

Whittier Alliance-Community Issues Committee- DRAFT MINUTES

Monday July 12, 2010 City of Lakes Waldorf School

Attendees: Jess Clark, Anthony Carchedi, Robert Nogler, Tom Bissen, Verne Greenlee, David Bagley, Erica Christ, Daphna Stromberg, Cindy Wong, Kurt Nelson, Mark Smith, Paula Horan, Chris Martinson, Hillary Davis, Felino dela Pena, Robert Frame, Alysén Hoberg, Veronica Mitchell, Nancy Peterson, Scott Smith, Jim Baker, Mark Lucas, Jeff Rabkin, Matt Goeder, Paul Wharton, Andrew Kay, Dave Sasse, Kristine Martinson, Bonnie Ford, Brent Roeger, Shirley Bernu, Jerry Rudkin, Mary Stewart, Cheryl Morgan Spencer, Timothy LaPean, Tod Skallerup, Ajai Abramson, Bruce Pderson, Robert Paulson, Michael Garr, Jesse Osendorf, Jesse Oyervides, Andy Madson, Jeff Nelson, John Wilson, Kirk Morrhead, Theresa Nelson, Chuck Sasse, JoAnn Musumeci, Carrie Thompson, Erik Raveling, Nathalie Ly Foug Xiong, Corrine Zwickey, Chris Swaggert, Keith Chellson, Clarice Davis, Paul West, Don Davis **Presenters:** Chelsea Adams (5th Precinct), Rep. Karen Clark, Dean Duvolis (DJR Architects), Mark Lucas & Jesse Osendorf (Brighton), Kim Bretheim (LBH Architects), Rev. Lucille Michaels (Center of Light), Tom Bravo (HCMC), Jesse Yunger (Visual Communications), Marti Stewart (City of Lakes), Jen Nagel **Staff:** Marian Biehn, Becky Neamy, Jessica Rosenberg

Call to order at 6:08 by Erica Christ, Board Chair, who noted the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. A motion to **approve the agenda** was made and carried. Attendees introduced themselves. The June 2010 CI minutes were **approved**.

Announcements and Community Comments

Comments/Topics from Whittier Residents Paula asked if anyone knew who was responsible for the “Welcome Home” mats found around the n’hood. Erica speculated it might be an MCAD project. **5th Precinct report** – National Night Out street closure application is free through July 21st, \$100 after that. There are about 6 NNO parties scheduled for Whittier. Handouts are available, or <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno/>. On July 9th, a car break in was called into 911, and the suspect was apprehended. Residents asked for more information about recent shootings. No more information was available; Chelsea can’t comment until a press release is released. **City of Lakes Waldorf School** – Marti is the administrator at City of Lakes, an independent, Pre-K through 8th, Waldorf School. The mission of a Waldorf education is social renewal. Part of why they are in an urban environment is to bring social renewal to students. They don’t do a lot of testing; curriculum integrates arts, handiwork, music, includes ideas of heart, mind, body, and teaching will. Value outdoor education and play. Patti is a parent, and has been working on the rain garden project. CLW was awarded a grant from Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization to remove pavement, and put in a rain garden. The rain garden provides more space for water to go into the ground, be cleaned before it drains to the river. Patti would be happy to give a tour and talk to anyone about rain gardens in Whittier.

Legislative Update – Rep. Karen Clark - Rep Clark represents 94-Lake, Lyndale to 55; comes to CI meetings 1 or 2 times a year to report and hear from residents. Started this year with a billion dollar deficit, and waiting to hear from state Supreme Court about legality of un-allotment. About 3-4 weeks before the end of the session, was deemed illegal move. Ended up with a 4 billion dollar deficit. Gov. Pawlenty says no new taxes, by which he means no new income taxes. Rep Clark and Sen Berglin have been working to get the governor to do things differently. Gov Pawlenty wanted to cut GAMC, health care for low-income Minnesotans. Now there are only 4 hospitals who will take it: Henn County, Fairview University, North Memorial, Regents. State legislature offered Pawlenty 1.4 billion from federal gov’t that he isn’t taking, to not increase federal deficit. Rep Clark works on housing, they passed 6 million to housing with services. Legislature was determined to put money in jobs and healthcare, had a bonding bill to put 20,000 jobs, many in construction to renovate

public housing, which was vetoed. Also vetoed: money for African American History Museum in Stevens Square, and for transit. Rep Clark worked with tenants and property owners and passed tenants rights bill. Xcel Energy wanted to put an energy line over the Greenway, got a temporary stop until there is a study showing need.

