

Whittier Alliance Board of Directors
November 18th, 2010, 6-8:30, Whittier Elementary
Draft Minutes

Present: Tom Bissen, David Bagley, Jesse Oyervides, Mike Tupper, Maurice Battle, Christina Le, Daphna Stromberg, Anthony Carchedi, Lisa Vecoli, Erin Sjoquist, Laura Jean, Robert Nogler

Staff: Marian Biehn **Guest:** Carl Antolak, Erin Bowley

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:20 pm. by Vice Chair Erin Sjoquist. The standard of conduct and conflict of interest were noted. The agenda was presented and a **Motion** to approve with the addition of the MCAD Art Sale Tickets & the Sabri letter to Old/New Business added was made and **Carried** as amended.

Comments from the Chair: Erin differed to Marian for the introduction of new BA Rep board member Rachel Lewis from Washburn Center for Children. Rachel said that she has been attending the BA meetings and wants to get more involved on behalf of WCC. She has worked there for about a year. Washburn serves children with learning disabilities and handicaps. Anthony was congratulated on his new baby boy, Thompson.

Secretary's Report- Laura Jean: October 2010 minutes were presented and a **Motion** to approve as written **Carried**. Board absences were presented 5-0, 8-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-Reinstatements 2 Resignation. The Dec. board meeting will be early due to Christmas: Monday December 20th 2010 at Laura Jean's house 2456 Harriet Ave. People will bring things to share. The sequence of the agenda was altered this evening to accommodate an NRP meeting that Tom needs to attend. Board Chair Erica Christ arrived and Erin turned over the facilitation of the meeting.

Finance Committee – Tom Bissen The Oct 2010 finance report was presented. The cash balance is in good shape. A review of the expenses to date indicate that we haven't spent as much a planned or budgeted. Cash balance \$99,557.49, total assets \$158,663.25, Total liabilities and equity \$158,663.25. The telephone system is the only change on the balance sheet. It is the only fixed asset we have that is still in use. There are no out of the ordinary expenses.

Motion FC 1: The Whittier Alliance Board of Directors accepts the October 2010 financial report for the Whittier Alliance **Carried**

Neighborhood Community Relations (NCR) Fund Transition The final figures for each neighborhood allocation from NCR has been released. Whittier will receive less funding than originally projected but more than other neighborhoods. The funds were to be available in January but NCR has not yet completed paperwork needed to submit. We can spend our city funding first then other NRP funds then unrestricted funds. If the NRP allocations are approved by the City Council, the WA will get approximately \$90k for 2011.

Community Development Corporation (CDC): We are still waiting for confirmation that the Commercial Revolving Loan funds have been transferred. Tom Reynolds is gone. The work Tom did now falls to the CDC board so it may take several months. Tom gave a brief history of the CDC and the funds to inform new board member Rachel and prospective board member Carl. The funds came from NRP Phase 1 and at this time it's all program income. As funds are loaned and returned they become program income and gives us more freedom as to what we can do with the funds. CDC was not marketing this fund and was no longer in our neighborhood. So we have asked them to return the fund.

2011 Budget Review: The income sources from NCR, NRP, fundraising and other misc sources were discussed. The actual "useable" income is 194k and expenses are 190k, BA CPED grant covers some of the Admin, the green highlighted line items are pass through from NRP, fund raising, salaries will not be increasing. May want to consider new phone system ours is dated and the office could use a paint job if we chose to stay in that space. Those expenses are not included in the budget but there

should be enough flexibility to do them if we so choose. Anthony suggests getting paint donated from Valspar Tom comments to Strategic Planning that he thinks despite expense it is a good use of funds to help us plan and survive in the future. 5 year budget shows what we hope to contract out as far as we can. The 2011 NRP budget is 160k, If unspent it can roll over into the next years. We have the advantage of 20 years of NRP program income from phase one and two that can be used to sustain the organization if it is not preempted by the City. We also have 1 million left in phase two in specific strategies to contract. Tom suggests we meet with Peg to go over the NRP funds. We hope to protect our funds to keep the WA open and going and what projects and events are mostly closely aligned with our mission. WA board Predecessors created loans instead of grants and that has allowed our NRP funds to go further than some neighborhoods. Next month we need to approve the 2011 budget and contract the money by January so if there are any changes please attend the Finance meeting Tuesday the 14th 4pm at the WA office or email Marian.

