

Whittier Alliance Board of Directors
March 25, 2010 6-8:30pm Whittier Elementary School

Present: Anthony Carchedi, Michael Tupper, Laura Jean, Erin Sjoquist, Elizabeth Grzechowiak, David Bagley, Christina Le, Larry Ludeman, Erica Christ, Tom Bissen, Maurice Battle, Jesse Oyervides, Daphna Stromberg, **Absent:** Lisa Vecoli, David Schuster, Felino de la Pena **Staff:** Marian Biehn, Jessica Rosenberg **Guest:** Dylan Thomas (Southwest Journal)

Call to Order: Chair Erica Christ called The Board of Director's meeting to order at 6:07pm. The Standard of Conduct was noted. The draft agenda was presented and additions or changes were requested. MB added the n'hood wine tasting to new business. A **Motion** to approve the agenda as amended **Carried**.

Comments from the Chair: Erica thanked Larry for his five years serving on the board. She will be asking for an executive session during this meeting.

Secretary' Report: Tom Bissen missed his third meeting, and has submitted a written request to be reinstated. A **Motion** to reinstate Tom was made and **Carried**. Chris Gottshall is moving out of the neighborhood, and so is resigning from the board. **Elizabeth Grzechowiak** presented the Feb 25th Board Minutes and asked for changes or additions. A **Motion** to approve the minutes as written **Carried**. The Board Meeting attendance was reviewed with misses and resignations (Board Meeting attendance: 1-0, 7-1, 4-2, 4-3 misses; 3-resign. Open seat -At Large '10 & '11.) We have board openings: a CI Chair, an open 2011 seat, and 5 people whose board terms are expiring at the Annual Meeting.

Executive Committee: **Erica Christ.** Erica announced that the board move into Executive Session and requested that staff and guests leave the room. They staff and guest were invited back into the room and the regular board meeting resumed.

BD Motion 1: The Whittier Alliance Board of Directors moves to appoint Larry Ludeman to the 2012 two year seat. **Motion Passes 9-0-3.** (*vacated by Michaela Ahern*)

BD Motion 2: The Whittier Alliance Board of Directors moves to elect five directors to the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 8th, as stated in the bylaws. **Motion Passes 10-0-2.**

Annual Meeting: The planning committee has been putting together the Annual Meeting. There is a volunteer sheet with everyone's assignments. Please double check your assignment and be prepared to show up on time. The draft agenda was reviewed: The meeting needs to reach quorum of 50 eligible voters. More people than that usually show up but not all are registered voters. Tom Hayes from Hen. Cty Med. Center will speak; then the election process (candidate speak for one minute, q & a, balloting, collection. League of Women Voters will count the ballots while volunteers are recognized, the committees report, the good biz/neighbor awards are given, the acting committees of the board are voted on then the winners of Board election are announced. There is a motion from the executive committee to recommit the CI and BA as the acting committees of the WA for 2010. At AM we have to reestablish residency, with proof. Make sure you tell people in n'hood to bring ID, if they don't have ID that shows Whittier residency, they need utility bill or something that proves residency. We need 50 voting members to have quorum. You get a voting card that you trade for a ballot. N'hood resource tables will be active. Franken, Ellison, Clark, Park Reps Tabb and At Large, CM Lilligren and Mayor Rybak have been invited. Some years we let elected officials speak for a few minutes if they come. We will mention strategic planning, not talk a lot about it. Childcare? The WA will provide childcare within the school building but it needs to be arranged for in advance.

CI & BA motion: Any thought to combine? They're different, have different agendas, different people come to them. The BA meets during the day, which wouldn't work for most community members. One community member asked about reestablishing a livability and safety committee. Bylaws say they have to get it going, but momentum hasn't grown, after a few attempts. It could be a task force. Many of those issues are covered in CI meeting.

BD Motion 3: The Whittier Alliance moves to recommend the Community Issues and Business Association as the Acting Committees of the Whittier Alliance for 2010. **Motion Carried 13-0-1.**

Retreat-Strategic Planning Recap: Christine thought it was much more productive than last retreat. Robert did a good job to lead into action, continue process. Erica, Laura Jean, Mike and Anthony had a first task force meeting. Laura Jean says the plan for the plan is in progress. We have a draft vision and mission. Is it necessary to formally adopt draft? Or can we move forward with a working draft:

Vision: Build a World Class Neighborhood. Mission: The Whittier Alliance works to create a balanced, sustainable, diverse and eclectic neighborhood. Comments: do we create? We support. And are 'diverse' and 'eclectic' the same? Maybe, but there is something diff about our eclectic feel of the n'hood, beyond diversity of people here. Instead of create, could we say: support, nurture...Could we add 'thriving' or 'prosperous' to show economic development? The Task Force will: 1. Identify stakeholders. 2. Ask questions: What do we know? What do we think we know? What do we need to know? 3. Identify master goals. Meetings will be once a month, the Monday before each board meeting so they have something to report. We had an exciting conversation that went far beyond vision to fantasy: what if we put a bio-fuel station on Nicollet? That's not even legal, but we want to go beyond battling Plymouth and stopping car break-ins. We want to get the n'hood on board, too: what can we do to imagine ourselves in the future, and become that future. No idea is too large. Next meeting Monday April 19th, noon, Muddy Waters. Let us know if you're coming, there will be homework.

