

-WHITTIER ALLIANCE- Community Issues Committee- DRAFT MINUTES
Monday July 13, 2009 1st Minneapolis Seven Day Adventist Church

Attendees: Ahmad Alhawari, David Bagley, Jim Baker, Sandra Block, Mary Cable, Anthony Carchedi, John Champe, Jen Chilstrom, Patricia Clarke, Erica Christ, Glenn Crown, Don Davis, Clarice Davis, Faisal Demaag, Hung Veit Do, Ariel Edes, Kathi Elliars, Amy Geisler, Michael Garon, Matt Goeden, John Gunther, Lavina Gunther, John Hanke, Allen Hendon, Paula Horan, Duohg Lanh Huhg, Machalle Johnson, Marsha Johnson, Mary Johnson, Sarah Kunze, Christina Le, Steve Leventhal, CM Robert Lilligen, Larry Ludeman, Bruce Lundeen, Kris Martinson, Rhonda Meyers, Jen Nagel, Jeff Nelson, Kurt Nelson, Tim Nelson, Pete Nueman, Destin Nygard, Jan Olson, Jesse Oyervides, Ron Parker, Mary Packard, Don Portwood, Brian Posch, Alexis Racciatti, Ted Redmond, Dave Sasse, Chuck Sasse, Josie Shardlow, Erin Sjoquist, Tod Skallerup, Scott Smith, Tony Smith, Steven Stodolka, Daphna Stromberg, Kris Swaggart, Roger Truax, Nick Tveitbakk, Mike Tupper, Lisa Vecoli, John Wilson, Cynthia Wong, Corrine Zwickey

Presenters: Chelsea Adams (5th Precinct), Ben Post (Calvary Church), Rep. Karen Clark (State of MN), Marjorie Pearson (Hess Roise), Bihn Le (Lake Wine and Cheese), Robert Roscoe (architect on behalf of Lake Wine and Cheese), David Quast (East St. Paul PD) Peggy Lucas (Brighton Development- Salem), Don Gerberding (Master Engineering on behalf of 27th and Nicollet), Dave Quasant (St. Paul Police Department- East Side on behalf of Lake Wine and Cheese) Jesse Osendorf (LHB Architects), Aaron Rosseth (ESG Architects), David Graham (ESG Architects), Tim Herman (Dayton's Bluff Business Association)

Staff: Marian Beihn, Becky Neamy

Call to Order at 6:16 by Destin Nygard, CI committee chair, who noted the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. **A motion to approve the agenda** with a change to include a presentation of new development before the Historic Context Study. Motion was made and **carried**. Attendees were given time to review the minutes from last month; a **motion to approve** the June 8, 2009 CI minutes was **carried**. Introductions were skipped in interest of time.

Announcements & Community Comments

Kris Martinson said that Karmel Village received approval for additional space from the city. She also said that Leo Whitebird filed an appeal with the city contesting the decision of the expansion. Kris brought a petition for neighbors that are against the expansion of the Karmel development to sign. Jen Chilstrom from Old Arizona shared information about Old Arizona's summer activities and youth programs for girls in the neighborhood. **5th Precinct Report:** Chelsea noted that the overall crime in Whittier was down about 14% for the month of June compared to last year. Year to date reported crime is down 9.84%, with a reduction in rape, robbery, theft, auto theft and arson. There has been an increase in aggravated assault and burglary. She said that crime is down due to neighbors being connected and watching out for one another by providing additional eyes on the street. She also talked about the deadlines for registering your event for National Night Out to receive free door prizes and street closings from the city. Applications for street closing will be free until July 21st and after this there will be a \$100 charge. So register your NNO event soon! **Legislative Report:** **Representative Karen Clarke** gave brief report on what was going on and how the previous year's session had gone. She was also seeking feedback from neighborhoods to see what they would like to see done over the next year. She said that there had been no approval to continue general assistance for medical care funding. There will be an increase on property taxes and renter's credit is being reduced dramatically. There had been multiple vetoes from Senate about having progressive state taxes on alcohol sales and highest income earning brackets. Rep. Clarke said the state will be sending out a legislative report in near future to constituents of Whittier and surrounding neighborhoods. Due to time constraint Rep Clarke was asked to come back to CI when the legislative report is ready in couple of months.

