

**Community Issues Meeting DRAFT Minutes**  
**Monday, June 13, 2016 — 6:00-7:30pm — Whittier Park**

**Attendees:** Marie Listopad, Mary Gazca, Jay Emmerich, Jo Ann Musumeci, Emily Lund, Christine Popowski, Gregory Schmidt, Brian Foster, Emanuel Tekle, Erin Sjoquist, Osman Abo, John Outlaw  
**Staff:** Ricardo McCurley, Paul Shanafelt, Lucy Lawson, Camilla Jamal  
**Presenters:** 10<sup>th</sup> Ward Council Member Lisa Bender & Senior Policy Aide Ron Harris; Sgt. Kristopher Brown, MPD; Teresa Murphy Dieveny, Serenity Place

**Welcome**

Welcome at 6.05 by Brett Vandebussche, CI Chair. Agenda was reviewed. Standard of conduct policy was reviewed. **Motion** to approve the Agenda, with the addition of the Farmers Market and the Greenway Glow, **Carried**. Introductions were made. Minutes from May CI meeting were reviewed. **Motion** to approve May CI meeting minutes **Carried**.

**Announcements/Community Comments & Discussion**

**Community Announcements:**

**Whittier Farmers Market – starting June 25**

Emily Lund, Whittier Farmers Market manager, announced the upcoming market at the 26th & Blaisdell block. An amazing set of vendors have joined up. Email [whittierfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:whittierfarmersmarket@gmail.com) if you're interested in volunteering.

**Greenway Glow – June 18**

Jo Ann Musumeci announced the Greenway Glow: the annual fundraiser for the Midtown Greenway Coalition, which works to keep the Greenway beautiful and safe.

**Ward 10 update**

Lisa Bender

Councilmember Lisa Bender briefed attendees on City Council activities and introduced Ron Harris, her new policy aide.

- Regarding the Rex 26 (Lyndale & 26th St) development proposal, which came before the CI meeting last month, she had a lot of concerns about the Floor Area Ratio variance. An attendee asked about traffic issues with the project, and Lisa said the Planning Commission depends on staff expertise for those issues, especially at an early project stage.
- CPED recently hosted a discussion about a Hennepin & Lyndale Aves pedestrian overlay. Triggered by concerns about a recent Walgreens project on Hennepin and the Rex 26 project. Gerberding is asking for land rezoning, but if his project didn't go ahead the rezoning could remain. Nicollet's pedestrian overlay is from Franklin Ave to north of the Kmart site. Lisa would like to include Lake St but staff are pushing back on that a bit. Residents were very opposed to the one-story Walgreens building going up but there wasn't anything to say Walgreens couldn't.
- Her office is preparing to make the case at Council to spend \$7.3mn for the land below the Kmart site in order to reopen Nicollet Ave: it is going to be very difficult to convince the other Councilmembers to spend the money, and will require the n'hood to talk about the City-wide benefits, e.g. for the transit network.
- Attendee asked about density and sustainability: Whittier is already a very densely populated n'hood, and some large projects are being added at the moment, how do we determine the upper limit? Lisa commented that it would be interesting to look at how people are calculating Whittier to be the densest n'hood in Minneapolis: she doesn't think that is correct. She commented that 70% of Minneapolis is single family residential, and it's hard to rezone n'hoods that are R1 without a lot of City Council pushback. Currently the Council's plan is to concentrate growth in the transit corridors, such as Whittier. It will be politically challenging to upzone much of the city. The City is growing, and if you don't build to keep pace, you get displacement – San Francisco being the classic example.

**Whittier Task Forces update**

Paul Shanafelt

**Crime & Safety Task Force:** Next meeting will cover problem & nuisance properties, and crime prevention strategies.

**Environmental Sustainability Task Force:** Is working on a potential Whittier Bike Program, a rain garden and some organics recycling outreach to Whittier businesses.

**Livable Streets Task Force:** TF worked on problem intersections in the n'hood. Some of these Public Works fixed immediately; some needed some more follow-up. A survey of the Whittier International Elementary parents/staff found 72% of participants suggested a 4-way stop at 27<sup>th</sup> & Pleasant, unprompted. The Task Force will be taking survey results to Ward 10 and Whittier school. Similar issues over at Hennepin Elementary were brought up at the last CI meeting.

**Whittier Bike Patrol**

Sgt. Kristopher Brown, MPD

Sgt. Brown briefed attendees on the new n'hood bike patrol. A healthy number of officers have volunteered to work. It's a n'hood and police run program, not a City run program. Cops on bikes are less threatening for citizens and kids. They can make more contact with people and use all 5 of their senses. The officers are also more recognizable. It's easier to go down an alley, and to surprise people who are doing bad things. It's also easier to turn around and pursue people. Sgt. Brown made some points in response to attendees comments and questions:

- Beat cops can focus on livability crimes, unlike 911 responders who, being understaffed and having a high volume of calls, cannot take ownership of the area the way beat cops can.
- Attendee asked about bike racks. The MPD doesn't run the fleet, and only one vehicle has a tow package. Crown Victorias can have bike racks mounted to them, but not squad cars.
- The bikes do not have GPS; the radios the cops carry do, although dispatchers don't use them.
- Examples of crimes you see from a bike: typically if you are on bike patrol, you don't get the 911 calls or domestic disputes, but, say, customer trouble. You listen to the radio and if you're close by you go to that area, but you never tell the cop in the squad car not to come.
- The big thing is more positive interaction with people. All studies on differences between beat cops and squad cars find little difference in overall crime reduction, but that people feel much safer. Being on a bike offers a unique connection to the community.
- Funding for the bike patrol will run out after two years. Attendee asked what we can do to get the MPD to put money into something similar. The squeaky wheel gets the grease.
- Attendee asked if she could approach police and offer drinks/snacks. Yes.

**Whittier Place & Serenity Place**

Teresa Murphy Dieveney

Teresa is the director at Whittier Place and Serenity Place, which provide supportive living solutions for people with a mental illness. They have been in the n'hood for a long time but would like to get more involved. There are many people in the community who have a mental illness but you would never know. In contrast, with their clients you often would notice they are struggling – their organization provides support with medication, food and basic needs. However, to have a fulfilled life and a successful life, you need more than basic needs. An attendee asked if Whittier Place was a nursing home; it isn't. Most of their clients are Hennepin County referrals. They can come and go as they please. They have to be med compliant, but otherwise they are independent.

An attendee asked if they could create an inventory of skills residents want to share. Would like to see a breakdown of stigma. Teresa said there are a lot of artists, gardeners, crocheters, etc , but there are people who need to know they are welcome before you can find out what they can do. In terms of residents attending community meetings, it would be great but be aware that sometimes we have strange behaviors.

**Motion to Adjourn: 7:55pm. Motion Carried.**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Lucy Lawson.**