

Whittier Alliance-Community Issues Committee- DRAFT MINUTES
Monday April 12, 2010 Whittier Elementary School

Attendees: David W. Schroth, Cynthia Wong, Jerry Rudkin, Jesse Oyervides, Mohamed Ali, Josh Dibley, , Darrell Washington , Nora Novic, Nimco Ahmed, Leo Whitebird, Brad Johnson, Larry Ludeman, Lisa Owens, Chelsea Adams, Rochelle Woldorsky, Tom Bissen, Anthony Carchedi, Laura Jean, Shirley Bernu, Mike Tupper, Shannon Tupper, Robert Nogler, Steven Stodolka, David Bagley, Erin Sjoquist, Raymond Hoffman

Presenters: Ross Lumley (2509 Clinton), Dean Duvolis (Sabri Properties, DJR Architects), Bob Speeter (Sabri Properties), Myrna Orenstein (Murals), Chelsea Adams (5th Precinct),

Staff: Marian Biehn, Becky Neamy

Call to order at 6:17 by Maurice Battle Board Member, who noted the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. An addition was made to include an announcement for the May Day Soiree. A motion to **approve the agenda** was made and carried. Time was given for attendees to review the previous month's minutes. Chelsea Adams found an error in the block club training time. It is on April 21st from 6:30-8 pm, not 6- 8 pm as written. A **motion to approve** the March CI meeting minutes with the correction **carried**.

Announcements and Community Comments

Josh Dibley said that there was a group of residents who were interested in starting a new **community garden** in Whittier and were trying to partner with the University of Minnesota. For more information, people are invited to attend the planning meeting that they will be having at Common Roots Café on April 16, at 5:30. Jesse Oyervides commented that the Police Department has been doing an excellent job maintaining **traffic** and controlling other violations around **Karmel Square**.

5th precinct Report- Safe Specialist Chelsea Adams introduced herself and the new sector Lieutenant Tony Diaz. She handed out the newly updated list for police contacts. She explained that the neighborhood has 2 officers in the day and 2 officers at night. The Precinct is having an **open house for the 5th precinct on May 13th at 7 pm**. The event is a free, fun day for families that will have a variety of departments and information. Block **club leader training** on April 28th located at the precinct. This is a great opportunity for those who are interested in becoming block clubs leaders/ contacts and co-contacts. If you are interested but can not attend training you may schedule an appointment with Chelsea can do one-on-one trainings. **Annual meeting report-** Marian provided a recap of Whittier Alliance Annual Meeting: the yearly activities the 2009 financial status, and the newly elected board members, and the good neighbor/ good business winners. Information and the Annual report is posted on the Whittier Alliance website for review. **Election of CI chair-** Marian spoke about the election process that needs to happen after each annual meeting for the election of the committee chairs. Marian reviewed the job description of the Community Issues Chair and times, and then opened the floor for nominations. Laura Jean nominated Maurice Battle, Tom seconded. Maurice has been on board for the past 2 years, and is the pastor at the church on 24th and Nicollet. **Motion passed and carried to elect Maurice Battle as the 2010 CI Chair.**

MCAD Storefront project- April 24th Open House-

The Whittier Alliance is working with MCAD to put store front décor along Nicollet to make it look more decorative and give diversion to our vacant store fronts. As storefronts become rented, the window dressing will be able to be moved and relocated to another location. The Open House for the Storefront Project is Sat. April 24 3-6pm at 2600 Nicollet. On Friday the April 16, MCAD students will be having an exhibition to display works from recent graduates.

This event is open and free to public in open space in Eat Street Flats next to CVS. **Formation of Task force-** Darrell Washington, resident and PTA member, reviewed the history of park board, school, and NRP funds for the creation of the community center and gym. He is looking to create a facilities use agreement for buildings. He would like to create task force with neighborhood as a partner with the Park and School to shape the faculties agreement. An official agreement was never created. Darrel would like to recruit 3 people from neighborhood, 3 people from park, 3 people from school. The task force is looking to have a final agreement in place by August. Not looking to have more than 3 meetings over the summer.

