

**Whittier Alliance-Community Issues Committee-  
DRAFT MINUTES**

**Monday February 8, 2010 Whittier Elementary School**

**Attendees:** Maurice Battle, Andrew Cox, Anthony Carchedi, David Bagley, Abou Amara Jr., Laura Jean, David Scroth, CM Lilligren, Taryn Runck, Clarence Sasse, Nadia Abramson, Linda Bernin, David Scroth, Erin Sjoquist, Kurt Nelson, Timothy LaPean, Erica Christ, Mike Meland, R. Delroy Calhoun, Lisa Vecoli. **Presenters:** Anita Tabb (4<sup>th</sup> District Park Rep), Bill Dalin, Chelsea Adams (5<sup>th</sup> Precinct), Darrell Washington (Whittier International School PTA Member) **Staff:** Marian Biehn, Becky Neamy, Jessica Rosenberg

Call to order at 6:10 by Maurice Battle, board member, who is guest chairing this meeting, and who noted the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. A **motion** to approve the agenda **carried**. The previous month's minutes were presented and **motion to approve** the Jan 11, 2010 CI minutes **carried**.

**Announcements and Community Comments**

**Comments/Topics from Whittier Residents** – Are we going over the n'hood design standards? MB just got updated version, will take comments on last draft, and we can discuss at next meeting. **Annual Meeting – April 8- Board Candidates, Good N'bor/Biz-** The Whittier N'hood Annual Meeting will be Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. We will recognize 3 good neighbors and 3 good businesses, please pick up nomination forms. We have openings on the WA Board of Directors, and nomination applications at the front. If you are interested in n'hood concerns and want to get more involved, please pick up an application and contact the WA. Tell your friends and neighbors, and come to the Annual meeting to meet organizations, hear about the work of the Whittier Alliance, and elect board representatives. **Historic Guideline Advisory Group – interested volunteers** – The historic context study is on the WA website. It goes over all of the historic buildings in n'hood, both social and architectural historical assets, from homes, apartment buildings, institutions and businesses. We are developing guidelines for rehabbing historic homes, and will have a low-interest loan attached. We're looking for volunteers to be on the task force, to turn the historic guidelines into rehab guidelines. **Dog Days of Whittier-** Bring your friends, family, and pups for food and fun. We'll have awards for best dog outfit and best dog trick. Saturday February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1-3, Washburn Fair Oaks Park (24<sup>th</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>) **5<sup>th</sup> Precinct report – Safe Specialist Chelsea Adams-** Crimes have moved to Wednesday since last year. N'hood prevention plan: 2009 2.6% decrease in crime in almost every category. One common concern in Whittier is robbery. The best prevention is to keep to well lit streets, look confident. Car break-ins are usually for visible items in cars: GPS, cell phones, purses. We've had some first floor of apt break ins. Even in winter, lock your first floor windows. **Questions.** Erica asked about the amount of time spent arresting drunk people. Chelsea says we have a high number reported b/c we have beat officers at Franklin & Nicollet. There is a liquor task force involved in n'hood policing plan, they are trying to figure out what is bringing people to the area. What is illegal about this? You can't openly drink in public, if it isn't on your property. Could you address what strategies were used to decrease crime last year? Beat officers at Lyndale/Lake, Franklin/Nicollet. It was a quiet year in general. And people being better about locking doors, stuff out of cars. Anything we can do this year? With frequently stolen cars, use the Club! Keep valuables out of your car, out of site. Know your make, model, serial number of valuables, so you have a better chance of getting things back. In the spring, Chelsea can come by and talk to you about keeping your home or business safe. Best thing is to know your neighbors, know your block. For more on the n'hood policing plan, check out: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/outreach/docs/WhittierPolicingPlan2009.pdf>

**Bill Dalin- Environmental Pest Management Systems** Bill's been with EPMS for many years. Seen lots of changes in the bug world. Right now, bed bugs is the hot topic. They are Bill's nemeses. He doesn't hate them, because they provide a tremendous source of income for him. But we are facing an upsurge, and S Mpls has them. They have been here forever, had gone down. About 6 years ago, populations started rising. Mobile society, immigration from places with no or too much pest control. The bugs now are Superbugs, tougher. Basic thing: when you get bed bugs, you can live with them or eradicate. Best thing is to never get them. You can have the cleanest home in the world and still have bed bugs; all they need is a food source. The human body is the food source. Then they will go lay eggs,