Becky Neamy from the Whittier Alliance gave a quick update about upcoming things that are happening in Whittier. There is an Ice Cream Social on July 21st in Clinton Field Park at 2:00 pm. There will be free ice cream treats, a performance from Old Arizona's dancers and games for kids. On July 20th at 6 pm the Whittier Alliance will be hosting a Block Club Potluck where block club contacts and those interested can mingle and discuss upcoming NNO plans, block issues and other fun activities for block clubs.

Don Gerberding from Master Engineering revealed his proposal for a mixed-use project at **2644 Nicollet** on the corner of 27th and Nicollet. The project would be a four-story building with market rate rental housing of 45 units out of which 40% would be affordable. The design of the building will be in compliance with the neighborhoods design guidelines. Parking will be available off of 26th Street for the commercial spaces and visitors with underground parking stalls for tenants. Gerberding has also designed the Arts quarter lofts and Greenleaf lofts, which are both in Whittier. Gerberding wanted to share his project idea and hear concerns from the neighborhood; he was not seeking any action at this time. The development firm plans to meet with development task force and will plan to seek an official place on the Community Issues Committee agenda at a later time.

Historic Context Study- Marjorie Pearson-Hesse Roise

Marjorie Pearson presented an overview of the current historic context study that focuses on Washburn Fair Oaks and Blaisdell areas. The Whittier neighborhood was home to several famous people. It was originally shaped by plats and was desired for its proximity to downtown Minneapolis. John Blaisdell built the first long house on Lyndale during 1870's. The city of Minneapolis became incorporated in 1881. The Whittier neighborhood was home to the first school

and fire station in Minneapolis. In 1883 John Bradstreet built his first home on 2nd Ave. In 1884 St. Stephens Church was established.

Rail was established north of Lake Street in the early 1900's. The first street rail came to the neighborhood in 1889. This form of transportation was on three major lines of streetcars that went down commercial corridors. Streets such as Nicollet, Lake, Franklin and Lyndale were being built up as commercial corridors early in the 1920's. In 1907, the first apartment building, The Savannah Apartment House, was built in Whittier on Garfield Ave. In the 1920's the city began to define what should stay apartment homes or what should be zoned as apartment dwelling. The freeway system was proposed in 1956 and built in the 1960's. The addition of the freeway created a separation of the Whittier neighborhood.

Hess Roise anticipates that he will be done with the historic study by Labor Day and will then send the findings to the Alliance for distribution to the neighborhood. This should give the neighborhood a broad understanding of how to proceed. Hess Roise will also be developing a 'dos and don'ts' of how to deal with historic structures and maintaining buildings in the neighborhood.

Attendees Comments and Questions: Erica Christ asked if there is a precedent to create guidelines that deal with the interior of historic buildings and not just the exteriors. Marjorie said that if a building is private property it is not easy to make an historic evaluation or design guidelines. If the house is open to the public it can be maintained by historic preservation and guidelines, however if it is not, it is more difficulty to hold it to such standarda. Based on the findings of the study the neighborhood may want to expand the historic district not necessarily in a continuous area but sporadic areas and to individual buildings to include homes on Pillsbury and on Blaisdell.

David Bagley felt that the neighborhood should hold the estate-sale company that conducted the auction for the 2008 Pillsbury property, partly responsible for the destruction of the building. He felt that they did not conduct the sale in an ethical way or properly evaluate the historic value of the house. David suggested that we invite the estate-sale company to come and speak with at the next Com. Issues meeting. Destin gave a quick recap on what had happened with the 2008 Pillsbury Estate sale and how the bank had stepped in based on allerts from concerned neighbors.

