

Community Issues Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 10th, 2020— 6:30--8:00pm — Whittier Park

Attendees: Justin Kader, Jen Kader, **Brigid Higgins, Ben Carrier, Addison Coley, Jesse Oyervides, Peder Hagen, Kevin Beaudin, Charlie Sawyer, Ella Rasp, Erika Shepard, Sarah Paulus, Amber Bellamy, Daniel Perez, Josh Christianson?, Kathryn Van Duynhoven, Willow Kreibich, Jake Gysland, Stephanie Brown, Scott Melamed, Nate Broadbridge, Brandon Schorsch, Aldona Martinka, Harrell Mathieu, Peter Thomas**

Staff: Kaley Brown, Fartun Ismail

Presenter: Abdullahi Abdulle, Mike Samuelson, Becky Lewis, Brigid Higgins, Jen Kader

Welcome at 6:35pm by Kaley Brown, Executive Director.

Agenda & Standard of Conduct is reviewed.

Motion to approve agenda. Seconded. Motion carried.

Motion to approve November minutes. Seconded. Motion carried.

Introductions.

Community Updates

Whittier Alliance - Kaley Brown & Fartun Ismail

- 2020 Board application period is open now through 5pm on Friday, March 6th; if you or someone you know might be interested in running for a WA board seat or even Chair of this committee, please reach out with any questions or to grab coffee with either me or any of our current board members who would be happy to share their experience and what you could expect if you are elected.
- WA is also hosting a workshop on 2/29 for Whittier community members interested in building up some of their organizing skills. The workshop will be focused on strategies for effective base building through 1:1 conversations with another person. Free to anyone, light breakfast and coffee provided - SpringHouse Ministry Center on the 29th from 10am-12pm. Flyer on the check-in table.
- Upcoming dates of interest:
 - Housing Issues Committee on Tuesday, February 18th
 - Eat Street Fest Visioning & Planning meeting, Wednesday, February 19th
 - Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 9th

Whittier Park Updates - Becky Lewis

- Free, drop-in/flexible programming is the name of the game at Whittier Park; youth ages 18 and under can take any classes or participate in programs as long as they have an "Active Pass" which needs to be signed by a parent or guardian.
- They serve a meal and snack every day after school and on Saturdays to anyone ages 18 and under, including on snow days. They are open on early release days, as well.
- They have an active futsal program at Whittier, and earlier that evening the Park Board naturalist had a snake on site for kids to interact with. They are always looking for new ideas for programming that can be done on a free or donation-based basis.
- Open 12 - 9 during school days of spring break
- Upcoming events:
 - Ceramics (10 - 12 Saturdays sched. change)
 - 4/2 - basketball tournament
 - 4/18 - Earth Day cleanup event
 - August - National Night Out, Great Whittier Get Together, MIA artist in residence, summer camps

Greenway Signage Project

Brigid Higgins - Artist

- Goal is to revitalize the Greenway entrance/exit to Nicollet with signage reflecting the residence and businesses of the neighborhood
- Handed out booklets soliciting favorite memories of Eat Street to generate ideas for art and signage. Booklets can be dropped off at Whittier Alliance
- Working with Hennepin County on the project
- Unsure of precise locations, aware of the need to consult the owners of the wall that has the faded whale mural

Whittier/Lyndale Bikeway ImprovementsMike Samuelson & Abdullahi Abdulle, City of Mpls
Public Works