Questions: Bicycle law about red lights as stop signs? Rep Clark's not sure, will get in touch. Who is the state indebted to? We're not allowed to collect a debt. Either we have to cut budget, or raise revenue. Now there are signs that there will be monthly cash flow problems, will have to borrow, which MN has never had to do. One of the successes was funding for supportive housing. But one of the issues of this n'hood has been the city council not following rules for impacted n'hoods in where to place supportive housing. One thing Clark has tried to work on is the prevention of over concentration of housing for sex offenders. North and Phillips have 1/2 of state's sex offenders, she worked on bill to have housing more dispersed. State has relationship with Henn County, and out state legislators had votes to defeat it. There is a balance to seek with all of these. Supportive housing, where there is supervision is better support for tenants. High rise, low-income housing, who owns them? Fed owns them, managed by city. Seems like there are many privately owned in our n'hood. Yes, many of them are managed privately, get section 8. Anthony has seen his neighboring supportive housing be painted twice this year. Rep Clark will look into it.

Eat Street Excursion this Thursday and Friday, discounts at Nicollet restaurants and businesses. **Washburn Fair Oaks** historic walking tour and MIA 3rd Thursday Bike Night on Thursday. Open Eye Theater drive way show in WFO Parks this Sunday.

2910 Pillsbury-Karmel Plaza – Dean Duvolis, DJR Architects Karmel Plaza (the Somali Mall) owned by Basim Sabri would like to expand the first floor and add a 3rd floor for self-storage. Sabri Properties is asking for two things: to cover the arcade that wraps around inside of mall. Request is to enclose it to prevent crime, make it more conducive for retailers, and increase retail space. This would bring every retailer forward. And they would add a sandwich stand, produce market, and retail space: 4500 sq feet addition. 2nd request is to create a mini-storage on 3rd floor, primarily to use by tenants. All proposed additions fit within parking requirements. The zoning report by city planners will be out by Wednesday evening. Traffic demand study will be posted Friday.

Attendees Comments and Questions: How many square feet are there now? 62,000 now with 2 stories. Increase is 10% at best. Are retailers added? 3 added. Building on top of what's there? Completing the 1/2 finished 3rd floor. Will this take additional parking? It will fit within parking required by city. No parking spaces will be taken away. Do you have images? Yes. Shading study for the greenway? Yes, it fits within their criteria for the Greenway. It does shade the Greenway in Dec and January. What's being built now? Sabri started a 3rd floor, looked at feasibility study for the hotel and decided not to do one but do a storage facility in stead.

CI Motion 1: The Community Issues Committee moves to deny the site plan review for the 3rd floor addition to Karmel Plaza at 2910 Pillsbury Ave. Motion Passes 25-2-9

Discussion: Tom says that the neighborhood never gets the true story behind a Sabri Properties proposal. [If the 3rd floor addition] is approved, who knows what it will be? That area of the neighborhood will continue to be plagued by hyper congestion for traffic and parking. The Traffic Demand Study was done when off duty police were helping to move

traffic and does not give an accurate picture of traffic on a daily and especially weekend basis. This building and the way it is managed has been disastrous for the n'hood. Is the storage for Plaza or Square? Both... unclear. Will this be entire or partial 3rd floor? And if it is storage, will windows on 1st floor be opened up? On the Pillsbury and Pleasant side, the windows on 1st and 2nd floor are blocked by merchandise. That is a management issue. Yes, that is part of why this is being done. Will licensed and bonded workers be used on this project? Presenter is not a contractor, can't promise that. Would hope so. The 1st floor addition was started without permits and will add up to 9 more retail spots. Will this addition and the addition of the storage make traffic worse? Hopefully no. How many trash rooms? One trash room, and one compactor by Walgreens. Jesse has observed trash thrown around. Jesse saw that a young person almost got hit by a car from the traffic congestion earlier this week. When will change happen? Architect will pass on comments to management. Another resident asked Tom to clarify what he meant by "disaster for the n'hood." Tom says he meant parking disaster, it clogs Pillsbury. The developer has a reputation; Need to see positive change before we approve more. Motion came to a vote.

CI Motion 1: The Community Issues Committee moves to deny the site plan review for the 3rd floor addition to Karmel Plaza at 2910 Pillsbury Ave. **Motion Passes 25-2-9**

CI Motion 2: The CI Committee moves to deny the site plan for the 4500 sq foot addition to the first floor retail space at Karmel Village 2910 Pillsbury Ave. **Motion Passes 20-7-9.**

POI: this goes to planning meeting a week from today, July 19th. You can submit comments by email to planning committee, or show up.