Calvary Baptist Church-Ben Post - Ben Post presented a plan for site modification for Calvary Church on 26th and Blaisdell. The church would like to make the main floor of the building accessible, as of now it is not. They are currently working with reputable architect who has done work following historic guidelines. The church has a hearing with the city Heritage Preservation Commission on Aug 4, 2009. At this time Calvary is not seeking action from the community but wanted to inform the neighborhood of the project. The church is proposing to build exterior wood ramp on the west side of the building currently being used as a parking lot. The church chose the ramp after looking into a variety of other options such as exterior lift and interior elevator. However, the cost for these was more than the church could afford. They considered other sides of the building for the location of the ramp but felt that having the ramp on any other side other than the western side would detract from the historic value of the church. The church is proposing to re-grade current dirt parking lot and add a concrete slab. In addition to the wood ramp, they would add additional stairs for those not needing accessibility and are entering through the west entrance. Changes to the lot will have to be approved by the city due to the zoning codes and how the traffic has to enter and exit from the lot. The church will have 4 traditional parking spots and one accessible stall in the lot. For these reasons the church needs to apply for a variance. The church was not seeking action from the neighborhood at this time as it is waiting to hear from HPC first. The rationale behind the project is to provide total church access to older members who are wheelchair bound and one 16-year-old who recently broke his neck. At this time, these members are being carried in their chairs up the stairs into the sanctuary.

CI Motion 1: The Community Issues Committee supports a certificate of appropriateness for the installation of a handicap ramp on the western side of Calvary Church at 2608 Blaisdell Ave. **Motion carried:** 33 -0- 2

CI Motion 2: The Community Issues Committee supports a variance to allow cars to back into 26th St from the west side parking lot at Calvary Church 2608 Blaisdell.

Motion carried: 34-0- 4

Lake Wine and Cheese- Behn Le- 404 W. Lake St.

Bihn Le presented his plan for Lake Wine and Cheese specialty shop. He showed pictures of the building that he is purchasing to house the wine and cheese store. He is working with architect Robert Roscoe, who has served on Minneapolis' Historic Preservation Commission, to maintain the integrity of the building. Le gave a brief review of his background working with off sale Liquor stores in St. Paul's Dayton's bluff and other neighborhoods. Le had invited Tim Herman who has a small business in Dayton's Bluff and is also the founder of the Dayton's Bluff Business Association. Herman spoke of how Le had purchased an old janitorial supply company and turned it around by improving exterior lighting, adding flowers and renovating the building. He also said that Le has been an active member in the development and contributes to the well being of the community. Dave Quasant from St. Paul Police Department

on the East Side spoke highly of Le and his business. He said that Le had partnered with the neighborhood and police to maintain safety and welfare of the area.

The building on Lake St is a one-story, 1950's typical brick storefront. The store will include modern elements of larger windows, awnings and storefront lighting. It will also have some high-end features of trellises, chandeliers and plants in front of the store like Surdyks or France 44's design. The traffic will flow from Lake St to a parking lot that has 10 spaces on the west side of building. There is a 17-foot space behind the building that would be adequate for delivery trucks' entrance from the alley. Le has no plans to place marketing signs or posters on the storefront windows. Le is hoping to sell 90% wine and cheese but will be applying for a full liquor license to include sale of spirits, wine and beer. Phase II of the project will include a rooftop dining area for private wine-tasting and other social gatherings for the store club members. Le was seeking the neighborhood's support and suggestions.

Attendees Comments and Questions: How will voting for previous CUP from Loon Express affect the Wine and Cheese shop? The neighborhood is allowed to support as many CUP's as they would like, it will only become an issue at the city level when they apply for a liquor license. Le said that they have submitted their liquor license application along with their CUP to the city. He also said that the other liquor CUP applicant has not submitted their liquor license to the city. A liquor-license application approval will supersede the approval of a CUP.