WA Office Building Purchase Task Force: Tom suggested that the WA to look into purchasing a building—possibly one that can generate some income from rent, interest rates are low may be a good time to purchase and invest in a more permanent home. Nicollet Ave prices and taxes are high. As a non-profit we would not pay taxes. Lisa points out the city may start assessing fees for services, streets, lights etc that non-profits would have to pay. The fees are escalating. To help keep costs down. Erica says we it needs to cash flow not be dependant on renters. 2611 1st Ave onion dome is for sale and might be a good location but is priced too high. Marian thinks WA needs to have a task force to explore all of our options: ideal price point, space, handicap requirements; leases/leasing; pros & cons; buy delinquent and rehab; what the ideal thing would be and if purchasing would be the way to good. Christina thinks it's a good time to purchase. Small commercial with rental so we can cash flow right away and keep upkeep costs down. Marian recommends a street presence .

Erica asked for volunteers for a task force of three or four people. Erin asks what the time frame would be. Tom thinks better deals will be coming up, so perhaps within 12 months. Task Force volunteers are Tom Bissen, Maurice Battle, & Christina Le

Executive Committee: Erica Christ Erica asked Maurice's indulgence to postpone the discussion on motions from standing committees until after the Exec. Com. and the Strategic Planning presentation.

Com Org. & Admin Asst Positions: Ads were placed and are now closed. Many resumes were received and there are about ten viable candidates for Community Organizer position. Marian is hoping to schedule 4 interviews this Sat. has fewer applicants for Administrative Assistant position. It's a good group of candidates with higher skill levels then we have seen in the past. Marian would like a personnel committee to help do second interviews probably looking at the week after Thanksgiving.

Strategic Planning Update: Presentation from Erin Bowley: Erica introduced Erin Bowley as the person who the Task Force has been consulting with for the past 6 weeks. She came recommended from the Corcoran neighborhood. Erin's current proposal was emailed out to the board.

Erin: The Committee was able to refine the plan for the plan, and identify process and what kind of feedback WA is looking for on a narrower set of identified goals. Preliminary goals that have already been identified. Will develop a survey that will be widely available. Surveys will be both on-line and paper and in bilingual. Will use focus groups to reach minority groups, collecting info and feedback and then using that in the S.P. process. Will use combo of large group sessions and some smaller working group meetings and a more hands on task force. Goal is to have S.P. to present at the annual meeting in April. Anthony asks about how we are asking the questions? Will it be open ended? We will start by asking for feedback on draft goals to narrow conversation but will be looking for trends in responses. Budget is weighed to creating the plan and less on gathering the info. Bulk of money will go to crafting the plan. David asked about process-- expresses concern about perception of not just seeming to do the right thing but doing the right thing. Concerned that having things done by April might not be perceived as allowing enough time to be as open as might be desired. Erin says process will be open but targeted S.P. Committee will be creating one page history document that will lay out following entry points for

people to give feedback. Can also record process meticulously. The draft vision is of a world class neighborhood WA will not be asking for a do to list but what is next big advancement. David asks: What is the end product? Erin: Two documents: actual report summarizing document and final document will be a strategic plan can be long or short depending on overarching goals and how detailed you want to get. Might want to have a shorter public version and a longer working plan. Can look at examples to get a sense of what that might look like. Christina thinks have a S.P. Consultant helps show that there is a neutral person involved other than just board members. Erin also serves as an outside evaluator. Plan to have process complete by annual meeting in April. If we find that it's not ready this process can go longer. What is anticipated amount of time for board members? Present at focus groups or over the phone calling stakeholders, will ask for volunteers. Stronger expectation is that there will be two or three meetings and some smaller work groups. To economize time will try to have all focus groups on one day. Maybe have a board meeting designated to S.P. to use time well.

Board Discussion & Motion re Strategic Plan and Funding Source:

The S.P. proposal, Erica, Laura and Marian interviewed Erin and then Laura and Marian met with her to refine the outline and narrow in a proposed budget.

Original proposal gave a wide range from 6K to 34k and went through each strategy to narrow down costs and tasks. S.P. will come out of Professional Services in budget. Need motion to contract with Erin to have her be the facilitator To accept Erin Bowley's proposal Erica or Marian can sign contract, think Erin will send contract and then she will send invoice but will confirm.