Salem English Lutheran Church-Lyndale Green – Brighton Development: Mark Lucas & Jesse Osendorf (Brighton), Kim Bretheim (LBH Architects) This project is returning to the n'hood with a new CUP for approval. They have images of the amended request. They are staying at a higher level of affordability. Will be at 50-60% of median income; they are taking a 4% tax credit. Tax credits go up to 9%, so they have a bigger gap to fill. The MN Housing has stepped in, will sell bonds, and will fund remaining gap. They have a goal of starting to build Sept-Oct. For the CUP, they added 2 residential units, at 60% rent level, helps with slightly bigger mortgage, and to balance budget. To do that, they decreased the commercial space by 1000 ft, of interior sq footage (about 10%). Entire exterior block, on Lyndale, will be commercial. Is there demand for more rental housing? HUD tracks this nationwide, gets down to census tract level. They'll know data for this area. We've done a market study with a firm in town. Everyone wants it to be full. This is rental. A lot of people who had been buying into condo market, a lot of people in bankruptcy, rental is more possible. There is no bank funding for commercial space which make it difficult to build.

Attendees Comments and Questions: At Planning Com. meeting, city planners said it wasn't attractive, and I don't see many changes. A resident says the approvals for the zoning changes weren't done right, and that still hasn't been resolved. There could be about 120 people, and not enough parking. How many vehicles can you accommodate? Mark says Brighton doesn't want a parking problem either. They manage the building as well as build it; want happy tenants. Similar building by the Guthrie, and 2/3 have cars. Here, we have 51 spots underground, 48 above.

Kim: Request was to improve building design, add texture to the mass, add more pedestrian interest. To start with building design: last year it was straight wall from one end of the building to the other, and store front was in one plane. To break up monolithic look, they brought brick down, brought masonry piers down, so that front is recessed more. Will be various ins and outs along store fronts. Building is about the same foot print. Sq footage was reduced 718 sq feet. Increased ground floor by 225 sq feet, reduced 4th floor 386. Pulled corners back, so ends bay out. More variation: brick warbling, stone banding at corners and sills, cast stone elements over windows, brick coursing in and out. The design tries to recall some of the 20's buildings in the neighborhood. Basic materials are a reddish orange brick, alternates 8 and 12 high. Metal siding now, not cement, horizontal band. Not flush piece of metal. Canopy and trellis on south side of building. They haven't heard about city streetscape design on Lyndale and 28th. City hasn't completed plan, so they aren't proposing streetscape change. How would reducing commercial space improve plan? Codes say that commercial space is more parking intensive. We're doing it to have space for more living units, and it is virtually impossible to finance commercial space right now. Tax credit investor, MN Housing, won't let it be part of the project. Want it to be financed separately, so there is no risk of it upsetting housing. N'hood had parking issues when it was just the church. How can parking work? Where are you going to put them? Jen Nagel says the church would support permit resident parking only on Garfield. But where would residents' visitors park? On 28th street side, it is corner commercial, and then apartments. Are there individual entries? Yes. Are there any plans to make the 28th street side all commercial? Not for a while. Tax credits say it has to be housing. Change would be way down the road, 30 years. It seems like a loss of commercial potential. The corner space became larger. Do the apts have storage? Maximizing apartment closets, haven't discussed about using garage for storage.

63 units. 33-1 bedrooms and 33-2 bedrooms. 1 bedrooms at 50-55-60%. 1 bedroom \$850. 50% 1 bedroom will be \$650, 2 bedroom \$725. This is the rent of our n'hood anyway. Why should we subsidize this, for Brighton to make a profit? It is an alternative for the marketplace. Brighton has done affordable housing for 30 years. 50% rental is what's going on in the n'hood. This will further impact this segment of the city, where this is the market rate, without the government subsidies? A resident asked what the 50% measure means. They track income by census tract. Take the median income, want rent to be set affordable (30% of income to housing) at 50-55-60% of median income. Will there be play space? Exercise area and community room. No dedicated outdoors play space. Green roof on the building? No. Storm water management has underground storage and forced pavers. But still running off? Green roof deals with water quality, can be dealt with in pipes and tanks.

Last approval that was given for % affordable was what? It isn't approving a change in rent, it is number of rentals. Was previously 50% and 60%, and now has 55%. Some projects include apartments not deemed affordable? Yes. Why not do that in this building, market rate? There is a school of thought that mixing the income levels is positive. Speaking from recent experience, no one walking by knows whether a building is "affordable."

What they're looking for is a new Conditional use Permit for 63 units. If we want to, we can add conditions.

CI Motion 3: The Community Issues Committee Motions to approve a new CUP for 63 units for Brighton Development at the Salem English Lutheran Church Development –
Motion Passes 20-15-6

Discussion: Entire basement of building is parking, 51 for residents. 8 for church. Balance is for guests and commercial. How many church goers drive? A lot don't. For big event, we'd use off site parking, Intermedia Arts, shuttle. A resident says that at 61 units, there would be quality of life issues. You had an opportunity here to build something here to bring something to improve the neighborhood. You are here to take a little more away from the n'hood. With a condition, could we ask for something to make it more desirable quality of life? Presenter says they don't have a lot of commercial space, but what BD has is long term tenants. Space across from Guthrie has Spoonriver. Edina Realty wanted to go in there, but what would that do for the n'hood? BD is already working to find good tenants for the commercial space. Could we add parking requirement? Could, would have to talk to motioner and 2nder, or you could take it to MB to take to Board.