usually close to where we spend time stationary: couches and beds and chairs. Killing bedbugs isn't the problem. Getting people to report it is the problem. People are trying to self-medicate, and bugs spread. How we get them in our homes? Furniture, clothing, mattresses, people. People call with the bites, then you look around the house for eggs, nips. EPMS uses one kind of chemical, doesn't effect people. Other methods include steam heat, raising a building temp to 140\* for a day, cryogenics, or carbon dioxide freezing. We have systems to kill them, we just have to find out where they're at. **Attendees Comments and Questions:** How many times does it take to eradicate? Usually 2, a week apart at a minimum. Is it expensive of landlord or tenant? Both. Some management companies have tenant pay for pest control. Usually landlord. Comes down to how they got in, which is nearly impossible to prove (prior tenant, public transport, etc) because all it takes is 1 bug. If a resident is told they have to pay for it, if they can't afford that and don't treat, leads to spreading. With multi-housing, EPM suggests preventative inspections. If you treat it, can they comeback? EPM lays down treatment that lasts 90-100 days. Effectiveness decreases after 3 weeks or so. If traveling to hotel/motel, you can blow hair dryer behind bed board, see if something crawls out. Bugs can live for up to a year without food. All levels of hotels have bed bugs. Don't use luggage wracks. **Vonnie Linnel City of Mpls Health Dept.** There are ordinances about pests. City gets complaints from city, is getting more complaints all the time. Not sure if they are calling the landlord first or not. City goes out, inspects. City issues order to landlord, holds landlord responsible for whole building. They have seen success with heat methods, but city doesn't recommend. Landlord has 15 days, has to provide proof of extermination (ex. copy of billing.) For more information, look up city ordinance (cockroach, or pest) on city website (Chp 244). With multiple units invested, it is the landlord's responsibility. **Questions.** What if it doesn't get resolved? The city can continue to order, fine, put them on a regular extermination program. How prevalent is bedbugs? We've seen roaches go way down, bed bugs up. What about properties owned by the city? Public housing is using heat. Lots of hotels are doing regular preventative treatments. Is there ever just one bed bug? If it is a female, you are infested. How do you know if it is female or not? We are unsure. They all look the same from the top.

### **Whittier School – Darrell Washington Whittier Resident and PTA Member**

Darrell is a parent who lives in Whittier. The n'hood put a lot of sweat, time, energy, emotion into having this school here. We fought for this school b/c kids were being sent all over Mpls to school. Gave a lot of NRP dollars to build the school and gym. The school struggled. A principal decided to make it better, make it rigorous, and got it International Baccalaureate accredited (only accredited IB elem in Mpls). Now the school is very popular (3<sup>rd</sup> most requested school) for rigor and diversity; has gone from 90% free and reduced lunch to 50%. School board has decided to make it a magnet school, not a n'hood school. This makes it so that Whittier residents will not have a preference here. This school is one of the n'hood assets we have, and should provide access for n'hood families and youth. Darrell would like motion: because of both financial and community support, Whittier residents should have some preference in getting to attend Whittier school. Whittier School has 105 openings for 4 kindergarten classes, and some openings 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. One idea is to have 10, 15, or 20% of spots reserved for Whittier residents. Darrell has been trying to get data on how many students at Whittier school live in the n'hood, but addresses are private, or we need someone from the school district to get that information. **Comments and questions.** This is a great idea, is this time sensitive? Do we have time to get data? 2010-2011 choice cards are already in, so it is done for next year. This fall it will be magnet, with no pref for the n'hood. Is there a precedent for this? This might be something new. We've actually put \$ in. Is it the school board that makes this decision? And how do we make a difference? We make a motion it will be listened to more because we are a group of n'hood residents. The community school for n'hood is Jefferson: 26<sup>th</sup> and Hennepin. In 2009 it was 20% Whittier residents. Families who don't or can't get their cards in, miss out, would miss out more if this becomes all magnet. Would this be a quota or a threshold? At least 20%. And if people don't choose it (in school choice process, due 1/30), then school board can fill it with other people. Making a motion now would not preclude us from making a motion later with data. Yes, Darrell will come next month with more data. Erin is hoping for something sent something out electronically, so we can use it to get more people to come. Do we want to make a motion now? Send it to the board? Could

the board develop a committee? Whatever motions we make get sent to the board, but not sure there is enough to make a board task force.

**CI Motion 1:** The CI Committee asks that the staff of WA to assist Darrell getting research needed and working with the school board or city staff to address the issue of reserving spaces for Whittier residents in the Whittier Community School. **Motion Passes 13-0-0.**

