screening people who come there, engaging in high-visibility enforcement actions, and the improved policies and procedures now being put in place by staff, should help put us in the right direction. Fisher asked how many police calls have there been since it opened. According to Freedland, by comparison, there were none in the first two months of 2017 but many in the first two months of 2018. Cooper asked whether the opening of the Beacon has reduced problems at the top of State St. Freedman answered that it has, but he is not sure of the direct correlation. There has been some improvement, but the problems persist. He believes that with warmer weather coming, people from the Beacon may return

to State St., as well as to other nearby areas such as James Madison Park and Reynolds Park. He added that police believe it is easier to deal with problems spread out over several smaller areas than in one or two major areas.

Stitt asked whether anyone has looked into best practices nationwide to see where something like this is working. Freedman answered that they are using a best practices approach adopted by UW a few years ago, but things change. He cited the example of the recent heroin epidemic. He added that members of the Beacon staff traveled around the country to learn best practices in other cities, but no one has yet to figure this out. Solutions include finding places for long-term storage of property, more publicly-supported housing, and places for people to go after the shelter closes. There are many “missing links.” He is pleased that the Beacon staff is now on board with normal best practices in other facilities serving similar populations in the city. Stitt believes that long-term housing would work better if it is staffed housing. Freedman cited as an example the Housing First Initiative. Stitt noted that Madison adopted Housing First a few years ago through the United Way. Fisher commented that Seattle provided housing but it only attracted more people. Freedman agreed that there can be unintended consequences from any solution.

Broughman asked whether the Beacon is tied in with the overnight shelters. Freedman answered that they communicate and some of the Beacon’s staff worked at the overnight shelters. Freedman acknowledged that the Beacon is adding social services and is working to get its “house in order.” Also, police officers who work on mental health issues are working with the Beacon and want to get involved with the service providers. Broughman suggested adopting a policy that anyone who is banned from the Beacon is banned from all other shelters. Freedman likened this approach to banning someone from all bars who is banned from one bar but, he asked, what do you do in winter, leave them out in the cold? He believes it is important that there be standards of conduct, expectations of behavior and consistent practices.

Cooper asked about a recently reported “pedestrian death” near the parking garage exit on N. Fairchild that was later changed to a “sleeping in a garage” death. Freedman answered that this is still an active investigation that appears to have been an accident resulting from “a series of bad events.” He added that a traffic specialist is working on the case. Morgan asked about a recent accident on E. Johnson St. where a car flipped over. Freedman had no information, but he will seek it out and send it to our e-mail group.

III. TREASURER’S REPORT

Warman reports a checking account balance of \$19,597.98. This consists of \$16,270.45 in the General account; \$818.68 in the Period Garden account; \$368.98 in the James Madison Park account; and \$1,792.99 in the Emerald Ash Borer account. We have pending unpaid bills of \$475 to State Farm for liability insurance and \$600 for the holiday party at The Rigby. We had income since the last meeting of \$410.91, of which \$260.91 will go into the General Account and \$150 will go into

the Period Garden Park Account. We had expenses of \$696.78, consisting of: \$100 to Period Garden Park; \$346.78 to Ideal Printing and Graphics; and \$250 to renew our annual membership in DMI.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

DMI Executive Director Jason Ilstrup.

After a round of introductions, DMI President and Executive Director Jason Ilstrup gave a presentation. Ilstrup has been DMI President since January 2, 2018. Before then, he worked for seven years as General Manager and Director of Development at Hotel Red. He worked previously at the Concourse Hotel and the Iron Horse Hotel in Milwaukee. The Minneapolis native worked in the Peace Corps and is a lawyer. Ilstrup said that his work at Hotel Red gave him a unique perspective. It taught him the value of networking and advocacy. He noted, for example, that Captain Freedman will attend DMI's quality of life meeting tomorrow (2/28). Ilstrup pointed to the networking opportunities DMI provides such as the "What's Up Downtown" monthly breakfasts and its "New Faces/New Places" monthly social gatherings at different locations. As members of CNI, by virtue of our membership in DMI, we may attend those events. Ilstrup said he wants to renew cooperation between DMI and CNI. He is willing to once again have DMI and CNI partner on projects and events. Ilstrup strongly encouraged our involvement in the events and committees at DMI.

Warman asked what the best way is for CNI members to participate. Ilstrup answered that DMI has seven standing committees we could serve on. Most meet at 8:00 a.m. in the Hovde building. There are various projects and speaking opportunities, in addition to the monthly breakfasts and social gatherings noted above. He encouraged anyone interested to send him an e-mail directly and he will put them on the list. Ilstrup believes that the input of downtown residents is especially important, as is that of businesses and non-profits. Warman asked about sharing resources specifically as it relates to the production of our newsletter. Ilstrup encouraged him to contact John Cerniglia, the DMI Communications Director. In response to Broughman's question, Ilstrup said DMI does not sponsor festivals and it no longer sponsors the "Frostiball," which was spun off to the Overture Center. DMI still sponsors the "Gnosh at Noon" information sessions, and the "Behind the Scenes" events inside interesting buildings downtown.