CI Motion 1: The CI Committee supports the creation of a neighborhood task force to work with Mpls & Whittier Elementary School and the Mpls and Whittier Park and Recreation Center to develop a facilities agreement for the use of the community center. **Motion Passes 16-0-0**

Whittier Elementary School enrollment-

When the Whittier school was built it was a community school. The school is now IB (international baccalaureate) and has become very popular with a waiting list. Kids who are attending are coming from other neighborhoods and there is the concern that there will be no spaces available for Whittier kids when they want to enroll. Darrell is working with School Board Member Carla Bates to learn how many kids were enrolled from the neighborhood prior to the school becoming magnet. The school used to be 80% free lunch, now it is at 50% free lunch. They changed from community school last year to magnet school, no longer community centered. He would eventually like to start an additional task force for this issue.

May Day Soirée- Marian provided information on the upcoming Whittier Alliance annual benefit. on May 6. **Earth Day Clean Up** – Becky shared information about the neighborhood clean up on April 24th, from 10-2 and will have food provided from Calvary Church.

Inn at Karmel-2910 Pillsbury-Dean Duvolis & Robert Speeter

DJR Architects presented the plan for the 77 unit hotel, on top of Karmel Plaza. They will present at the city planning commission April 21. The hotel will be similar to the hotel built on top of Sears building on Lake St. The hotel will be managed by a corporate hospitality company, such as Hilton or Holiday Inn. All the components are currently in compliance with parking and zoning. There is a demand for hotels in South Minneapolis, which this hotel will fill. **Attendees Comments and Questions:** Will extend beyond existing area or in to Walgreens lot? No, will only use in current Karmel space. Is parking really in place? There seems to be no parking at this point. Currently Karmel Plaza has a one-story underground parking that is being under utilized. Will flip entrance to Pleasant side so that we can use it ramp will have two lanes so that the can exit and enter under Karmel plaza. How many spaces are in this underground space? There are 92 spaces. For a hotel the city requires 1 space for every 3 rooms. The hotel will be built to code. The city recommends use of valet during the peak times. What kind of traffic study was created before Karmel Plaza was built?? They were unsure, and thought that one may not have been required. Is there a banquet room in the plans?? If so what are the sizes? There is a breakfast room that will be about 1,500 -2,000 square feet. With a room that size it could ultimately be used the for a banquet hall. This will only serve as a breakfast room, with a limitation of 60 people with 1 meeting room for less than 100 people. Are the current underground spaces being used? Were they being used during the study? Is there a charge to use the lot? Yes, there were being partially used during the study and yes there is a charge. From 3-6 pm the range of use is typically 30-50 spaces. The current parking situation on Pleasant is double and triple parking, and Karmel is trying to work with 5th precinct to curb those bad habits.

Flipping the entrance to the parking lot is a good idea, has been talked about for a long time and could have been done a long time ago. If the parking and traffic is enforced at the request of Sabri property, it should not be blamed on the n'hood as it has in the past. Is there any franchise agreement with a franchise for the hotel? It would be premature to have a franchise agreement, until the land use approval passes through. When will RFP go out for franchise? After the land use has passed. What type of clientele will this property bring due? What is the specific price point? Target clientele will be similar to Hilton Garden Inn or Holiday Inn. It seems a bit irregular that you are presenting a plan for a business with out having a partner to with, prior to the construction. Why? The hotel partner may have own ideas on how to do things. Could the hotel be flipped into an apartment if it was not approved for a hotel? No, it cannot, it would not fall under correct zoning. Sabri had hoped to originally do condos but could not due to the economy. Is there really a surplus of parking? Yes. If so then why are they going into the Park Square lot? This is why we will be flipping the entrance Pleasant side. Were will the valet take the additional cars? Miller Towing- they have space. Do you have a signed agreement? No. I do not need to answer that I am just presenting. How late will the community room be open? That is regulated by zoning, information is located in public statement. What effect will the construction have on traffic and parking? It is being built on top and will not affect the parking or traffic. Are you going to come back to the neighborhood after the meeting with the city? No, us presenting this is a courtesy to you. How long will construction last? 6-9 months. What is the BZZ number for the Planning Dept? 4646. It seems a bit irregular that you are presenting a plan for a business with out having a partner to with, prior to the construction. Why? The partner may have own ideas on how to do things.