**Anita Tabb- 4<sup>th</sup> District Park Rep** Anita Tabb is the new district 4 park rep. To continue bug theme: **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** is going to be real bad. There is no known cure and 38,000 (20%) of our urban forest trees are ash trees. Where are they? We know they are in St. Paul, so eastern Mpls is a bigger concern than Whittier and other west areas. We can't eradicate, but we're looking to mitigate them. Parks got a grant for \$100,000 to replace 350-450 trees, in addition to what they do yearly. Taking down ash trees and replanting (water your new trees!). Are going to start east (Seward, Hiawatha, Lowe) and move west. What will they replace ash trees with? A variety, not one kind of tree, of disease resistance trees. If I have an ash tree on my property? You can wait. City will take it down and charge you, or you can take it down. Does Ash bore get underneath bark? Yes, not for firewood. Its just Emerald Ash (white, green, and black), Mountain Ash trees are not vulnerable to the disease. Is there any aid from the federal level? Anita doesn't know of any, we're usually pretty good at looking for that. **China Friendship Garden.** The China Friendship Garden Society wants to donate a Chinese Garden to City of Mpls, as part of a sister city relationship. One pick is a piece of Washburn Fair Oaks Park, appropriate topography. They want to donate it and provide \$ for maintenance. Before we come to citizens, we want to work with them to see if it is financially viable. Then it goes to the park board to say, would you do this, if citizens want it. If yes, come to citizens. If there is interest, committee of stakeholders: residents, businesses, etc, work on it. If that were approved, then we'd get a China Friendship Garden. There needs to be buy-in. CM Lilligren: There has been a fair amount of discussion. They have come looking for support. There is some n'hood support to go forward to discuss, but what we need is someone to steward it. Good to see AT here talking about it. Anita hopes it can be resolved quickly. Are there any partnerships or discussion with MIA? Lisa Vecoli (MIA staff and Board of Directors) came to address this. MIA sits on park property, park across the street is separate land. We don't actively program that park, do get permits and do things there, same as other people. Some people would like to see MIA do more in the park, some don't want them to use it as their front yard. Delicate balance: b/c it is their front yard, and can do things that help people engage, bring people in, bring things for residents. But it isn't their park.

With the China Friendship Garden, they have stayed on sidelines, to give chance for community to have discussion with park board. Resident noted that MIA has an outstanding Chinese Art collection, potential for nice synergy. Lisa agrees, but sees success only if everyone feels it belongs to the n'hood. MIA is waiting for sense of community to see if it works from the ground up.

Darrell feels some frustration: we should be working together to make things happen. Lisa welcomes that discussion, but the sense was the best way for it not to happen was for MIA to plow through. CM Lilligren has heard a range of feelings in the community, plenty feel that the park should be left the way it is. And then others feel this would be good. Some issues of concern (a wall, a water feature) we've seen the group respond to, be willing to change. Anita wants to make sure whatever happens in southeast corner, there has to be benefit and investment in full park: lighting and security. Not just development in that corner. Has heard that if someone finds money for one section, parks could find some money for the rest. They welcome input from the n'hood. One model to check out: Walker and Loring Park. **Target Field:** Grants for redoing fields. There are none in district 4, but it could happen next. 25<sup>th</sup> and Clinton? They'll look at field use, i.e. if there is a baseball diamond and people are playing soccer. We'll try to get on some lists for field rehab. **Community Service Areas:** some parks don't have enough people to field a team. Several rec centers are part of larger comm. service area for joint programming. Whittier is part of Lakes East CSA, which also includes Loring, Painter, Bryant Square, Clinton Sculpture Garden, Parade, Stevens Square, Mueller. Rec centers have buses to transport people. With basketball in one place, soccer in another, it is possible to field an entire team easier. **Resident Comments & Questions:** Darrell mentions the challenges between park and school, maybe pulling community thing out of school, moving

it elsewhere. School staff and park board staff trying to work it out, hasn't gone anywhere, is bubbling up. PTA parents are holding off from bombarding park board public, until hopefully staff can work it out. Other groups can't meet downstairs in park building, which shouldn't be. Blinds are pulled, people can't get in. AT was aware there were timing issues, wants to set up a meeting. Call Anita, talk to her so she can write things down and look into it. Icy sidewalks around parks? Email Anita if you see it, they've been working hard if they know. Anyone at park board looking at Winter Crow Roost? Other cities are capitalizing on it. AT hasn't heard of anything. Contact Anita with any other questions at 612-230-6443 Ext. 4, [atabb@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:atabb@minneapolisparcs.org)

**Old / New Business:** Announcement from Center of Light, corner of Pleasant and 26<sup>th</sup>. They are moving two houses down, and are having an open house for new property. Free day of community fun, free yoga, guided meditation, healthy lunch, conscious movie.

Darrell mentions park board is reducing staff at underused parks. Is there any idea of park building going to school or diff owner? In 30 yrs, he's seen park underused. CM Lilligren has seen lots of organizing on east side about this issue. There are unusually fewer children in Whittier, more in Phillips, so fewer people dealing with this equity of service idea. Some feel the community service areas re wicking programs away from core city area, ex. Peavy Park building shut down. There are age concerns at Whittier park. Delroy, in his work with youth and schools, sees high school students know Whittier gym is only place to go in walking distance, becomes an issue for parents of younger kids. Park board and school board aren't good neighbors, don't share. When we got the school started here, MCBA helped get it organized, was supposed to be partnership, but it happened top level, not at staff level. Now they address different communities.

**Meeting adjourned:** 8:21pm

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

**Next meeting:** Monday, March 8th, 6 pm, the Whittier Elementary School