Cooper referenced the partnership in past years between CNI and DMI to put on the "Downtown Living Tour" of homes, and when it ended, our two organizations drifted apart. Now would be a good time to rekindle those connections. Ilstrup agrees. He wants to meet everyone he can and listen to what they have to say. He will try to attend our meetings as much as possible, adding that we all want the best quality of life downtown. Stitt encouraged DMI to form a Downtown Living Committee, noting that it has the staff to do so, but we don't. Ilstrup also noted that DMI is working on a new website that will enable it to do more. Verveer noted that when Adam Plotkin was President of CNI, he would forward DMI e-mails inviting

all EC members to the DMI events. Verveer asked whether all EC members are again invited to the monthly events like “What’s Up Downtown” and “New Faces/ New Places.” Ilstrup answered that we are all invited to those events, and we will be notified of them, along with relevant DMI committee meetings. Ilstrup agreed to Verveer’s request that DMI add the CNI-EC Yahoo listserve to its member list, commenting that it would be easy to do and he wants more people to become active. Cooper will send an e-mail to Ilstrup with our address.

V. ALDERPERSONS’ REPORTS

Verveer reports that the Heartland Credit Union Building at W. Wash. and S. Bedford in Bassett has been purchased and the new owners propose to replace it with a stand-alone, multi-family apartment building. The architect will make a presentation at the next Bassett district meeting. Verveer noted that they have not requested a special variance, a PUD, for this project. Also scheduled to attend the next Bassett meeting are representatives of the out-of-state investors in the office building at S. Henry and S. Hamilton across from the courthouse who want to build residential condominiums there. Cooper noted that the height limit is six stories and they intend to build 19 units. Verveer believes they are asking for six stories.

According to Verveer, he and Fred Mohs had a good meeting recently with representatives of the Drury Hotel Group to discuss their plans for re-development of the MATC campus in Mansion Hill. They have agreed to build within the existing zoning code and may not request bonus stories. Their plans are to make the existing building a hotel and to retain the arch. The entrance would be through the arch with a restaurant on the first floor on Johnson and Dayton Sts. If they request bonus stories, those would contain office space. Parking would be both underground with some above ground that would be camouflaged. They have agreed to maintain the Mansion Hill Historic District setbacks, though there may be some sort of a patio along Johnson St. The setbacks will remain on Wis. Ave and the trees will remain. They plan to use historic preservation tax credits. In response to Stitt’s question, Verveer assumed they would excavate under the arch, but they will keep the arch where it is. Stitt asked how they are able to make this economically feasible with Hovde no longer a partner. Verveer did not have an answer, noting that he was not privy to their discussions with MATC.

Verveer reports that the hotel proposal for the 100 block of State St. is delayed until next month for a traffic study. They may incorporate the building that houses the Tikki Shack into the project if they can purchase it. They plan to save the more historic building and either make it part of the project or rent it. Harold Langhammer, who owns 122 State St., is a partner in the project.

The Capitol Centre Foods expansion is going ahead and Dorn Hardware has moved out of the downtown. There is nothing new to report regarding the APEX Properties development proposal for a multi-family apartment building at 100 W. Wilson. There is nothing new to report on the development proposal by Prof. Wells

to expand the house he owns on N. Broom St. It should not require approval as a PUD because it meets zoning code requirements.

Verveer met with the landscape architect to discuss the two proposals for the Brittingham dog park. A follow-up neighborhood meeting has not yet been scheduled. Stitt believes we should raise money to do something special at the park, not just functional, because it is an entrance to the downtown. Cooper asked whether the city could tap into the park fees that have accumulated over the years. Verveer answered that those fees provide the main source of funding. The current budget is over \$300,000 collected from park impact fees and dog license fees. If there is private fundraising, the Madison Parks Foundation would be the depository for monies collected. If we engage in a fundraising campaign now, however, it may delay the planned renovation. Stitt suggested that the renovations could proceed on schedule and enhancements could be made after they are done. Verveer said “no” to plans to replace the chain link fence at the park with another chain link fence. They are also researching the cost of bringing water into the park from Broom St. There will also be more aesthetically pleasing lighting. Verveer would be willing to push for a budget amendment if need be.

Verveer will give presentations at the upcoming Miffland meeting about the status of a new park in Miffland. Several people have volunteered to sell their property to the city for that purpose, he said.

According to Verveer, Mayor Soglin formerly introduced his proposal for a moratorium on issuance of alcohol licenses downtown to the city council, but then asked that it not be taken up by city committees right away so the issues associated with it can be considered further.

VI. OLD BUISNESS

The Future of the CNI Newsletter.

