

# Whittier Alliance Community Issues Committee Meetings- DRAFT MINUTES

Monday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, First Christian Church

**Attendees:** Chelsea Adams, David Anderson, Eric Bruce, Mary Cable, Erica Christ, Insp. Matt Clark, Ryan Dean, Geoff Dittberner, John Dundie, Brian Hoffman, Pahoua Hoffman, Paula Horan, Justin Kader, Willow Kreibich, Councilman Robert Lilligren, Paul Livadahl, Bruce Lundeen, Andrea Marcias, Greg Martin, Linda Martin, Jeff Nelson, Ben Ptacek, Felino de la Peña, Chris Popowski, Gida Rios, Justin Russell, Hockley Sarir, Scott Smith, Adrian St Francis, Daphna Stromberg, Andy Urness, Dan Weaver, Paul Wharton, Rochelle Woldorsky

**Presenters:** Laura Boyd, Allan Henden, Mark Krogh, Peggy Lucas, Lara Norkus-Crampton, Don Portwood

**Staff:** Marian Biehn, Jen Wendland

Call to order at 6:13 by Marian Biehn who noted the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. A **motion** to approve the agenda as presented was made, and **carried**. The June 13, CI minutes were reviewed and a **motion** to approve **Carried**. Introductions were made.

## Announcements and Community Comments

### **5<sup>th</sup> Precinct report—CPS Chelsea Adams & Insp. Matt Clark**

NNO is Tuesday Aug. 2 and deadlines are for registering a block party are approaching. Graffiti prevention information is online. Matt Clark—911 response times vary based on the severity of the crime. Regarding getting an officer's attention, squads may not be available to just stop if flagged down if they are on a call. Even if you have been waiting for a while and see one go by, it may be they are responding to a higher priority call. As calls come in, they are prioritized based on public safety. If ever there is an attitude with police officers or you feel something wasn't handled correctly, please call Insp Clark or Chelsea and let them know.

There has been only one homicide in the 5<sup>th</sup> precinct in the last year. The incident was isolated and just happened to occur outside of Gangchen—there doesn't seem to be any connection to the restaurant.

Uptown Robberies—Boyce, the one who did most of the assaulting, just pleaded guilty to 72 months for the one incident in Whittier. There is hope he will plead to the others. The other individual is expected to plea soon.

**Theater in the Park: Minneapolis Police Band**—Thursday, 7pm in Whittier Park. It's free and open to the public.

**Bridging Minneapolis:** Aug 13. This event is commemorating the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian bridge as a liaison between Phillips and Whittier. This will be a community building and community beautification event. Volunteers are needed for the event.

**Free Passes:** The Whittier Alliance has free passes to the **Hennepin History Museum** and also to **Vertical Endeavors**: Whittier Alliance also has free passes for the one opening here in the fall. Fliers were distributed with Whittier summer events and a reminder to check our website for more n'hood information as well as draft agendas and meeting minutes.

**Strategic Plan—Erica Christ:** The funding for the Alliance is shifting from NRP. There will be less outside funding and more uncertainty. The strategic plan is an effort to try to figure out where we will go in the future and how we want to focus the funds. The Strategic Planning started over a year ago. This spring, there was a survey and focus group sessions. From this, 6 focus areas/goals came about: environmental sustainability, commercial corridor (Nicollet), historic preservation, organizational sustainability, housing, stakeholder engagement. Once goals and sub-goals are established, the working document will be posted online and presented in future meetings. Since there is no City or public funding for this SP, there is no need to get City approval. But we do want City buy-in so it will be presented to the City.