Motions from Standing Committee: Erica Christ chaired every WA meeting last month.

CI Motion 1: The CI Committee moves to recommend approval for the application for the upgraded liquor license from Class E to Class B at El Mariachi, 2738 Nicollet Ave. Motion Passes 12-0-1.

Motion carried at the Board 12-0-1.

El Mariachi is upgrading, wants to have music and dancing. CI committee had no resistance. They have had some entertainment at the old space. The Class B will be for the new space. Will switch restaurant with event space.

CI Motion 2: The CI Committee recommends approval and adoption of the Whittier Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

We asked them to review, so that we can adopt. Some people read over the guidelines and came to meeting to discuss. They are not totally done, but close with just a few editorial changes to make, and we've been working on them for awhile. Do we need to do this here at the board level? We could wait until they are absolutely final. It would be helpful to have board support to take it downtown. Might give downtown some more teeth. Can we change it once we approve it? Yes, it has to be a living document. Some example: Greenspace: City is changing requirements, so we'll have to relook at our recommendations on greenspace in relation to what the city does, see if we want ours to be higher, lower, the same. Have board members read the guidelines? Should we wait until next month and everyone will really read it?

BD Motion 4: The Whittier Alliance Board of Directors moves to table the approval and adoption of the Whittier Neighborhood Design Guidelines until the April Board Meeting. **Motion Passes 11-0-1.**

Finance Committee: Tom Bissen-

FC Motion 2: At a meeting of the Finance Committee/Board of Directors of the Corporation "Whittier Alliance"—duly called and held on March 25, 2010 (at which a quorum was present and voting), the following resolution was set forth: To establish a \$10,000 line of credit with Franklin Bank.

We've had the line of credit at Franklin Bank for many years. We reduced it to \$10,000 a few years ago. We've only accessed it once in ten years. There is a \$200 charge for the credit line. FC decided to let it go. We can connect checking to savings, so that overdraft could dip into savings if checking is low, with only \$3 charge, and federal limit of 6 transfers a month. But we've only used the line of credit once in 10 years. Tom moves to

withdraw FC motion 2. What was line of credit used for the one time? One time NRP funds were late in coming.
Motion Withdrawn.

FC 1 Motion: The Finance Committee moves to accept the Feb 2010 financial report for the Whittier Alliance.
Motion Carried at Board.

We've got unrestricted funds at 132K. We've talked about moving some of those into CD at Franklin Bank. It is a secure financial instrument, with some interest. Could put 1/2 of unrestricted funds into a CD, and we can still advance on it. Bob Miller thinks we'll be 95% whole for NRP funds. Profit and loss: 93K in the bank. Receivables from NRP: 54K. Our liabilities are some advances on NRP contracts. Liability, equity, February expenses reviewed. We went over on postage which was the mailing of the 2010 calendar.

Within the FC time, Tom raised the issue of the Historic Context Study: it is on the website, check it out. Rex Hardware is back on city agenda within the next few weeks. Do we have any active work on it? Any actions? The WA is on record as NOT supporting its demolition

Resource Development May Day Soiree: Liz leads group stretching. David and Daphna stay seated, as British people don't do that. As responsible board members, we'd like for you to bring something to the MDS. We all know someone or something with a skill. This is a major fundraiser for the WA. **What is popular?** Practical things: house cleaning, gas cards, oil changes. Services. We'd like to diversify. Dance classes. Could we use funds to buy Groupons? We already get a lot of restaurant gift certificates. Catering is a good one. Tickets to things. Opening day Twins Tickets. We have an emcee but don't have entertainment. Can't do the invitations until we have entertainment. Christina has someone to donate liquor and help pour. Anthony has fancy Surly. We have tickets to Cirque de Soleil. If anybody knows anybody at airline tickets or vouchers. MB can get a weekend in San Francisco, if we can get airfare to go with. Do we do local hotel packages? Who is emcee? Chris Kallal, former Kare11 reporter. Any entertainment ideas? One person is checking out jazz trio background music. Last year DJ, year before singer, year before Al Franken. Miss Richfield? Won't commit. Mayor Rybak? Is already a donor. Open Eye Figure Theater has lots of connections to local musicians. Or they could do a puppet show. This is a lot of work, thanks for brainstorming, please bring in your donations. Multi-neighborhood **Wine Tasting:** Not going to happen this year after 27 years. Last year they lost the parking lot, had to go to the street, Cowboy Slim's owner didn't follow through on a commitment. The event had to pay to use the street, and Cowboy Slim's owner pledged 1/2 parking lot revenue, but never gave it. He also made money on the food. So they're not going to do it this year. We only made \$3-400 on ticket sales. It was big fundraiser for other n'hoods. The event is big and they don't have other space for it. Pat Fleetham organizes the event and Hennepin Lake Liquors works with wine vendors. Could we move it to 27th and Nicollet?

