

Whittier Alliance Business Association Committee-Draft Minutes

Wednesday July 8 2009 11:30 – 1 pm at AAUW/ The Gale Mansion, 2115 Stevens Ave.

Present Marcy Tollefson (Washburn Center for Children), Mary Cable (Sullivan's Super Value), Carolyn Humphrey (Gale Mansion/ AAUW), Angela Pycer (Gale Mansion), Elizabeth Grzechowiak (AZIA), Jim Hubal (Edina Realty), Erica Christ (Black Forest), Sharon Lund (Falls Agency), Dave (Lost and Found)

Staff Marian Biehn, Becky Neamy

Call to Order at 11:49 by Erica Christ, BA Chair, followed by introductions. Erica recognized the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. A **motion** to move HCMC's update to the beginning of the agenda after the spot light on business was made and **carried**. Those present were given time to review the minutes. A **motion** to approve the June 10, 2009 BA minutes- with the correction that Ahmad from Loon express would only have 2 employees in the liquor store, not 2 employees in his liquor store at all times in addition to his current staff in the convenience store side- **carried as amended**.

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS: American Association of University Women (AAUW)/ Gale Mansion Carolyn Humphrey said that the mansion was buildt in 1912, by Edward Gale who was married to Sarah Pillsbury. The mansion had been given to the couple as a wedding gift. In 1947, AAUW bought the house and has owned and maintained it since.

AAUW is an organization that researches and advocates for women and girls education and equality issues. They have about 430 members, who are mostly older but are looking to recruit younger ones. They said that most of the members hold 4 year degrees, but due to the lower membership, they now allow people who hold a 2 year degree to join.

AAUW/ The Gale Mansion, presented on their plans to install an elevator that will not compromise inside or exterior of the building. Plans for elevator are to go in to where there is currently a closet, and will go out to 2nd floor and not attic. The elevator will come to 2nd floor on an outside porch area, so there will be no way to notice a change from the outside. Also with the addition of an elevator they will redo the kitchen. They plan to move bar from current hallway location to Minnesota room near the new elevator to help alleviate traffic from hallway to Minnesota room. Finally they plan to add staff changing rooms in the attic. The mansion will be closed from November 1, 2009 to April 1, 2010 while the renovations will be done. The project has an estimated cost of \$1.3 Million, which will be covered by the funds that were raised during their capital campaign.

HCMC UPDATE Greg Lutz, of HCMC invited everyone to the clinic's open house and ground breaking on July 22 at 4:30. They will begin at the old clinic on Lake St. site and walk to new site on 29th and Nicollet, break ground and then celebrate at Old Arizona. HCMC plans to open the clinic sometime in Aug of 2010. Their current clinic on Lake St. has about 70 current employees, plans to add 20-40 new full time employees gradually over time to their Nicollet location. They will not be developing the whole lot on the 29th and Nicollet, as the additional space is owned by the City. Eventually the additional space will be developed, but the current plan is to have it used as green space.

MAXFIELD RESEARCH, INC. FOLLOW UP-At the last meeting the group was given a presentation on research about Nicollet Ave to increase commercial development and activity on the commercial corridors. The Whittier Alliance is working on the Design Guidelines for the Commercial Corridors and the Pedestrian Overlay is in place. The group discussed the presentation and that much of what was presented on was the obvious, but that it had lacked the connection of what to do next. Liz questioned if Maxfield had provided a recommendation on

how to bridge this gap to market to larger corporations that would attract more people and encourage them to spend money in the neighborhood.

Sharon Lund spoke on the idea of cost sharing, by partnering retailers with large businesses. This way the Whittier businesses could figure where majority of customers are coming from based on zip codes, and target these areas. Sharon made note that more Urban planners say the most important thing for a neighborhood to do is to create identity. Current identity of Whittier is now Eat Street, this excludes the Lyn-Lake area that is another big hot spot in the neighborhood. Jim thought that we have not really done any thing that is promoting Whittier the neighborhood, but we are doing promotion of Eat Street. Sharon also talked about creating incentive cards or a bonus program for people who patron the area. She suggested creating an interactive service/ package that could provide services to large corporations for them to provide to their employees as incentives or bonus. She also suggested that we make committee to a strategic plan to attract people to the neighborhood as a whole not as individual businesses.

Liz talked about Eat Street having more businesses that are seen as destination locations instead of a place where people would just walk around through the neighborhood. Erica suggested a 2 prong approach that we work with what we have and then figure out how we could shape the development of the neighborhood. Liz suggested that we find out what was the appeal of new businesses as to why they chose to move to the neighborhood, and how could use this information to attract more small businesses in the neighborhood.

Sharon said she would help to make promotional package, but suggested that we also host a breakfast or after hours and invite HR people to present promotions to the large corporations. She also thought it would be good idea to have website that shows open store fronts to encourage small businesses to rent store fronts. The website should also show the amenities of neighborhood to create a destination area for people outside of the neighborhood.

Marian from the Whittier Alliance, said that it would be helpful to have the Design Guidelines for the Commercial Corridors completed before we could move forward with recruiting businesses. Mary from Super Value suggested having joint meetings with other Business Associations, (i.e. Lyndale, Lake Street, Nicollet, Uptown) to help combine the efforts. Marian said she will put out a call to all local businesses and Businesses Associations to see if they want to be involved in a task force.

OLD/ NEW BUSINESS The **2010 Whittier Calendar**. The past years calendars have featured images of the neighborhood, taken by the residents. The next year's calendar will be a Food of Whittier Calendar, possibly with pictures of Eat Street Food and a recipe. This has been a great source of outreach and reaches over 7000 residents in the Whittier neighborhood.

There is still a for profit seat open for on the Business Association.

Liz volunteered to have the next BA meeting at Azia from 4-5:30 on Aug 12.

Meeting adjourned at 2:09. Minutes submitted by Becky Neamy
Next meeting: Aug. 12, 2009