Board Motion 1: The Whittier Alliance Board of Directors accepts the Strategic Planning Proposal and draft budget prepared by Erin Bowley in collaboration with the Strategic Planning Task Force and recommends contracting with Erin Bowley to implement the process as outlined in the proposal dated and named *Revised Proposal Nov. 18, 2010*.

Motion carried 13-0-0

Vision and Mission Statements: Vision: "A world class neighborhood" Part of S.P. is to set up neighborhood for future, mission and vision set stage. Talked about whether need to adopt vision and mission that we talked about at retreat back in March. Draft mission could use more word smithing. Does mission and vision come out of S.P. or vice versa? David suggests we use it as draft through the process and see how it changes as we get feedback from community and clarify our direction.

Motions from Standing Committees: Maurice Battle

CI Motion 1: *The Community Issues committee moves to approve the concept of the site plan for the Ice House Development at 22528-2548 Nicollet Ave.* Motion Passes 13-0-3.

Attendees at the CI meeting were generally pleased to see progress on the site. There was concern about Dunn Bro. coffee going in. The comment by the leasing agent saying that the windows in the Ice House were drawn in for marketing purposes was unusual. The guy from Vertical Endeavors said that they did not intend to put in windows. This is the only ice house left in Mpls. but the new owner has opted not to take the preservation tax incentives available for rehab if it were designated. Marian cautioned that the parking lot was going to be massive – much bigger than it appears and that the mitigating landscaping, pergola and center medallion would not be enough to make it seem less. Conditions were discussed knowing that they are advisory but if not stated we would lose the opportunity to put our concerns forward. The motion was amended.

Board Motion 2: The Whittier Alliance Board moves to approve the concept of the site plan for the Ice House Development at 2528-2548 Nicollet Ave. with the conditions that:

- the landscaping meet the 25% minimum coverage of non-built up land as stated in the WA Design Guideline standards;
- the owner protect the historical integrity and structure of the only remaining ice house in Minneapolis and apply for historic designation;
- when considering tenants for spaces that are or become available, the owner/leasing agents make the effort to find local, independent businesses consistent with the eclectic character of Whittier's

Nicollet Ave. and the cultural diversity of Eat Street. **Motion carried 10-0-3**

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CI Motion 2: *The Community Issues committee moves to approve request Balance Fitness Studio for a zoning change at 2902-04-06 Garfield Ave S from I1 to C3A*

CI Motion 3: *The Community Issues committee moves to approve request by Balance Fitness Studio to rezone at 2902-0406-08 Garfield Ave S Motion*

BA Motion 1: *The Whittier Business Assn moves to support the request by Balance Fitness Studio to rezone 2902-04-06 Garfield Ave from I1 C3A contingent on the applicant contacting, informing and getting feedback from the Midtown Greenway Coalition.*

Property owner Morgan did what was requested said she was open to working with MGC in the future. Due to the timing of the Planning Commission public hearing for this rezoning, the Executive Committee had to act on behalf of the board per the By-Laws.

Board Motion 3: The Whittier Alliance Board ratifies the approval of the Executive Committee regarding the Balance Fitness motions from the Community Issues and Business Assn meeting for rezoning and site plan. (CI Motions 1 & 2 and BA Motion 1) **Motion Carried 12-0-1**

Resource Development-Lisa Vecoli: Letters are being sent out to the neighborhood. Less are being sent than last year—a more targeted mailing. GiveMN was successful but not as successful as last year. There were 15 donors. It is important for all of the board to give what you can – a little or a lot, please encourage neighborhoods and business owners. The letter also has a Whittier Scavenger Hunt in it and the winners will receive a gift cert to an Eat Street restaurant.

Staff Reports: Meeting has run short on time, please review these on your own and contact the office with any questions.

Old New Business: HCMC Opening: Saturday October 30th, Had a great turn out was a nice event.

Tasty Eat Street: Nov. 18 -19 Thurs & Fri 6-9pm, please attend. Due to time the meeting had to adjourn prior to completing the old and new business due to lack of time before covering old and new business.**2011 Calendar** Did not have time to discuss. Laura Jean will send an email to the board with her thoughts about next years calendar.

Meeting Adjourn at 8:30pm

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by: Laura Jean, Board Secretary

Approved on Dec. 20, 2010

Erica Christ, Board Chair

Laura Jean, Board Secretary