CI Motion 3: The Community Issues Committee supports a Conditional Use Permit for off sale liquor at the proposed Lake Wine and Cheese Shop at 404 W. Lake St. **Motion Carried.** 36-3-4

Salem Church- Brighton Development- Peggy Lucas, LHG Architects

Peggy Lucas, Jesse Osendorf and Alex from Brighton Development and LHB Architects presented the Salem Church proposed development. Peggy gave a brief history of the project. She said that the presentatui will focus on the need to move forward with the city requirements rather than the design due to timing for their applicatons. Previously Salem and Lyndale UCC Church have come together as two congregations. In the fall of 2007 Brighton Development was asked to be the developer of the Salem site. Brighton is proposing to save the limestone portions of the 1904 church. They are proposing four-story mixed-use building with 61 housing units that include 30 one-bedroom and 31 two-bedroom rentals. The existing church currently has 3 additions that were added in 1938, 1953 and 1963. Brighton is proposing to demolish the garage, the 1938 and 1968 additions. The mixed-use structure will have street access from 28th and Lyndale, all the commercial units of the site will be facing Lyndale. The housing entrance will be on 28th street. The height, number of units and parking has been reduced from previous meeting. They also plan to set the building further back from alley and Lyndale due to more space and scaling down of building. They will be creating a new accessible entrance to the church with a green meeting space on the outside. They also plan on saving the limestone structure of church. The housing proposal will add French balconies along Lyndale and other balconies on 28th. Brighton has made a change in the building materials to a brick terra cotta that matches the roof of the church and brick that matches the limestone. Peggy said the timing on the project is critical, with each winter that passes the existing crack in the church's limestone expands thus jeopardizing the structure of the church. The commercial storefront access is primarily off of Lyndale, but will have a service, parking and access from the back. Brighton would like to target small business owner as tenants. The building will have off street parking with 48 parking stalls, 8 for the church and 40 for commercial. The residential parking will be composed of 51 underground parking spaces. The street level will have some community and service rooms for the rental and 9000 sqft of retail. The retail will have multiple glass storefronts but is flexible. Garbage removal will be in the back of the lot. The development will have the same look on the back as the front—no shortcuts.

Jen Nagel from Salem Church said that the each church has about 60 congregation members (120 total). The current church is 54 feet high and the proposed mixed-use building will be not be higher than 50 feet. Brighton conducted shadow study per city requirement. They presented a review of the shadow study for proposed conditions and current conditions. Study shows that current shadows would not change much in summer from existing conditions with the construction of a new building but will make a difference in winter where it will shade and block the light to the houses across the alley earlier in the day. The new development does not include home ownership component for dwellings due to lack of ability to obtain financing for ownership project.

Attendees Comments and Questions: Erica stated that the rents proposed are at the current rate for affordable housing and would like to request that the building rental rates continue to rise to keep up with the neighborhood and city market rates and that they do not get locked into a contract for affordable housing for 30 plus years. Peggy responded that they will most likely stay as designated affordable. Questions were asked about the proposed geo-thermal and the solar panels. It is unclear which might be used until they know what is under the surface. A request was made to discuss the design of the building since it was a very contentious issue at the June presentation. Peggy responded that it had been reduced by a story and that balconies were added and the rhythm of the windows had been changed. How will the pedestrian use of Lyndale be reinforced if the parking is on the backside and there is access to the retail from the backside? The neighborhood would also like to have some kind of green space between the alley that separates the

residential and the new development. There has been no decision on height requirements of shrubbery or green space; Brighton will seek neighborhood opinion on this. The Historic preservation Commission has required them to make application and review the demolition request for the additions to the original church. The HPC public hearing is Tuesday, July 21.