Staff Report: Executive Director. Community Organizer Is the city proposing different ordinances on homeless shelters? Yes, Catholic Charities came forward requesting that buildings other than church and mission spaces in downtown area, be allowed to have shelters. Talking to CPED and CM, it is specifically downtown, and won't creep into n'hoods. Do they need an ordinance change if it is a one time thing? Has this passed or not passed? Still coming forward.

Old/New Business: Rezoning Proposal Update: Many thanks and kudos to MB for sticking with the Greenway Rezoning. Meeting was this morning; MB is passing around detailed sheet with a map of the zoning. Of 214 parcels: the n'hood agreed to about 110 of them going with city recommendations: along Lyndale, Nicollet, Lake, commercial corridors. The areas in green on the map are going to stay existing zoning: Industrial, business incubator industrial, single family homes. Sites like Vera's Garden and Soo Line Garden were zoned R1, not for development, which gives them some protection. Karmel: Either way it was going to go, could allow hotel or housing. The decision was to leave it existing zoning, look at hotel proposal and evaluate based on impact it will have. What's going on with W 29th St? The historic designation has stalled a bit. The momentum should come from people in the n'hood to make it a

working class historic district. There are about 16 homes. It would be good if it were homeowner or grassroots or street initiated thing. Could the WA initiate it? We could initiate the conversation, and urge the designation, but it wouldn't work if it were just the Board, not residents moving it forward. This is a very good stretch to preserve the R2B zoning. One of the threats of up-zoning was creating deterioration: a property owner could divide up a sgl family home into a multiunit. Doing that could devalue the structure but the land value goes up because of the potential to build density. Some down zoning on Grand, Pleasant, Pillsbury. Was zoned R5 but had duplexes, and city agreed to down zone to R3. How did this all happen? CM Lilligren stepped up, people in the area gave voice, Marian did all the work. Good job! And Schiff recognized Marian from the Z & P bench. Today they considered west of 35W. Marian has incredible detail work and great follow up. She was prepared for a bigger fight. Met with Amanda and Nimco last week, Amanda, Nimco, Robert this week. Did they notify you of today's meeting? Yes. This means that when some parcels are purchased, (Pleasant from 28th-Lake) they'll have to fight each fight on rezoning.

Have other n'hoods caused as much ruckus? Central n'hood has made noise about the blanket up zone to R5. Lyndale rolled over on a lot of it. It is great that the city is listening to us when we make the point that our n'hood has integrity the way it is and we do our homework.

MCAD - Nicollet Vacant Storefront Project. The Art in Community class from MCAD is doing this project. The plan is to install vinyl art panels in vacant store front windows to create a better image and show some creativity. They want to have art that is what the n'hood wants, and represent the n'hood. They went out and asked what people want, will do art that reflects n'hood hopes, dreams, vision of themselves. Will have opening event, hopefully at Pay Day America, on Saturday April 24th. Have contacted ½ dozen property owners. What will be cost to WA? BA has up to \$1000 for a CPED grant. Vinyl panels \$100 a piece, MCAD has \$200, time, talent. **Lyn Lake Street Fair** will be happening again this year, May 16th. On Lyndale, btw Lake and 31st. Jesse announced about **Pillsbury traffic issues** at CI. Karmel is doing a traffic study which is required for the hotel that they want to build on top of Karmel Plaza. Police cars, off duty cops doing traffic patrols while the study is going on. Park Square. Background: We've been asking the city to do a travel demand study on the Karmels. Before Sabri can go forward with hotel, city conceded that they need a travel demand management study and plan. So he's getting this done, at the same time that he's hired off duty police officers to move traffic along. Traffic study people said they'd be honest. They did 12-1:30 till 2. Not 6-9 as Jesse requested. Jesse and Park Square Condos are forming a committee away from Whittier Board. Found some people who want to fight hotel. Jesse's talked to some business owners, who don't support Sabri but don't want to organize. As long as they're making money, which some of the businesses are.

Development Document Update: If anyone has looked through it, and has questions, shout them out, or look through it at your leisure. MB puts it together once a year or so. Useful information. It was the most popular thing at the CI meeting. Joe's Chicken Shack has sold, trying to purchase the lot. **Upcoming N'hood Cleanups:** Fallout did one, MIA is doing one, WA will be doing one for Earth Day.

Motion to Adjourn 8:24

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 22

Minutes Respectfully Submitted: Jessica Rosenberg, Administrative Assistant

Erica Christ, Chair

Elizabeth Grzechowiak, Secretary