**35W Access Plan-David Bagley PAC Whittier Rep:** Discussions/meetings are being held regarding the 35W/Lake St access –what a transit stop will look like, the number of lanes, ramps, etc. Everything is still in the very early stages of planning. At the moment, the idea is to replicate the transit station at 46<sup>th</sup>. There are many things to be taken into account in this process: cars, transit and access to the Greenway, properties along the highway, flow of traffic, and much more. This is something that should be lodged into current neighborhood awareness. This will have a major impact on the neighborhood, whether good or bad. Meetings are held monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday. If you have questions, email Marian at the office and she will pass them on. The meetings are held at Christo del Rey school, at 4<sup>th</sup> on the Greenway. They do tend to move around on occasion so check before going. The process is marching on in such a way at the moment that it is very unclear how much has been decided and how much has not been decided. The more heard from the neighborhood about what would be positive or negative the better. The size of that transit station will dictate how wide that space would be and how much of an impact there will be for the neighborhood as a whole and for the area around the intersection. At the moment, 8 lanes of Lake St traffic are being discussed.

### **Urban Bean—2401 Lyndale Ave S. -Greg Martin**

Urban Bean has been working on building out the space for the past couple of months. The space was entirely gutted and is being redone. Outdoor seating has already been approved, which will increase the number of customers. There is another Urban Bean store in South Mpls but it is in a very residential area. The one on Lyndale is applying to have a Wine and Beer liquor license. There will also be a small menu of 5-8 options-no kitchen so the menu will be toaster-oven doable. The hours of operation are 6:30-midnight daily. Doors will be closing 2 hours earlier than what Muddy Waters had been closing. Bakery items will be provided by Turtle Bread and Rustica as well. They will keep their 1<sup>st</sup> location and open this one with n'hood employees. The seating inside and out is: 24 seats along the south wall, 8 bar seats. Outdoors, 8 seats on the Lyndale side, and twelve on the 24<sup>th</sup> St side. They are exploring ways to incorporate more outdoor seating. They are applying for a Class E Liquor license which means no entertainment, no hard liquor.

There will be 4-5 beers wines on the menu. It is anticipated that the wine and beer will be a compliment to the coffee shop not the driving force—it is a coffee shop, not a bar. They plan to open by Aug. 1. There will be a public hearing about the Class E Liquor license coming up and people within 300 feet will be notified. One person did email the WA office to comment on potential noise.

**CI Motion 1:** The Community Issues Committee moves to support a Class E liquor license for Urban Bean at 2401 Lyndale.  
**Motion Carried. 14-0-0**

**Salem English Lutheran Church/Greenleaf Housing-28<sup>th</sup> & Lyndale: Salem: Don Portwood, Paul Livadahl. Greenleaf: Brighton Development-Peggy Lucas and LHD Architects**

Greenleaf mixed use construction is coming along nicely. It was delayed by the weather and the goal is to have people moving in by late October/early November. There are 63 rental housing units. No rental applications are currently being accepted, but a list of interested individuals is growing. There are no tenants for the commercial space just yet. The commercial space is on grade on Lyndale and the housing wraps around to 24<sup>th</sup>. The Greenleaf is a separate development from the Church and will pay property taxes. Target dates for move in: November for the residents, maybe December for the commercial spaces

Salem Church: First Christian Church has become the 3<sup>rd</sup> partner in this project, having joined in February. When they came on board, the plans changed a little bit. This is a good partnership theologically as well as financially. Because of the financial capacity First Christian brought, the interior church space is able to be finished and some exterior work on the church can be done. There is an addition going on the west side of the church between the church and the apartment building that will become the new entrance. During the early winter, a lot of work was being done to stabilize the church and help hold everything in place. There is still a bowing in the north wall, but it is safe. A permanent solution within the church of concrete columns is holding things in place. More exterior work on walls and windows will take place after another month or two. There are three worshipping groups and three worship spaces, but no one is assigned to a specific location. The three churches will rotate through the spaces, sharing the common space. A pipe organ will be built where the original balcony was located. It will be coming from First Christian Church and installed in the sanctuary. The goal for actually using the space is late fall. Hoping for an opening service at Thanksgiving. In terms of sustainability, 3 congregations in 120,000 sq ft to 3 congregations in 16,000 sq ft. The original entrance on 28<sup>th</sup> was originally not going to be use after the renovations. But with the arrival of Christian things changed. It can be opened, but it won't be an entrance most of the time. It will still look like the original entrance. The 2 entrances on Garfield will be emergency exits only.