CI Motion 4: The Community Issues Committee supports the certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of the 1938 & 1960 additions to Salem English Lutheran Church at 610 W. 28th St. **Motion carried.** 28-11 -2

CI Motion 5: The Community Issues Committee supports the site plan for Salem English Lutheran Church at 610 W. 28th St. **Motion carried.** 36-0-6

CI Motion 6: The Community Issues Committee supports a FAR (floor area ratio) variance request for Salem Church at 610 W. 28th St. **Motion carried.** 40-0-1

Discussion prior to the vote an explanation was given on FAR: R2B zoning, the current zoning, only allows church to build on half the site. This type of zoning was originally designed to prevent residential areas from becoming too dense. Most churches do not meet the FAR since they are usually quite spacious and also are built to nearly the lot line.

CI Motion 7: The Community Issues Committee support variance request to exceed maximum space zoning for Salem Church at 610 W. 28th St. **Motion carried.** 37-1-1 (*current building expands on total lot*)

CI Motion 8: The Community Issues Committee supports the site plan of the proposed mixed-use building at the NE corner of 28th St & Lyndale. **Motion carried.** 22-15-4

Discussion prior to the vote sighted the 2-way curb cut at 28th St as a problem. The traffic from Salem is 2-way onto 28th and the traffic from the Loon Express is also 2-ways onto 28th which will create a hazardous situation. It was suggested limiting traffic from Salem to one-way onto 28h. There is lack of information provided regarding the design, undecided use of materials and landscaping. How will garbage be serviced? Concerns that it will be busy and loud with delivery trucks for the retail stores. Will there be access to the alley from the parking lot? No, only small access near the Church dumpster area.

CI Motion 9: The Community Issues Committee supports a variance exceeding the allowable percentage of compact parking spaces at the proposed mixed-use development at the NE corner of 28th and Lyndale. **Motion carried.** 27- 9-2

Discussion: The proposal is to have 35 spaces designated compact; city allows 25% and they want 33% which is higher than currently allowed because they think that in future more people will have smaller cars. Some people felt that there will be more demand for parking than is being made available for the retail and the housing. Brighton claims that people who will live there will have no more than one car, but the neighborhood disagreed. The Church will also be using the same parking spaces. Brighton's parking plan is based on the hope that the residents will not have too many cars. Peggy said she thought that there would be less demand for parking by the residents and that there will be an agreement with the Church and retail about usage of the parking during Sunday services since they think that retail will not be open on Sunday but since they have no knowledge of who will rent it, it is only a guess. Both Jen and Peggy agreed that although this is the intention it is hard to get such a commitment. How about other church programs at other times of the week?

CI Motion 10: The Community Issues Committee supports the Conditional Use Permit for 61 housing units at the proposed mixed-use development at the NE corner of 28th and Lyndale Ave. **Motion carried.** 24-11- 4

Discussion: Where will the children play? There will be families in the building and there is no green space for them. Jim Baker quoted the Met Council affordable housing target market and emphasized that the project will be dense. It is almost certain that the parking will overflow on to Garfield. There is no guest parking. The project doesn't meet the goals of the neighborhood to have home ownership. The added rental is too much for an area already full of rental units.

CI Motion 11: The Community Issues supports the rezoning request from R2B to C2 for the proposed mixed-use development at the NE corner of 28th St & Lyndale. **Motion carried** 24-12- 2.

Discussion: Peggy was asked for a clarification on the C1 & C2 zoning but claimed not to know the difference. She said that they would like the most flexible zoning and that their consultant for the retail suggested C2. It was also suggested that their City Planner suggested C2. There was a question as to whether the zoning would allow for money exchanges and pawn shops. CM Lilligren said that in order for money exchanges or pawn shops Brighton would have to apply for a higher zoning such as a C3 or C4. He thought that money exchanges and pawn shops were limited to C4

CI Motion 12: The Community Issues Committee moves to invite Brighton Developers back to a community meeting to continue discussion the design, architectural details, materials and safety issues of the proposed development at the NE corner of 28th St and Lyndale. **Motion carried.**

OLD / NEW BUSINESS (there was none offered).

Meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Becky Neamy, Community Organizer, Whittier Alliance

Next meeting: Monday August 10th, 6 pm, at 1st Minneapolis Seventh Day Adventist Church, 24th and Nicollet.