Warman and Cooper recently met to discuss options for the future of the newsletter. Warman said there will not be another issue of the newsletter until at least the summer. Warman contacted the “Daily Cardinal” student newspaper to see whether anyone would be interested in helping out, but he got no takers. He also contacted a virtual office company that could do some things for the newsletter, but they are not cheap. Our website also needs updating. Stitt suggested collaborating with DMI. He believes a quarterly newsletter is sufficient and it could be wonderful. Cooper believes the newsletter needs more neighborhood news, content and input. He believes that more EC members have to step up. There should be regular contributions from each district every issue. Stitt responded that we cannot wait for volunteers; we should invest in it. We need someone who will go out and get the information from each district and who will provide stronger content value, photographs, and the like.

Cooper noted that the website is not being kept up. Davy Mayer’s company was in charge of it but Mayer turned it over to us when he moved out of the downtown. Stitt suggested hiring a company like Mayer’s to do the work and bring

in income sufficient to pay for it. Stitt believes the website should be current at all times. Cooper favors a quarterly newsletter and using the website to actively update. Stitt suggested putting out an RFP for the newsletter and website work. Broughman asked whether we could “cherry pick” articles about the downtown from the *State Journal* and other sources. Stitt encouraged using relevant information from other sources. He added that we already have some wonderful contributors, citing articles by Michael Bridgeman as an example.

Cooper reports that circulation is presently at 215. It is enough to send copies of the newsletter to CNI members and a few others. He suggested increasing the number of issues printed to at least 300 and freely distributing it at various regular locations and at the Farmer’s Market, as in the past. Stitt suggested energizing our social media presence to reach the current generation. Stitt said he is willing to work with a small group to find people we would pay to do the work. Cooper suggested putting out a call on the CNI e-mail and district lists to solicit committee members. Warman said he is willing to edit and print articles. Broughman volunteered to help Warman. Warman believes it could be beneficial if we hook up with other groups such as DMI to help. Stitt suggested that we provide a regular payment to DMI to underwrite the cost of using their staff. He offered to discuss this idea with Ilstrup. Broughman suggested having CNI and DMI together at the Farmer’s Market. Broughman announced at this time that he has obtained the permit for our Farmer’s Market table this year. Warman noted that we will have to put out a publication for the June Annual Meeting.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS

Miffland. According to Warman, the owner of Capitol Center Foods reached out to the owner of Dorn Hardware in an effort to keep them downtown, but it appears they just wanted to leave. Stitt believes DMI should get involved because the downtown needs a hardware store. Warman said that Capitol Centre will begin its expansion on April 1.

The committee working on a park for the district is open to the concept of two pocket parks, but the city wants one park at a larger location. Broughman suggested the use of excess funds for the dog park to spruce up the area around the Bassett district sign. Cooper suggested installing a water tap near the sign. Cooper reports that at the meeting on January 31 to discuss the dog park, people liked the idea of installing artificial turf because to install natural grass, the park would have to be closed for a year. Broughman pointed out that it will still require water to hose down the artificial turf.

Warman reports that Miffland residents are involved in fundraising for restoration of the organ at Capitol Theater. They seek support from CNI either with a direct donation, or by sending out information to CNI members and asking them to donate. Broughman notes that matching funds are available. Stitt suggested giving them access to our mailing list to solicit donations directly. Kamps has suggested a \$500 donation from CNI. Stitt suggested \$1,000. Cooper suggested that

we do both: CNI makes an initial donation, but reaches out to its members to make individual donations as well. He noted that there will be a presentation about the organ at the April “Duck Soup” cinema. We could present a check from CNI at that event. This will be put on the agenda for the March EC meeting.

Bassett. See the Bassett items in Ald. Verveer’s report, above.

First Settlement. Stitt reports that jazz musician and promoter Hannah John Taylor is exploring taking over the recently defunct Hail Mary Sports Bar at E. Wash. and S. Hancock. Stitt accompanied Taylor on a tour of the building today. Stitt believes it could be a good space for a jazz club. The hotel proposal on E. Wash. and N. Franklin seems to be on hold for now.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Cooper is concerned about the number of EC members who do not show up regularly for meetings. Tonight’s lack of a quorum shows that this is becoming a problem. He notes that the bylaws allow for the removal of an EC member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings. Stitt commented that the energy at EC meetings has dissipated and he is concerned. Meetings can get tiresome especially when members come with their own agendas. We need a chair who is bold enough to hold people to account at meetings. We should be present and patient, but also revive the meetings, he added. Everyone needs to attend on a regular basis. Warman agrees that we need to have quorum. Stitt suggested a change in the bylaws defining what is required for quorum.

MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT EC MEETING: Tuesday March 27, 2018, 5:15 p.m., Central Library, third floor.

AGENDA for March 27 EC Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (Negrin).
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 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;
Website/Membership/Communications System Upgrade;
CNI Membership Outreach/Growth Strategy Next Steps;
Attendance at EC meetings;
Capitol Theater Organ Renovation Fundraising;
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;
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.**