Part of the original issue with Salem was that the heating costs were syphoning all the cash out of the church. The h/c system is totally new but it is unknown what the operational costs will be. The lower level walls will also be insulated and fitted with new windows. In the upper levels, there is forced air heat. There are also heating and cooling zones allowing for temperature control. More insulation will be put into the attic as well. This building is being constructed/renovated to LEED Gold standards but it probably won't get certified as such as the application/approval fee is ball parked at \$100,000. There will also be a commercial kitchen with which we can feed the neighborhood instead of just holding potlucks.

Comment: How the church is being renovated and restored with 3 churches moving in is amazing and should be commended, especially with the reverence and respect for the history in the building. The n'hood really fought to save the original church and it is commendable how the congregations have made that happen. .

**Hennepin Energy Recovery Center**

City Council HEARING IS AUGUST 25<sup>TH</sup>.

HERC has been burning 1,000 tons of trash per day since the late 80s. They are requesting to increase the amount burned by 20% or 212 more tons per day. The last environmental impact study was done in 1986 before the burner was built. There has been no follow-up study since. Incineration turns a solid waste problem into an air pollution problem. HERC is the largest dioxin emitter in the state. About a year ago, the request to increase the amount burned was denied by the Planning Commission based on a lack of information on the impacts of the burning on the air quality and fallout. The data required still has not been submitted regarding the health impacts, 2yrs later. The study would request what the increase would do health-impact wise as well as what the impacts have already been. Additionally, it would require a study of the alternatives to burning. Half of what gets burned is recyclable. The question is burn more or recycles more. Right now, the contract allows for 1,000 tons to be burned a day, and even if the waste stream stopped from Minneapolis, it would come from somewhere else. It is coming from Minnetonka, St Louis Park, and other places already. They burn it, we breathe it. Trash incinerators are known to be dirtier than coal, emitting more dioxins. Studies across the country have prompted moratoriums on garbage burners because of the health effects and the desire to reach zero-waste. At this time, an increase in burning capacity does not seem to be the correct course of action. The Minnesota Nurses Association is not asking to shut it down—just asking that the capacity not increase in an effort to protect the health of the public. The Pollution Control Agency promotes incineration as an alternative to landfilling.

To operate the burner needs a conditional use permit within the current zoning. Covanta is a private company owns and operates the burner, but Hennepin County approves the contract, licensing, zoning, and also deals with the energy produced. However, the energy saved by increasing recycling will be more than that the energy produced by the burner. The Conditional Use Permit (CUP) required “finding” which can either support or contract the request for approval. The bottom line is that they have to produce the data for the findings that become a legal statement. This is a revenue generator for the City and a profit maker for Covanta. We are discussing where to put the trash, but the topic of discussion should be their dioxins produced—the most toxic manmade pollutant. There are only two ways to get rid of dioxin: pregnancy and breastfeeding, because the dioxin goes to the fetus and newborn baby. St Paul successfully fought a garbage burner. Check Neighbors Against the Burner online.

CM-Lilligren stated that this will come to the City Council on an appeal and will need to be approached by the council as a quasi-judicial matter, based on judgment of the record and the record alone. If there are strong feelings about this, get them into the record

in hearings or by forwarding information to City Hall, the Planning Dept, Kimberly Holein is the Planner. In order to prove that an increase won't harm the public, there has to be proof that the burner hasn't harmed the public. Ask for an EIS. Feel free to contact Lara. Marian has her email and the planner's email.