CI Motion 2: The CI Committee moves to deny any further development on the Karmel plaza at 2910 Pillsbury Ave and to remove the 3rd floor that already exists. **Motion Passes 17-2-0**

2509 Clinton Ave- Ross Lumley

Mr. Lumley is seeking a certificate of appropriateness from HPC for window replacement and deck reconstruction on 2509 Clinton. In its current condition the deck is dilapidated and has some dry rot. Design will not change with the reconstruction. The windows will be replaced with wood interior and vinyl exterior, from windsorwindow.com. They are sash insert windows with wood storms. He is currently working with construction person who is has worked with HPC, prior. **Attendees Comments and Questions:** Are you going to replace the decorative overhang and porch roof? Are they going to be replaced exactly as is now? Yes and yes. Are you living there now? Right is it uninhabitable, but plans on living in it when rehabbed. He currently lives at 22nd and Grand. The plans show a change in the interior stair case, are you planning to change it? Ross would like to keep it the same. The exterior construction will be have wood lap siding. Are you going to replace brick or paint? He plans on painting only. Plans page A2 and A3 are not consistent, it looks like there is no interior entrance which looks like an efficiency. There is no plans to make efficiency, it is a bedroom with now exterior entrance. How long has this unit sat vacant? Since 2004. Will the city require you to update the whole building and put sprinkler in since it has been with out a rental license for over a year? No.

CI Motion 3: The CI Committee moves to support the Heritage Preservation Commission certificate of appropriateness for 2509 Clinton Ave. **Motion Passes 12-0-2**

2833 Lyndale- The Murals – Myrna Orenstein

The Murals are requesting to have signs on non primary walls, to minimize adverse affects of clutter on nearby property. The request for signage is for murals offices and retail identification, along with artistic enhancements. They will place a sign on the north wall to see where the rental office is and where to turn in. They want to have sign that is on north side of building as current sign can not be seen in the winter or when there are leaves on the trees. These will be permanent signs, however, the sign on the Garfield building will be a banner (not metal). They said the feel that people can't find the entrance to the Mural.

Attendees Comments and Questions: Will they have two signs on Greenway side? Yes, they will face the greenway on two separate levels. There were some issues with when the Murals first opened with Tiger Sushi placing sandwich boards on the greenway which was in violation of the City. What is the size of the sign facing the Greenway? 32 square feet a 4x8, and 80 square feet 8x10, this is in code with city regulations. The code says signage can only be on primary walls. Variance is for location of signs to not be on primary walls, which is Lyndale side. The only illuminated sign will be the Lyndale side. Are there other buildings with signs on the greenway? Not quite sure. What is the main purpose of the signs, advertising or building identification—it looks like hotel signage? Building identification.

CI Motion 4: The CI Committee denies the request by the Murals at 2833 Lyndale for a signage variance on the Greenway (Sign #2) south facing retaining wall. **Motion Passes 9-5-0**

CI Motion 5: The CI Committee denies the request by the Murals at 2833 Lyndale for a signage variance for a permanent banner sign (#3) on south facing wall of the Garfield Ave units.

Motion Passes 9-4-0

CI Motion 6: The CI Committee supports the request by the Murals at 2833 Lyndale for a signage variance for placement of an illuminated sign on the north facing wall.. **Motion Passes 14-1-0**

Old / New Business Rex Hardware 2601 Lyndale was saved from demo last fall because there was enough information that it had historic value and the Whittier Preservation Context Study was being done. Heritage Preservation Commission did a designation study and it is coming before HPC on April 20th It is being recommended for preservation. Staff reports are available as to why the building should be preserved. HPC is seeking that the neighborhood takes a position on the preservation.

CI Motion 7: The Community Issues Committee supports the finding of the preservation designations study for the Rex Hardware building at 2601 Lyndale and supports the HPC staff recommendation for historical designation of the building. **Motion carried.**

CI Motion 8: The CI Committee moves a vote of no confidence in the developer of Karmel plaza. Motion seconded and carried.

Meeting adjourned: 8:28pm

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

Next meeting: Monday, May 10th, 6 pm, the Whittier Elementary School