2548 Pleasant Ave S. – Center of Light Order of Christ Sophia – Rev. Lucille Michaels

Here to request a change of non-conforming use. They have a building zoned R2B single family, and they would like to use it for worship center. 2548 Pleasant was owned by REM Hennepin, and used for up to 20-person for-profit nursing home. Is 5 bedroom house Realtor says it looked institutional and was big, so didn't have a lot of interested. Most of interest was contractors to turn into a 3 family unit. Center of Light has been living 2 doors down since 2008 as spiritual community. 2548 is big enough for them to live and to have public worship space. COL was told by city, before purchasing, that it is zoned for worship center. Bought it, then was told they don't have enough land around, and have to do a change of nonconforming use. REM Hen already had variance, so process is diff, to go from one non-conforming to another non-conforming. Were told that they were a move towards conformity; that it was more like what is appropriate for that location. After application, COL was told that due to the size of the house it would have to be called "retreat center or convent" to account for people living there. At back they Meeting Area, legal for 30 people; have 3 parking spaces at PPL. Basement and attic are unfinished. Currently there are 8-10 members; all have full time careers outside the religious organization. They are a slowly growing, small group. Because of the size, this is not a single family home, unless someone was to rip off back. Given the building size and location on a high traffic street, they believe they are the best use for the space. An email went out insinuating that they are a cult, Rev Lucille had conversation with Whittier leadership and there were apologies. They did not want to present on their faith, as they have no obligation to explain their religion to live in the building or apply for this. COL passed out handouts answering questions about the building and their organization They are inviting the neighborhood to an open house at 2548 Pleasant on Saturday July 17th, 10am-12pm. The hours of operation were brought up. The non conforming use allows them use as a worship center during certain hours.

Attendees Comments and Questions: The building is across from park, do you proselytize to children? We don't proselytize period, and definitely never to children. What are we voting on? Non-conforming use: center for worship or retreat. What does this open us up to, if they move? With sale, non-conforming use stays with building for a year. And parking isn't part of discussion. With R2B, it is allowed up to 6 people living there. Hours of operation: 6-7:30am morning communion. Typically Tues and Thurs classes 7-9pm, and have said every evening, M-F 7-9:30. Saturdays all day gatherings, usually once a month. Sunday 9:30-3:30 service and then class. A resident said that after listening to Salem English Lutheran's proposal, knowing their financial issues, if only 8 people are going to support the

whole complex, where does money come from? Rev. Michaels says mortgage is not high, rent covers mortgage. Church is part of a national network, national church would cover other costs. One resident said that a non-conforming use is asking for an exception to the rules, just because it is a religious doesn't mean n'hood has to approve. Are the ministers licensed? Ministers don't need any sort of license.. Can't park on 26th? No signs prohibit parking on this block of 26th. A neighbor from 25th and Pleasant says that this Sisters are wonderful neighbors, considerate. Let neighbors know what's going on.

Motion 4: The Community Issues Committee moves to deny the request for a change of non-conforming use at 2548 Pleasant Avenue. **Motion Fails 3-26-4.**

Motion 5: the Community Issues Committee moves to accept the request for a change of non-conforming use at 2548 Pleasant Avenue. **Motion Carried. 26-3-5**

Hennepin County Medical Center – Tom Bravo HCMC is looking for approval for 4 variances for signs at Whittier Clinic, which will be opening up October 30th. They've done community and patient focus groups at last clinic, and heard that one big issue was finding your way around and inadequate signs. Clinic is 80% built. Because of multiple 1-way streets, are looking to have good signs in lots of places so that people aren't circling looking for way in to parking in times of already high stress. Allowed signs include "Whittier Clinic" at Nicollet on 28th side, and on canopy on Nicollet side. Zoning allows for 1 monument type sign, they want to put up 5, including L shaped signs, signs on corners to direct people to entrance. The plans are for smaller signs, by request of n'hood. Were 7 ft internal, now are 6. What material? Brushed aluminum. Building is LEED certified.

Attendees Comments and Questions: The signs are large 7 ft x 4 ft, camouflage park area, a safety issue. Could there be signs on the pergola, up high, away from snow? Eye level better for elderly, and drivers. Can look at pergola, but they think this will work better.

CI Motion 6: The CI Committee moves to approve the requests for sign variance at HCMC's Whittier Clinic. **Motion passes 26-2-2.**

Old / New Business. None.

Meeting adjourned: 8:40pm

Minutes submitted by: Jessica Rosenberg, Administrative Assistant, Whittier Alliance

Next meeting: Monday, August 9th, 6 pm, City of Lakes Waldorf School