- City of Mpls is collecting information from tonight's discussion and via feedback forms on their website, soliciting new round of feedback later this spring
- Project will expand from Grant st. to 40th st. along either 1st Ave, Blaisdell Ave., or both
- 1st ave south of Lake street will be resurfaced this year, so opportunities for bollards protected lane
- 1st ave north of Lake street will be fully reconstructed within the next few years, so opportunities for bollards, in-street, or even behind-the-curb bike lanes, as well as pedestrian improvements like medians and bump-outs
- Blaisdell will be resurfaced from Franklin to 40th in the next year or so
- Concerns voiced by attendees:
 - History of poor / lacking communication with 26th and 28th projects - how will the city educate the public?
 - Whittier Alliance can help disseminate information from the city
 - No signage on bike lanes means cars drive on bike lanes, not even correctly painted lines on the street in certain intersections (1st and 26th, for example)
 - More visible cues / reminders for cars helps make everyone safer
 - With on-street parking on 1st, how will a bike lane be added? Will increasing bike lanes and reducing parking create more hostility from drivers towards bikes?
 - While there is public interest in fully pedestrianizing 1st, city says not realistic option
 - Public interest in wider bike lanes, or two-way bike lanes
 - Kids don't fit well in one-way lanes
 - Many people use one-way lanes as two-way lanes anyway
 - Side-by-side biking helps encourage more ridership
 - Perception of safety (with wider lanes, more permanent structures) increases ridership
 - Diagram of width of bike and car lanes would be helpful at next presentation
 - City plans on providing that information next time
- Whittier Alliance will share feedback form link with neighborhood and forward any public comments to the city planners
- City of Mpls public works partnering with Mpls public schools on Safe Rout to School project. More details to come soon.

Whittier Alliance Bylaws Update Discussion

Jen Kader, Whittier Alliance Board Chair

- Jen explained why the board has been working on updating the bylaws:
 - Democratizing project to create more accessibility, better support the strategic plan, and meet requirements the city has in place for future funding

- Smaller updates to be covered at annual meeting, larger updates were first presented by Jen, allowing for clarifying questions, and then discussed in small groups by meeting attendees with feedback recorded during report back to the large group
- 1) Establishing member voting eligibility with more options for proof of ID, including more mail and third party vouchers:
 - a) These changes aim to bring bylaws more aligned with current secretary of state requirements
 - b) WA has been in violation of its CPP contract by requiring photo IDs. Aim of update is to have a process that ensures people are part of Whittier, while not being more difficult to participate and vote in a neighborhood association than it is for a federal election.
 - i) Scott asked if this would apply to all WA meetings, Jen said yes
 - ii) Erika asked if form of identification could be any mail, Jen said no only specific kinds of mail specified in the bylaws
 - iii) Aldona explained the Secretary of State requirements are considered an exemplar for voting eligibility requirements, which is why WA used it as a model
 - 2) Extend the right to vote at all meetings for all voters
 - a) Because residents, businesses, and properties all weave together to form a neighborhood and influence one another, these changes ensure all members have the same rights--once becoming a member of WA, one can partake in all of its business and happenings.
 - b) Additionally, these changes further aligns the Business Association with other Acting Committees, rather than seeming like a separate entity.
 - i) Daniel commended the WA for shifting from an either/or dichotomy of siloed meetings & committees to embracing the gray area that all members can have an interest in all meetings & committees. This approach fights white supremacy
 - 3) Shift voting for acting committee chairs from individual committee meetings to all voting members at annual meeting, following the election of at-large board candidates and reports from preceding term's committee chairs
 - a) This change brings more people into the process and ensures that acting committee chairs are elected with as many votes cast as possible
 - b) This also helps voting members to be more informed when casting their votes
 - 4) Shift from requirement of involvement with WA 6 months prior to annual meeting or earlier to simply require any engagement with WA prior to annual meeting
 - a) This can allow for newer folks to the WA and for folks with new skills to run for the board
 - 5) Shrink board size to include 4 at large members (instead of 5) and 2 business reps (instead of 4) made up of 1 for-profit and one non-profit
 - a) 14-17 board members is much more manageable than 18-21, especially in terms of efficiency and scheduling & attendance
 - b) This also further integrates the Business Association as an acting committee, rather than it seeming like its own entity.
 - 6) Allow same-day nominations for board candidates at annual meeting
 - a) Increasing accessibility, while maintaining eligibility standards. This will allow people to run on the day of as long as they are able to prove their eligibility, and officially allowing WA staff to confirm eligibility like they already do.
 - b) This would increase accessibility while still keeping a priority deadline and including requirement of candidates to prove eligibility

General consensus was support for the changes, with some lingering questions and need for further discussion around bylaws update #3. Full feedback from small groups reporting back was collected by Jen on posters.

**Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.
Minutes submitted by Justin Kader.**