



WA Business Association Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 11, 2017
Whittier Alliance Office, 10 E 25th St 9:00am - 10:30am

Attendees: Andrew Nordick Logica Law
Denise McAlpin NuWay
Martha Nemesi Learning In Style
Hassan Warsame BP Gas Station

WA Staff: Ricardo McCurley, Dan Stanton, Marcus VanderSanden

Introductions/Call to Order

Meeting begins at 9:05am, Minutes approved, Agenda approved

Spotlight on Business- Whittier Alliance

Whittier Alliance is the neighborhood association serving the Whittier neighborhood, working to engage stakeholders and bring,..... The ongoing mural on the wall of the office is the product of several different MCAD student interns and highlights different landmarks and aspects of the neighborhood. It is yet to be decided if it will be finished or if it will continue with different artists but it is a fun way to brighten up the office. It is a strategic planning year for the Whittier Alliance, which can dictate the mission and goals of the organization for a 5 year window. In addition to the excitement of strategic planning, the organization will have to think about funding moving forward. A TIF (Tax Increment Finance) district that is mandated to fund neighborhoods is currently the main funding stream, while the TIF will remain the mandate will expire and will go to the city's general fund. A Minneapolis study on the function of neighborhood associations will be released soon which will be helpful in seeking additional funding and it is also possible to seek state funding. "It's a good time to be a neighborhood association, with lots of questions that need answering and it's exciting to seek those" - Ricardo

Current Concerns & Events

Hassan- In months since closing of Franklin bridge business has gone down 40-45%. The primary concern is the timeline of the project. Hassan feels that if timeline were expedited there would be a better chance for local business to weather the impact but current timeline could have drastic impacts on his ability to stay open and would like to seek compensation from city for loss. There has been a hesitation to rush into any drastic changes in employee hours due to necessity of two people working for safety reasons but the financial strain is already being felt. Whittier has looked into possible stopgap funding for businesses that can demonstrate direct impact and has met with the Neighborhood Develop Center and Sunrise Banks to discuss options including potential grants or low interest small business loans.

Martha- 10am Friday the 27th people from St. Mary's Health Clinic are coming to Learning In Style to help undocumented people or asylum seekers who do not have health insurance receive basic health needs and routine check up is not being able to pay taxes which continues to make the path to citizenship more difficult.

35W Response Task Force

- Andrew has been working with Whittier Alliance to create a task force for construction of the 35W Task Force that will be happening over the next 5 years

- Bringing in Zeus Jones to help with marketing, creative ways to encourage people to come into the neighborhood
 - Pairing with Sunrise Banks to address financial side
 - These things are in infancy; nothing is solidified yet, but Zeus Jones and Sunrise are willing to lend a helping hand
 - We still need helpful minds to create those ideas
 - Task Force would meet 1-2 times a month outside of BA, then present to the BA to be tweaked and voted on. Then, they would be brought to the WA Board, where they would be decided on.
 - There will be an awareness aspect to it, but there will also be a portion devoted to mitigating problems for businesses associated with the street closures
 - The Task Force will be a brainstorming session to create ideas to be implemented by WA, Zeus Jones, Sunrise Banks
 - MNDot has spent their budget: there will be no wayfinding
- Questions/Concerns:
 - Economic impact for businesses: will become harder for people to get in and out of neighborhood
 - What are the other concerns?
 - Safety: people will be navigating new areas with street closures, added traffic
 - Signage/wayfinding is a major concern
 - This has already been a concern prior to this
 - Is there an existing definition/description of the Task Force?
 - No, this will be fleshed out

Vote on Task Force:

Motion to create 35W TaskForce. Motion seconded. 6 - yes, 1- abstention. **Motion Carries**

The Task Force will be brought up with the Whittier Alliance to discuss creation
Zeus Jones & Sunrise Banks has representatives that will be on the Task Force

- Recap of meeting between Whittier Alliance and Zeus Jones
 - Zeus Jones is working on a survey to determine where businesses' customers are coming from in the area
 - Ultimately, they want to target those routes
- If interested in participating in the task force, email dan@whittieralliance.org

Old & New Business

- NDC (Neighborhood Development Center) Entrepreneur Training Scholarships
 - Last month, we voted on the Whittier Alliance offering 10 \$100 scholarships to entrepreneurs in Whittier for the NDC's trainings
 - Tuition is scaled on income: ranges from \$150-650
 - Anyone that lives in Whittier that applies to and gets accepted to the training will get reimbursed by the Whittier Alliance
 - NDC places people based on their level of entrepreneurship
 - NDC does this training program twice a year
- Nicollet Open Streets
 - September 24th, 11-5pm, KMART to 46th & Nicollet

Meeting adjourns at 5:28pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Dan Stanton