### **Ice House Development—Dean Duvolis and Mark Krogh**

Vertical Endeavors will open in the fall in the Ice House building. Most of the interior work is done. The development is on schedule—other new leases are planning on opening this fall as well. Roofs are going on this week. Tenants are working on their spaces. The apartments are done—13 1 bd and efficiency apts on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor as well as a 1500 sqft office space. Northeast Social Club will be known as Eat Street Social Club will be moving in. This is a chef-driven restaurant. Very creative menu.. They will be opening in the former Taco Morelos space. The area on the west will become an outdoor dining area with an outdoor grill. French doors will go on to the west wall. Bewitched on Washington signed the lease last month and they are going to call this deli “The Ice House”. This will be more a lighter fare/snack restaurant. They'll have two fronts—one on Nicollet and one on the interior of the public space. Dunn Bros is working on the A26 space. There are multiple parties interested in the Azia space but no decision has been made yet. If anyone has an idea for that space, contact Mark. Something Eat Street doesn't have already would be desired—Italian would be good.

Additional parking will be leased. City Parking codes are met but additional parking is still being sought. Anticipated opening: Dunn Bros this summer, VE and Eat Street Social September, Apartments in the next month or so, Bewitched November, and the corner space will depend on the tenant. The courtyard that is on the north side of the parking lot is being redesigned. No plans yet but will be more courtyard and less parking

### **Quang Restaurant – 2719 Nicollet Ave**

Quang has applied for a sidewalk café license and a Class E Liquor license. There will be no internal changes or operating changes other than the addition to the menus. Customers have been requesting wine and beer but it has not been able to provide. The children have taken over management of the restaurant and now want to introduce some changes that the mother did not want to do because of tradition. Quang is probably the last sit-down restaurant on Eat Street to apply for this. The sidewalk café would be on Nicollet and the 6 ft sidewalk space would still be available. This has been approved.

There won't be a change the hours. The latest Quang could stay open is 1:00am, but there is little desire to stay that open that late since it is a family run business and they want to go home. Maybe for a special event. There will be no live music or entertainment. Just background music. There was a public hearing on July 5 and no one attended to support or object.

**CI Motion 2:** The Community Issues Committee supports the request for a Class E wine and beer liquor license for Quang Restaurant at 2719 Nicollet Ave. **Motion Carried. 11-0-0**

### **Old/New Business**

**CM Lilligren** was called upon to highlight topics. **NRP:** \$10 million were re-appropriated away from neighborhoods. There is an interest within city hall to restore that \$10 million but there needs to be neighborhood involvement in this. Neighborhoods need to be more vocal. This would help out with the process. The consolidation plan is still going forward. **Reopen Nicollet and streetcars:** These would have a huge impact on the neighborhood and it could be horrible or great. Once the strategic plan is in place, the neighborhoods should really be engaged in the development of this. And how does this play into the 35W Access Plan.

Streetcars: Mpls has invested city funds to do a feasibility study. The first priority line would be the Nicollet and Central line. How big that piece will be is not yet known. One federal grant just shy of a million dollars was received by the city. This gives the project traction at the federal level and establishes a place in line. MetCouncil is now interested in being the operator as well. This can be thought of as a project to take place in the next 5-7 years. A few neighborhoods have been holding planning discussions that have helped gather neighborhood input. Part of this grant requires that we work closely with the neighborhoods. Early in 2012, a formal process that is transparent and open will be laid out. The protection of the local communities and the *character* of the local communities will be incorporated. That has to be intentional and in there from the beginning. Reopening of Nicollet and the connection 35W: Hennepin County is the lead agency for this local intersection project. If people want Nicollet to be reopened as a part of that project, then that needs to be very strongly and frequently voiced.

Q: Is there a way to have the neighborhoods drive the decisions instead of just giving input? How do you make sure that neighborhoods don't become a token voice to be documented to prove “engagement”? We're ready to talk about it. Can we engage these conversations, and soon?

A: Yes and there are ways to load questions and concerns so that they require a response. This will be in city jurisdiction for a while, but it will eventually go to MetCouncil. The effort put into the pedestrian overlay will be fruitful here. In order for local opportunities to be fully realized, the involvement and cooperation between the city and the neighborhoods needs to be there from the beginning.

### **Meeting adjourned: 8:26pm**

**Minutes submitted by:** Jen Wendland, Whittier Alliance Community Organizer

**Next meeting:** Monday, Aug 8th, First Christian Church